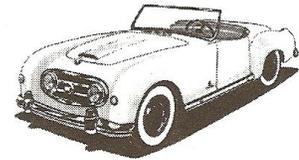


# *Mask Healey*

*May 2017*



*Newsletter*

## *Ruby at the California Mille 2017*



Jim Walton and son, Gordon enjoying the sights on the California Mille April 23- 27, 2017. They were accompanied on their journey by a variety of pre 1958 cars including Alfa Romeos, Jaguars, Mercedes Benz, Ferrari, Bentley to name a few Ruby completed the rally without a hitch, using only an estimated 60% of her available power. Well done !!

The 27th Anniversary of the California Mille. One of the premier vintage motoring events in the world – 1000 miles over 4 days on California's best backroads.

The event is open to any and all cars that did, or could have, participated in the original Mille Miglia during the years of 1927-57, and can be of foreign or domestic manufacture.



# 1953 Nash-Healey Roadster

**John Gunnell** AUTHOR

THIS ARTICLE ORIGINATED IN SPEEDVILLE



It is the almost-perfect collector car, but Jim Rugowski's love affair with the Nash-Healey started long before he owned one. In 1954, Jim took a photo of a Nash-Healey LeMans coupe at the Lincoln Park Field House, in Manitowoc, WI, the town he grew up in. He still has the faded, curly-edged, black-and-white Brownie print showing the coupe that imbedded itself in his psyche 50 years ago. Jim now has a real car to go with it.

Jim's white Nash-Healey roadster may well be the *perfect* collectible vehicle. It features American power and running gear, Italian design and British chassis construction. The Nash-Healey is roomy and provides ample trunk space. With its big Nash Ambassador six, it can really move; with overdrive it produces excellent highway mileage, bettering that of many four-cylinder cars.

The roots of the Nash-Healey story can be traced back as far as World War I, when Royal Air Force pilot Donald Healey developed a taste for speed. By the end of World War II, Healey was managing director of the Donald Healey Motor Company of Warwick, England, a firm that produced limited-production sports-racing cars. American sportsman Briggs Cunningham, who wanted to win LeMans with an American entry, took a liking to the Healey Silverstone and commissioned Healey to build him one with a Cadillac V8.

Cunningham's car came out terrific and Healey decided to travel to the United States to visit General Motors in a quest to purchase engines for a new series of cars. While sailing aboard the Queen Elizabeth, Healey struck up a conversation with a man who had a mutual interest in cameras. The man turned out to be George Mason, the president of Nash-Kelvinator Corp.

Mason invited Donald Healey to come to his cabin that evening for a cocktail. Naturally, the reason for Healey's trip to America came out. Mason offered to let Healey stay at his Detroit home while he was in the area. He also told the British car builder that Nash would be interested in supplying engines if General Motors wasn't. In Detroit, Healey met with Ed Cole, general manager of Cadillac and his request to purchase engines was denied.

After car serial number N2250 and engine number N1163 the engine grew from the previous 3.8-liter job to 4.1 liters. The bigger in-line six had a 3.50 x 4.37-inch bore and stroke and displaced 252.6 cu. in. With its 8.25:1 compression ratio, it developed 140 hp at 4000 rpm. Starting with serial number N2310, the British S.U. carburetors were replaced by a pair of Carter YH sidedraft carbs. The engine was linked to a three-speed manual gearbox. Nash stuck to a 6-volt electrical system.

The Nash-Healey was one of only 17 cars finishing the French Grand Prix out of a starting field of 58 entries. This was an impressive performance, with the "Kenosha Cadillac" besting most of Europe's leading marques.

The LeMans coupe, added in January 1953, was a larger car and did not perform as well in racing, despite its competition-inspired name. It did, however, embody a beauty of line that few other cars of the era could match.



