



Overdrive

January 2016 Official Newsletter of the Central Indiana Austin-Healey Club

From the President

By Bruce Watson

Christmas is behind us and the New Year is rapidly approaching. I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday.

This month began with another great Christmas Party, this time at the Milano Inn in Indianapolis. A big thanks to Jo Switzer for all her efforts in planning the event this year. Thirty-three people attended and shared in the good food and good times. Also, a big thanks to Ruth Buis for all the afghans, scarves, and hats that she donated to the raffle again this year. Over \$150 was raised and donated to the Cardboard Box Ministry in Indianapolis. Our donation bought sleeping bags for homeless people to help them stay warm this winter. One of the evenings' highlights was the traditional White Elephant gift exchange. And as usual, "exchange" was the operative word. There were much sought-after gifts that made their rounds until the third exchange found them a permanent home. This always creates a lot of fun and laughter. Thanks again to all who attended and who made this a great way to wind up our 2015 Healey calendar!

Jim Frakes held another Tech Session on Dec. 28 to continue the reassembly of his latest restoration project. This was a great way to celebrate Boxing Day in true British fashion. What better way to celebrate this holiday than to work on the rebirth of the best British sports car ever, the Austin-Healey! (See photos later in this newsletter.)

2015 was a very good year for the CIAHC. There were many noteworthy events, both organized by our club and other Regional and National events. The years' events began in **February** with the traditional Daytona 500 Party and Chili Cook-off at the Watson's home. **April** brought the Cars for the Cure



Frakes' Tech Session

Show at the Rolls Royce Heritage Trust Museum. **May** was a busy month with Spring Thing in Goodlettsville, TN, which several members attended. Later in May, Jon Monies and Joan Wright hosted their traditional Indy 500 Party at their home in Grawbone, IN; always a good time.
continued on page 3

Next Business Meeting

The January business meeting will be on Tuesday, January 12th.

Dawson's on Main
1464 W Main Street
Speedway, IN 46224
(317) 247-7000
Dinner: 6:30 & Meeting: 7:30

Contents

From the President	1, 3, 4
Officers and Contacts	2
From the Editor	2
Vintage Race Report.....	4 – 7
Calendar.....	7

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Mr. Healey's Neighborhood

Central Indiana AHC
<http://www.ciahc.org>

Bluegrass AHC
<http://www.bluegrassclub.com>

Miami Valley AHC
<http://sites.google.com/miamivalleyahccom>

Mid Ohio AHC
<http://www.moahc.org>

Northern Indiana AHC
<http://niahc.org>

Ohio Valley AHC
<http://ohiovalleyahc.com>

Indiana British Car Union
<http://www.ibcu.org>

Austin Healey Club of America
<http://www.healeyclub.org>

From the Editor

Hope they get will soon – Doug Frakes (Jim Frake's son) and Gene Marinacci (former club member) are both at Community North dealing with infections.

Would just like to say thanks to Jim Frakes, Jerry Butler, Ron Francis and Jim Switzer for helping Melanie and I empty the detached garage. The drywallers demo'd the ceilings on January 4th and the electrician was here on the 5th to repair the chewed wiring. New insulation and drywall has been installed with the first coat of mud. When done I get to paint. Would be a good time to paint the walls too as I just did a coat of primer the first time. Then I get to put everything back in; want to help? Bob

