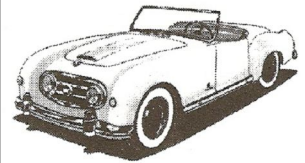


# Nash Healey



April 2013

Newsletter

## Nash Healey #1 restored to its former glory



The Nash Healey Registry includes many beautiful specimens of the marquee, but this newly restored 1951 may well be the loveliest of all.

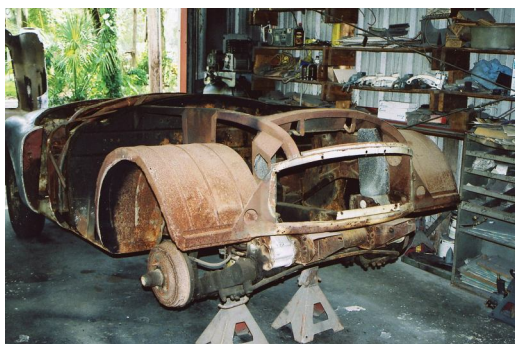
I was delighted when, about a year ago, this car was added to the Nash Healey Registry by Dennis Collins of Wylie, Texas. I was in awe, however, when I received the photos in December of the completed restoration

Many of you may have seen these photos and read about it when it appeared on the Hemmings Blog in January. Contact me at [jbrookes@moradnet.ca](mailto:jbrookes@moradnet.ca) if you would like a link to this great article. The car is listed for sale At the Worldwide Auction Houston Classic May 4 , 2013. Check out the fabulous brochure at [www.wwgauctions.com/](http://www.wwgauctions.com/).





This newsletter is a bit of a departure from the normal format. I was generously provided these fabulous photos as well as the restoration detail by Dennis Collins and the people at Worldwide Auctions and wanted to share as much as possible. What could possibly be more interesting to a group of Nash Healey Owners?



The car was acquired by Dennis Collins of Wylie, Texas in May 2010.

The car was promptly sent out for restoration to renowned Tsikuris Classics of Lakeland, Florida. What would become a two-year project was overseen by Emerson, a personal friend of Donald Healey, author of *The Healey Book* and former owner of two Nash-Healeys. Emerson worked with Donald Healey himself on one of his restorations, and has received a number of trophies for work on early Healeys.

#### Chassis

The chassis is the backbone of the automobile and during the restoration it forms that critical first skeletal piece to which all other pieces are attached. The restoration was begun by careful disassembly of this very first Nash-Healey down to the bare chassis. During the original building of the Nash-Healey, red oxide was used as a primer; however, over the years we have learned that this as a primer did not provide an adequate seal. In order to duplicate the chassis color, as it would have been when new, color plus flat paint was mixed to simulate the red oxide applied in the 1950s. Care was taken to "overspray" in areas that had been oversprayed on the cars during the disassembly. The final step was the painting of the chassis in semi-gloss black as was found on the car when new.

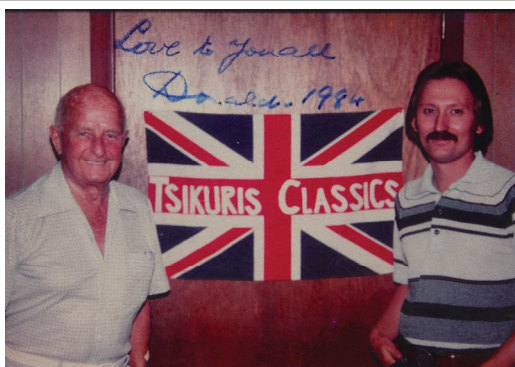
#### Suspension

The trailing arm suspension of the Nash-Healey is exactly the same as that found on "HEALEY" cars built between 1946 and 1953. This was a race-proved suspension that provided superior road holding and maintained its alignment even under adverse conditions. In order to obtain a full understanding of this unique type of suspension, assistance was obtained from the "Association Of Healey Owners" in England. This club had developed a highly detailed technical manual on the care and maintenance of the chassis, steering, and suspension. This manual included a step-by-step process for the disassembly and reassembly of the trailing arm suspension.

After disassembly all individual parts were crack tested, polished, new bearings installed, reassembled and remounted on the now restored chassis. It only takes a moment to write this, however it took hours and hours of careful hand polishing to obtain the desired results

#### Engine and Transmission

The engine and transmission of the Nash-Healey provided the easiest portion of the restoration since NOS Nash parts were still available from various collectors and dealers, including Blaser's Auto in Moline, Illinois, in particular. Researching just where to find these parts was sometimes a lengthy process but always resulted in success. The exception to Nash parts required for the engine was of course the SU carburetors, the same as found on Austin-Healeys, therefore they were familiar to this restoration shop. The battery in the Nash-Healey is an Auto-Lite as was used when the Nash-Healey was new, as Ford did not buy Auto-Lite until 1961.