Jim Rugowski's white 1953 roadster is of the second-generation type. It has serial number 421, engine number 1421 and chassis number 2404. The car has the beautiful aluminum cylinder head. According to the history Jim received, the car is unrestored. It had 82,000 miles on the clock when Rugowski bought it

Rugowski says that he likes the fact that the car has an all-American drive line and that it's a '50s-era sports car. "I don't know which of these points I like best," he admits. Jim also does a lot of touring with the Fox Cities British Car Club based in Oshkosh, WI. The Nash-Healey has also put in appearances at Road America and at the British Car Field Days in Sussex, WI.



# Nash Healey at Le Mans

## Bert Hadley by Peter Richardson

Healey owners will remember Bert Hadley for partnering Leslie Johnson in the 1953 Le Mans 4.1 streamlined Nash-Healy in which they came 11th overall at 92.5 mph. Bert had made his name at Austin with the pre-war blown A7 single-seater "works" racers. Leslie Johnson, Chairman of E.R.A., had already driven Nash-Healeys in the 1952 Le Mans beating 2 Mercedes-Benz 300SL's and coming 3<sup>rd</sup> in a "Nash Healey!"

Bert Hadley had driven a "100" a couple of months earlier in the Mille Miglia but had to retire with a mechanical malady in its first "works" entered competition. The 1953 was the first outing at Le Mans for a pair of the new Healey 100s and the last for the "old guard" Warwick design. Hadley had been apprenticed to Austin in the Experimental & Racing Department and soon began an eventful competition career in racing, rallies and trials.

The Pre-War Austin 7 Club Ltd has published a biography "Bert Hadley – A Son of Birmingham" and it is fully reviewed in the VSCC Bulletin Spring 2014. It covers his schooling, competition and war career, together with his later involvement with the restoration of Wheatcroft's racing A7s.

(220 pages. Soft cover. Many black and white illustrations. Published by: The Pre-War Austin Seven Club. Price £18 including UK post and packing from Graham Beckett, 77 All Saints Lane, Nettleham, Lincoln. LN2 2NG. ISBN 978-0-9572426-2-3)

[Watch the brilliant 1953 Le Mans video here!](#)



Nash Healey Le Mans 1953  
Bert Hadley & Leslie Johnson finished 11<sup>th</sup>



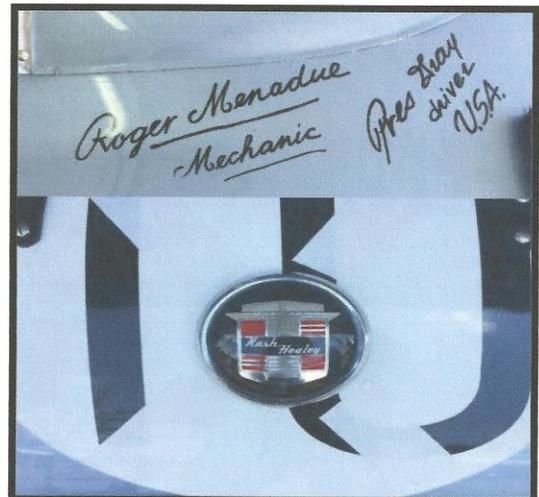
Nash Healey Le Mans 1952 - pictured in the pits at Le Mans Classic 2014 - but unfortunately did not race

## 1952 Le Mans Nash Healey – 3<sup>rd</sup>!!!

After being badly damaged and written off in the Mille Miglia, Roger Menadue describes what happened: "With less than 2 weeks to go I said that I could make another car body and all. Donald and Geoffrey both said, "Impossible, nobody could build a Le Mans race car complete with body in less than two weeks." I said, "Maybe not, but I can." They said, "Don't be ridiculous." I said, "You two will not have any say in the building, either. I can't have people arguing. I will never get it done." They knew that they couldn't argue with me and had to give in. They were furious especially Donald and more so when I had it ready on time. But worse was to follow."

"In the Race, my car beat every other car in the race including one of the three works Mercedes. I beat the Ferraris, the Jaguars, Aston Martins, Cunninghams, Talbots. You name them, I beat them."