From the President

Continued from page 1

The 2015 Brickyard Invitational returned to the track in **June**. Doug Bruce raced his Bugeye and did very well. Good friend Jeff Freers, from the Northern IN club, raced his Square Body Sprite also. Many of us made it to the track and enjoyed Doug's hospitality at his paddock. The Louisville, KY club hosted their British Bash to which some of our members made the trip. **July** Began with several of our members participating in the London to Brighton Run, hosted by the Indiana British Car Union, again this year. This is always an interesting rally. This year's Conclave was a joint event of the Austin-Healey Club of America and the Austin-Healey Sports & Touring Club, and was named "Enclave – Healeys on Hallowed Ground." The name was a combination of Conclave and Encounter. A CIAHC contingent drove their cars to Gettysburg, PA and back without significant issues. All reports were that this was a great event! The following week a few of our members attended the Rolling into Roanoke Classic Car Show, and reported back that it was a very nice event. **August** was a very active month for our members. First came the annual British Motor Days car show in Zionsville. Then, Bruce & Charlene Gilham organized what was arguably the "best" Annual Ice Cream Social ever put on by the CIAHC. It began with a visit to the IMA for the Dream Cars Exhibit, for which our own Bruce Gilham performed the Docent duties. Next we drove across the street to the Woodstock CC for an excellent lunch. Thanks again to Tom & Wendy Neal for organizing. Then it was on to ice cream to top off a wonderful day! Carmel Artomobilia followed the next week, with several of our members' cars being accepted for the show. There were a number of events to take advantage of in **September** beginning with the Vintage Vineyard Foreign Sports Car Show hosted by the Northern Indiana Club. Next was the annual Scottish Festival for which Jon Monies was an organizer and judge. September Round-up followed, hosted by the Miami Valley AHC. A good size contingent from the CIAHC attended and had a very enjoyable time. The month ended with the Southeastern Classic in Seville, TN, which a few of our members attended. **October** began the wind-down of the Healey Driving Season with British Fall-out at Winona Lake and a Tech Session at Tucker Madowick's Autosport garage. The month ended with another wonderful Halloween Party hosted by the Bush's in their barn. The weather was very cooperative and a good time was had by all. In **November** the National Delegates meeting was again held in Indianapolis, with a nice lunch and tour of the Stutz museum downtown. The year ended with our Christmas Party on December 5th. In addition, there were several Tech Sessions and other regional events that our members participated in. There was certainly plenty to do this year with our Healeys and Healey friends.

Sadly, in June, David Morrison crashed his newly restored BJ8 following a meticulous 3 year restoration. Thankfully, although David suffered a number of injuries, he wasn't more seriously injured and his niece suffered only some bruises.

Continued on page 4



Jim Bush and Jim Frakes offer up the gas tank



Jim Switzer works on the front suspension, while Steve Halleck and Jim Bush talk

From the President

Continued from page 4

His car is back at the Korner Garage being re-restored.

This was quite an eventful year. I look forward to an equally active 2016!

Our next meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 12 at 6:30 at Dawson's in Speedway. This will be our Annual Planning Meeting. So start thinking of how you would like to spend the year with your Austin- Healey and Healey friends. If you have an idea, don't be bashful. Let's hear it. Maybe you have attended another event this year that had an activity that you particularly enjoyed. Let's hear about it. Or maybe you just have a wacky idea of something different. Everything's on the table at this meeting. We will get some dates set for the traditional events, and fill in with the rest.

I wish you all a Happy & Healthy New Year!

Bruce



Jim Switzer and Jim Frakes working on the front suspension

2015 Vintage Racing in Review - Indy

by Doug Bruce

Finally-A summer of podium finishes! My recap of the ins and outs of a whole season of vintage racing.

Vintage racing is about having fun racing old cars the way they were raced back in the day. Well, that is what we tell those who don't race and ourselves too. Really though, vintage racing is 6 months of preparation for 6 months worth of pain and despair. Sort of. Vintage racing does involve plenty off season preparation and often results in good weekends shared with some not so good weekends. Lets take the time I made the tow to the track only to have the throttle cable break just as I unloaded the race car from the trailer.

(Sure-it could have been worse, as it could have happened while I was racing!). In the second session of many for that weekend my clutch disk also exploded while I was at full throttle and then since I quickly had to shut the car down the motor suddenly, without any cooling, overheated and cooked itself into a well done *continued on page 5*



