

OFF SIDE



British Motor Club of Southern New Jersey

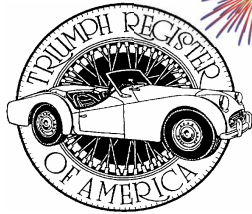
NEAR SIDE



THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION  
of THE BRITISH MOTOR CLUB  
of SOUTHERN NEW JERSEY

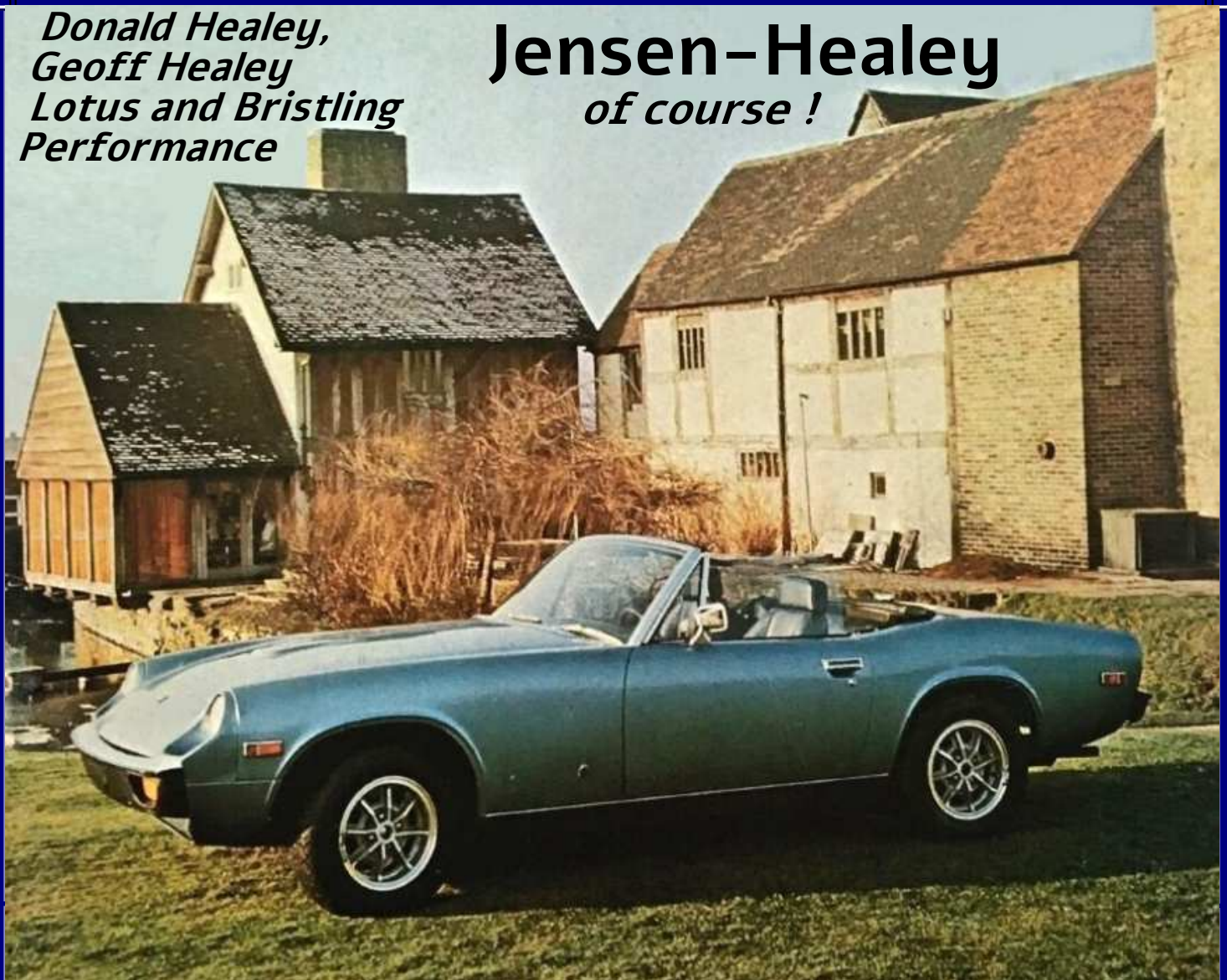
January / February 2024

VOL. 34 ISSUE 01



*Donald Healey,  
Geoff Healey  
Lotus and Bristling  
Performance*

**Jensen-Healey**  
*of course !*



*To all BMC of SNJ, Members, Friends and Family*  
**HAPPY NEW YEAR !!**





BRITISH MOTOR CLUB  
of  
SOUTHERN NEW JERSEY



**"Offside/Nearside"** is the bi-monthly newsletter of the British Motor Club of Southern New Jersey (BMC), which was founded in 1992 to encourage the ownership, operation and preservation of British cars.

Membership is open to all owners of automobiles manufactured in Great Britain prior to 1996 and all owners of motorcycles manufactured in Great Britain prior to 1979.

The dues of \$15.00 per year, includes a subscription to "Offside/Nearside". BMC is affiliated with the following organizations: MG Owners Club (MGOC); North American MGB Register (NAMGBR); North American MGA Register (NAMGAR); Vintage Triumph Register (VTR); Triumph Register of America (TRA).

**BMC Meetings** are generally held on the third Wednesday of each month in alternating locations to best reach our membership base.

Odd numbered months (January, March, May, July, September):  
Seven Stars Diner 1890 Hurffville Rd, Sewell, NJ 08080

Even numbered months (February, April, June, August, October)  
Uno Pizzeria & Grill, 2803 NJ 73, Maple Shade NJ 08052

Meetings are not planned for November or December due to holiday scheduling conflicts. Meetings typically begin at 7pm, with food service beginning at 6pm. Dates and times are subject to change, which will be communicated by email to club members.

**NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS**

**OFF SIDE / NEAR SIDE is YOUR Newsletter.**

The Editors are always looking for new material.

No material / No Newsletter. Simple as that. Please submit British car related copy and especially personal experiences in your LBC for us to use in one of our six annual Newsletters. Project articles with pictures are really good.

**PLEASE SEND NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE EDITOR :**

**Joe Marchione:** [editor@bmcsnj.org](mailto:editor@bmcsnj.org)

**Note:** If you are emailing please leave a message on 609-272-9743 phone number so I'm sure to get it.  
**Thanks—Joe Marchione**

**PLEASE SEND FOR SALE, WANTED or FREE REQUESTS TO :**

**Ed Gaubert:** [mgarage@comcast.net](mailto:mgarage@comcast.net)

**Although we hope that these things are common sense, BMCSNJ has adopted the following policies and practices with respect to club sponsored events.**

Membership meetings are sometimes held in restaurants that serve alcoholic beverages. We expect that members who choose to consume alcohol at these meetings will do so responsibly.

BMCSNJ supports safe and responsible enjoyment of British automobiles and motorcycles. All events sponsored by BMCSNJ are alcohol and drug free. Consumption or distribution of alcohol or controlled substances is expressly prohibited. All driving events are conducted in accordance with motor vehicle laws at all times.

This does not really represent a change to our prior policy or practice, it just documents it. If you have not been to one of our events before, come out and join us. You will be glad that you did.

**>>>> DISCLAIMER!!! <<<<**

Readers are warned that any attempt at mechanical or other modifications described herein is at their own risk. Good car mechanics results in pleasure; poor car mechanics results in, at best, a personal rebuild. The opinions expressed in the articles of this newsletter are not necessarily those of BMC, the editors or advertisers.

The editors take responsibility for any editorial mistakes or errors.

January / February 2024

VOL. 34 ISSUE 01



British Motor Club of Southern New Jersey

The official BMCSNJ website can be  
accessed at:  
[WWW.BMCSNJ.ORG](http://WWW.BMCSNJ.ORG)

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<b>Pg. 4</b>	<b>President's Message</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Secretary's Satchel</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Treasurer's / Registrar's Report Money Is No Object</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>The Editor Writes</b>
<b>8 - 10</b>	<b>The Rescue Squad</b>
<b>11 - 26</b>	<b>The Jensen-Healey - Flawed but Fun</b>
<b>27 - 28</b>	<b>Tech Tips - Toe in or Toe out</b>
<b>29 - 31</b>	<i>The Vertige</i>
<b>32 - 35</b>	<i>Tour of the Shore</i>
<b>36</b>	<i>In Memory of Jack Kontes</i>
<b>37 - 39</b>	<b>SWAP SHOP</b>
<b>40 - 44</b>	<b>CLUB EVENTS</b>
<b>45</b>	<b>And Now Our a word from our Sponsors</b>





## IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

As you are all aware by now, I am stepping down as president of the club. When we reorganized the club several years ago, there were a few changes in the Board of Directors. Fast forward to a year or so ago, we made the decision to add two additional board members as a way to get more people involved and to spread out the work load. The board has met recently and made a decision to run the club as a group rather than the structure that was in place and has elected Brian Deam as Chairman. The membership should know that the current board members are strongly committed to the continued operation and success of the club.

As we move into 2024, the membership will notice a few changes. If you attend meetings regularly, you will see that other board members will be hosting the meetings on a rotating basis. We are hopeful that this change will make the meetings more interesting as each board member who hosts a meeting will be able to do so with their own twist.

If your contact with the club is mainly via the newsletter, then you will notice the changes in leadership positions on Page 3 and that club events and the Calendar of Events will be handled internally by board member and new Events Manager, Pete Cosmides.

Representing the board, I would like to extend our appreciation to Tracy Westergard and John Stern for their service to the club as Events Coordinators. Their help was a valuable component used to ensure that all members were aware of necessary information regarding all events. They will both stay involved with the club as Tracy will be organizing another great Summer Tour and John has agreed to assist with planning of the Memorial Gathering at Smithville.

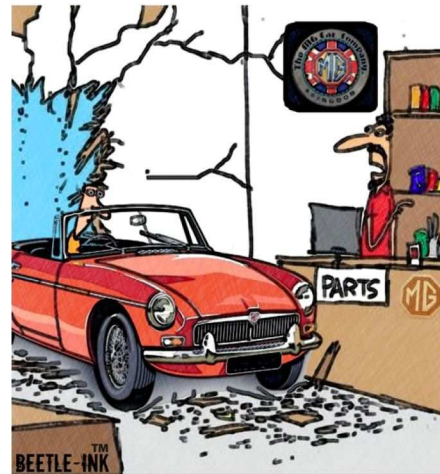
The board members will also reshuffle some responsibilities to make sure that all the jobs are getting done. From a member standpoint, these changes will happen with no visible changes.

Once again, thank you so much for the opportunity to serve as your president and to get to know as many of you as I could since 1992. It has truly been a pleasure.

In addition to the passing of long-time member, Jack Kontes (obituary in this newsletter) we were recently made aware that our host for the Patcong Valley Railroad Tour in June, John Dunn passed away in December. John and the staff welcomed us to the museum and graciously hosted our event there. The club has made a donation to the Patcong Valley Railroad Club in John's memory.

I am hopeful that 2024 will be good to us all.

