



NASH
HEALEY
NEWS

Issue No. 37
July/August 1986

Car club

June 16, 1986

Ms. Mary A. Soles
R.D. #1 Box A161
Addison, PA 15411

Re: Nash Healey Car Club Newsletter

Dear Ms. Soles:

I have a 1953 Nash Healey Roadster or Convertible. It has a Farina built body, Motor Number NHA 1214, Body Number 11900. It has the aluminum head and has two S.U. Pots.

The car supposedly has low mileage, actual KL13920.6. When the car was purchased new, the owner kept it two years and traded in in on a Mercedes. The second owner purchased the Healey and kept it until 1968.

The car has been in and out of Europe. The Healey left Switzerland in 1965. It came to Houston and then to Austin, U.S.A. When it left Austin it came to Dallas, where I acquired the Healey from George R. and Alix W. Hutchings in 1968 and both are deceased at this time.

The 1953 Nash Healey Farina body roadster or convertible with roll-up windows and removable hard top does exist! I have it and it is mechanically perfect. I am restoring it. Since there was never one built, I hesitate to say, maybe so it just sprouted and grew up. The Nash Healey is available and can be seen any day or night. There are a few items I still need; the emblem for the center of the grille and the front header or bow for the soft top can be had if needed.

Do you suppose Ford could have borrowed the idea from this 1953 Nash-Healey as how to build the 1955-56-57 T-Bird? They have a soft top removable hard top and roll-up windows.

This gives us something to think about. It does exist and is real. It is available to look at.

Sincerely,

T.J. Stice
8324 Foxwood Lane
Dallas, Texas 75217
(214) 398-7609 (Home)
(214) 376-7054 (Shop)
6918 So. R.L. Thornton
Dallas, Texas 75232

LETTER FROM A MEMBER

Dear Mrs. Soles:

I enclose \$9 membership for 86/87.

I enjoy the newsletter every time it arrives.
Keep up the good work.

I have enclosed a photo of a poor Nash-Healey in a scrap yard in England. All the parts are with the car. You might mention it in your next newsletter. I will give any interested member more details if he writes to me.



Sincerely,
Nick Currie
1 Kemp Court
Connaught Park
Bagshot
Surrey
GU195QG
England

NASH-HEALEY ON THE RADIO

by Mike Feingold

By now just about every Club member is aware of the Nash-Healey's impressive list of motion picture and television appearances. But how about an "appearance" on radio? Well, it happened at least once. In 1945 the NBC Network began broadcasting "The Falcon". This popular espionage drama concerned the ad-

ventures of Mike Waring, an American agent whose code name was "The Falcon". During an episode aired in 1952 the following dialog took place: "Don't bother, I'll get a cab". "Ridiculous. In my Nash-Healey it'll take us no time at all". In 1955 the show became a syndicated television series starring Charles McGraw. It would be interesting to know whether or not the association with Nash-Healey was continued.

Nash Motors Division of Nash-Kelvinator Corporation early in 1951 brought out the Nash-Healey, the first sports car to be introduced by a U. S. manufacturer in 20 years.

Donald Healey, managing director of the Donald Healey Motor Company of Warwick, England, had built a special sports car, using a Nash Ambassador engine and drive line, which he entered in the 24-hour LeMans endurance race in July, 1950. So well did the sports car perform in the race (finishing fourth) that Nash elected to contract for a limited number of the sports model.

For the new production Nash-Healey, the high-compression, 6-cylinder Nash Ambassador engine was fitted with an aluminum head and dual carburetors. Overdrive was standard. The prototype, which had an aluminum body built by the Healey company, was shown publicly for the first time at the Paris Automobile Show in early fall of 1950.

Production began in December of 1950. In that month, 36 models were built. An additional 68 were produced in the months of January, February and March of 1951. All were 2-door convertibles.

General specifications of the initial 1951 Nash-Healey included, as standard equipment, leather upholstery, adjustable steering wheel, directional signals, chrome wheel discs, foam rubber cushions and five 4-0ly whitewall tires. Standard colors were Champagne Ivory and Sunset Maroon. (No other colors were available).

