

Keeping The Door Open – 6 Cyl Healey

It is all about “keeping it open”, the car doors that is. When your 6 cylinder Healey left the factory it was engineered to have the doors stay open at a 45 degree angle so it was easier to enter and exit the car. It was a great idea Donald and or Gerry designed into the car and the system that keeps the door open is the “ultimate in simplicity”. The unit is called the door check assembly, and it is located between the front door and the firewall door jamb, just between the hinges. It is a small silver (it was when new) unit with two bolts into the firewall jamb and attaches to a chrome bracket held into the front of the door by two chrome Phillips head screws. To repair it you first must understand how and why it works. In most cars I see the door check assembly does not function properly because it has been oil/ greased/lubricated. This is probably the only thing on the car you should not lubricate as its function is built on “friction”. That’s right, simple friction as you open the door keeps it open.

Here’s how it works. When the door is opened the forked arm surrounding the nut (see illustration) turns the nut which tightens down on the black star shaped washer which in turn presses a circular friction pad and creates the pressure to hold the door open. As you now understand, oil or grease impairs up the operation.

To correct the situation, remove the unit by unbolting it from the firewall door jamb and unscrew the slotted head screw. There is no need to remove the chrome piece on the door unless you want to clean it up. Remove the 5/16 bolt holding the forked arm and then the nut, BUT be careful the nut may unscrew in a different direction than you think! Lift out the washer and fiber washer and clean everything up. Remember originally it was all zinc plated except the star washer that I believe the concours guide indicated was anodized black. If the fiber washer is missing or damaged you can get a replacement from British Car Service 209 948-8767.(tell Michael you read it in the Flash)

Reassemble and finger tighten the nut but do not put the forked piece on yet. Put the unit back onto the car and watch the operation as the door opens. Now install the forked arm and adjust the nut to provide the tension to keep the door open. This is a trial and error process accomplished by turning the bolt, until the door opens without dragging and stays open. Good luck. It is an easy project and actually fun as you can usually see positive results quickly.

Austin-Healey 3000 Colors

Discovery

By Roger Moment

Rocky Mountain AHC

One question that always comes up is "what color is correct for my car?" Some information has come to light recently that introduces a twist into what has been fairly well understood until now.

There are a series of color chip booklets that were printed covering the 100-6, 3000, and 3000 MkII which have orange covers and a single page of each color.

These color chip books have different printing numbers and the table below shows the colors included in each:

What is of interest is that the 3000 (MkI for those who want to clearly distinguish from the MkII) has two chip books, one with Pacific Green and Primrose and the other omitting these colors. Furthermore, the version sans these two, 1531/B was printed with two different covers, one specifying it was for the Austin-Healey "3000" and the other the "3000," MkII. This suggests that Pacific Green and Primrose were dropped as offered colors sometime during the 3000 (MkI) production, the reduced number of color options were continued with introduction of the 3000 MkII, and publication 1531/B was kept with only "MkII" being added to the cover title.

last cars of these colors were produced, but knowing that all 3000s (MkIs) were not offered with the same range of colors is surprising and interesting.

There were a number of two-tone combinations offered as well on both the 100-6 and 3000:

Black/Colorado Red
 Colorado Red/Black
 Pale Ivory/Black
 Pacific Green/Pale Ivory
 Florida Green/Pale Ivory
 Pacific Green/Florida Green
 Healey Blue/Pale Ivory
 Primrose/Black
 Black/Primrose

Again those involving Pacific Green

Vehicle	100-6	3000	3000	3000 MkII
Publication number	1531	1531/A	1531/B	1531/B
Colors	Healey Blue	Healey Blue	Healey Blue	Healey Blue
	Black	Black	Black	Black
	Florida Green	Florida Green	Florida Green	Florida Green
	Colorado Red	Colorado Red	Colorado Red	Colorado Red
	Ivory White	Ivory White	Ivory White	Ivory White
	Primrose	Primrose		
	Pacific Green	Pacific Green		

The second 3000 booklet (1531/B) is no accidental fluke. The front and back covers are printed on one piece of stock and folded over at the binding. Thus the cover title and identification number are printed at the same time and had to be intentionally set up as found.

In *The Original Austin-Healey* by Anders Clausager and also published in the *Concours Guidelines* Ivory White is listed as Pale Ivory. Publications 1531 and 1531/A do not give a number for Ivory White, but 1531/B also calls it WT3.

A Paint and Trim Color Chart for Austin-Healey Type BN7 and BT7, No. A.7114 and dated 14-11-60, also refers to Ivory White.

There are two additional published brochures on the 3000 that help to determine when this change occurred. Both are black on white printings for "The New Austin-Healey 3000, Fabulous Successor to the 100-6." One marked #1124-E/BW, 300M-9/59 lists Pacific Green and Primrose as color choices. The other marked #1124-E/BW, 400M-2/60 does not list these two colors.

So it seems that cars built into January 1960 could have come in Pacific Green or Primrose, but later 3000s did not. Given the likely time delays between incorporating production line changes and distribution of brochures, it is impossible to tell from this data just when the

and Primrose were only offered into early 1960.

The next revision to *Concours Guidelines* will include this information. Other information that can be documented is also welcome as we continually make corrections and additions. Please write or call me if you have contributions to make. ☺

About the author: Roger Moment is a member of the Rocky Mountain AHC and has been an avid Healey enthusiast for more than thirty years. His expertise in Big Healeys is widely recognized and he is a frequent contributor to CHATTER, as well as the chairman of the Big Healey Concours Technical Committee.



Metallic Paint on Austin-Healeys

By Roger Moment
Rocky Mountain AHC

Two metallic colors were offered on Austin-Healeys – Healey Blue (also called by other names early on in production during 1953) which was used on *all* models from BN1 through BJ8, and Golden Beige Metallic which was introduced in 1967 during the last year of BJ8 production. These are beautiful colors, but matching them today requires much more attention to detail than when matching any of the solid colors (reds, greens, white, etc.). At shows, when I look at the many Healeys finished in metallic colors I find that easily on 90% or more the paint just doesn't look right. And I'm not referring to the super quality of finish attainable today using modern clear-coat paints.

The problem arises from the metal flake component. Good paint shops that have equipment capable of "reading" paint samples and coming up with mixing formulas usually get the color shade correct. Here I will refer to the matching of Healey Blue, since that is by far the more common color (compared to Golden Beige Metallic), but the issues and principle are the same for *any* metallic paint. And I will also mention that there were *many* variations of Healey Blue used during production, most rather subtle but some not so.