Steve Ferrante  
President, BMC of SNJ



*"Brakes are in isle two."*



Future BMC of SNJ members



# ***SECRETARY'S SATCHEL***

**January / February 2024**

**by Tom Evans**

December 15, 2023

Why do chicken coops only have two doors? Because if they had four, they would be chicken saloons! Car humor has been a staple of our hobby since the first horseless carriage rolled out of the fabricators shop. Remember "Click and Clack the Tappet Brothers" of Saturday morning Car Talk fame? They were so much fun to listen to with their wit and humor about cars, car repair and other philosophical topics with answers to calls, they claimed, were "unencumbered by the thought process" and then closing each show with fictitious staff members like "Peekup Andropoff." My children gave me a cassette, yes cassette, of "Car-Tunes", car songs produced, composed and assembled by Car Talk with such memorable songs as "It's a Rental and They Have to Take it Back," about how to abuse a rental car. (BTW, even if you do get all the insurance coverage tires and glass are still your responsibility.) I had a dream that I was a muffler last night ..... I woke up exhausted.

Blwyddyn newydd dda – "Happy New Year!" The calendar for 2024 is being built and preliminary information is in this issue of Off Side/Near Side and will be refined in time. Our monthly meetings have been growing in attendance, and it has been great to see more members getting together at these meetings to reinforce our interest in LBCs. Most of our regular events will remain as will the monthly meetings starting on January 17th, 6PM dinner and 7PM meeting, at 7 Star Diner in Sewell. The schedule will remain the same for 2024, odd months in Sewell and even months in Maple Shade. Also, we have an active "Rescue Squad" that is there to help any member or acquaintance with simple repairs and maintenance to help keep their LBCs on the road. Please avail yourself of their services, they really enjoy doing it and you will benefit from it.

February 10, 2024 is international "Drive Your Triumph Day!" commemorating Sir John Black's birthday. Take a photo of your car on your drive, or if the weather isn't cooperating and the car remains in the garage, snap a photo of it there, and email it to [driveyourtriumphday@gmail.com](mailto:driveyourtriumphday@gmail.com) and send it with some basic details: owner's name, year and model, location where the photo was taken (city, state, country) The photos will then be published not only in the Triumph Travelers Sports Car Club of CA newsletter and website, but also in USA's national magazine: The Vintage Triumph, and on the Drive Your Triumph Day Facebook page.

As of this writing, the Board is in the process of recruiting a new President of the Club and we wish to extend a heartfelt "Thank You" to Steve Ferrante for his five years of leadership. Steve will remain on the Board in another capacity as we expand the number of Board members and share responsibilities.

As our annual reminder: The British Motor Club of Southern New Jersey is a 501(c)(7) not for profit organization established under the laws of the State of New Jersey as a social club.

Come out to the events in 2024, thanks again to all who have organized and attended last year's events. As we have said previously, it is important that we endeavor to promote the inclusion and growth of younger enthusiasts in classic restoration. This is vital to keeping the sport alive, so invite them out to our meetings, gatherings and cruises, and include them in your own rebuild, restoration, maintenance and repairs. They are out there; the auto tech schools are loaded with them.

See you on the road!

Happy Motoring

Tom Evans

# Treasurer/Registrar's Report

January / February 2024

## *Money Is No Object*



Dear Members,

First, I want to share a recent positive experience. I've had a TR6 for 25 years and acquired a Jag XK8 earlier this year. However, I have only a 2 stall garage and my wife, for some reason, does not want to give up her stall during the winter months. Solution - I installed a 4 post car lift in my garage that allows me to store the TR6 on the lift and the Jag XK8 under it. I had just enough headroom in the garage to make it work and am thoroughly pleased with how it fit. So, the wife is happy, I'm happy and the cars are happy – it's a Christmas Miracle.

The lift brand is Direct Lift by Rotary. It has an 8,000 lb. capacity and did not need to be bolted to the garage floor. It was purchased from and installed by SAR Equipment in Barrington. They did a great job, and I would recommend them in a heartbeat.

Now to business - your club is ending the year with just about the same amount in the bank account as when we started. As the remaining renewals come in, I expect we will be slightly ahead. We are well positioned to support our events and member services in 2024.

Two new members joined in December, boosting our membership up to 170. Renewal notices were sent in late November for those whose membership expires on December 31st. So far, 67% of those members have renewed. Thank you!! If you received the notice and haven't paid yet, please do so promptly. Keep spreading the word about the club.

If you have a question about when your membership expires, please email me at [members@bmcsnj.org](mailto:members@bmcsnj.org).

Club dues remain at \$15/year (free if you volunteer to host an event). You receive six newsletters per year, access to our Facebook page and unlimited use of club supplied resources! Just a reminder that the Facebook page is for paying members and spouses only.

If you want to renew or if your membership has inadvertently lapsed, please send your payment using one of two methods:

- PayPal: sign on to [www.PayPal.com](http://www.PayPal.com) and send your dues to "members@bmcsnj.org".

- Check: made payable to "British Motor Club of Southern NJ" and mailed to:

Brian Deam

900 Riverton Road

Moorestown, NJ 08057

Happy Holidays!



### *Welcome to our new and returning members:*

Name	Town	Car
<b>Philip Aronow</b>	<b>Mt. Laurel</b>	<b>1974 TR6</b>
<b>Claire Green</b>	<b>Moorestown</b>	<b>1956 MGA</b>

# The Editor Writes



Hello all from your editor.

I hope you enjoy the car that I picked this issue. I've always felt that the Jensen-Healey is one of the most underrated British sportscars. Despite all its, shall we say, teething problems, it's a very modern looking and spunky performer. That Lotus 904 twin cam is a sweet little engine. That's again, after it was sorted. One has to remember that Chapman told Jensen that the engine was still a "work in progress" when Jensen requested that Lotus supply them with 904s for Jensen's upcoming sports car. Of course he didn't mention that it leaked copious amounts of oil. I don't think Colin cared much about the Middle East oil crisis at the time. I only say this because one of Lotus' more creative ads featured the early Lotus Elite boldly bosting " **300 Miles to the Quart !** " and Lotus wasn't claiming good gas consumption, but the amount of oil one should expect disappearing from the crankcase of their Elite's Coventry Climax engine. Of course they went on about the Elite being a real racing machine and one should expect a car with such fantastic performance to use a copious amount of oil sloshing around it's necessarily wide tolerances. I mean, you DID understand that you had purchased a car that had **WON** its class at the prestigious **LeMans Racing Event**... multiple times in fact. So, make sure that if you expect to charge around the countryside in one of their "Racing" machines, you had better be prepared to check that oil every 300 miles, and lube those wheel and universal bearings every couple of hundred and keep those tires ( sorry, I mean tyres ) pressurized to exacting specification. What did you think you were driving. A Campervan ?!! ( that's RV in America speak.)

Joe Marchione

So all that brings me back to:

***SEEKING MEMBER  
CONTRIBUTIONS !!!!!***

***I am soliciting member articles for the  
March / April 2024 newsletter (and beyond).***

***LOOKING FOR ARTICLES ABOUT***

***Everything About You and Your Cars, projects, rides,  
or just what's going on in that garage.***

***And you can't hide because I know members who are doing stuff !***

***So I expect some Action !!***



So, if you are an owner, present or past, or have a story about one of those wonderful British cars, or are even just an admirer, **please** consider sending in something about your car and you and your car's experiences together.

Could be how you found it, how you brought it back from the dead, how you love it, how you lost it — anything will do. Or just send a picture of you and your car! Doesn't have to be a big deal.

If you're interested please send any material to your Editor, at "[editor@bmcsnj.org](mailto:editor@bmcsnj.org)".

I'm asking now because our cutoff date for member articles is at least one month before the month of the newsletter. Meaning that to have your piece published in the March / April 2024

newsletter please get anything to me no later than **Feburary 10th. 2024.**

**Although if I get it later I could still publish it in another later newsletter  
so please don't hesitate !**

***\*\* Also please consider contributing a member or  
project profile....Anytime !!***



**A member profile lets our members know a little bit about you and your car.  
Some excellent examples are John and Joyce with their 1950 MGY in January 2020's  
newsletter. Or Eric Sundberg and his MGA restoration and, our very own past  
Club President, Steve Ferrante and his cars, both in July 2019's newsletter.**



Attention BMC of SNJ Members!  
I am happy to announce a new benefit available to the club!

## **The BMC of SNJ RESCUE SQUAD**



Perhaps your British car is languishing in your garage due to a mechanical roadblock that you have encountered that has prevented you from enjoying your car.

We have harnessed the collective talent of several club members and are instituting a program that we call "BMC of SNJ Rescue Squad." Our goal is to provide volunteers to help you get your car back on the road. Short of routine maintenance and full restorations, we can help if you have a problem you can't overcome by sending a group of volunteers to your home garage and help you through the process.

Maybe you have a clutch or brake system that needs to be bled and you're struggling with the process. Or, perhaps your turn signals stopped working and you can't wind your way through the electrical diagram to make the repair. Maybe your car ran when parked and doesn't want to start now. Let us know and we will do all we can to arrange for the help you need.

This will provide some fun, social interaction and productive garage time for all parties involved. Refreshments are optional!

One of our original BMC members, Pete Cosmides has offered to get this program off the ground.

So, if you need some help, please contact Pete and he will determine if we can be of assistance. Pete can be reached by email at [tundramgb@hotmail.com](mailto:tundramgb@hotmail.com)

By the way, if you want to get involved with the Rescue Squad, you can let Pete know that as well. You don't need to be an expert, but perhaps you have mastered certain mechanical aspects that will come in handy to others under the right circumstances.

Steve Ferrante  
President, BMC of SNJ  
[president@bmcsnj.org](mailto:president@bmcsnj.org)



# *BMC of SNJ*

# *Rescue Squad*

*on the Road Again*



*BMC of SNJ*



## **BMC of SNJ Rescue Squad report; January / February 2024**

By Pete Cosmides

The club's squad of mechanical volunteers showed up in force at the Moorestown home of new member, John Nixon to evaluate and make some needed repairs to make John's newly purchased 1974 TR6 more roadworthy. Ed Doody and I made an initial recon to John's garage to evaluate his car and make a Moss Motors shopping list of parts that John would need for the necessary repairs.

The follow-up came on Saturday, November 18<sup>th</sup> which was a beautiful day and attendance was strong. Ed Doody, our resident TR6 expert, took the lead along with me, George Lawton, Steve Ferrante, Ed Gaubert, Fred DiSantis, and car owner John Nixon. This was by far the Squad's most ambitious undertaking to date and I'd say it all went very well. Work included a full rear brake service including flex hoses, wheel cylinders, brake shoes, and a fluid bleed. Additional work done included installing new steering rack gaiters along with an upgrade to solid steering rack mounts, a spin-on oil filter adaptor conversion, and an alternator upgrade to a more modern, higher output unit per Ed D.'s suggestion. Everyone stayed busy and the work was completed by the end of the day.

The one lesson we learned is that working remotely without your usual supply of garage tools can be a challenge, but between all of us we managed to have what was needed. I did however subsequently make a visit to Harbor Freight to supplement my own "travel tool bag" in anticipation of the next outing. Now if we can just figure out how to identify all the tools scattered about the floor and get them to the right person at the end of the day. Thanks to everyone who came out, with a special shout out to Fred DiSantis who made the trip all the way from Ocean City to be part of the fun.