The 6-cylinder engine, of 234.8 cubic inch displacement (3847 c.c.), had 125 horsepower, 8:1 compression ration, 7-main-bearing crankshaft; intake manifold sealed-in-head and two S. U. side-draft carburetors. Other details -- torque-tube drive; rear coil springs; tires 6.40 x 15; 20 U. S. gallon fuel tank; plexiglas side windows. Dimensions -- overall length 170 inches, width 60 inches, wheelbase 102 inches, tread 53 inches front and rear, turning radius 17 feet 6 inches, road clearance 7 inches, weight 2400 pounds.

No Nash-Healeys were made from April 1951 until January 1952, when an entirely new roadster body was created by Pinin Farina of Turin, Italy. A total of 150 of these 1952 convertible models were produced.

By this time, the Nash-Healey was truly an international car. The engine and main parts were manufactured by Nash at its plant in Kenosha, Wisconsin, then shipped to England, where the chassis with "trailing link" front-end suspension was added by the Donald Healey Company. The chassis with engines were then shipped to Turin, Italy, where the custom body was built by hand by Farina. The new Farina-designed Nash-Healey was shown for the first time at the Chicago Automobile Show in February, 1952.

A Nash-Healey took first place in its class (behind a Ferrari and a Talbot) and third among all entries in the 1952 LeMans sports car race in France. Fifty-eight cars had started, and only 17 finished.

In January, 1953, a Farina-designed hardtop model was added to the Nash-Healey series. In 1953, a total of 162 roadsters and hardtops were built.

Dimensions of the two models were as follows:

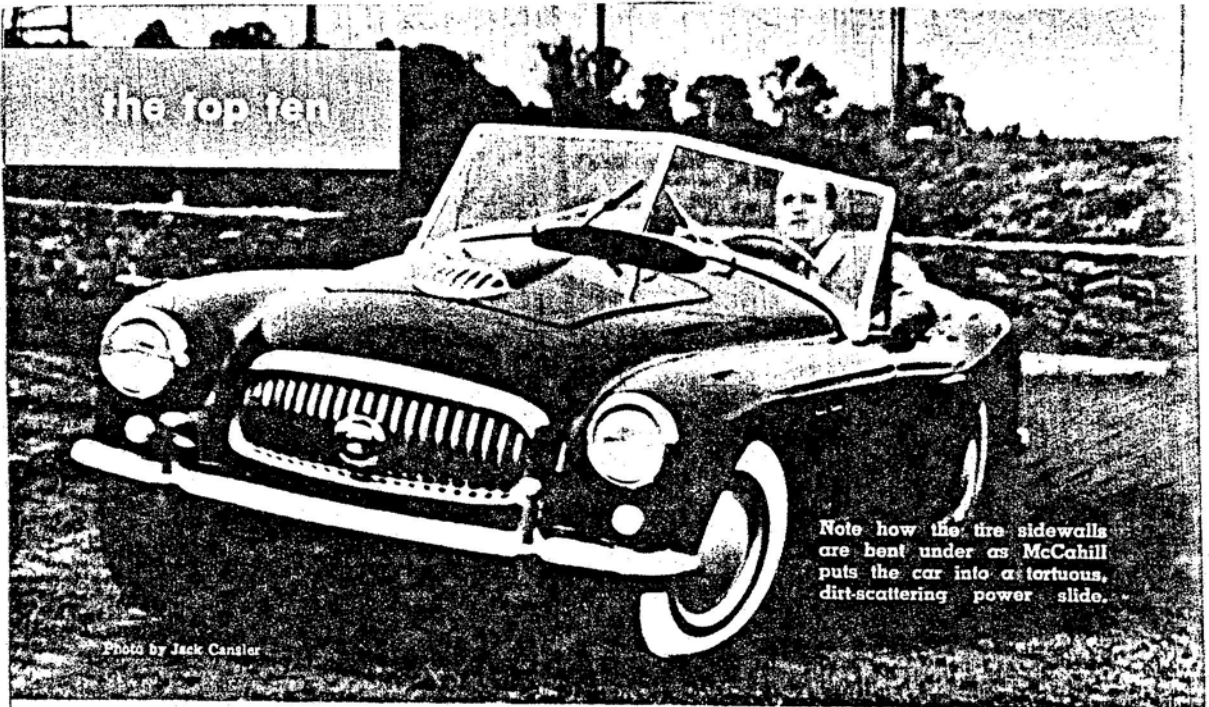
	<u>Convertible</u>	<u>Hardtop</u>
Wheelbase	102"	108"
Overall Length	170.75"	180.5"
Width	64"	65.87"
Height	48.65"	55"
Tread, Front	53"	53"
Rear	54.87"	54.87"