If you look carefully at cars painted in metallic colors from the 1950s and 1960s you will see that they have a metallic luster or sheen that is obvious, yet somewhat subtle at the same time. This result is brought about from the extremely fine metal flake that was used (I don't have any numerical data to quantify particle size). From my observation of metallic paints over the years, it appears that starting in the later 1970s or 1980s larger flake became more common in paints used whether in America, Japan or Europe. And this particle size has continued to increase as well as fluctuate since 1990. Look at a GM metallic paint from the past five years and you will be able to make out the individual particle flakes at an eye-to-surface distance of 1-2 feet, and often even up to 4-5 feet. The paint will appear to sparkle and as you move your head from side to side the flakes will change their light reflection much as sand will sparkle on a bright sunny day. Just the other day, I carefully studied paint on a VW and saw that

I could easily see light reflections from individual aluminum particles. This is not the case with metallic paints used when our Austin-Healeys were produced.

Talking over this issue with my local Dupont paint experts I learned that the metal flake available in the '50s and '60s was much finer than that used in modern paints. This extremely fine particle size is still available for mixing into laquers, but not for urethanes. Since the aluminum particles are part of the color mixing formula, you can't just mix the shade and then add the aluminum. When you have metallic paint mixed, whether from a color chip formula or custom, it is important to specify to your paint shop that they use the finest metallic particles available for the type of paint you're using. (I have recently heard that Ditzler *may* have the very fine aluminum flake available in their urethane paints, but I have not been able to check this out yet.)

My paint supplier told me that it is possible to minimize the "sparkle" or "glitter" from the larger particles in urethanes if a slower reducer is used and the color coat is laid down wetter. This technique gives the metal particles more time to lay down flat and results in more of a metallic "sheen."

Recently a BJ8 I've been working on was sprayed in Healey Blue here in Denver, and it came out looking exactly like the original paint finish, in terms of metallic luster. The car was sprayed in Dupont urethane (2-stage – with clear coat) using a slow reducer and wet color coats. The painter also used lower air pressure – he said this painting technique (lower air pressure, wet application, and slow reducer) lets the metal particles "sink down" into the color more, and minimizes their individual reflections. The results were outstanding!

While it is somewhat difficult to put down in words the subtle differences in metallic appearance, if you spend some time looking at paint on new cars and old, especially if you can find a period paint job from the 1950s or 1960s, you will appreciate what I've been attempting to describe. And in the process you will build up your own knowledge base to the point where you'll know exactly what is correct or not. And, of course, if you have a sample of original Healey Blue (such as from a steering column blanking plate) and can *carefully* polish it a bit to see the original paint finish, that is the best example to match to.

Installing Door Handle Pins

For those Austin Healey and Triumph owners who have struggled to replace the original pins holding the door and window winder handles in place, here is a straightforward solution. Using a suitably sized nail (it must just fit inside the handle), cut off the head, then pre-measure it to the same length as the original pin. Cut through one third to one half of the nail's diameter. When you are ready to install the handle, insert the nail up to the cut and bend it. The nail will break off and your "shear pin" is in!

If you have difficulty seeing exactly how far to insert the nail before shearing it, tie the cut with a piece of thread or put a drop of bright fingernail polish on it.

Thomas Dillard
Anaheim, CA

Removal of the chrome grill surround assembly

Bodywork issues arise frequently and there are few resources that will answer all questions, thus, the Healey List, using the expertise of hundreds of devotees to our cars is an invaluable source of first hand experience. Dan White recently asked: "I've checked the shop manual and the list archives and can't solve my problem I'm trying to remove the chrome grille surround assembly on my BN7 MkII. The nuts are removed from the backside (top and bottom) and, looking from the backside, I can see the mounting tabs top and bottom, which would prevent pulling it out from the front. So ... I'm pushing it from the front to get out from the rear and it just doesn't want to move. If I push any harder I'm afraid I'll damage the shroud opening. Any thoughts before I use a larger hammer?"

John Snyder responded that: "The grill surround will only come out from the front. The grill itself comes out from the back. You must remove the grill first, then the grill surround. There are 2 very small nuts at the outboard ends of the "grill hood" which must be removed before the grill surround and grill hood are removed as a unit. Then push the top of the surround/hood rocking it forward, then lift it up to clear the bottom tabs. A larger hammer, or any hammer is not a good solution.

Dan made a posting on the next day that he had been successful in removing the grille surround, thanked the list and said that he was now going to have to find another use for his hammer – hopefully far away from his car. Your correspondent had to make this same repair several years ago and wishes that he had had the benefit of these postings, which would have saved several scraped knuckles, and some words that should not be said in public.

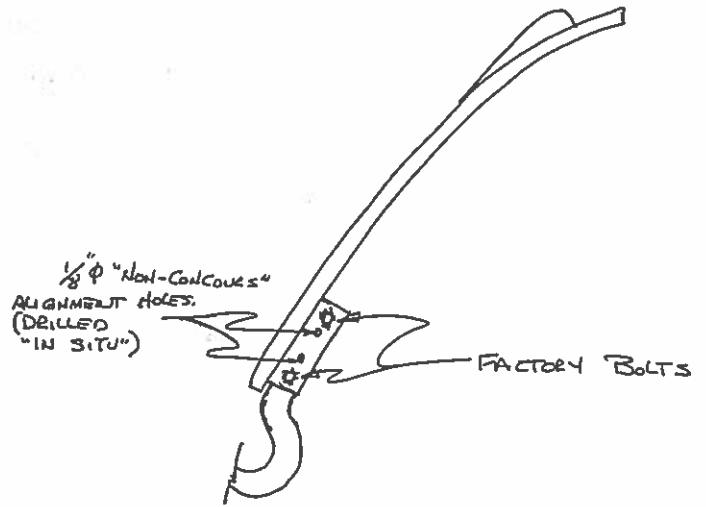
Bonnet Reinstallation

By Frank Broome
Middle Tennessee AHC

This one is so obvious that I suspect it was suggested years ago, but I've never seen it in print, so here goes.

The hood ("bonnet" in England, "hood" in Tennessee) on our BJ8 recently developed a small stress crack which I successfully ignored until it was no longer small and repair became unavoidable. As I made plans to remove the hood for repair and repaint, I remembered the trauma of installing and aligning the hood after a complete repaint.