Hopefully everyone enjoyed themselves and learned something new from the experience.



Rescue Squad Continued on Next Page.





Our second Rescue Squad event for the season was more of an impromptu session with Gary Warren and me. The back story is long and does not necessarily need to be told here in detail but the general idea is that a longtime friend of Gary Warren's, Dennis Green of Moorestown, had been a long-term owner of a nice 1957 MGA. The car sat for many years unused in his garage and Dennis wanted to get it back on the road.

After contracting out the necessary work, which involved a rather lengthy list, it seems the clutch was still a sticking point, quite literally. No amount of hydraulic work or bleeding would yield a working clutch, so the car was trailed back to Dennis and yet he was still unable to drive it. Unfortunately, in the interim Dennis developed some health problems and subsequently passed away. His wife and family are now left with an MGA that while very nice, could not be driven and therefore would be a tough sell.

Gary Warren stepped in and he and I went over to see Dennis's wife Claire Green and evaluate the car. It had been at least a year since the previous work was performed so some fiddling was necessary to get the engine running. I suspected that the clutch disc had been stuck to the flywheel, which often happens when a car sits unused for many years, and the many methods for freeing up a stuck clutch require that the engine run. The second obstacle was that the starter cable was seized, so as a "MacGyver" fix I wired up some scrap household wiring I found in the garage and created my own pull cable. Once the car was sufficiently warmed up and out of the garage, free of any obstructions. Engine off, car in 4<sup>th</sup> gear I pulled the "starter cable" and off the car surged down her driveway. It didn't take long for this jerky motion to free up the clutch disc and off I went around the neighborhood with a working clutch and a surprisingly nice driving car. Claire was thrilled and now she can sell a working/driving MGA. So rather than having to spend additional thousands having the engine pulled to free a stuck clutch, Claire spent \$15. to become a member of the club and the Rescue Squad work was justified.





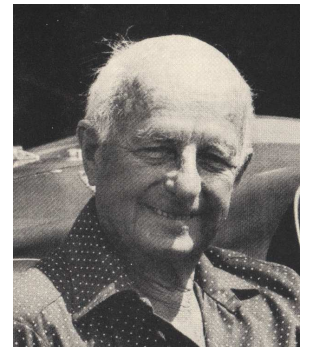


## *Flawed but fun, 1972–76 Jensen-Healeys*

Think 1970s sports cars and likely MGs, Alfas, Datsuns, and Triumphs come to mind. Maybe a Jag or a Porsche. Or maybe a Ferrari, if you're feeling fancy. The Jensen-Healey, meanwhile, remains an obscure choice among classic two-seaters even though it married three of the most famous names in the fun car business—Jensen Motors, Donald Healey, and Lotus. A flawed but fun car, the Jensen-Healey offers performance and rarity over its British roadster brethren, but even very nice examples are still surprisingly inexpensive.

Austin-Healey, the long-running partnership between Austin and the Donald Healey Motor Company, ended in 1967 after 15 years.

The corporation was merging left, right and center, turning into the impotent hydra that was to become British Leyland. The Healey name had little value to the BL monster's executives and, just like John Cooper, Healey was cut loose from his lucrative association with Austin by 1970 – the very last Sprites made in 1971 being simply rebadged as "Austin" so that BL could forego paying Healey's modest royalties. Donald Healey saw this coming and had been secretly working on a Vauxhall-based prototype, codenamed X500, since 1967.



Donald Healey

Healey, suddenly free to build whatever he wanted, looked to make another sports car. Meanwhile, Jensen Motors in West Bromwich, England, was in trouble. Jensen assembled the Sunbeam Tiger and built the bodies for the Austin-Healey 3000, so having both of those cars bow out at the same time was a big hit in the pocketbook. There was then a shakeup at Jensen when Kjell Qvale, West Coast distributor of British and other foreign cars, became a majority shareholder of the company in 1970. He made Donald Healey chairman.



Geoff Healey and dad Donald

Upon taking on job of director at Jensen Motors Donald and his son Geoff set to work on a new Jensen sports car, using a unitary body along with Vauxhall suspension and steering bits.

## Kjell Qvale



Qvale came to America from Norway when he was a kid, and, after a stint as a U.S. Navy pilot in World War II, saw an MG TC sports car and fell in love. From that moment on, he decided that if little British sports cars could have such a profound effect on him, there were probably many others who'd be similarly smitten, so he started a company in San Francisco called 'British Motor Car Distributors,' and from there he sold Morris, Austin, Jaguar, Rolls-Royces, the occasional Triumph, and other bits of golden-age British iron.

When Austin-Healey announced they were stopping production, Qvale realized this would leave a large hole in the American market, where the Austin-Healey was still popular. To fill this hole, Qvale partnered with Donald Healey, the designer of the Austin-Healey, and Jensen Motors, who was building the Austin-Healey for Austin (sort of in the same way Jensen built the early P1800 for Volvo).

Healey was going to miss the royalties he got from Austin, and Jensen wanted something to replace the production of the Austin-Healey, so they were as eager as Qvale to create a new car to replace it. What they came up with was the Jensen-Healey.

The Jensen-Healey became Jensen's biggest-selling car ever, and in 1970 Qvale became Jensen's biggest shareholder. Much later, Kjell Qvale's son, Bruce, would buy the rights to the De Tomaso Biguà and sell it as a Qvale Mangusta. It's safe to say the Qvale name is a big one in the world of cars

Long before the official presentation of the Jensen-Healey in March 1972, several years of development had passed, and many drawbacks overcome. The fact is, far from popular belief, the idea for the Jensen-Healey was not initiated by Kjell Qvale. When it became clear the Austin Healey contract was coming to an end, Donald Healey had already started working on a successor as early as 1968/69.

Meanwhile over at Jensen Motors, the Jensen brothers have asked for help from Norcros bank, the Norcros Group. The Norcros Group appointed Carl Duerr (known as "the turn around man") as Managing Director of Jensen Motors in 1968. Duerr was worried about the large over-capacity in the factory, caused not only by the fact that the Austin Healey production had ended, but the Sunbeam Tiger as well.

Later that year William Brandt took over from Norcros. They asked Duerr to stay on. There was intensive contact between Duerr and Donald Healey, so together with the Jensen staff, the new Healey project was continued.

Duerr had worked in Germany for many years, and established a lot of valuable contacts there. He then approached BMW for their 6 cylinder in line engine. This was a logical move as a replacement for the "big" Healey which had a 6 cylinder engine too.

Donald Healey however preferred a lighter more economical sports car and thus continued his design using the Vauxhall 4 cylinder.





### Codename, X500

In view of the oncoming break up with BMC, Healey now based his designs on Vauxhall components. Vauxhall had recently introduced a new 'slant' 2 liter 4 cylinder engine. Using this engine made a low bonnet possible. Donald Healey named his project 'X500'. Vague similarities with the production Jensen-Healey can be seen in this concept drawing of the modified X500.

Healey's prototype was just what Qvale was looking for – an MG/Triumph competitor for Jensen to conquer the US market and keep the now severely underused factory active. Well, it was *almost* what Qvale was looking for.



The parties involved, Qvale in particular, had doubts about the styling of the 'X500' and approached Hugo Poole for a new design loosely based on the new Alfa Romeo and Fiat sports cars. Kevin Beattie from Jensen Motors agreed, and from 1969 onwards, work on a new design started in earnest.

The 'X500' was used for extensive testing, and unfortunately was written off in an accident. Qvale did not like the styling of the 'X500' anyway, but also disapproved of Hugo Poole's design. Qvale preferred styling similar to the successful Triumph TR6 and MG-B. His company made good money importing and selling these rather conventional British sports cars.

It was now 1970, and Jensen received delivery of ten chassis, which were based on the 'X500' platform. The pre-production cars were built on these platforms in various configurations. Ford was one of the candidate engine suppliers and offered the 2 liter OHC Pinto engine and/or the German 2.6 liter V6. Ford even proposed to supply the complete platform – including all technical components – of the yet to be introduced Ford Cortina MK III.

Nevertheless, since development based on the Vauxhall technique already had progressed far, parties decided to stick to this plan. Duerr and Beattie started negotiations with BMW for the use of their 2.5L and 2.8L 6 cylinder in-line engines and transmissions. BMW offered the complete 2.8 engine for 2570 German Marks and the gearbox for an additional DM612,70.

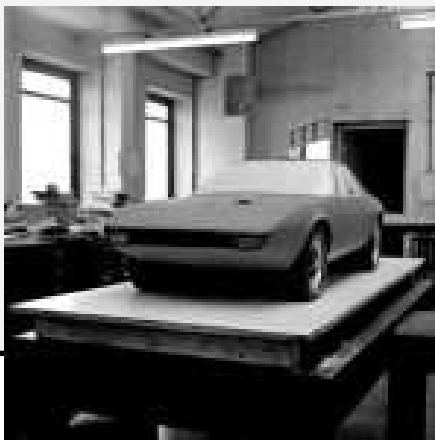


Outside of engine choice, there were still issues over the design. Tests made clear that the MG-B design with TR6 style rear end had a high drag coefficient, and thus was unable to reach the desired top speed.

A clay model Jensen Healey design by Towns.



Front end styling of the clay model..



Rear end styling to the clay model.

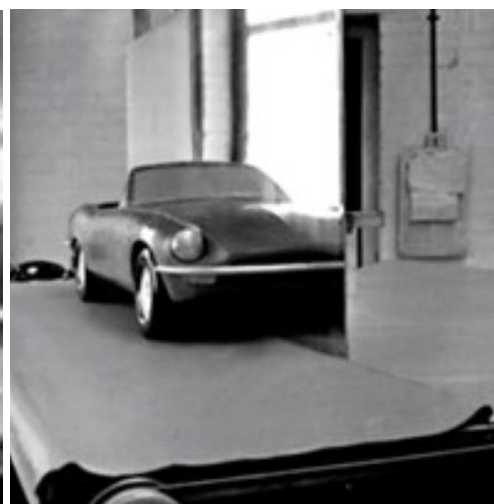


Once again, assistance of William Towns, who earlier also supplied a design, was called in to create some further designs. The designs were completed in a very short time. One of the designs was finally agreed to by Qvale. Towns was also commissioned to design the interior.

Undeniably, Donald Healey's and William Towns' first designs were modern, sophisticated looking cars. However, Qvale had persisted with modifications to the designs. This was due to Qvale's overwhelming preference for conservatively styled sports cars, so further designs with these features were worked on. One such design was finished as a half clay model. The half model was placed against a mirror, thus creating a total picture.

Geoff Healey can be seen through the mirror taking a photograph of the half clay model.

Seen from this angle the clever half clay model can be seen with mirror on end. By this simple device, a half model gave a view of a complete car. The final design was a compromise with which Qvale could live. Now that this decision had been finally made, further development continued.



The development work took into account the Federal legislation with regard to bumper and headlight height, as well as emissions standards. It then became clear that the Vauxhall engine in Federal specification was not powerful enough. This was yet another problem causing the project to be delayed further.