*Roger Menadue, Experimental Chief*



Passionate about racing cars of the fifties, [Jose Fernandez](#) owns the unique Nash Healey Le Mans 1952 signed by Roger Menadue

# '52 Nash-Healey—A Multinational Sports Car Rocks a Big Car Show

By Jerry Sutherland  
Contributing Writer



Nash was a car maker known more for function over form in the 50s.

'Healey was known for form and function and Italians focus on form.'

This is the perfect combination for a very cool ride. Ron Brookes is the proud owner of a 1952 Nash-Healey so he knows how well that combination works in practice. He's a resident historian on these unique cars and he's very willing to explain how they came to be part of automotive folklore.



He talked about the Nash power train connection to Donald Healey and how this British-American partnership added an Italian connection in the design and handcrafted build of the bodies. Ron added, "they only built 506 and there are 300 left—8 in Canada". A Nash-Healey was also a movie star in the Humphrey Bogart—Audrey Hepburn movie "Sabrina" because these cars had that much presence when they came out.

This Nash-Healey was far from stock when Ron found it in California—he explained how "it had a roll cage and a big V-8 under the hood because they were racing it". Ron took it back to stock (Ambassador engine) and got it back on the road on July 1st. He was happy to report there wasn't any rust on this Texas to California car so the focus was on the mechanical side.

Nash-Healeys were built from a Nash parts bin so Ron pointed out the Metropolitan tail lights on this high-end sports car and the wheel covers are standard bolt-ons from Nash. There were two departures from stock—Ron went from the factory green "couldn't get a match" to red "you'll get prizes" and he runs an 8-volt battery for extra starting power because he says, "they're a little tough to start sometimes". Ron didn't bring this car back to factory condition to

turn it into a museum piece—this Nash-Healey is a driver within reason (too many rocks so it's trailered to shows) but he has done time behind the wheel. He pointed out a few practical limitations like the roof when it's up but he was happy to add he can "have it up in two minutes". He said Donald Healey wasn't very tall so taller guys literally look over the windshield in this roadster.

He likes to run this car at a comfortable 70 miles per hour and he said it, "feels good and handles very well because they were built to drive". He's a little less enthusiastic about the brakes because the described them as "adequate when they're adjusted".



There's a bonus feature that most Nash guys already knew about back in the 1950s and it's found in the gas mileage. Ron reported he gets "around 30 miles per gallon with a 3-speed overdrive" so this legendary sports car is actually practical.

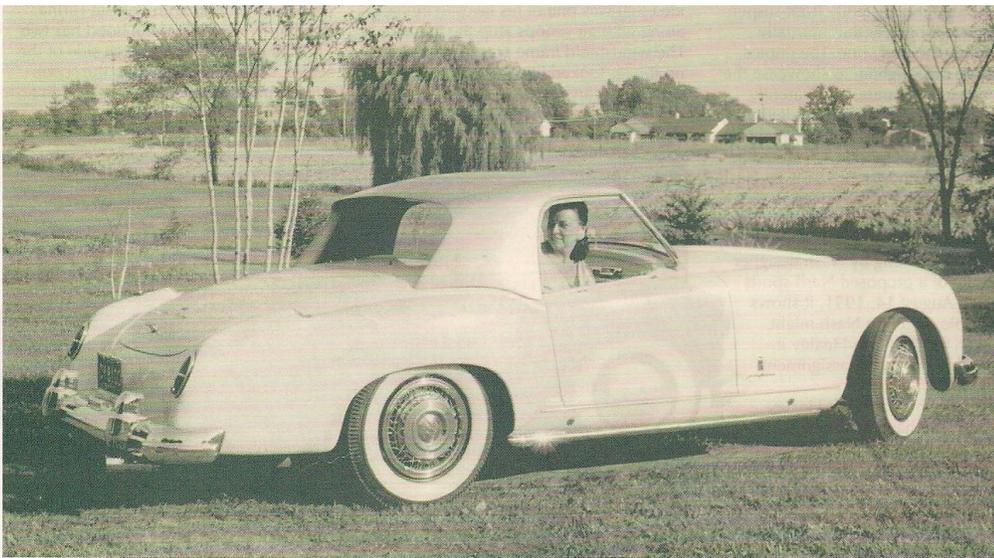
Ron is a self-described "huge Nash guy" so this car made a lot of sense from a purely historical point of view but it's provided a lot more than that to him. He's really enjoyed the challenge to bring this car back to stock and the notoriety it gets at shows. This car was surrounded by hardcore car guys who were amazed because they got to see a '52 Nash-Healey in person.