Doug Bruce on the main straight at Indy 2015

2015 Vintage Racing in Review - Indy

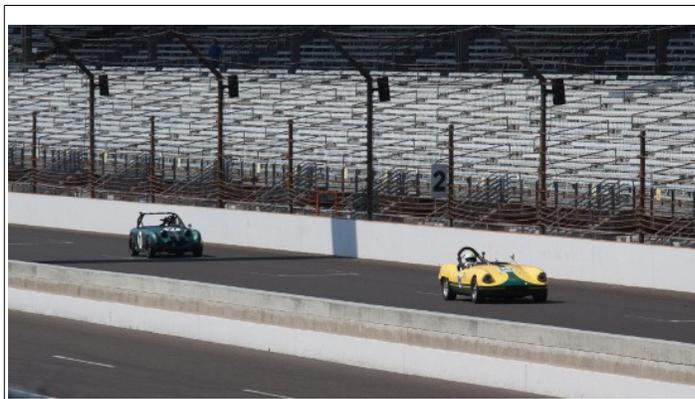
continued from page 4

steak! Those weekends are not the norm, but recently I had my share of them. Until this season. Finally.

We spent the off season working on better ducting for the cooling system, clearer rerouting of cooling system lines, magic dances in the garage to find more speed, and cleaning the last season of grime from a race car that has more places to hide dirt than pirates had to hide buried treasure! My 2015 season of vintage racing was going to be amazing I thought.

Indy a second time. Better driver attention and better car performance. Running at Indy a second time, I had greater expectations for my race finishes. Add the pressure of running at the historic track to having family and fellow Central Indiana Austin-Healey Club members present, and I had to succeed. With my brother-in-law Tom, along with long time SCCA crew member Dick Powell assisting my preparation at the track, we had a step-by-step plan to run every session. For four days I camped inside the fabled track, taking in the experience-even finding time to visit a friend's track side suite and other competitors as my car was running flawlessly and I didn't know what to do with this new found free time!. Finally, my race rolled around and I was taking the green flag as we roared down the front straight. One early lap as I raced towards the top five cars, I had a mental lapse. Finding my senses as my car began to spin, I turned into the spin and drove straight through turn one at high speed. I entered the runoff chicane cursing myself as I carefully re-entered the track and allowed numerous cars in front of me that represented my intense effort to get in front of them during the first few laps back by me, now I was going to have to do it all over again! Gathering my senses and reminding myself to brake earlier into turn one the next lap, I again pursued those cars that I knew I was capable of beating. Racing a vintage car does that to you. It requires skills to drive a car that doesn't handle like newer cars and their modern suspensions as well as it matches cars that often seem odd on the track together but are grouped with different engine sizes and track handling abilities. Working steadily but cautiously towards the front pack of cars, I knew the laps were winding down and I was running short of time and dang it, I wanted to at least, get back to where I was running before I had the brain fade.

As I raced to the finish, I caught my friend Tucker, racing his wonderful Elva Courier. I had a great start and drove away from him in the early traffic and now he was on my front bumper as I was behind him. Racing vintage cars also means you race close when you can but smart. "High eyes" we say and avoid the "red mist" we urge, but this was Tucker in front of me! I decided to race smart- no dive bomb pass, I had to make sure he was aware of me. I worked every inch of the track as I searched for a way around the Elva, but he was making his car wider than the wingspan of a 747! As the laps wound down, I found a weakness in his



Doug chasing Tucker Madawick in the Elva Courier

effort to stay in front of me. I began to set up my move to make a clean pass. As we exited turn seven, I tried a wide pass on drivers left, which only left me slowing as we entered the immediate right turn eight and sliding with lap of grip driving in the loose marbles of tire bits. Each time I tried that move, I found that he would drift left to block my attempted pass. Finally, we crossed the yard of bricks-albeit, traveling the wrong direction, we were shown the one lap to go signal- I had to make my move, this lap, a move that I

continued on page 6

2015 Vintage Racing in Review - Indy

continued from page 4

would later find out was what made this an event I would remember for a lifetime! I stayed closer to his rear bumper than I had the previous laps, I timed my corner brake and acceleration points and worked to maintain a safe position but a close position; after all, this is my friend Tucker. We both began vintage racing together and have raced each other in dozens of races, often enjoying a beer when the day's racing has ended. As we approached turn seven on this final lap, I allowed for a few extra RPM's and then braked later. As we hit the apex I differed from what I had done the previous laps. As we exited the turn, I once again began to make my drivers left pass, but just as he moved slightly left to block me, I stayed heavy on the throttle and proceeded straight and pulled alongside drivers right. Checkmate. With only a few turns left on this last lap, I now had to hit my marks and become the wider car of the two. Crossing the finish line, I felt elation as I knew I drove a pretty good race and "won" this battle with my friend, he will be tougher at the next race, I know that too.