Nash-Healeys with the Donald Healey Company body all had the 234.8 cubic inch (3.8-litre) engine or "small six." A few of the early models with Farina bodies also had this engine. All others were powered by the larger bore 252.6 cubic inch (4.1-litre) engine which used a pair of side-draft Carter carburetors in place of the earlier SU carburetor versions. How to ascertain which engine is in a Nash-Healey model is to check the car serial and engine numbers. If the serial number is under N2250 and if the engine number is below 1163, it is a 3.8-litre engine. If the numbers are higher, the car has a 4.1-litre engine.

The 1953 Nash-Healey hardtop (designated as the LeMans hardtop) was awarded first prize in March of that year in the Italian International Concours D'Elegance held at Tresa, Italy.

From January, 1954 through August of 1954, a total of 90 hardtop Nash-Healey models were built. No convertibles were made in 1954. This brought to 402 the number of Nash-Healeys with Farina bodies. It also brought an end to the production of the famed Nash-Healey sports car, with a total of 506 having been built from December, 1950 through August, 1954.

the top ten



Note how the tire sidewalls are bent under as McCahill puts the car into a tortuous, dirt-scattering power slide.

Photo by Jack Canler

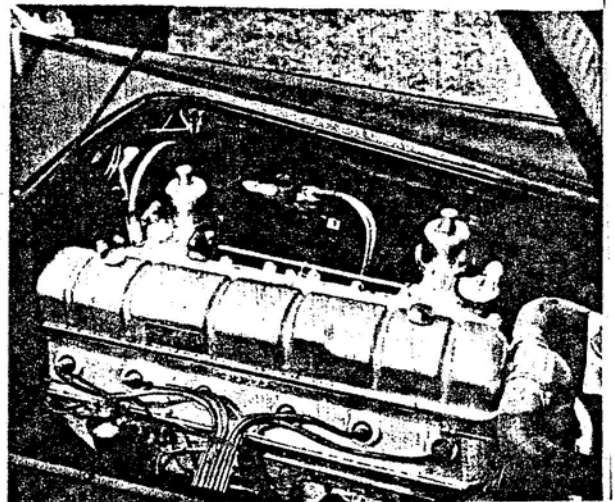
The Nash Healey

Meet America's latest sports car, combining English Healey body and chassis with our own Nash Ambassador power plant.

One poor feature of the new car, Tom feels, is the pull-up window arrangement. Windows do not recess far enough for comfortable armrest riding.

MY introduction to the double-chinned Nash Healey came about on a rainy day at the Langhorne track in Pennsylvania. I had gone to Langhorne to see the stock car races only to find the clam-bake called off because a sunny California-type dew had made the track surface as slick as a greased frog. I was about to shove off for home when, from the track, noises resembling a gargling grizzly bear caught my ear. Further investigation revealed a

The 6-cylinder Nash OHV engine which powers the Nash Healey is the regular Ambassador, except for twin carburetors and high-compression head.



new Nash Healey buzzing around the lot.

Over a thousand disappointed race spectators were still in the stands, watching the Nash loop the mile circuit. I spied Bill Haworth, Nash's fire-eating publicist from Detroit and Jim Moore, a Nash factory engineer, in a huddle with Bill France, the NASCAR prexie who was there for the race. "Where did you get the Crosley?" I shouted to Haworth—that did it. The car was flagged down, and I was personally introduced.

From a looks standpoint there isn't a finer looking sports car in the world today than the Nash Healey. It has excellent storage space and a big three passenger front seat with a pull-down arm rest. Even the double-chin protrusions on the hood give it a super power look. One is the Nash weather-eye heating air scoop and the other an engine breathing vent.