Donald provided generous adjustment (slotted holes) for each of the bolts (two on each side), which attach the hood to the hood hinges. So generous, in fact, that front-to-rear adjustment is one-half inch or more, and left-to-right (at front of hood) is more than a full inch. Adjust-and-try will get you there eventually, but in the process may very well result in damaged paint where the rear of the hood clears (or doesn't clear!) the shroud and/or where the front of the hood seats in the groove around the shroud. Been there, done that, and paid the bill for repainting scuffed areas. Since the hood was properly aligned at this time, the challenge became how to reinstall it after repair/repaint without going through the adjust-and-try process all over again. So here is "what worked for me." While the hood was still on the car, I drilled $\frac{1}{8}$ " diameter holes, two on each side,



through the hood flange and hinge. (See sketch.) Then the hood was removed for repair/repaint.

When reinstalling the hood, (with plenty of help and my best motel towels to protect the shroud), I installed, but did not tighten, the four attaching bolts. Final alignment was accomplished by inserting the shank end of four $\frac{1}{8}$ " diameter drill bits through the previously drilled holes, then tightening the four attaching bolts. Voila! Perfect alignment and no scuffed paint! ©

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Austin Healey Q&A

A Handy Guide to a Beautiful Boot Bottom

by Michael C. Spector

Tampa Bay AHC

Photos by Michael C. Spector

Even though the restoration of my BJ8 is far from complete, I couldn't restrain myself from writing an article about one part of the restoration which has been successfully accomplished. "A Handy Guide to a Beautiful Boot Bottom" is the tale of how I replaced the rusty trunk floor of my Healey.

Aeons ago during my teenagerhood, an older friend acquired a well-worn but still handsome Austin-Healey roadster. When I complimented him on the Healey's appearance, my buddy agreed it was a great-looking car—then sarcastically complained there were a hundred pounds of concrete in the trunk! I never really understood that comment until many years later when I learned that old British sports cars don't need ballast, they just become victims of rust repairs performed by means of a trowel.

Restoration Compulsion Strikes Again

After reviving a badly buggered Bugeye in the late '80s, the restoration compulsion struck again in September of 1993 when I found a neglected but very original and unmolested BJ8 convertible. It was extremely straight and relatively solid, with corrosion

Top: What evils hide beneath the boot lid of this old Healey? Bottom, left: Boot bottom corrodes under tank and even worse in corners. Bottom, right: Inner fender panel shows surface corrosion at rear.

most evident in the rocker panels and dog legs. But experience dictated there would be other nasties lurking under the low-slung beast and, sure enough, as I began putting the car in running order, it became obvious that the driver's floor beneath the pedals was badly rotted. A new driver's side floor and repair of the front outrigger solved that problem. There was also a small hole in the boot floor beneath the battery. Removing the Armacord trunk lining and the fuel tank revealed more damage to the boot floor, and subsequent sandblasting showed that the areas between the bumper supports and the inner fender panels had the integrity of Swiss cheese. A new boot bottom was in order!

Fortunately, the trunk floor of a big Healey consists largely of a single pressing for which good reproductions are readily available and inexpensive. Best of all, replacement may be accomplished by an ordinary klutz with the necessary equipment and patience. Equipment needs may vary, but I've always found an air compressor, die grinder, angle grinder, mig welder, drill, and large chisel with a wide face to be the essentials. A very helpful little accessory is a spotweld cutter, a specialized drill bit which cuts around spot welds in rusty panels and frees them without damaging good adjacent panels. Avoid cheap imported versions which last about as long as an honest politician. U.S.-made spotweld cutters, available from companies such as Eastwood, cost little more and are far more durable.



Disassembly

Some disassembly is required before the real fun begins. To ease the task, the Healey's hindquarters may be elevated by blocking the front wheels and lifting with a jack placed very securely below the differential, then supporting the car with stands under each of the rear axle's spring shackles. The bumper comes away by undoing the four bolts joining its brackets to the two supports inside the trunk.

All exhaust plumbing and hangers beneath the boot must also be removed. Be very cautious when purchasing new exhaust components for BJ8s. Currently available systems typically vary from original specification and may require considerable heating and bending to fit adequately. The boot lid is simple to detach by disconnecting the cable and unfastening the two nuts which hold the hinges to the shroud. To easily access and drill out the welds which join the outer edges of the trunk floor to the inner fender panels, the rear fenders should be removed. This isn't difficult, but some of the small screws attaching the fender to the rear door pillar and the rocker panel may be frozen and require drilling. On my BJ8, the large fender bolt just behind the



top of the driver's door wouldn't cooperate and was also subjected to the drill.