Completing the cool down lap, we entered pit lane, I was busy to slow and signal my intentions to the grid workers that I wanted to turn in towards my paddock space at the far end of the pit lane, just then I saw it..PO-DI-UHM...The worker was pointing at me. Oh boy, what did I do wrong I thought...wait, that sign is PODIUM....are you kidding me? Directed to the Indy car Winner's Circle, I was beyond excited and numb from the thought that I was entering a place where so many of my idols have stood. Hold on, how do you get to the Winner's Circle I thought to myself? I don't recall that being addressed at the driver's meeting. I decided to follow the car in front of me, surely he was going there as well? Exiting the car I was told to walk up the steps to the podium, I don't think at any time that my feet even touched those steps. High fives were exchanged as we were given our podium finisher medallions and red baseball "winners circle" caps and suddenly we were each also handed a quart glass jar of milk, now I was truly numb as it was not lost on me that this was entering a tradition passed from generations of winners at this track, winners who I have idolized and have personally seen some 40 times May after May after May since I was a ten year old child.

Of course my family missed all of the fun, they had walked back to the area where I was camped in the paddock, expecting me to drive there after the race and as I was not there, they only guessed that perhaps I had an "issue" on the course and broke down on the last lap. Yeah, right, it's a British car but an issue? It took my 16 year old go-kart racing daughter to exclaim, "Dad's not broken down- I bet he is in winner's circle", with that, they ran to see where I ended up, only to arrive as we stepped down from my five minutes of fame on the podium! For a change I only needed to load up my car and gear into my hauler and unload when I arrived home. No work needed this time before my next race and that was a good thing as the next race was only a week away!



In the paddock

This year, it was a season of fine tuning my car between races and a season of cooking better food while camping at the track! It was also a season of the stars aligning I felt, sort of. Six weeks before the race at Indianapolis, I stepped into a hole in my yard and fell, breaking the Fibula bone in my leg near my ankle. As my wife was assisting me back inside the home for an ice pack, I said to her that we might as well drive to the emergency room as I felt an ice pack wasn't going to fix it. The next day as I sat down with the surgeon,
continued on page 7

2015 Vintage Racing in Review - Indy

continued from page 6

I told him in no uncertain terms that in six weeks, this foot was pushing a clutch pedal in and I was racing at Indy no matter what device he had on my foot, as he sat and starred at me, his response was “you are racing at Indy?” I knew then that I was in good hands. A metal plate and nine screws installed a week later, off racing I went. I suffered plenty the whole week at Indy, wearing a boot while out of the car and elevating my leg as much as possible. I had no idea that my ankle could ever swell to the size of a grapefruit!

My car is now sitting in the garage minus the engine and gearbox and fuel cell. New foam and a rubber bladder sit nearby. My garage is cold. I tell myself, tomorrow I will start working on her. I am trying to get motivated to begin the necessary off season work she needs and dirty my hands. Oh how I miss my simpler hobbies. Naa, I can't believe I get to enjoy the friends, travel, and race cars as a hobby!

See you on the grid!

Doug

Calendar of Events (partial)

January

12th Business Meeting (Dawsons on Main)

February

9th Business Meeting (Dawsons on Main)

12th – 14th World of Wheels at the State Fair grounds

March

8th Business Meeting (Dawsons on Main)

April

12th Business Meeting (Dawsons on Main)

17th 20th All British Car Swap Meet & Autojumble in Wheaton, IL

May

10th Business Meeting (Dawsons on Main)

19th – 22nd Southeastern Classic XXX in Crystal River, FL

June

3rd – 5th Champagne British Car Festival in Bloomington, IL

12th – 17th Conclave in Hebron, KY

14th Business Meeting (Dawsons on Main)

15th – 19th 2016 Brickyard Vintage Racing Invitational, IMS

19th Fathers' Day Car Show at Forest Park, Noblesville, IN