There was one other reason Ron took on the Nash-Healey project: "I'm retired, what the heck else am I going to do?"



**Auto Round-Up Publications welcomes our new Contributing Writer, Jerry Sutherland. "My Star Collector Car is here to tell your story because we are the voice of the average Joe." To see more of his articles visit [www.mystarcollectorcar.com](http://www.mystarcollectorcar.com)**

**For more articles, visit Auto Round-Up News online to view our archives at [www.autoroundup.com](http://www.autoroundup.com)**



The prototype removable pagoda-styled hardtop on this 1952 Nash-Healey roadster harmonized with the car's design perfectly

# *Nash* *Healey*

Removable  
Style  
Convertible  
Hardtop

**This photo is from a July 2006 edition of Hemmings Classic Car. Three of these were known to exist. Jim Walton recently had the one he has owned for more than 20 years for sale.**

*It was one of three custom hard tops ordered built by Nash Motors in 1954 to be fabricated by a California custom body shop as a prototype. It is currently disassembled but all the bits and pieces are there. It is steel and weighs about 20 lbs. The metalwork is fantastic and it attaches to the top of the windshield frame in the same way as the convertible top and attaches in the rear to the same hold downs as the convertible top. It comes with separate side curtains with sliding plexiglass windows. It has a headliner, a wraparound rear windshield, two opening 1/4 vent windows behind the door, and polished aluminum moldings for trim.*

*It requires no alteration to the stock body and/or its mechanisms and the convertible top can just stay folded as normal. It will require painting and new upholstery as well as polishing of the trim pieces.*

*We have no information on the whereabouts of the other two tops. The custom body fabrication shop where I bought the top was in California and I went by there when I first bought the car with it on it. I talked with the owner who was probably in his eighties at that time. He said he remembered having a contract with Nash Motors to build 3 of them for prototypes when he just worked there as a metal man. He later bought the shop when that owner died.*



We look forward to more info and photos of the top on it's new owners Nash Healey

## *Welcome to Our Newest Registered Owner*



The Nash Healey Registry is pleased to welcome Anne and Dan Russell to the group. They are about to begin restoration of this 1954 Coupe previously owned by Anne's father. We have had no knowledge of this car since the 1970's and are pleased it has survived. We look forward to updates on the restoration.

## *Upcoming Events*



Join the Golden Gate Austin Healey Club for Monterey International Healey Week 2017 in Monterey, California, **September 11-15**, while we commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of Big Healey production. Based at the beautiful Hyatt Regency Monterey Hotel with restaurant, sports bar, two swimming pools and spas, and golf course, this location offers opportunities to explore Cannery Row, Big Sur coastline, 17-Mile Drive through Pebble Beach and Pacific Grove, the charming town of Carmel, Monterey Bay Aquarium, whale watching, numerous wineries. More info and registration at <http://www.healeyweek2017.com/>



## *Nash* Centennial Celebration

### 2017 GRAND NASHIONAL

Hosted by Northeast Wisconsin Region

**June 21-25, 2017**

**Manitowoc, WI**

Host Hotel

*Holiday Inn Manitowoc Hotel*

More info and registration : [2017grandnashional.weebly.com](http://2017grandnashional.weebly.com)



## **2017 Austin-Healey Conclave** **Waco, Texas July 9-14, 2017**

# ***Nash Healey Registry Update***

The Nash Healey Registry currently has a total of 168 Registered cars. There seems to be a few cars trading hands and we appreciate that you are sending us this information and putting us in touch with the new owners in order to keep the Registry current. We have added a couple of cars to list of those we believe to still be in existence from the cars showing up at auction which we were not previously aware of.