Fuel Tank Problems

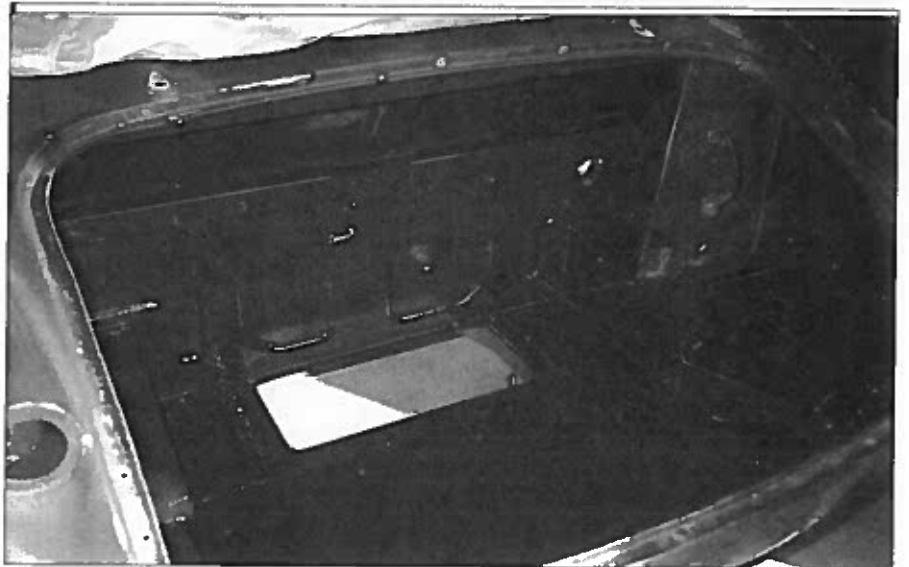
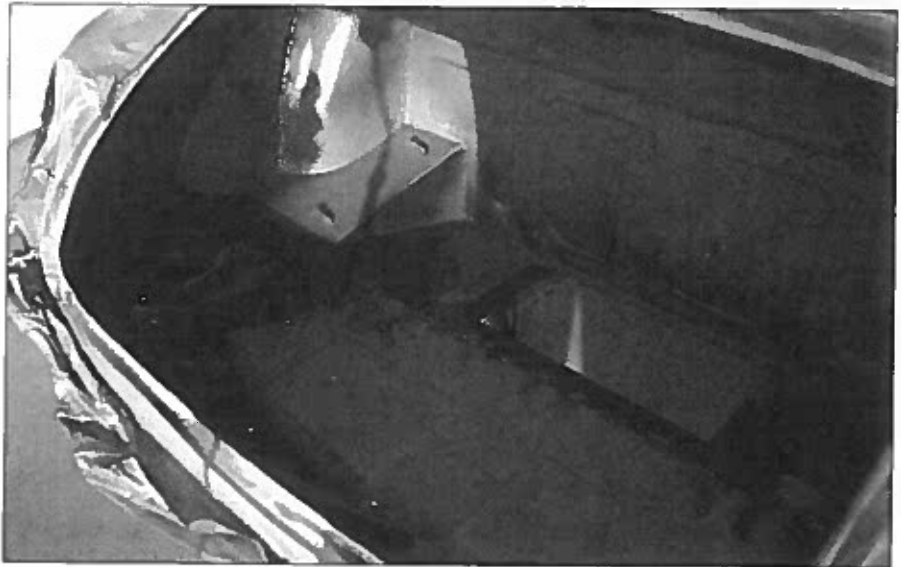
Our Healey's fuel tanks not only gobble up much of the boot area, but they also trap moisture between themselves and the floor on which they rest. Both tank and floor will corrode, and gas fumes in the boot may signal a perforated tank bottom. The front of the tank drops through a large opening ahead of the rear frame member, providing a convenient location for the drain bolt. Once drained, removal is accomplished by releasing the nuts which hold the metal straps to the floor and disconnecting the rubber coupling to the filler tube, the fuel line, and the wire to the sending unit. Now's the time to enjoy inspecting, cleaning, and if needed, repairing that old tank. Mine had at least an inch of sludge at the bottom but appeared to be solid. It was cleaned out at a commercial metal stripping facility after which a few tiny perforations appeared near one corner. I filled these with solder, then applied a tank coating to the interior, resulting in an effective repair to date. If your tank looks bad and you're not so cheap as I am, new ones are available. And remember, never apply heat to a fuel tank that is not absolutely clean and free of gas vapor or your next Healey bench racing session may be with the founder himself!

With the tank out, the various trunk logs and Armacord lining are more easily expelled. Disconnect the rear portion of the wiring harness and withdraw at least the lower two lamps to provide a clear working area. Gather your various implements of destruction and get ready to say farewell to that rusty old boot bottom!

Extracting a Corroded Floor

A good place to begin extracting your Healey's corroded boot floor is at the rear where it's connected to the bottom of the shroud by numerous rivets. To avoid enlarging the holes in the shroud, use a sharp centerpunch and drill the rivets out with an appropriately sized bit (about 1/8") or grind off the forward ends of the rivets beneath the trunk. The same floor flange which is riveted to the shroud continues around to the sides where it's spotwelded to the inner fenders. One way to better find all these spotwelds is to clean the welded area of rust and paint, using a small wire wheel fitted to a drill. Drilling the welds from the outside of the inner fender panels provides holes for mig welding the new floor into place. A centerpunch is again useful to position the drill bit, and a chisel may be needed to separate the panels but should be used moderately to prevent distortion.

The forward part of the boot floor isn't damaged and is welded over the rear frame member, two rectangular extensions of the forward floors which are next to the spring boxes, and curved flanges which extend rearward from the bottoms of the spring boxes. The floor is slotted to fit around the



Top: New floor welded in place. Bottom: Boot area with new floor and paint.

bumper supports where they attach to the spring boxes. These slots are flanged and welded to the bumper supports beneath the floor. Deterioration is often present around the bottoms of the bumper supports due to poor sealing of the joined pieces.

Drilling Out Spotwelds

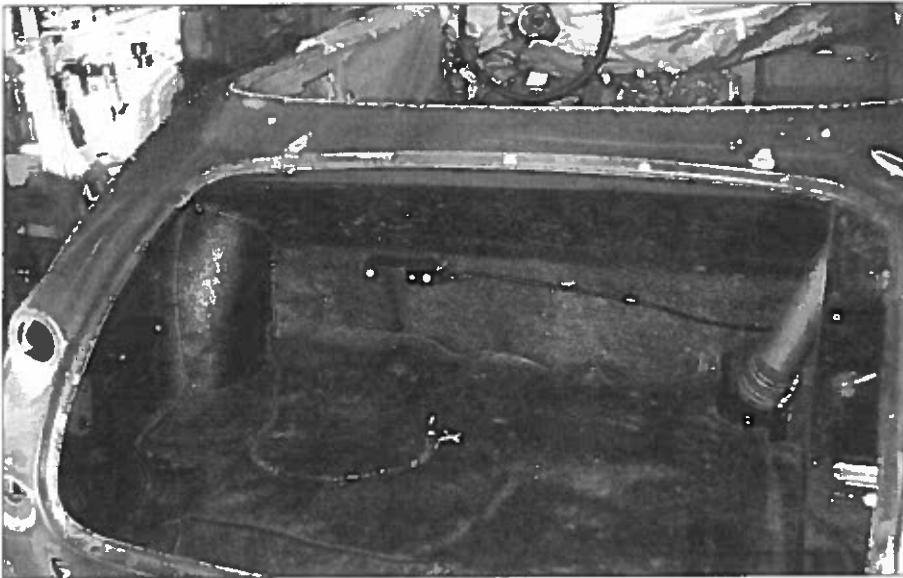
The spotwelds holding the floor to the curved flanges at the spring boxes may be drilled from above and below. These areas can be tricky, and caution will help keep the flanges intact. The spring box flanges and even the spring boxes may be rotted in rustier examples. A die grinder with a thin cutting wheel and a chisel will separate the old floor from the bumper supports. Other areas where careful use of the cutting wheel, drill, and chisel will prevent the need for excess reconstruction are the "feet" which connect the three braces from the rear of the shroud to the floor. The feet of the two outer braces, especially the one beneath the battery support in a four-seater, are least

accessible to a drill. I cut around them from below, then separated the attached pieces of old floor after the main part of the floor was removed. Be sure to measure the distance from the bottom of the center brace to the front of the boot, because this brace will interfere with the fuel tank if it's welded too far forward on the new floor.