This photo shows restoration specialist Paul Takuris with Donald Healey in 1984







Reassembled and ready for finishing

### Body

The body on Nash-Healey #2001 was in remarkable condition, with only two pieces missing: the front lip between the body and the bumper, and the covering for the transmission. The solution to this problem was solved by a trip to Maryland and a visit with famed Nash-Healey collector, Leonard McGrady. When looking at his collection of early Nash-Healeys, it was discerned that the first cars had a small lip between the body and the bumper, but after car number ten, a wider lip became standard. Measurements and patterns of the early lip were made so that this missing piece could be fabricated in aluminum in Florida. The second missing piece, the cover for the transmission, was lifted out of car number five by McGrady with this statement, "Take good care of this and return it after you have made a copy." The piece went in the car for a ride to Florida. A few weeks later the transmission cover was in the car bound for Maryland and a hearty "thank you" to Leonard McGrady for his trust and assistance in this restoration process.

### Paint

Choosing the right color for Nash-Healey #2001 was an easy task. Fortunately, there were numerous places on the body with the original color in places where it had not been subject to sunlight. The basic body, with the individual doors, was trucked across Florida to be painted at Fred's Healey Revival in New Smyrna Beach, Florida. Fred's has done all the Concours paint work for Tsikuris Classics since 1995. When the painting was completed and the paint had a month to harden, the restoration process continued.

### Glass

All glass was removed from the Nash-Healey. All chrome pieces surrounding the glass were sent out for re-chroming. The rubber seals around the windshield and vents had suffered from time and all were replaced. A slight delamination had occurred at the corner of some of the glass. This was replaced with new glass and duplicate Triplex date stamps were etched.

### Interior

Restoration of the interior centered on four different parts: the dashboard with its instruments, the steering wheel with its multiple components, the seats and finally the carpets.

It was fortunate that all the instruments were in the dashboard; unfortunately, none of them were working and all had to be sent out for rebuilding. During the lifetime of the car a radio had been installed in the area of the glove box and this area had to be reconstructed back to original. The final portion of the dashboard that required attention was the lighted turn indicator arm. Once again, through help of friends in the Nash Club an NOS replacement was located after a long search.

The steering wheel, chrome horn ring, and center-mounted overdrive drop-down switch were all obtained through the assistance of Leonard McGrady.

The biscuit color for the seats and interior panels was determined from a sizable piece of material located behind the dashboard, where it had never been exposed to sunlight. When received for restoration, the seats in the Nash-Healey were missing the center armrest. The solution was another quick drive to Maryland to photograph and measure the armrest in cars number five and seven and then back to Florida to fabricate the armrest mechanism. As received, the padding and covering of the seats provided good patterns for the fabrication of new seats. It was very fortunate in that all of the springs and sliding mechanism were in very good shape and only required a minimal amount of effort during the restoration.

The seats, carpeting and interior paneling were done by Rudy Bailey Interiors of Tampa Florida. In order to ensure a perfect fit for the paneling and the seats, he moved all his equipment from Tampa to Tsikuris Classics so that he would have constant access to the Nash-Healey. Since the car was handmade there were subtle differences in the measurements for each of the panels, and patterns had to be made for every piece. As can be seen, the seats have a very unique pattern with a cutout for the shift lever as well as the drop-down armrest. The boot area was also completely paneled and carpeted to match the original configuration. Carpeting is Wilton wool of a color carefully selected to complement the seats, paneling and dashboard.





Paul Tsikuris examining the old top.

### Top

The canvas top for the Nash-Healey was complete when the car arrived for restoration. The top mechanism and frame were all in working condition. The top canvas however had shrunk and was usable only as a general outline when making the new top. The wooden top bow that attaches the top to the windscreen had deteriorated and had to be re-fabricated. A three-dimensional copying machine was used to obtain an exact reproduction of the wood. This was done by making a pattern from the original in softwood and fitting this to the car. Once this final fitting to the car was done the softwood pattern was returned to the cabinetmaker where the final hardwood piece was fabricated. A complete top was made in vinyl, using the stitching patterns from the original, and fitted to the car to provide the pattern for the final canvas top. Fasteners were imported from England as exact matches to the original.

### The Result

Over two years went into the restoration of Nash-Healey #2001 and this historic automobile has now been restored to its original 1950 elegance. Knowing both Geoff and Donald Healey, the craftsman and historian fully appreciate the historic significance of this restoration effort. An incredible amount of effort by a great team resulted in this beautiful restoration of a significant milestone in automotive history.

What emerged after two years is nothing short of remarkable: Donald Healey's own Nash-Healey exactly as he built it, and as seen by 50,000 Americans in Miami in February 1951. Chevrolet's Corvette is touted as "America's sports car." It certainly is the most visible, but it wasn't the first. The Kurtis-Kraft Roadster and the Muntz Jet preceded the Nash-Healey, but they weren't production cars in any meaningful sense. The first genuine production American sports car, a car with a competition pedigree that you could buy from a hometown dealer, was the Nash-Healey.