The search for another powerplant was opened again, and several manufacturers were approached, including Ford, Mazda, Simca/Chrysler and once again, BMW. Unfortunately, there were issues with all the engine choices. One engine was too expensive, another too heavy, or the manufacturer could not comply to the required number of engines. Several prototypes were fitted with various engine & gearbox combinations and underwent testing. One particular example related to a BMW 2002 which Jensen Motors rented. Brian Spicer and his chaps in the experimental department removed the engine and gearbox from the loaned BMW and fitted the unit into a Jensen-Healey for testing. Of course, the BMW was returned to the rental company after a few days with the engine etc. refitted. Nobody was the wiser!

This BMW was very suitable since it was also a 'slant' unit like the Vauxhall, so it fitted perfectly. Unfortunately the BMW option ended by June 21, 1971, when they wrote that they could not supply the 10,000 units per year as envisioned by Qvale.



**Colin Chapman with Kjell Qvale during negotiations for the Lotus**

However, BMW indicated that they would be willing to increase their production capacity only if Jensen Motors would carry the cost.

Under huge time pressure (for Qvale could not afford any more delays), it was decided to choose the brand new motor that Lotus had begun building.

A few engines from Vauxhall, Ford, and BMW were considered, but Colin Chapman of Lotus stepped in with an offer to use his Type 907 twin-cam alloy four. Similar to the unit used in '70s Lotuses like the Eclat and Esprit, the unit was new and untested, and that would turn out to be a problem later.

The Lotus connection came about purely coincidentally. Two Jensen technicians were discussing the engine problems while on a train, and a Lotus employee overheard this conversation. This new Lotus engine was in fact developed on the cast iron Vauxhall block, for which Lotus designed and built a cylinder head with 2 overhead camshafts, 16 valves and two carburetors.

Tests with this setup were successful and Lotus then developed an alloy block with wet cylinder liners, while still using some Vauxhall components such as the crankshaft and connecting rods. Innovative in those days was the use of a 'rubber' belt instead of the commonly used chain to drive the camshafts. The new engine produced sufficient power and was 'clean'.

When Jensen Motors first contacted Colin Chapman, he was hesitant, since his new engine had not been fully developed and tested. On the other hand he was keen



to accept the order, as it would help him to recover a great deal of his investment.

Tough price negotiations between Qvale and Chapman eventually led to an agreement that Jensen would buy the engines without any warranty. This was in order to keep the cost at an acceptable level, although at £300 the cost was well beyond what had been budgeted for the Jensen-Healey. The Vauxhall motor would have cost a mere £160. A thought of perhaps offering a cheaper Vauxhall powered version along with the Lotus was soon abandoned.



With the Lotus at over 140 horsepower from 2.0 liters the performance was bristling, so the Healeys went for it. Mounted at a 45-degree angle, the Lotus engine got twin Dell'Orto carbs in Europe while we got dual single-barrel Zenith Strombergs here in the States.

Time and time again various circumstances delayed the project and necessitated the price to be increased. As yet many Vauxhall components were still fitted to the Jensen-Healey and apart from the gearbox these proved satisfactorily. After hard testing the Vauxhall gearbox wasn't considered good enough.

Again the search for an alternative for this important part started. After much research and testing, of amongst others Alfa Romeo and Fiat 5 speed gearboxes, it was decided to choose a 4 speed gearbox from Rootes, who used it in their Sunbeam Rapier H120. They were in a position to supply adequate numbers at a reasonable price as well. This being acceptable, all cars got a four-speed borrowed from Sunbeam. So now that all major components were decided upon, further testing could continue.



**Prototype with forward hinged bonnet open**



Suspension is by double wishbones and coil springs in front and a live axle in the rear, while braking is by discs in front and drums in the rear. The shape is in the same vein of other classic British roadsters, but the Jensen-Healey stands out, given the absence of a grille out front and the intake hidden behind that prominent front bumper.



**The prototype Jensen-Healey 'CEA 802J' in the old engineering shop above the Jensen-Healey production lines. On the 4th January 1971, the engineering crew toasted completion of the car with champagne.**



**Two Jensen-Healey prototypes parked after experimental use. Jensen Motors was still deciding on a definitive wheel type at this stage. The prototype nearest the camera is sporting Rostyle wheels.**





**The Jensen Healey launch at the Geneva Motor Show in 1972.**

**From left to right: Geoff Healey, Tony Good, Donald Healey, Alfred Vickers, Kevin Beattie, Kjell Qvale, Tony Marshall, Ian Royal and Richard Graves.**

Kjell Qvale expected to build 200 cars a week. Even while final testing and development were still being carried out, the factory was preparing for mass production by hiring new personnel. Unfortunately, Kjell Qvale's prognoses for the Jensen-Healey's sales potential were too high.

The Jensen craftsmen, however, were not familiar with mass fabrication techniques and sometimes clashed with the new workers. It took quite a while for them to get used to the new production methods. On top of that the Unions began to interfere.....

After some four years of money and energy having been expended on the new car, the Jensen-Healey was scheduled to be presented at the Earls Court Motor Show of October 1971. Problems with subcontractor supplies prevented that, so it wasn't until March 1972 that the Jensen-Healey would be officially revealed at the Geneva Motor Show. Meanwhile, Jensen Motors had a press launch at the factory. Both television, and print media were invited and allowed to see the Jensen-Healey production line with work in progress. A section of the factory was curtained off, and two Jensen-Healeys placed on show, one complete, and one with the wheels taken off to show the suspension set-up. The car was greeted favorably by the public and the press, but this enthusiasm cooled off soon after the first series of cars had been delivered to customers.



**Welding the main Jensen-Healey shell.**



**The main Jensen-Healey production run.**

**The way the Jensen-Healey was built meant that it still required a lot of manual labor. Additionally, assembly lines were not automated and the cars were pushed from one station to another.**



British press launch for the Jensen-Healey.

Although all was set-up at the Jensen factory for mass production of the Jensen-Healey, issues over deliveries of the new Lotus engine started, with an inevitable production hold up. Former Jensen Motors Sales Manager Tony Marshall remembers the situation well

*"We were receiving a fraction of the number of engines promised by Lotus, resulting in early production figures way below forecasts. And all the while the stocks of bought in parts including gearboxes, wheels and tires, exhausts, screens, and glass etc. etc were pouring into the factory each week as originally scheduled from suppliers, until the 'taps' could be turned down to match production. Not only was the Lotus engine supply disastrous, but they also came out of sequence and with an alarming number of design and build faults; and Qvale had done the deal with Chapman with no warranty 'given or implied'"*

Even once cars were coming off the production line and finding owners, all was still not well. It was not long after the first Healeys were delivered to customers that the enthusiasm for the new sports car diminished. As if Jensen had not already had enough difficulties, buyers of the first Jensen-Healeys bombed Jensen with warranty claims.

Former Jensen Motors Sales Manager, Tony Marshall, takes up the story again, *"there was a Birmingham-based Jensen-Healey owner who had bought one of the pre-production prototypes as a 'special deal'. Unlike the production Healeys, this car was sold on the clear understanding that it was without warranty of any sort. I don't know who sanctioned the sale, it certainly wasn't me, and it led to a lot of trouble. The owner had the words 'Death Trap' painted on it and parked it, or tried to, in front of Earls court one Motor Show. He came onto the Jensen stand creating a fuss and had to be removed by the security people. When they reported a successful ejection to us afterwards, one of them said that it was such a pity that the man had somehow tripped going down the stairs at the front entrance. That was the last we heard of him."*

*( Editor: Ouch, hummmm. Sounds like ye ol "Bums Rush". That'll show ya next time you try to bring your car back for warranty service !! )*



## Not Good and Getting Worse

However, complaints on the first production cars were equally as bad, and these 'were' fully warranted. Many complaints were related to paint finish and leaking soft tops. More serious were complaints about the Lotus engine which was still not fully sorted. Oil pressure problems, slipping timing belts (resulting in bent valves), oil leakage and flooding carburetors, all damaging the car's reputation.

Jensen Motors had to solve all this at their own expense, because the Lotus engines were bought without any warranty. In retrospect this was a bad decision by Qvale. Jensen's feeble financial situation worsened considerably due to these claims.

It was not only the Jensen-Healey that drained the finances though. Not to be forgotten were the very costly F and G-type projects that Qvale initiated. Figures between 1,5 and 2 million pounds are estimated to have been spent on these.

By now the Jensen management was fed up with the Lotus engine problems and was seriously considering alternative power plants. Jensen Motors studied the feasibility of fitting a DOHC, twin carb cylinder head to the robust and reliable Simca/Chrysler 180 engine block.

Negotiations with Ricardo Consulting Engineers were opened. In April 1973 Ricardo offered a complete package, from drawing board to mold making and building 10 complete test engines, including long term bench testing. Ricardo estimated it to be needing 18 months and the cost was budgeted at £160,000.



On top of this, Ricardo demanded royalties for each engine to be produced in future, maximized at £10,000. The plan was shelved; it would take too long and was too expensive. Another study ( supported by Lotus ) involved having GKN supply and assemble the Lotus engine block castings.

Making matters even worse, the Yom Kippur war in the Middle East caused a worldwide oil crisis, resulting in gas guzzling Interceptor sales declining seriously. Another adverse effect was government-imposed energy saving measures that led to a 3 day working week. Reading all this will make one understand that these were difficult and hectic times for Jensen Motors.

## Things Get Better. A Bit Better - Whew !

Quality issues were addressed adequately; paint quality was improved as well as many other, often minor issues. Nevertheless, sales remained disappointing. In two years, only some 3,500 Jensen-Healeys were sold in contrast to the 10,000 a year that Qvale had planned.



Donald Healey and his sons, Brian and Geoffrey, withdrew from the Jensen board in April 1973. They were severely frustrated seeing their reputation being damaged by the Jensen Healey that was carrying their name. Donald Healey's withdrawal meant that he no longer received any royalties.

## Jensen-Healey Launch of the new MK.II

May 1973 saw the launch of a new and vastly improved version of the Jensen-Healey, the MK II. In retrospect, the Healey family perhaps should have waited to see the launch of the new Mk.II Jensen-Healey, but by then they had gone.

Bill Towns had been asked to redesign the rather bland interior. The dashboard in particular was upgraded, and wood effect accents made it a lot more pleasing to the eye. At the same time the front fenders and headlight finishings were modified, panel fitment improved, and a new range of colors introduced.

Teething problems with the Lotus engines were all solved by now, and positive test reports in many magazines helped sales considerably.



A little later, by the end of 1974, Jensen introduced the 5 speed 'dog leg' Getrag gearbox, followed by the thick 5 mph impact bumpers mandatory for the US market.





# JENSEN-HEALEY



The Jensen-Healey Sports Roadster is proving a success in the market place as well as the race track. During the two years of its life we have been able to improve its appearance and desirability with a number of refinements in both coachwork and mechanical components. Its twin-cam 16-valve engine has proven to be both durable and economical to operate, and at the same time provided a National SCCA Championship in Class "D", in its first attempt. The original body design of the Jensen-Healey was conceived with the idea of providing comfort to both driver and passenger, a high degree of performance and handling available to the average driver and a pleasing

kind of design that would mellow with age and remain desirable. It is pretty obvious now that these aims were realized. The Jensen-Healey is a delightful Sportscar, and we feel the best value on the market. Made by the makers of the Jensen Interceptor, coach builders since 1875.