Most of the Langhorne track is rather heavy loose dirt and the pre-race rain had

engineer Moore looked about as happy as a fat missionary at a cannibal's picnic, but Haworth thought it would make a swell publicity picture so I did it again for Jack Cansler, the ace race photographer. Cansler had some more ideas so for the next hour I had the time of my life, throwing the Nash Healey into high speed and low speed controlled spins, slides and just plain skids. Haworth said later, Moore the engineer was dying every time I looped the car and then barreled it for rear wheel steering control.

I want to go on record right now and say I have never driven a sports car that handled better and gave the driver as much control in a power slide or spin. On the dirt part of the track, once I deliberately threw the car into a right semi-broad slide at about 85. When I felt the left rear wheel lift off the ground I snapped to the right and down it came immediately, but then the right wheel lifted from over con-

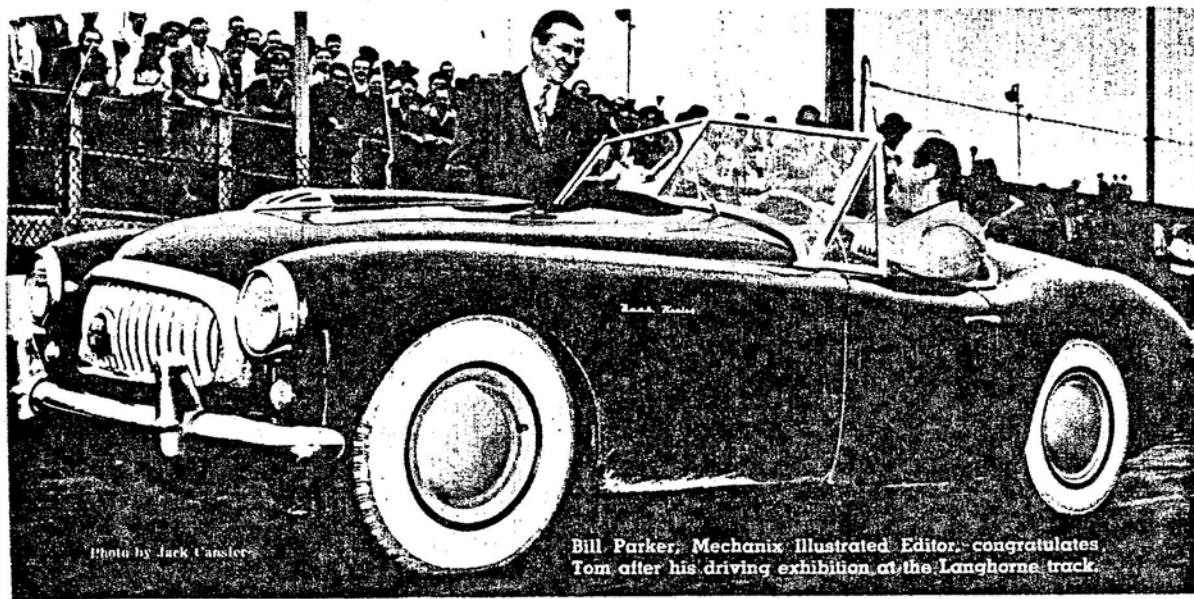


Photo by Jack Cansler

Bill Parker, Mechanix Illustrated Editor, congratulates Tom after his driving exhibition at the Langhorne track.