There are rows of spotwelds inboard of the spring boxes where the boot floor attaches to the two rectangular extensions of the forward floors. Use the spotweld cutter from above to avoid damaging these extensions underneath; then fire up the die grinder and cut through any additional welds joining the floor to the spring boxes and the welds holding the floor to the central portion of the rear frame member. Now the old floor should be free. Any areas which won't move freely need to be examined and remaining attachments severed. Cutting away the outer portions of the floor from its center section might also aid in the floor's removal.

The Gaping Hole Needs Filling

Congratulations! You now have a gaping hole where that rusty old floor once lived. Grind away the remnants of the old floor, and clean surface rust off with a drill-mounted wire wheel. Before welding the new floor over these cleaned surfaces, apply a metal treatment and a tough, corrosion resistant primer such as an epoxy type. My Healey's new boot bottom was provided by one of the very large American distributors of British parts and was manufactured by S.C. Parts Group, LTD. in Great Britain. Similarity to the new floor, quality of manufacture and fit were all excellent. It's wise to put a coat of good quality primer on the new floor before its installation, but places which will be welded should be marked and left unpainted, or cleaned of paint, prior to welding.



Original Armacord was cleaned and refitted after dropping in renewed fuel tank.

As the shop manual always says, replacement is the reverse sequence of removal, and in actuality it's almost that simple. The holes left by drilling through the inner fenders, spring box flanges, and feet at the bottom of the three braces can now be used for "plug welding" with the mig welder, although many of these small holes must be enlarged somewhat to allow good welds. Pre-drill the new floor where it sits on the rectangular extensions of the forward floors, then plug weld to mimic the original pattern of spot welds. Finishing the welds with a small electric angle grinder saves your air compressor from the burden of constantly running a die grinder. Before any welding is done, be sure the new floor is correctly fitted along all edges and high enough at the rear where it joins the bottom of the shroud and the inner fenders. The feet of

the three braces must be snug to the floor and the center brace positioned rearward enough to clear the fuel tank. Jacks and wood blocks can be used to support the floor while it's held against the shroud inner fenders with an army of clamps.

Final Touches

After carefully fitting and welding the other parts of the panel, the flanges on each side of the bumper supports can be hammered over the supports and welded to them. With clamps placed between the holes at the bottom of the shroud to hold it fast to the rear flange of the new floor, drill the flange to accept rivets. The factory used solid head "bucking" rivets here. Because I couldn't find duplicates of the originals, $\frac{5}{32}$ " short reach aluminum pop rivets were employed. These gave a very tight fit between panels; tediously filling and sanding their 19 little hollow heads provided an original appearance. Big Healeys were assembled with loads of seam sealer in the trunk area, and I used even more, applying 3M® Fast 'N Firm sealer from above and below along all seams. Flat-headed studs similar to those holding the BJ8's rear exhaust bracket couldn't be located, so new studs made from bolts were welded in after determining the best position for the new bracket. Surface corrosion anywhere in the boot and on the outside of the inner fenders was wire wheeled away, and epoxy primer applied prior to a top coat of urethane enamel.

The final result? A like-new boot with a solid bottom just waiting to be filled up with fuel tank, spare tire, battery, jack, tool kit, and any miscellaneous piece of small luggage that can fit among all that other stuff!

Rear Wheel Arch

Always verify the fit before covering.

Completed rear wheel arch on the interior of John Lore's BN7.

By John Lore, Editor, Gateway Healey Association newsletter, Side Curtain News

Having just completed installing the rear wheel arch interior pieces on my Austin-Healey BN7, it occurred to me that others might have the same problems I did. With this article I hope to simplify this project.

More often than not, the rear wheel arches on your BN6 or BN7 roadster are probably rotten. Pushing on the vinyl panels while listening and feeling the crunch of rotten wood can confirm this. If your car ever got caught out in the rain without the top up, or tonneau cover on, more than likely the wood got wet. Eventually it'll rot. It's just part of the ambiance of owning a British sports car. In fact, the rotting wood probably contributes to that wonderful aroma we all love. None of the

wood pieces I've found had any wood preservatives applied.

The wood pieces can be readily purchased from British Car Specialists. There may also be other sources. The interior panel kit I purchased from Moss Motors had some of the wood pieces, but not all of them, and no instructions on how to assemble the rear wheel arch covers. As far as I know this procedure is the same for BN6s and BN7s.

Using British Car Specialists' lettering scheme to identify the parts (this can be found on page 43 of their catalog) the parts are labeled as such:

- Top piece - A,
- Striker Post - B,
- Brace for plywood - C,
- Brace for plywood - D,
- Plywood Panels E & F*—(The panels E & F were included in my Moss Motors interior panel kit. All others I had to purchase separately.)

Looking at Figure 1. You'll find Plywood Panel E with Top Piece A, Striker Post B and Brace for plywood D nailed and glued in place. It's not uncommon to have to make minor adjustments to some of the pieces. If you look closely at Striker Post B, you'll notice I shaved a little off the bottom to fit around the plate on the sill that supports the door surround. Also, I had to cut a little off panel E to conform to the floor pan. Actually, I found the parts fit pretty well. Of course, once these parts are covered and mounted in the car none of these parts are visible.

I used Weldwood's contact cement with small nails to secure the pieces. On parts that are bent, I used small wood screws with clamps. It's important to note that you have to remove the aluminum door trim panels in order to remove the striker post. As far as I know, only three or four wood screws are needed to secure the assembly to the door. I did find a wood screw

coming up from the bottom of the top piece, indicating it may have been installed first. If that's true, how could you cover it? I really believe only the striker post screws are needed.

Looking at Figure 2 you can see how the F plywood panel bent around the C brace. The 1/8" plywood bends quite easily. Here is where you'll need glue and wood screws to hold the panel in place. Don't forget to counter sink the drilled holes to provide a smooth surface for the vinyl covering. The black cardboard panel was supplied in the Moss kit. I mounted the C brace slightly below the black panel board arch to allow room for the F panel, again to provide a smooth surface for covering.

Figure 3 shows how the panels fit together. It's very important to verify the fit on the car and make minor changes before covering.

Once the panels are covered separately they are joined together at brace D and installed in the car. In Figure 4 you can see that by screwing three or four wood screws into the striker post (through the metal door trim bracket) both of the pieces will be secured to the car. In Gary Anderson's book *Authentic Restoration Guide Austin-Healey 100/100-6/3000*, on page 117 (upper photo), I see a chrome screw at the base of the wheel arch. I'm not sure that is really necessary or original, but it would help hold the completed arch panels in place.