We are continuing our policy of supplying cars without a long list of extras, as most desirable accessories are included in our price. One notable exception is a beautiful double-skin hardtop which is now available through all dealers.

*Please write for free literature & name of nearest dealer.*

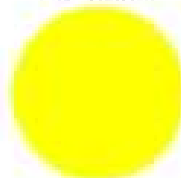
RED



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The prototype Jensen GT finished and registered in February 1975. This car is now a part of the Jensen Museum collection.

Lastly, during 1975, Jensen Motors presented a luxury “shooting brake” aimed at the American market especially, the prototype being registered in February 1975. The prototype GT had started life as a LHD Jensen-Healey. Initially, an original Jensen-Healey dashboard was left in place while work on the prototype wood veneer dashboard for the GT was completed. While prototyping of the full wood veneer dashboard for the GT was completed. Some initial works photos show the car with the Healey dashboard, before the new GT dashboard was subsequently fitted.



Qvale saw sales potential for this ‘baby Interceptor’. The handsome car was simply named the Jensen GT, because Donald Healey was no longer involved. That said, if one lifted the bonnet, the valve covers still showed the Jensen-Healey name on them.

The Jensen GT was just too late to help Jensen Motors. By May 1976 all business activity had come to an end.

Production numbers included 3,356 units for the Jensen-Healey Mark I (March 1972 - May 1973), 7,142 units for the Mark II and JH5 (August 1973 - August 1975), and 509 units for the Jensen GT (September 1975 - May 1976).

## Fast Forward

When it was new, the Jensen-Healey cost more than a Triumph TR6, but given the exclusivity, extra power, extra gear, and lighter weight when compared to the Triumph, the higher price tag seemed justified. Now that both roadsters are classics, however, they've switched places, with the Jensen-Healey carrying a median Condition #2 (excellent) value of \$15,000 compared to \$23,700 for the TR6. Chalk it up to the Triumph being more reliable, better-sounding, and enjoying a larger fanbase, but that makes the Jensen-Healey look like a bargain in comparison.

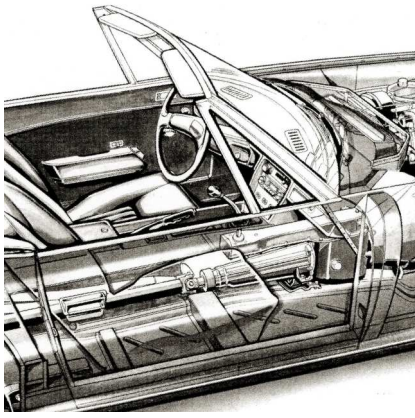
And they seem to be staying in entry-level territory. Prices have crept up over the past few years but they haven't done anything drastic. You'll rarely see sales break out of four-figure territory. A top-notch low-mile car brought \$22,000 on Bring a Trailer back in 2016, but even very nice cars typically sell in the teens. Jensen GTs (if you can find one) sell for similar prices as the roadsters, which is an even bigger bargain in terms of rarity.

As for which Jensen-Healeys are best, it largely comes down to personal preference. Some people like the Mk I cars with their better-looking smaller bumpers, since most problems in early cars have been sorted by now. On the other hand, some people want the five-speed and better equipment in the Mk II cars, so prices are usually similar. Expect to pay an extra \$500 or more for a car with a factory hardtop.





## Jensen-Healey | Cut-A-Way Drawings

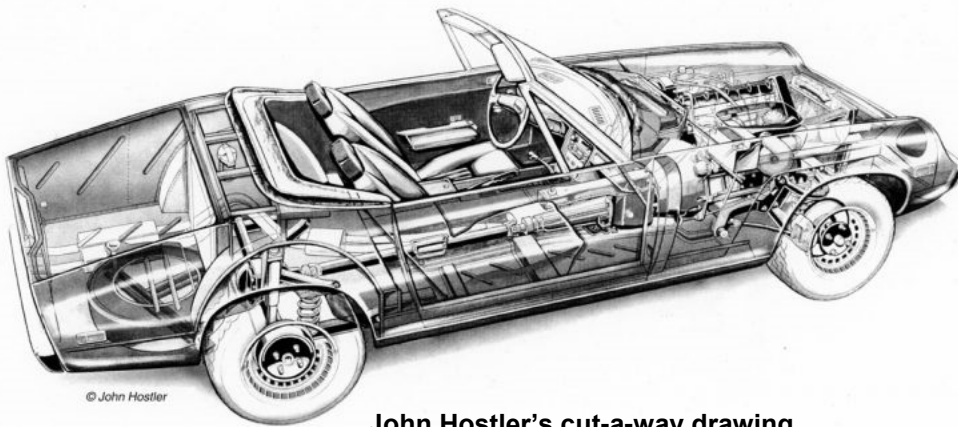
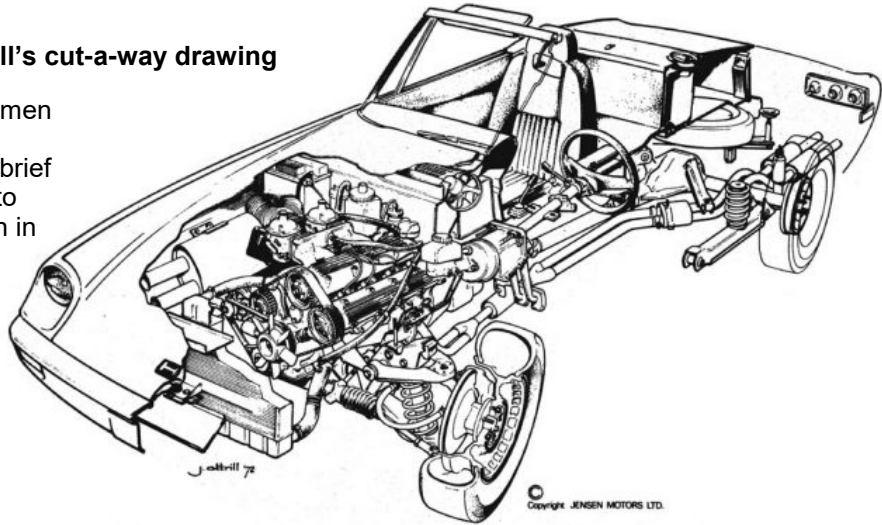


When the Jensen-Healey was introduced in 1972, two Jensen-Healey cut-a-way drawings were completed. The first drawing was by Jensen Motors' in-house senior draughtsman / designer, John Attrill. The other was completed by Autocar's artist, John Hostler. Both were finished and published in 1972. The two men dealt with their cut-a-way drawing in different ways. Today, both remain iconic cut-a-ways.

This was completed for Jensen Motors' new brochure for the Jensen Healey, which was published in February 1972. Attrill was a particularly competent draughtsman / designer who had joined Jensen Motors in the early 1950s.

### John Attrill's cut-a-way drawing

Attrill was one of the few draughts men who moved over from the Carter's Green factory, to Kelvin Way. The brief for Attrill's cut-a-way drawing was to show the drive-line and suspension in the best way possible.

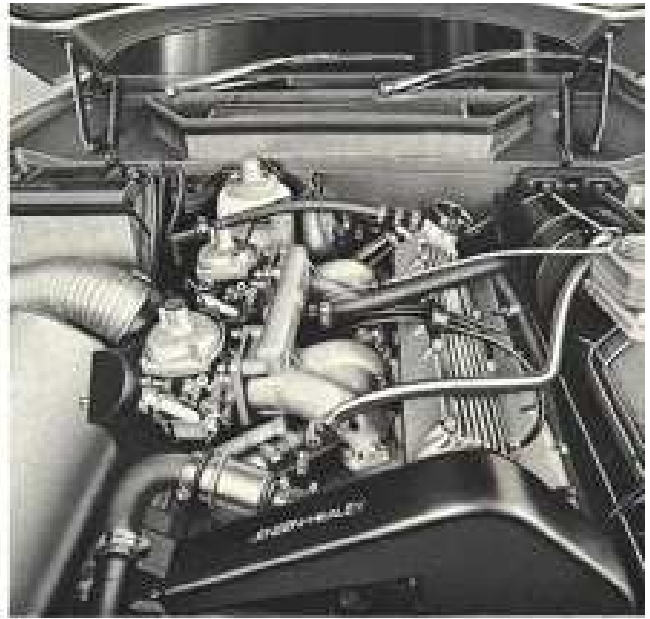


### John Hostler's cut-a-way drawing

Having been asked by Autocar to undertake a cut-a-way drawing of the Jensen-Healey, Hostler went up to Jensen Motors for a one day visit. According to Hostler, the Jensen-Healey cars available to him were all left-hand drive cars being made ready for the American market.

Hostler was later to mention, "*all the cars I saw were USA spec with Stromberg carburetors, so that is what I represented in the cut-a-way.*" Hostler remembers that he had just one day to complete what ever work he needed, in readiness to coming back to London to finish the drawing. He made notes and sketches, and took photographs. Hostler even took photographs of various body panels, as he wanted to show the nature of their fabrication. The finished Hostler cut-a-way was an interesting 'transparent' view of the car, as though you could see straight through the panels. It worked very well.





The Jensen-Healey, a product of a new era in technology, is designed for performance, comfort and safety. Power from the cast aluminium 4 cylinder 2 litre twin O.H.C. engine with 4 valves per cylinder offers performance normally associated with cars of a much higher capacity. Precise sensitive rack and pinion steering and dual circuit disc/drum brakes inspire confidence in handling and stability under

all conditions. Thoughtfully planned location of a full range of instruments and controls in the padded fascia permits effortless operation from the relaxing comfort of the body-contoured fully reclining seats.

The counterbalanced hood and 4 kw fan assisted heating and ventilation system provides 'Saloon Car' conditions in winter weather. A collapsible steering column, energy absorbing bumpers, laminated windscreen and lap and diagonal safety belts are but a few of the many safety features which make the Jensen-Healey a car you can drive with confidence and own with real pride.



**JENSEN-HEALEY**



## TECH TIPS

### Toe in or Toe out ? that is the question.

First, let's define what we mean by toe. It is the difference in the distance between the front and rear edges of the rims on one axle. If the distance at the front is larger than the rear, then the alignment is said to be toed-out, and if the distance at the rear is larger than the front, that's toe-in. This is relatively easy to measure and to adjust. It requires not much more than a tape measure or an alignment rack, and then loosening the jam nuts on the tie rods and adjusting their width.

Having said all that, what does toe-in or toe-out do to the way a car handles? Generally the rule of thumb is that more toe-in increases understeer and more toe-out increases oversteer. However, with modern cars, especially race cars with independent front and rear suspensions, there is another effect on handling. Most manufacturers recommend a chassis alignment which contains a small amount of toe-in. This will give the best possible stability at speed; the car will not have a tendency to wander. And the small amount of toe actually pre-loads the wheel bearings to make turning more instantaneous.