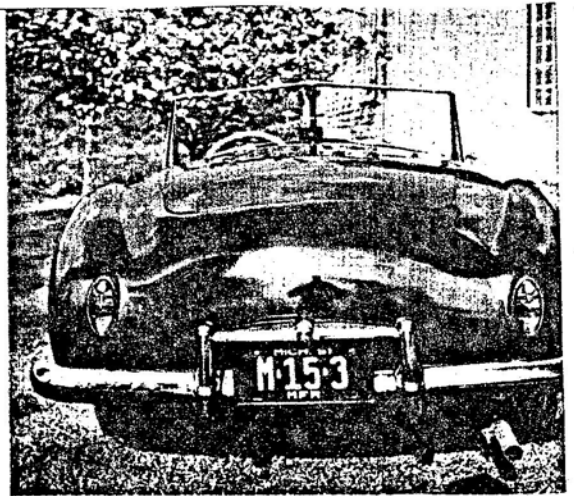
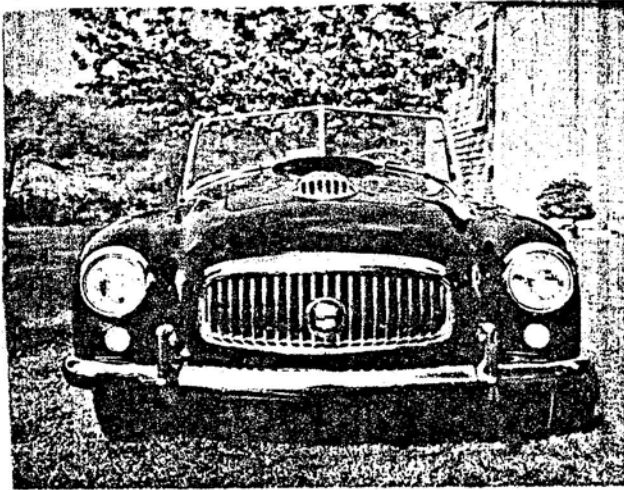
soaked it thoroughly and made it slow. Even so, by winding through gears, I got up a good head of steam before heading into the straightaway. In front of the stands is a short strip of about 300 feet of macadam and this was wet and oily, so to stop the car I threw it into a long slide and then a back spin. Frankly, I didn't think this was too unusual a maneuver for a sports car and was surprised to see the Nash boys running for cover.

When they came back I saw that Nash

trol. Again I counter controlled and after one more slight left rear wheel lift she was on course.

It was here that I found my first fault with the car. The three passenger seat just isn't a good enough tail anchor for this type of driving. In spite of my personal heavy hay bale bulk, in this maneuver I was sliding all over the seat like a caged tiger with his tail on fire.

Later, on my own test course, I made my acceleration runs and high speed tests and



Forward scoop is an engine breathing vent, rear one is air intake for Nash Weather Eye heating and ventilating system. Note slender bumpers.

Nash Healey has a six-inch road clearance, is 68 inches wide overall. Luggage compartment under the rear deck is large for a sports car.

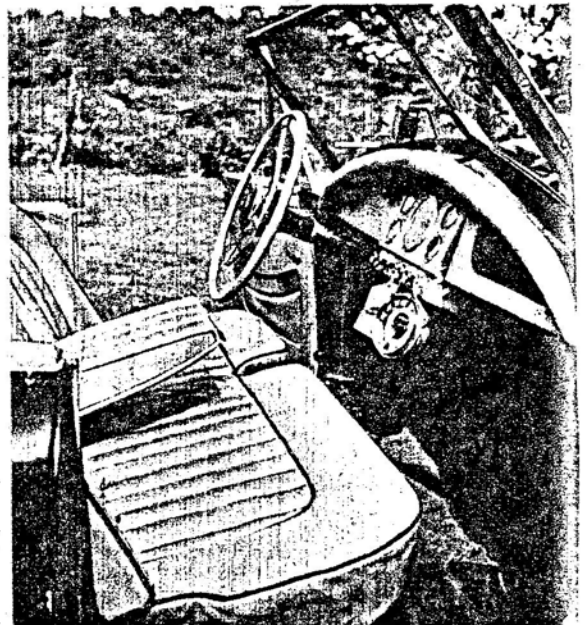
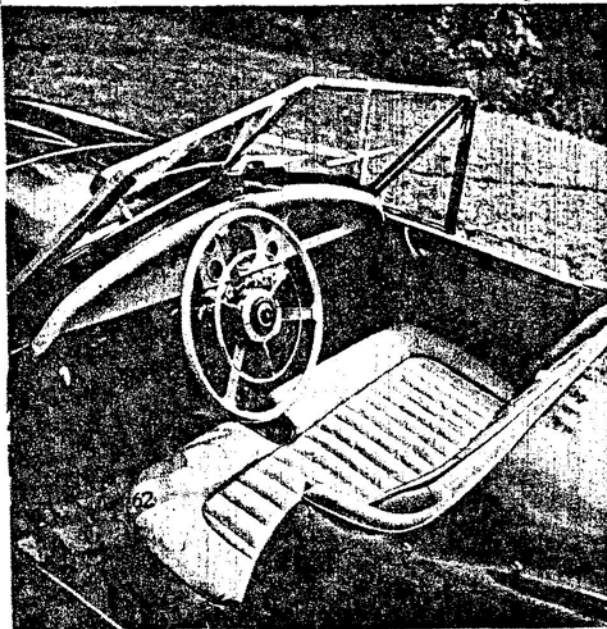
though this job steps out nicely, it's no keg of dynamite. Will it walk off with any big-time races? Not as it stands, it won't. But Nash plans to sell speed kits for building this into a wildcat similar to the successful Le Mans Nash Healeys.