John Lore, member AHCA and editor of the "Side Curtain News" newsletter of the Gateway Healey Association, St. Louis Missouri.

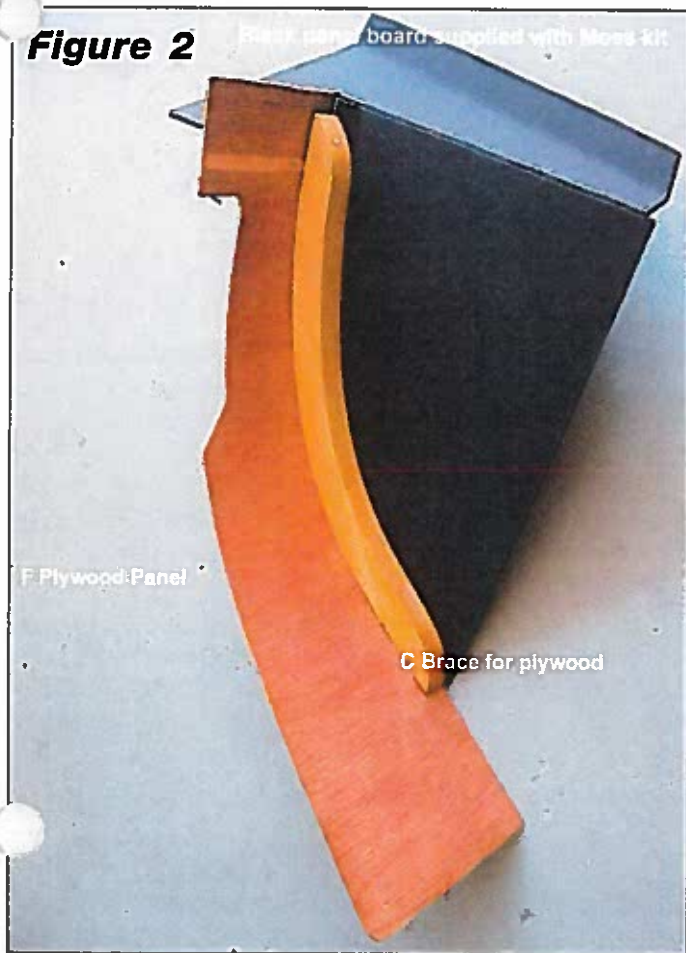
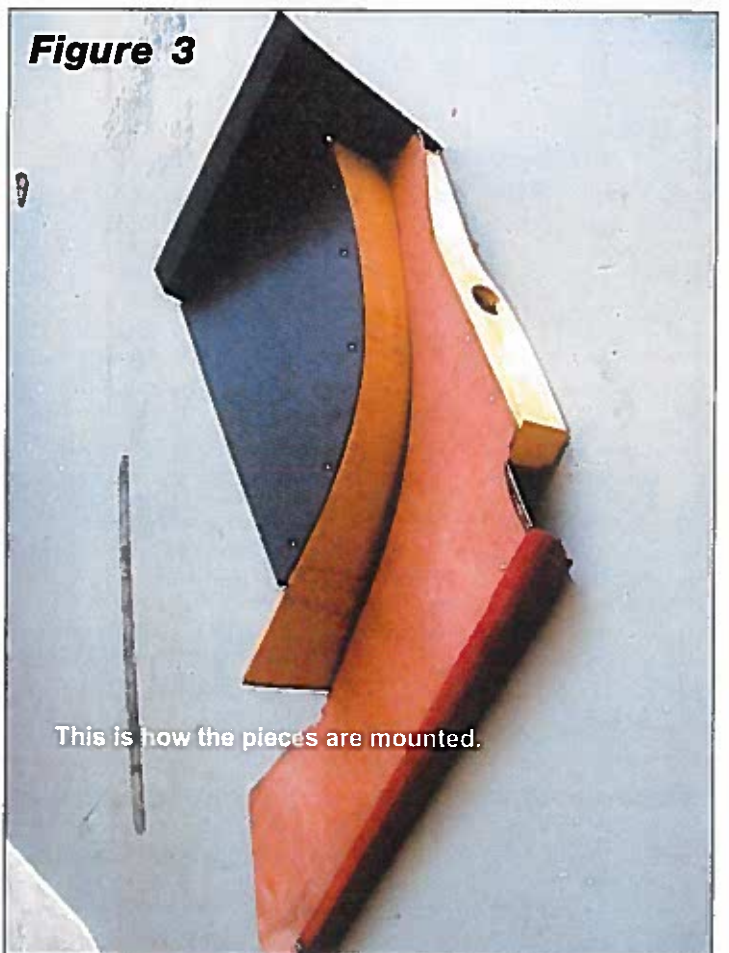
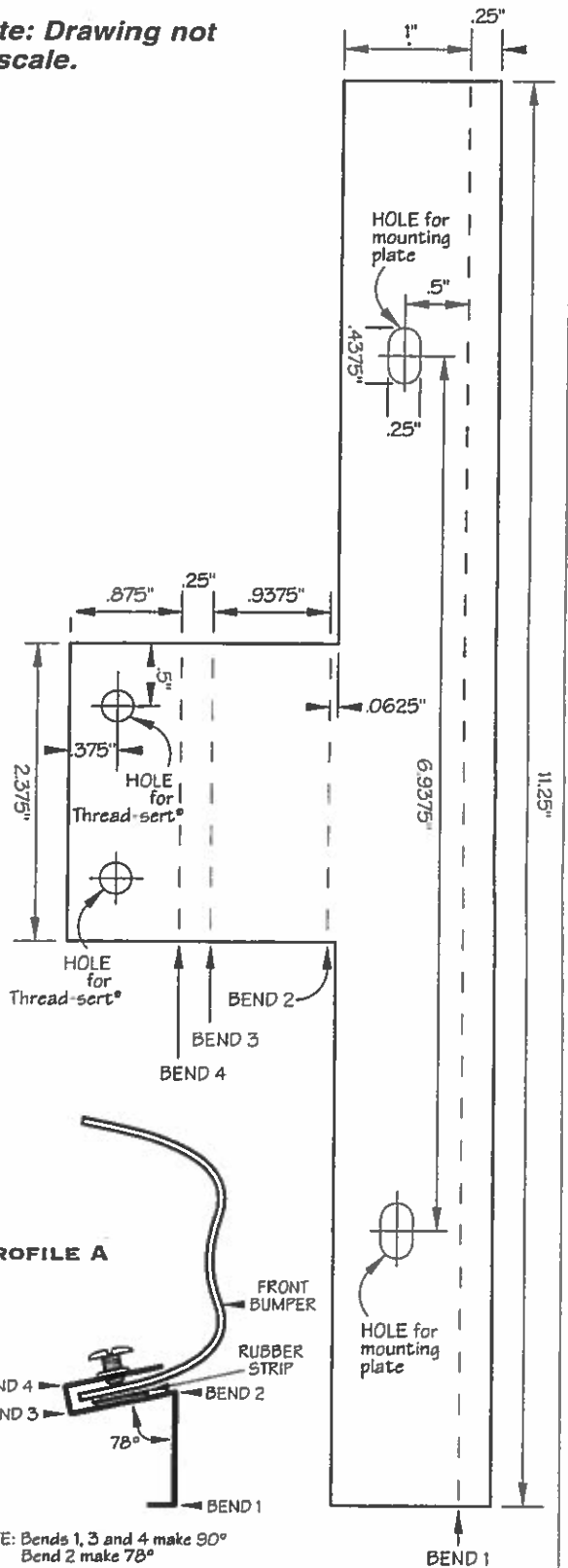