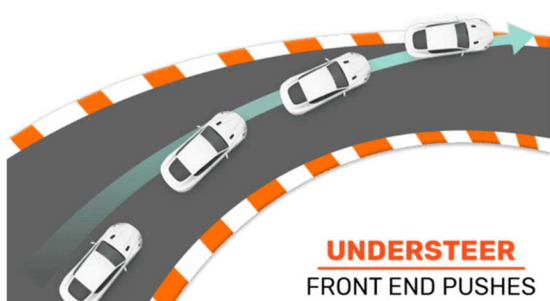
Two terms known as **Oversteer** and **Understeer**, are commonly used to describe a vehicle's behavior in certain situations where handling is compromised as the acceleration or power applied to the vehicle pushes the tires beyond the limits of grip. Let's take a look at why losing grip and traction can happen and how Oversteer and Understeer occur. We will also talk about what needs to be done (usually very quickly!) to correct the situation and get the vehicle (and its occupants) safely back on track to avoid collision, damage or other serious consequences.

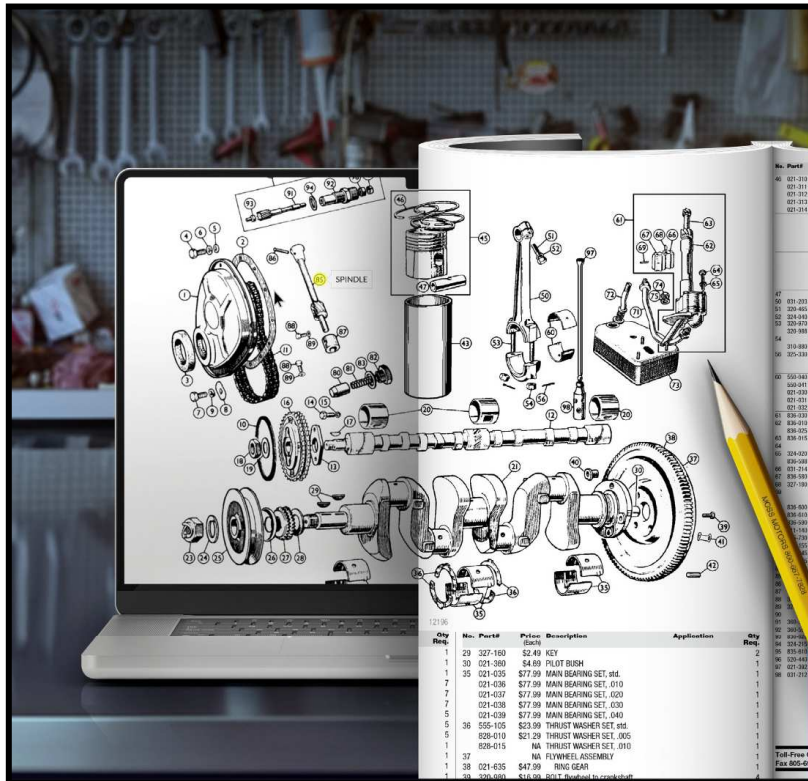
**Oversteer** usually occurs when the vehicle is turning or cornering at speed and the rear tires lose grip and traction due to the level of the power and acceleration being applied by the driver. This causes the rear tires break traction before the front tires lose traction. The front tires will continue to accelerate the front of the vehicle laterally, tracing a circle. The rear tires will have a tendency to continue along the tangent of that circle but cannot because of their attachment to the front of the car, which still has traction. The result is that the rear tires will swing outward relative to the front of the vehicle. This turns the vehicle toward the inside of the curve. If the steering angle is not changed (i.e. the steering wheel stays in the same position), then the front wheels will trace out a smaller and smaller circle while the rear wheels continue to swing around the front of the car. This is what is happening when a car 'spins out'.

In other words, Oversteer can be explained as the application of *too much throttle, too soon while cornering*. The rear tire traction is incapacitated, causing the wheels to spin and the vehicle to slide sideways. Oversteer can also occur by sudden braking or when the driver suddenly removes their foot from the accelerator.

**Understeer** is something that can occur in all vehicles (not just rear drives), but with front-wheel drives being more susceptible to this experience. Also occurring as a result of harsh or sudden cornering, this term applies to a situation where speed causes the front tires of the vehicle to begin to slip first, compromising the tires' traction and grip on the road surface and incapacitating the vehicle's steering! Since the front tires are slipping and the rear tires have grip, the vehicle will turn less than if all tires had grip. In Understeer you will find the vehicle wanting to go straight despite the driver trying to turn – with the front tires becoming overwhelmed and unable to provide the necessary grip as the corner is taken.

Since the amount of turning is less than it would be if all tires had traction, this is known as under-steering.





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*Toe in or Toe out ? Continued from pg.27*

### So, what can be done to minimize the risk of Over- and Understeer occurring if you do get into one of these situations?

Both Oversteer and Understeer are more likely to occur in the wet (or where there is ice, snow or oil on the road) – so it's vital to be driving at an appropriate speed for the road conditions.

. It therefore makes sense that the best solution for avoiding both Oversteer and Understeer in the first place is *slow down and don't drive too fast for the road and weather conditions!*

If either Oversteer or Understeer has begun to take place, avoid slamming on the brakes. A slow, gradual reduction of acceleration and speed is key rather than a sudden removal of power, which will help you regain control of the vehicle. Correcting the slide is assisted by ensuring you don't force the steering, rather turning into the skid and easing off the accelerator which will give the tires a chance to regain their grip.

Quality tires that are well maintained can also go a long way to ensuring Over- or Understeer is less likely to unnecessarily occur – and they will be able to cope better if it does. Additionally, correct inflation levels and tread that is not smooth or unevenly worn (along with good tire alignment and balance) will ensure that tires maintain optimum grip in these situations. Checking your tires and replacing them when the tread gets worn is also vital. If in any doubt, speak to a tire professional in your area who is trained to assist you with deciding the right time to change your tires to ensure the safety of your ride.

**Spread the word!**



*OK? Are You Ready For This?  
And she's British??*



Well, I'll tell you. *I wasn't! But, that being said .....*

## **New British firm reveals lightweight, manual sports car for £40k**

**Limited-run, two-seat Wells Vertige weighs just 1874 lbs. and will arrive with 208bhp 2.0-litre naturally aspirated four cylinder engine.**

( BMCofSNJ editor: While poking around the net for some pictures of the old British classics I usually feature, I fell across this little beauty. )

A new British-built £40,000 mid-engined sports coupé, developed in secret and now ready for the road and poised for production, will make its debut this week at the Goodwood Festival of Speed. Called the Wells Vertige, the car was designed to be beautiful, simple to own and fun to drive. It's the brainchild of entrepreneur Robin Wells, who set out in 2014 to buy the sports car of his dreams.

"I had a pretty wide choice," he says, "but nothing appealed so in the end I decided to make my own car. It has been a long journey, but I've loved it." The Vertige has a composite body mounted on a super-stiff steel monocoque chassis, topped by a tubular steel roll-cage, with fabricated tubular frames at either end to carry the bespoke cast-aluminum double-wishbones for the front and rear suspensions.



Its bespoke Speedline alloy wheels are wrapped in relatively modest, 205/45 R17 Michelin Pilot Sport 4 tires – another nod to Wells' easy ownership mantra. McLaren-

style dihedral doors give access to a snug but accommodating cockpit, with clever use of space allowing the diminutive two-seater to carry a full-sized spare wheel and offer a sensibly sized boot.



The car is 4.0m long, the same size as a Ford Fiesta, but slightly narrower than many modern cars, at 1.75m, for enhanced maneuverability. The Ford-sourced engine is a transversely mounted, normally aspirated 2.0-litre (122cu) four-cylinder unit producing 208bhp in standard form and driving through a six-speed manual gearbox.

The Vertige weighs 1874 lbs. fully equipped for the road, so performance is brisk. The standard engine (easily upgraded if customers wish) can deliver 0-60mph in less than 5.0sec and a top speed of more than 140mph.

The first batch of seven cars, all sold to “friends and family”, should be ready in spring 2022. Wells plans future production runs in batches, amounting to just 25 cars per year, because exclusivity is another of his criteria.

The launch of the Vertige brings to fruition a partnership between two men called Robin: Wells, whose success with a Middle-East-based insurance business has made it possible for him to self-fund the project; and engineer-cum-project manager Robin Hall, whose Northamptonshire-based company, Hall Engineering and Design, has been involved since 2016.



Hall Engineering will build the first seven cars while a new factory is prepared in Bishop’s Itchington, Warwickshire.



( Editor: This article I found is a few years old so I assume the new factory is now functioning. They have a website so it’s possible the car is now available for sale. If anyone would like to purchase one for me, like for my birthday or maybe Christmas, that would be great and thank you. If not well, Pat says we have no place to put it anyway so ..... But thanks for thinking of me. Darn. )

Originally trained as a chassis engineer, Hall previously worked on a wide variety of Rover, BMW and Jaguar Land Rover projects before setting up his own “small and real” specialist engineering business eight years ago, later adopting the Vertige as his priority project. By the time the pair met, Wells had already been working for more than a year with a Birmingham glassfibre specialist, optimizing a shape that was attractive and compact enough to suit his tastes.

Wells did a great deal of research, buying several sports cars, both classic and current, in the target area to inform the Vertige’s styling, which, although a totally bespoke effort, nods to some of the world’s greatest sports cars.

### Q&A: Robin Wells, Wells Motor Cars founder

*Why build your own car?* “I guess there’s something in all of us that wants to create our own car. Even in rental cars, I make a mental list about how I would improve the thing. Then a few years ago, I set out to buy the ideal sports car – and nothing appealed.”

*You styled the car before you designed the chassis. Why?* “Yes, we deliberately did the opposite to what most people do. I was determined to have a really beautiful car. Then Robin [Hall] designed his chassis to allow us to have perfect proportions.”



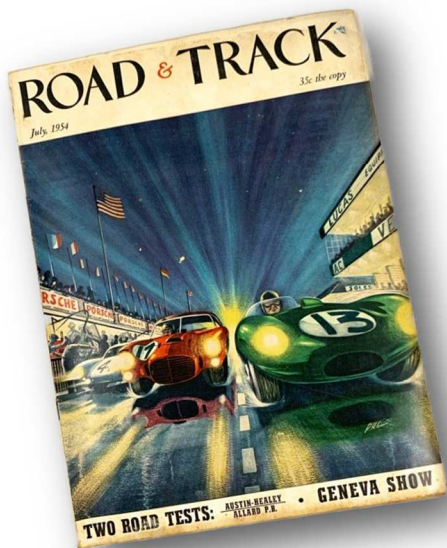


*Although the design's your own, you never actually drew the car accurately, did you?* “No, I decided we would do everything full size. We would produce a shape, then just stand and look at it for a while. That allowed me to do things like getting the spoiler lip just right so you could see the car's extremities from the driver's seat.”

*When did you build the first car?* “Not until early 2018, because we did the whole thing in CAD first to prove that everything would fit. That proved to be one of our best moves. The car emerged fully formed, as it were. It passed its IVA test first time, in November 2018.”

*You benchmarked a huge number of cars, didn't you?* “Yes, and I bought a few to help us, too. Robin has a Caterham, which was useful, and the Porsche Boxster/Cayman was often part of the discussion. And Robin's experience with the Mini was fed into the steering, too. We even measured the Mazda MX-5's gearchange throws with a tape measure.”

*Where did the name Vertige come from?* “That was my idea. Vertige is French for vertigo. I reckoned this car could make drivers dizzy with the excitement of driving it.”