The Nash Healey as it is is the finest commuter sports car I have ever driven, bar none. It's perfect for the sporty character who wants to roar to work from the suburbs to his office in the city in the least possible time; but it is not a big 140-mph leaguer now. This rig will get to 60 from zero in 11.5 seconds and will go right on up to 106 mph, which in its present state is tops.

Now you may not consider this a very good showing, but I do when all other factors are considered. In fact, of all the sports cars I have ever tested, for my own real use I would just as soon own a Nash Healey as any on the road. It gives me everything I want in a sports car short of dynamite performance. For cruising around the country it has loads of baggage space, comfort and superb handling quality. It can be serviced in any of the 48 states and their counties and I believe will be as reliable as an old shoe, which is where many of the real firecrackers fail to measure up, since unpredictable temperament seems to go with hotshot behavior.

Roomy seat has space for three people, one more than most sports cars carry. "Horn button" is in actuality a novel overdrive kickdown switch.

Extra speedometer under dash was added just for tests. Steering wheel is adjustable up and down. Note the wide center armrest and crash padding.

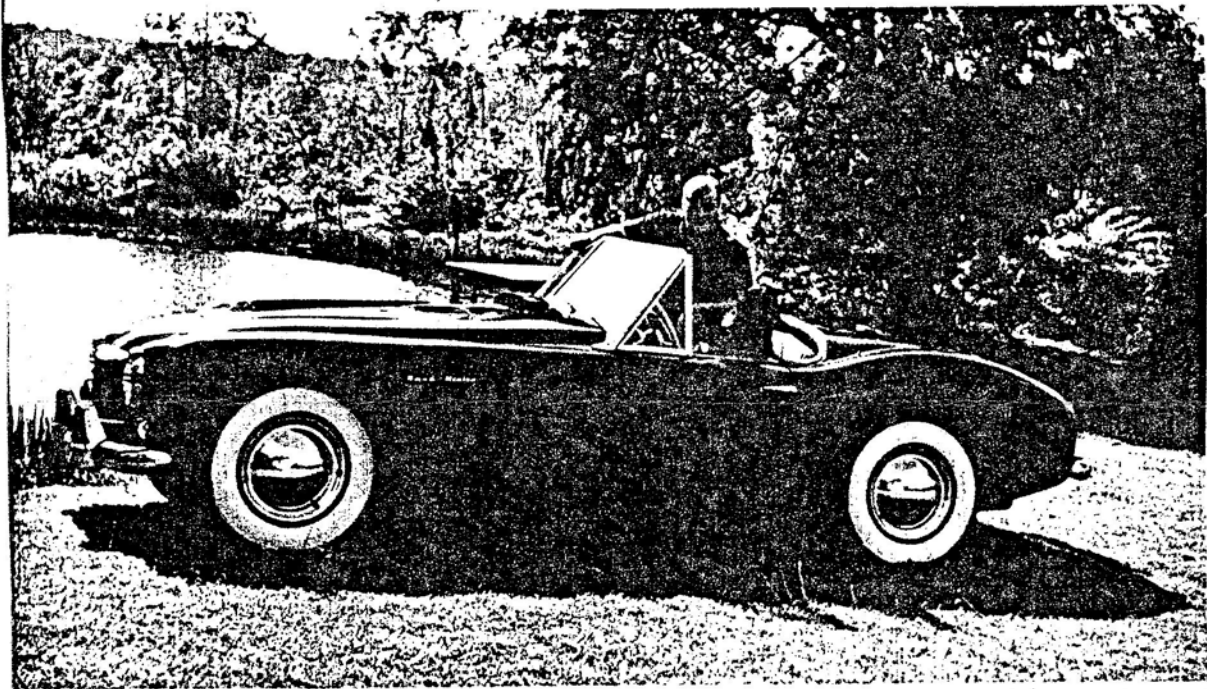


In each door is a pull-up window that makes this car a full fledged convertible when the top is up. These windows do not recess all the way, however.