Also, we are always looking for your stories and photos to share in the newsletter. We encourage everyone to participate and make our newsletter better and more informative

As always, we appreciate any information you come across in regards to unregistered cars. With your assistance, we are trying to create a historic record of the Nash Healeys produced.

Please contact me at [nashhealeyregistry@gmail.com](mailto:nashhealeyregistry@gmail.com)

## ***Items for sale***

Drive straight, drive safe with a new Torque Tube Stabilizer Trunnion. Restore reliable and quiet driving. An old original stabilizer can cause the rear wheels to steer the car due to torque tube flex at the transmission. Old stabilizers will soften or crack from oil leaks and wear. An old trunnion can fail on the road. It may just come apart during transmission or engine repair. Stop trouble before it happens. A new replacement is precision molded to exact factory specs and made with high tech materials. Prevent sloppy steering, scraping noise and wandering when driving your 51-54 Nash Healey. Carry a spare. Nash never made replacements so we did. Heavy Duty, impervious to oil, heat, and high torque. New lifetime warranty.

Order by email from Bob Walker [ambo49@gmail.com](mailto:ambo49@gmail.com) or call 714 991 6260. See full description on our website [www.NashRamblerRubber.co](http://www.NashRamblerRubber.co)

## ***Items for sale***

Curved front windshields \$695.00 Curved rear windscreens 1953 Coupes \$695.00  
Rear windscreen weatherstrip \$450.00  
Extended front suspension caster adjusters \$450.00  
Billet steel front spring seats for one car \$825.00  
1. Currently sold out of Roadster Windshields (pending on a current sale) call for current status  
2. Only one Coupe Windshield left, call on this one  
Contact Jim Walton [nshjw@yahoo.com](mailto:nshjw@yahoo.com)  
Also Available Oversize king pins (.005or.010) \$200 set [denmca@comcast.net](mailto:denmca@comcast.net) 510-794-0968  
Items



[www.CranberryRunConstruction.com](http://www.CranberryRunConstruction.com)  
Reproduction Nash Healey Parts. They add items to their website regularly. Also if you are looking for something not on the website email Patrick McGrady [leonardmcgrady@gmail.com](mailto:leonardmcgrady@gmail.com)

## ***Items for sale Nash Healey Deck Lid Script***

Dennis Collins, Wylie, TX. Phone number **972.442.6189**. This script looks like the original. The attaching studs are in the same original location. The thickness of the lettering is as original as is the size and font of the lettering. Their price is



\$150.00 for the two pieces plus shipping

## ***The Nash Healey Newsletter***

is produced three times a year and distributed free of charge to Registered owners. If you are not registered please contact me in order continue receiving your copy. There are no fees associated with The Registry and strict privacy levels are maintained. Please contribute to the Newsletter by sending me your photos and stories. We appreciate all contributions and suggestions.

Contact Information Judy Brookes PO Box 6452 Hinton, Alberta Canada T7V 1X7 Telephone 780-865-7066 Or email [nashhealeyregistry@gmail.com](mailto:nashhealeyregistry@gmail.com)

## ***Nash Healey Resources***

If you are looking for information and connection to other owners check out the following websites.

1. The Nash Healey Discussion Group [nashhealey@yahogroups.com](mailto:nashhealey@yahogroups.com)
2. Larry Varleys site <http://www.acmefluid.com.au/nash/docs.html>
3. Phil Auldridges Nash Healey Owners site [www.NashHealeyOwners.com](http://www.NashHealeyOwners.com)