# Tour of the Shore

2023



Stone Harbor

By Joe Marchione



Me hanging on with Mad Man Eric Sundberg at the wheel of his hopped up MGA !! Only kidding Eric.

It's a real test of what's left of my memory trying to write something about our 2023 Tour of the Shore which was held this past October. Considering it's now December 28th. I'm like ... we had a Tour ? And it was at the Shore ??!! Yikes. It's a good day when I remember where I hid my car keys. Not that I was TRYING to hide them, but seems I did a real good job of it. Ok, Enough of my memory issues because what I DO remember is a beautiful day racing through the South Jersey Pinelands on our way to the JERSEY SHORE !! Yea.

Maybe this year I won't get half the tour lost as I did last year when I missed a turn and led about 12 LBCs through

some backroad in Cape May Courthouse the very day they are having their Fall Carnival. We ended up having to inch through throngs of people and little kids on their way to have a good time. I, on the other hand, was having a terrible time since I was feeling I had really let the crew down by missing that turn. As it finally turned out, we all made it to Stone Harbor without any serious mishaps.



Now, on the other hand, this year had all the good stuff and none of the bad. It did turn out that half the crew were able to follow the tour map and the other half made up their own shortcut, **but** we all ended up together in beautiful Stone Harbor.





# Tour of the Shore 2023





# Tour of the Shore





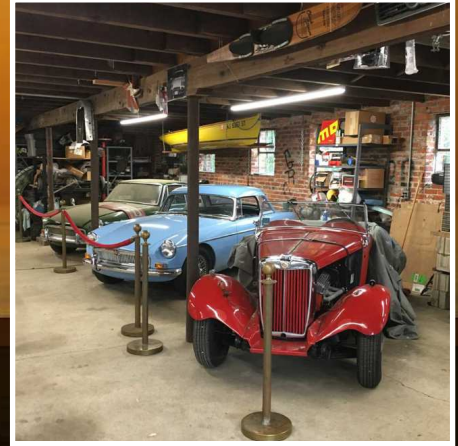
*Tour of the Shore 2023*



## In Memory of James E. Kontes



James E. "Jack" Kontes  
1948 - 2023



It is with great sadness that I announce that long-time British Motor Club of Southern New Jersey member, Jack Kontes, passed away unexpectedly on November 18, 2023. A member since the club's beginning in 1992, Jack was an active participant who also took the time to host events for the club's membership at his home. Jack was an interesting person with a passionate interest in the hobby and will be missed at meetings and events. On behalf of the entire membership, I would like to extend condolences to Jack's wife, Vivian, and to his other family and friends. A link to his obituary is below.

The club has made a donation in Jack's memory to CU – Maurice River, one of his favorite causes.”

<https://dlfuneral.com/tribute/details/1950/James-Kontes/obituary.html#tribute-start>

Steve Ferrante, President,  
British Motor Club of Southern New Jersey,  
president@bmcsnj.org

### Memories of Jack

I met Jack Kontes for the first time while my 1963 Morgan was at Skip Lustig's shop near Millville. This was during the early summer of ----2002. I was working in the shop when Jack drove up and discussed something with Skip. While he was there, Skip introduced us. Skip and Jack had been friends for a long time already. With the common bond of British cars and our mutual membership in the British Motor Club of Southern NJ, we began seeing each other more and more at club events and also at Skip's house. This led to socializing in that the three of us and our wives would meet frequently for dinners at local restaurants. These were very enjoyable evenings.

I was already friendly with the Seabrook brothers, Ivin and Pete. It was through them I met their father, Charlie, who had a long history of racing. Bob Watson and I began meeting Charlie for breakfast every Sunday and lunch every Friday. In view of Jack's equally strong interest in all things automotive, we began to include him too. He frequently joined us when his schedule permitted.

When Charlie Seabrook passed in 2016, Jack and I continued meeting for lunches and breakfasts quite often, sometimes. As the years passed, it seems that our friendship became even stronger.

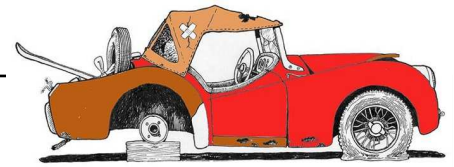
I will truly miss seeing the entry, "Breakfast with Jack" in my desktop weekly planner. The last one was on November 15 of this year (2023), only a week ago as I write this. My brother-in-law, Joe Marchione and I met Jack at the Maurice River Diner not far from his home. We had a nice breakfast and a wonderful chat mostly "car talk." Joe had some MGA seats that he was giving to Jack. They were in my SUV so I lifted them into the bed of Jack's truck. Joe and I went on our separate ways home and Jack returned to his. Vivian said that when he came in, he told her that he had a very nice breakfast. That morning, Jack was his usual, interesting, pleasant self showing not a sign of what was to come later in the day.

Jack was a friendly, smart, and interesting man. He loved his family and his wife, Vivian dearly. I will deeply miss his good company and the many hours of pleasant conversations we had together. It seems that Joe and I were the last of his friends to seem him as an apparently healthy man. How quickly things can change.

Fred Schuchard  
Roadstown, NJ  
November 23, 2023



# SWAP MEET



**YOUR AD COULD APPEAR HERE** Find a home for those extra parts or that car that you will never get around to restoring. Raise some cash to buy more extra parts or projects that you do not need!!

Contact Ed Gaubert: [mggarage@comcast.net](mailto:mggarage@comcast.net)

Ads will appear for two (2) issues , as space allows

**FOR SALE. Bundle of TR3 parts. One price for all:**

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- 1 pair of very nice wind wings
- 1 black vinyl grained top. Serviceable. Will keep the rain off you, but has small repairs at seam on side of each small rear window

All for \$125. [Bruce Aydelotte 609-705-4753 or cuznbrucie@comcast.net](mailto:Bruce Aydelotte 609-705-4753 or cuznbrucie@comcast.net)

**FOR SALE: TR3 starter handle \$100.** Bruce Aydelotte 609-705-4753 or [cuznbrucie@comcast.net](mailto:cuznbrucie@comcast.net)

**FOR SALE: I have sold my TR6,** and I have 13 years' worth of accumulated parts, some NOS hard to find items. Too much to list. Please email for details. [Stuart drshonick@gofeet.com](mailto:Stuart drshonick@gofeet.com)

**FOR SALE: Indoor car cover for MGB** or other car of similar size. Cover is new. \$30  
Call Guido 856-220-0074

**FOR SALE. For MGB.** Two complete doors, bonnet, trunk lid, and windscreen. \$500 for all. Will separate. Tom Fanelle 609-922-5372 or [tfanelle@aol.com](mailto:tfanelle@aol.com)



**FOR SALE. 1962 AH Sprite Mark 2.** Project with amazing mechanicals. Car was running strong until 2<sup>nd</sup> gear went out in 1980. I have an almost new ribbed case transmission and many new parts including heritage jacking tubes (interchangeable with Bugeye). All parts are bagged and tagged, stored indoors for over 25 years. Engine turns well and is a beauty on the outside. New but older tires mounted on correct wheels with AH hubcaps. Needs a few exterior patches, but no structural repair. All original and new parts are included. No top but includes the original frame. Car was pure driving fun. Title included for \$875. Engine and transmission alone are worth more than this much.

D. Michael Scott 609-792-6943







**FOR SALE. TR6 Roll Bar.** Moss p/n 856-090 with mounting hardware. I purchased it many years ago but decided not to install it. Listed for 800 bucks in the latest Moss catalog. \$400 cash and carry for club members. Ed Doody 609-706-9246 or [collbark@hotmail.com](mailto:collbark@hotmail.com)

**FOR SALE. TR6 parts.** Set of gauges \$150. Various other parts including heater, wheel trim rings, steering wheel. Text or email John 609-425-0878 or [jarmand1@comcast.net](mailto:jarmand1@comcast.net)

**FOR SALE. I have a 1954 MGTF project** for sale for the right offer. If you have any interest, please call, there is too much to describe in a short ad. Reggie Harris 856-264-6032 or [reggie630@hotmail.com](mailto:reggie630@hotmail.com)

**WANTED. Knowledgeable, skilled person** to repair the lower wood framing on my 1954 MG-TF. Photos available on request. Car is also for sale for someone willing to undertake the project. See my other ad in this newsletter. Reggie Harris [reggie630@hotmail.com](mailto:reggie630@hotmail.com)

**FOR SALE: 1954 MG-TF project.** Needs repair to lower wood framing. If I cannot locate someone to repair the framing, the project will be available for sale (see my other ad in this newsletter just above). Photos available on request. Reggie Harris [reggie630@hotmail.com](mailto:reggie630@hotmail.com)

**FOR SALE. MGB parts.** Engine and transmission in parts car \$500 or Best Offer. Rust free doors complete, 2 four speed transmissions, other various parts from complete car. Text or email John 609-425-0878 or [jarmand1@comcast.net](mailto:jarmand1@comcast.net)

**FOR SALE. MGB parts:**

2 black driver quality top covers. Not certain of year. \$50 each  
Early MGB head. Taken from my running 68 MGB 40 years ago. \$50  
MGB aftermarket accessory grille guard. Make offer  
MGB ANSA headers #MG0281. New \$125  
Reggie Harris 856-264-6032 or [reggie630@hotmail.com](mailto:reggie630@hotmail.com)

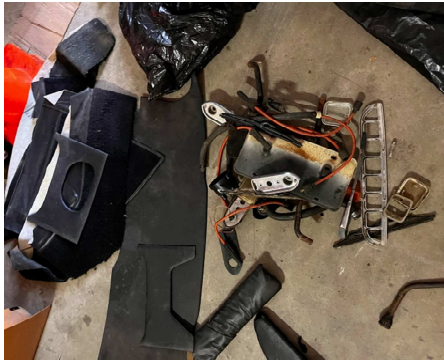
**FOR SALE. MGB Roll Bar.** Freshly painted. Includes all mounting hardware. \$150. Ed Connor 609-332-1501 (call/text) or [ed.connor320@gmail.com](mailto:ed.connor320@gmail.com)

**FOR SALE. Lucas breaker plate for the Lucas 25D distributor.** Will fit any Lucas 25D distributor from 1962 to 1974 for MG or any other British Car with a 25D distributor. \$40.  
Ira Eckstein 856-296-6460 or [ijeckstein9@gmail.com](mailto:ijeckstein9@gmail.com)

**FOR SALE: MGB rollbar.** Freshly painted. Includes all mounting hardware. \$150. Ed Connor 609-332-1501 (call / text) or [ed.connor320@gmail.com](mailto:ed.connor320@gmail.com)



**FOR SALE. For MGB.** Tonneau cover with headrest pockets, top boot cover and other assorted soft items. \$100 for all Tom Fanelle 609-922-5372 or [tfanelle@aol.com](mailto:tfanelle@aol.com)



**FOR SALE. Bugeye Sprite radiator.** Needs work. \$50. Reggie Harris 856-264-6032 or [reggie630@hotmail.com](mailto:reggie630@hotmail.com)

**Wanted: TR4A/250 Front and rear fenders,** in good to repairable condition.  
Contact: Paul at [pis9@yahoo.com](mailto:pis9@yahoo.com) or 609-462-3593