Figure 2

Figure 3

Front License Plate Bracket Plan

Note: Drawing not to scale.



A Front License Plate Bracket Without Drilling Holes in the Bumper

by Barry Lau

Midwest Region AHC

Are you thinking of replating the front bumper of your Healey or want to repair those holes that were drilled to mount the front license plate?

Here's a simple solution if you want to keep your bumper original and looking good!

1. Cut a "T" shape out of 18 gauge steel following the diagram (a small sheet can be purchased from Eastwood by mail order)

2. After drilling the holes as indicated, file or sand any burrs that might exist.

3. Attach two "Thread-ert"® fasteners (size 6-32) at the area shown. (These are fantastic, blind rivets with built-in threads, allowing bolts to be fastened into metal too thin for threading.)

4. Bend where indicated using a bending tool matching to profile A.

5. Spray paint with primer and gloss black enamel. Using two stainless machine screws (1/4"-32) as shown, mount bracket to bumper. Note: also adding a strip of thick rubber will give extra grip after mounted.

Reprinted from Wing Notes with thanks. -Ed.

Boot Lock Disassembly and Re-Assembly

Roger Momen
Boulder, Colorado


Q Back when I got a new ignition switch for my 100, it came with a matching tumbler for the boot. Now I can't figure out how to get the boot handle apart to install the new tumbler so that the ignition key will fit both the ignition and the boot lock. Is this possible to disassemble the boot handle without destroying the lock?

A To take the boot handle apart so that you can install new tumblers do the following:

1. There is a cast cup that slides up on the square shaft. It is held by four peened areas on the shaft corners. The cup actually has a spring on the inside that pushes it back against the peenings. You need to hammer back the peenings or grind them away. Hammering is preferred, as you'll need the metal to re-peen when you're all done.
2. Once the cup can slide down the shaft, the bezel will slide off as well.
3. The chrome handle is held to the shaft by a small pin that goes through its boss. Drive this out carefully and don't lose it.
4. There is a sliding cast piece that the tumbler operates. Watch for it when you remove the tumbler and note the orientation of all parts as you take them apart.
5. There is a second small pin that retains the tumbler towards its end. This is well offset from the axis of the handle (the pin actually rides in a groove in the tumbler casting). Drive the pin out carefully and don't lose it.
6. You need a key that works the tumbler to remove it. Insert the key and turn the tumbler. Then draw the tumbler out of the handle.
7. To re-key the tumbler you first need to be sure that it is the same series as the ignition. There were FA series key numbers on 100, FP on 6-cylinder roadsters and FS on the 6-cylinder convertibles. If you don't have a tumbler with the same series letters as your ignition – and you'll know if your ignition key doesn't slide into the slot – then you'll have to find a boot tumbler of the proper series, or perhaps adjust it to match the ignition key.
8. To re-key a tumbler, grab one of the protruding brass parts that slide in the housing with a grippy pliers and pull firmly. It will come out. There is a small spring under the tab that protrudes from one side. This will likely remain in its hole. Watch that you don't lose it. When a key is inserted it draws the tumbler into the slot – how far depending on the notches in the key. You can find

other brass pieces that will be correct for your key from other locks (they don't have to be boot locks). Just swap out the specific ones you need. You may also be able to interchange some that are already in place in your tumbler. If you can't find a brass piece with the proper configuration to perfectly fit that position in the tumbler, use one that pushes through too far and file the slot appropriately with a jeweler's file so that with the key inserted the ends are flush with the tumbler surface. **DO NOT** file the protruding part of the brass pieces. When you are ready to try the new brass piece, just push it back into the slot. It will snap "home" and have the proper easy sliding range.

9. To reinsert the tumbler, insert the key and slide it into the handle housing, being sure to engage the sliding bar in the handle. Then press the retaining pin home.

I've re-keyed many locks this way and had no trouble. The most difficult part is finding the drive pins and getting them out without losing them. On re-assembly you'll need to hold the cast cup firmly against the bezel/base so that the spring is compressed while you re-peen the shaft edges. If you're creative enough to get that far in the process, you'll figure out a way to do this last step. 

Scuttle Vent for Your Healey

Gary Hodson
Bonner Springs, Kansas
Austin-Healey Club of Kansas City

Many of the factory racecars were fitted with scuttle vents to provide additional ventilation air to the interior in an attempt to reduce cockpit temperatures. The original vent consisted of a scoop in front of the windscreen and a shallow pan under the scuttle with two openings to let air into the cockpit, and a tube in the bottom of the pan to drain off any rainwater. In modifying my Healey we duplicated this concept except that we made the pan deeper and added a damper to shut off the air in cold or rainy weather. The damper is opened and closed by a "PUSH" knob located to the left of the center console and below the instrument panel. **HM**



One of many mods to Gary's Healey, this PUSH knob opens and closes the scuttle vent.



Looking very factory-correct, the scuttle vent adds to the factory competition car look of his Healey.