The gear shift lever is nicely located on the floor at the rear edge of the seat in the best sports car tradition. It has a three speed transmission with overdrive and a brand new wrinkle. The kickdown switch, instead of being under the throttle as in most overdrive cars, is controlled by the horn button on the steering wheel. A horn steering wheel ring is actually used for the horn so the center button is exclusively

English sports cars, is a quality product and the buyer's assurance that there is nothing finer in the world, suspension or handling wise.

In summing up, I think the Nash Healey is a beautiful rig with a tremendous potential. It is a long way from the fastest car on the road but when features such as comfort, looks, reliability and handling are considered you will agree, I believe, that it has a lot to offer. The big Nash Ambassador overhead valve six used in the Healey comes equipped with two SU carburetors and 8.5 heads. This is the only alteration to



for putting the overdrive in operation.

Nearly all of us have had the experience with overdrive of pressing the throttle too far, causing a gear reduction just when we didn't want it. On the Nash Healey this is impossible. When you need an extra burst of speed to pass a car or for more power on a corner you merely give the would-be horn button a push and Zingo! you are in a lower gear. To get into the higher gearing again you lift your foot from the throttle momentarily as in all overdrive and Zump! you're in. The Nash Healey gets its name from the fact that the chassis and bodies are made by Donald Healey in England and the engine by Nash in Wisconsin.

A Healey chassis, unlike many cheaper

the engines made to date. With a high speed cam and valve porting and a few other hot rod tricks this rig could be turned into a full-fledged tornado. •

SPECIFICATIONS

1951 Nash Healey

ENGINE: 6 cylinder, OHV; bore $3\frac{3}{8}$ in., stroke $4\frac{3}{8}$ in.; piston displacement 234.8 in.; brake horsepower 125 at 4,000 rpm; compression ratio 8.1 to 1.

DIMENSIONS: Wheelbase 102 in.; overall length 170 in.; tread 53 in. front, 53 in. rear; width 66 in.; road clearance 6 in.; weight 2,600 lb.; standard tire size 6.40 x 15. Gas tank 16 gals.

PERFORMANCE: 0 to 30 mph, 4.1 seconds; 0 to 50 mph, 8.8 seconds; 0 to 60 mph, 11.5 seconds; 0 to 70 mph, 17.8 seconds; 0 to 80 mph, 22.7 seconds. Top speed, 106 mph with windshield, 110 mph without windshield.

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE NASH-HEALEY CAR CLUB:

Once a year it seems that I have to write an article asking the members of the Nash-Healey Car Club to send me articles on meets they have attended or trips, technical tips, photographs, restorations, etc. I am the type of person who does not like to repeat herself, but!!!

After this newsletter I would like to inform you that I have nothing for the next newsletter. What material I do have is a few reproduced articles but nothing to brag about.

In the past 6 months I have received absolutely nothing except for a new personal letters. I know for a fact there have been several meets across the country where members have taken their Nash-Healeys. There was a meet recently in California but no one wrote to me to tell me what went on. Perhaps they don't feel it is important but it is!!!!

I have been the Editor of the Nash-Healey News since 1981 and this is the first time I can say I am disturbed that we have nothing to print. Out of 100 members isn't there someone who has attended a meet or two or took a trip in their car? Did anyone do any repairs on their car or are you in the process of a total restoration? Have you taken a recent photograph of your car that you would like someone to see? ANYTHING!!!!

I regret to inform the membership that if I don't receive something soon there will not be a newsletter in September. The heart of this Club is the newsletter because the cars are spread across the United States and a few in other countries. I went through everything I have looking for a few Classified Ads but as usual, nothing. Remember, this is your Club so lets do something about it.

Send in those articles, classified ads, photos, tech tips, etc. Do it NOW if you want to have future newsletters.

Mrs. Joanne M. Soles, Editor
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