This is the the very first Nash-Healey production car - Chassis #2001, Engine #1001, with a Panelcraft alloy body and built by hand. The limited production American-built sports car that repeatedly stood tall in international racing. In road trim they were 124 mph cars, and in race trim 144 mph cars, with no other American car even coming close. This car received a \$400,000 restoration, supervised by noted Nash-Healey Authority Bill Emerson and performed by marque specialist Paul Tsikuris.

Congratulations to Dennis Collins and his entire Restoration Team  
All eyes will be on the May 4 2013 Houston Worldwide Auction



Special Thanks to both Dennis Collins and the folks at Worldwide Auctions for sharing the information and photos with the Nash Healey Registry





## Dennis McAllisters 1952 Nash Healey



Here is Dennis McAllister's lovely 1952 Nash Healey. This car won the President's Award at the AMC Show in Sparks Nevada last summer. The insert is Dennis's 1953 hardtop.



## Reflections



Richard Kauffman of Lakeland, Georgia passed away September 8, 2012. Richard has owned his 1952 Nash Healey Roadster since 1965 and has been an avid supporter of all things Nash Healey. He began the second Nash Healey Car Club in 1970 and maintained it through 1974. His car appeared in numerous movies through the years.

As Summers Die 1986 With Jaimie Lee Curtis  
Gator 1976 starring Burt Reynolds  
Crow on a June Bug 1972

Our condolences to his wife of 55 years,  
Addie Jean and their family

## Upcoming Events

### 2013 AHCA Rendezvous

Lake Tahoe June 16-21, 2013

[www.rendezvous2013.com/](http://www.rendezvous2013.com/)

Numerous Nash Healey Registry members have expressed interest. This promises to be a great event. Early registration by April 30. Let's see how many Nash Healeys we can show at Lake Tahoe.

### Conclave Charlevoix 2013

June 23rd – 28th 2013

[www.austinhealeyconclave.com/](http://www.austinhealeyconclave.com/)

### 2013 Grand Nashional

held at the Clarion Hotel,

Batavia, New York on July 24-27, 2013.

Hosted by Niagara Frontier Region

## Registry Update

The Nash Healey Registry now has 144 registered vehicles. Our list of vehicles believed to still exist is at currently 376. We welcome our latest registered owner from Cyprus.

Please send your stories and photos to [jbrookes@moradnet.ca](mailto:jbrookes@moradnet.ca). We need your input to continue producing the Nash Healey Newsletter.

## Special Interest

Be sure to check out Larry Varley's website regularly for updates on the restoration of his 1954 Nash Healey.

<http://www.acnefluid.com.au/nash/nash3.html>

As well as documenting the restoration, Larry has posted a huge amount of Nash Healey documentation from various sources.

## Items for sale

### Nash Healey Deck Lid Script

available from 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

## Items for sale

I want to sell ORIGINAL PARTS FOR NASH HEALEY (CONVERTIBLE, COUPE' COUPE' LE MANS) 6 CYLINDERS NEW ORIGINAL NASH, 4 HUBCAPS STANDARD ORIGINAL NASH, 1 WATER PUMP NEW, TWO PLEXIGLASS WINDOW ORIGINAL PARTS PININ FARINA –TORINO, NASH EMBLEM. [davide.civiero@virgilio.it](mailto:davide.civiero@virgilio.it)

## Wanted: For 53 roadster

Nash ignition key blank, rear deck "flag" badge, rocker panel jack hole "plugs", windshield inner top trim, front grille badge and mounting escutcheon (from 51 Ambassador?), tail light lens, accessory pull switches from dash, switch knobs, door latch knobs, radio panel, steering wheel center (plastic boss and chrome retainer ring only - I have the OD button), and shift lever. John DeHaan, 707-642-8023, 2301 Alameda St., Vallejo CA 94590 or [jddehaan@fire-exforensics.com](mailto:jddehaan@fire-exforensics.com)

## Items for sale

### Nash Healey Drive Stabilizer Trunnions

**are back in stock. Restore straight safe driving. Prevent sloppy steering, wandering and certain drive line noises. Exact factory replacement for all 51-54. Nash never made spares so we did. \$219 Heavy Duty, lifetime warranty. Order by email from Bob Walker [ambo49@gmail.com](mailto:ambo49@gmail.com) or call 714 991 7070 For details go to our website [NashRamblerRubber.com](http://NashRamblerRubber.com)**

## Items for sale

**Billet steel machined lower front spring seats molded in urethane and many times stronger than the original. A serious safety item. \$695.00 per set**

1952-54 Nash Healey Roadster Windshields \$695.00

1953 Nash Healey Coupe back Windshields \$695.00

1953 & 1954 Nash Healey Coupe Windshields \$695.00

1954 Nash Healey Coupe back windshield weatherstrip. \$450.00

All Nash Healeys extended front suspension caster adjuster \$350.00

All Nash Healeys front stabilizer bar (3 times stiffer) \$395.00

Nash Healey rear motor mounts recast in urethane for \$95.00 each on an exchange basis only

Contact Jim Walton [nshjw@yahoo.com](mailto:nshjw@yahoo.com) or

## The Nash Healey Newsletter

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