**FOR SALE. Outdoor car cover for TR6.** Used for 3 months only. Purchased from Moss Motors. Manufacturer is Budge, size #2. Includes storage bag. \$30. Will ship if necessary but buyer pays shipping in addition to price. Don Gray [tr61973@aol.com](mailto:tr61973@aol.com)

**Wanted: Triumph TR4A/TR6 overdrive transmission.**  
Contact: Paul at [pis9@yahoo.com](mailto:pis9@yahoo.com) or 609-462-3593

**FOR SALE. Triumph 6cylinder head \$50.** With new rocker cover \$70. MGA 1500 cylinder head \$50. Healey 6 cylinder valve cover \$10 (wall art or gravity racer?). Pick up in Bridgeton. Gary Cossaboon 856-455-eight349

**FOR SALE. 1979 MG Midget.** New carpet ,coil, cap, rotor, wires & plugs, aluminum radiator, custom console with volt meter, ignition switch, brake cable, speedometer cable and gear, fuel tank & sender, solenoid switch, rebuilt Zenith-stromberg carb. Carmine red faded. Needs trunk repaired and carb adjustment. Asking \$7000.00 negotiable.  
Call Rosario 856-981-8676 or [russellzappala@gmail.com](mailto:russellzappala@gmail.com)

**Wanted: Three point seat belts for 1971 MGB.** Specifically looking for the metal piece on the shoulder belt that attaches to the chrome lug on the back deck. This piece has a keyhole shaped opening. I need two of them. Condition of the seat belts does not matter.  
Ed Connor 609-332-1501 (call/text) or [ed.connor320@gmail.com](mailto:ed.connor320@gmail.com)

**FREE: Free to a good home. Black TR6 seat covers both back and seat surface.** Still in the bag, given to me as a gift, and I cannot use them on my Spitfire. Lance Landgraf [llandgraf@gmail.com](mailto:llandgraf@gmail.com) or 609-432-9024

# SPECIAL EVENT

## Special Meeting Announcement...February 21st Simeone Museum Best of Britain display

Our regularly scheduled meeting for Feb 21, 2024 will be held at the Simeone Museum during the special exhibit, Best of Britain - British V8

The evening will consist of an interactive discussion with museum Curator and BMCSNJ Founder Kevin Kelly and a tour of the museum.

Sandwiches and beverages will be served for your dining enjoyment.

Admission Price is reduced to a \$5/person CASH donation, see the donation box on the event/food table on the museum floor. The entire museum will be open to all of us and hopefully Kevin or another Simeone staff member can provide a brief commentary on the special V-8's that will be on display.

So that an adequate food supply can be provided we ask that you please RSVP, so we have a head count. Email [events@bmcsnj.org](mailto:events@bmcsnj.org)

See you at the museum!

Pete Cosmides

**SIMEONE FOUNDATION**  
**AUTOMOTIVE MUSEUM**





# CALENDAR OF EVENTS *2024*

BMCSNJ supports safe and responsible enjoyment of British automobiles and motorcycles.  
 All events sponsored by BMCSNJ are alcohol and drug free.  
 Consumption or distribution of alcohol or controlled substances is expressly prohibited.  
 All driving events are conducted in accordance with motor vehicle laws at all times.


**THE INFORMATION IN THIS EVENTS CALENDAR IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.  
 CHANGES WILL BE COMMUNICATED BY EMAIL.**

DATE	BMC EVENT	LOCATION / STATUS
Ongoing thru 4/20	Ongoing Austin Healey Display Brought to you by Austin Healey Sports & Touring Club	AACA Museum Hershey, PA
January 1/17	Membership Meeting Dinner at 6:00PM (member expense) Meeting at 7:00PM	7 Stars Diner Sewell, NJ 6:00-8:30 Mike Eck eckmichael@comcast.net
February 2/21	Special Membership Meeting @ Simeone Museum celebrating "Best of Britain" the British V-8 6:00PM	Simeone Museum SimeoneMuseum.org Pete Cosmides tundramgb@hotmail.com
March 3/20	Membership Meeting Dinner at 6:00PM (member expense) Meeting at 7:00PM	7 Stars Diner, Sewell 6:00-8:30 Gary Warren garswc@yahoo.com
April 4/17	Membership Meeting Dinner at 6:00PM (member expense) Meeting at 7:00PM	Uno, Maple Shade 2803 NJ Rt 73 South Maple Shade, NJ 6:00-8:30 Ed Gaubert mggarage@comcast.net
4/27	K&T Vintage Open House/Swap Meet British Car Parts	K&T Vintage 6584 Ruch Road Bethlehem, PA ktvintagecars.com
May 5/4	The British are Coming...Again Car Show	British Car Club of Delaware Lewes, DE
May 5/5	<b>New Hope Auto Cars and Coffee Event</b> These Cars and Coffee events that they host are almost better than their annual show. They fill up fast with an incredible array of cars and there is no charge. Just show up, coffee and donuts are available.	8:00AM-11:00 The main parking lot fills up by 8:30, the grass field becomes overflow.
5/11	The First Annual Roadster Rally Open Car Show for all roadsters/convertibles 9:00AM-4:00PM	Ocean City Boardwalk theroadsterrally.com

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS *2024*

DATE	BMC EVENT	LOCATION / STATUS
5/15	Membership Meeting Dinner at 6:00PM (member expense) Meeting at 7:00PM	7 Stars Diner Sewell, NJ 6:00-8:30 Contact Person?
June 6/9	30th Annual British Motor Gathering Car Show 10:00AM – 3:00PM	Alfred Fritchman Reservoir Park Hellertown, PA KeystoneBritish.com
6/19	Membership Meeting Dinner at 6:00PM (member expense) Meeting at 7:00PM	Uno, Maple Shade 2803 NJ Rt 73 South Maple Shade, NJ 6:00-8:30 Contact Person?
6/22	Members Memorial Gathering at Smithville to benefit Samaritan Hospice 10:00AM-2:00PM	www.historicsmithville.com Ed Gaubert mggarage@comcast.net Rain Date 6/23
6/24	Philadelphia Concours d'Elegance  <i>A fund-raising event that provides help and hope to children born with rare genetic diseases, and supports research at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. Jaguar is the featured marque and thirty or more curated Jaguars will be displayed.</i>	Simeone Museum SimeoneMuseum.org
TBD	Spring Tour	Details coming soon Rain Date TBD
July 7/17	Membership Meeting Dinner at 6:00PM (member expense) Meeting at 7:00PM	7 Stars Diner Sewell, NJ 6:00-8:30 Contact Person?
TBD	British Car Owners Ice Cream Social 6:00PM-8:00PM	5 Points Custard E. Landis Ave. (Rt 540) & Tuckahoe Road (Rt 557) Vineland, NJ
August 8/4	<b>New Hope Auto Cars and Coffee Event</b> These Cars and Coffee events that they host are almost better than their annual show. They fill up fast with an incredible array of cars and there is no charge. Just show up, coffee and donuts are available.	8:00AM-11:00 <b>The main parking lot fills up by 8:30, the grass field becomes overflow.</b>

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS *2024*

DATE	BMC EVENT	LOCATION / STATUS
August TBD	Summer Tour	Details coming soon
8/21	Membership Meeting Dinner at 6:00PM (member expense) Meeting at 7:00PM	Uno, Maple Shade 2803 NJ Rt 73 South Maple Shade, NJ 6:00-8:30 Contact Person?
September 9/6	Grand Prix Festival of Watkins Glen (MG is the Featured Marque)	grandprixfestival.com
9/15-18	Austin Healey Convention Car Show on the Ocean City Boardwalk	Flanders Hotel Ocean City, NJ www.austin-healey-stc.org
9/18	Membership Meeting Dinner at 6:00PM (member expense) Meeting at 7:00PM	7 Stars Diner Sewell, NJ 6:00-8:30 Contact Person?
TBD	BMC of SNJ End of Year Car Show at Greenwich Artisans Faire 10:00AM – 2:00PM	On the grounds of the Gibbon House 960 Ye Greate Street Greenwich, NJ Gary Warren garswc@yahoo.com or 609-247-3499
October 10/16	Membership Meeting Dinner at 6:00PM (member expense) Meeting at 7:00PM	Uno, Maple Shade 2803 NJ Rt 73 South Maple Shade, NJ 6:00-8:30 Contact Per- son?
TBD	Fall Tour	Details coming soon
December	No membership meeting in recognition of the holiday season	



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## ***British Car Event Calendar of the Northeast***

With the kind permission of one of our neighboring clubs, the Keystone British Car Club based in the Lehigh Valley, I present to you their very comprehensive calendar of events featuring many British Car Shows and events of interest in the PA/NJ/DE region.

I know many of you have never attended a British Car Show and perhaps you don't quite know what to expect. If your car is not "show quality" that should not preclude you from attending. Not all attendees are trophy hunters and many folks just attend for the camaraderie and the sharing of knowledge that comes with a gathering of like minded British car enthusiasts. It's nice to attend these shows, enter your car and support the surrounding clubs of their efforts. If nothing else, it may garner some reciprocity for attendance at our club's shows and events.

However, I think one important aspect of regularly attending these events is that it gets your car out on the road and away from your local neighborhood comfort zone.

It will push you to clean and maintain your car and engage you with the hobby. I have found that the cars that are used most regularly often give the owners the most pleasure because it gets you to sort out any niggling issues with your car and makes it roadworthy. The more and further you travel, the more confidence you will have in the car for longer trips. In my case, I enjoy the drive to and from some of these events as I will usually choose a scenic route.

So, let's get out there and I hope to see you at some of these area events this season.

Peter Cosmides

**Below is a link to a list British car events in the greater Northeast. (And beyond, for national meets and other large events of unique interest.) Also included are classic car events and community car shows of interest to our members**

*CLICK ON THE LINK BELOW TO ACCESS THE CALENDAR*

[British Car Calendar | Keystone British Car Club](#)

# And now a word from our Sponsors



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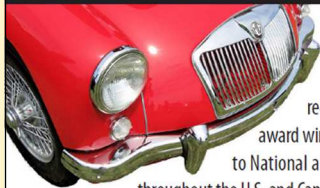
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North American MGB Register

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FULL AD ON PAGE 28



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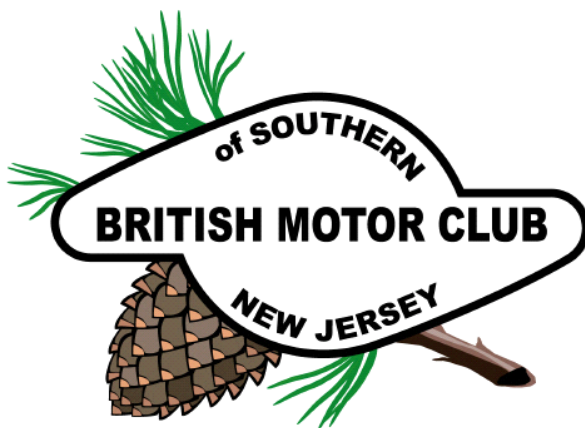
— and you can request a free catalog, too!

800 - 667 - 7872

**British Motor Club of Southern New Jersey**  
**90 Strawberry Drive**  
**Shamong, NJ 08088**



*The BMCSNJ Web Site can be found at*  
**WWW.BMCSNJ.ORG**



British Motor Club of Southern New Jersey