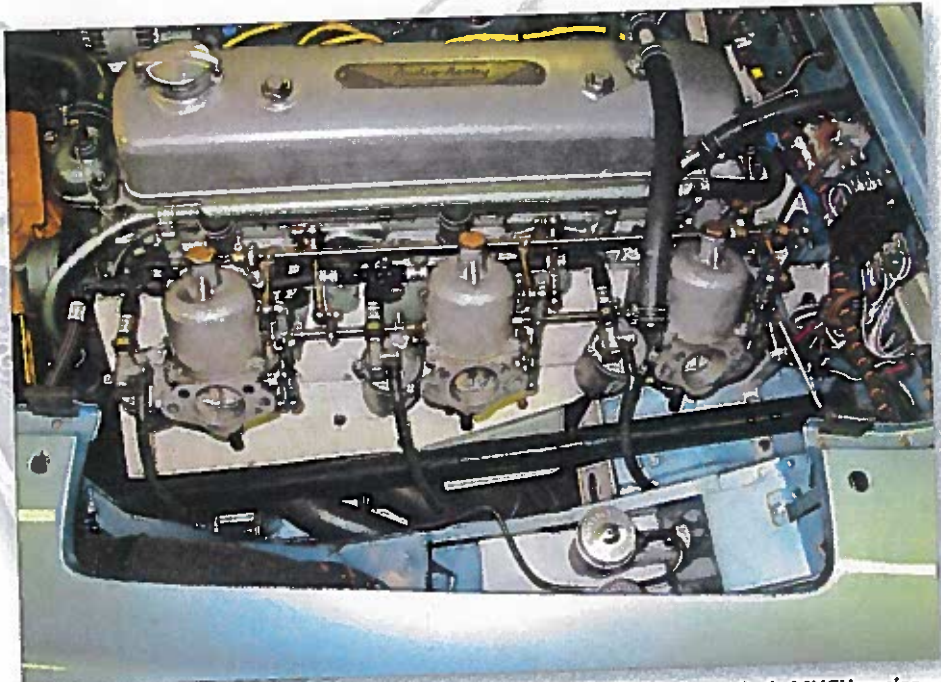
Scuttle vent sub-surface portion under construction.

Carburetor Access Panel

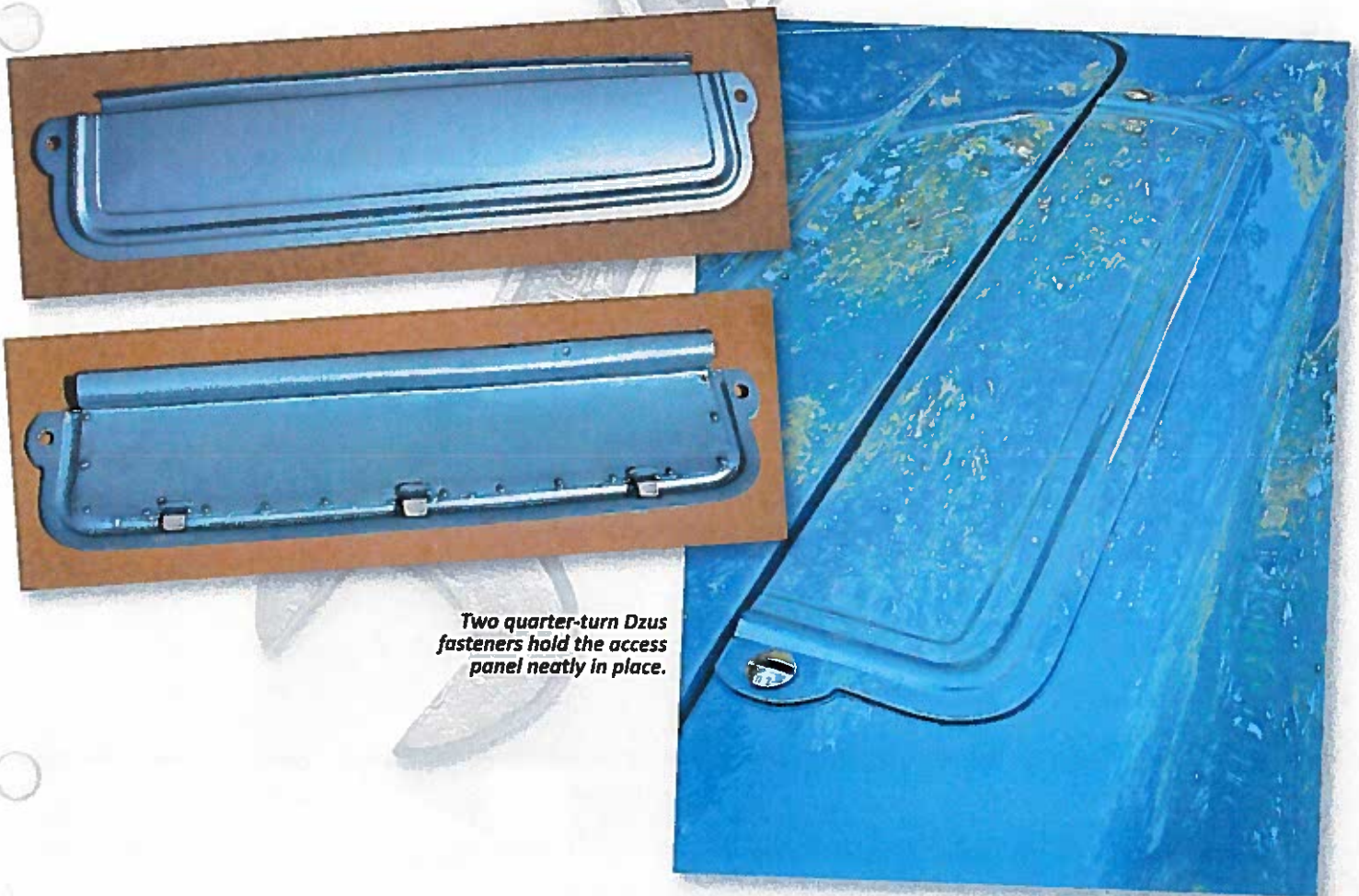
Gary Hodson
Bonner Springs, Kansas
Austin-Healey Club of Kansas City

Many of the factory competition cars were fitted with a carburetor access panel to facilitate working on the carbs. I suspect that the pit crews were responsible for suggesting this modification. They're very practical, and I also just like their looks.

This is the one I made for my Healey. It's held in place by two quarter-turn Dzus fasteners. **HM**



With the access panel removed, getting hands and tools near the carbs is MUCH easier, such as for removing the air filters.



Two quarter-turn Dzus fasteners hold the access panel neatly in place.