



# 1967 Austin-Healey 3000 Mark III



“ If there had been 10,000 of them in New York the day the Austin Healey made its debut, 10,000 would have been sold before the sun went down.  
— Tom McCahill

owner BOB SQUIER  
photos WEST PETERSON



Donald Healey, an English car designer and engineer, introduced his most famous masterpiece at the 1952 London Motor Show, an economical 100mph sports car, a pale-blue Healey 100. After negotiations with the British Motor Company (BMC), it became the Austin-Healey 100, which were produced at a rate of about 200 per week and quipped with an Austin four-cylinder engine and a rakish windshield that slide down almost horizontally, making it look like was doing 100mph while sitting at the curb.

Mechanix Illustrated's scribe Tom McCahill penned, "NOT since the day Neville Chamberlin showed up at 10 Downing Street with his umbrella incorrectly rolled, has a more sensational shocker taken place than that caused by the birth of the new Austin Healey 100. The windscreen and bonnet boys of England's motordom were outrageously amazed at the reception accorded this upstart at Mr. Herbert Shriner's Second Annual International Motor Sports Show in New York."

With the U.S. market being the major sales target, in September 1956, the new BN4 100-6 was introduced, fitted with an aggressive 2.6-liter inline six-cylinder. The 100-6 engine differed from previous BMC powerplants in that its cylinder head required location of the cam to the opposite side of the block. In 1959, the 3000 series was third Austin-Healey model, and became the best known of the "big Healeys." The original 3000 was equipped with a 2.9-liter straight-six engine fitted with twin SU carburetors that produced 124 horsepower. Girling front disc brakes were standard, with adjustable steering, overdrive-equipped gearbox, wire wheels and two-tone paint available as options.

Different iterations were made between 1959 and 1967 with both two- and four-seat availability, with the 3000 MK II announced during 1961. Sporting triple SU carburetors and an improved camshaft, the 2.9-liter engine in the MK II produced 132 horsepower. The triple carburetors proved difficult to keep in tune, and in 1963, the last variant of the Austin-Healey 3000, the Mark III, was introduced. With a new center console, walnut-veneer dash, toggle switches, and optional leather seating, the Mark III proved to be the most luxurious of the 3000 line. It was also the most powerful, now producing 150 horsepower with upgraded twin SU carburetors and dual exhaust. In addition, and a new rear suspension improved ride quality and now came only with the 2+2 seating configuration (although the rear seats provide little, if no





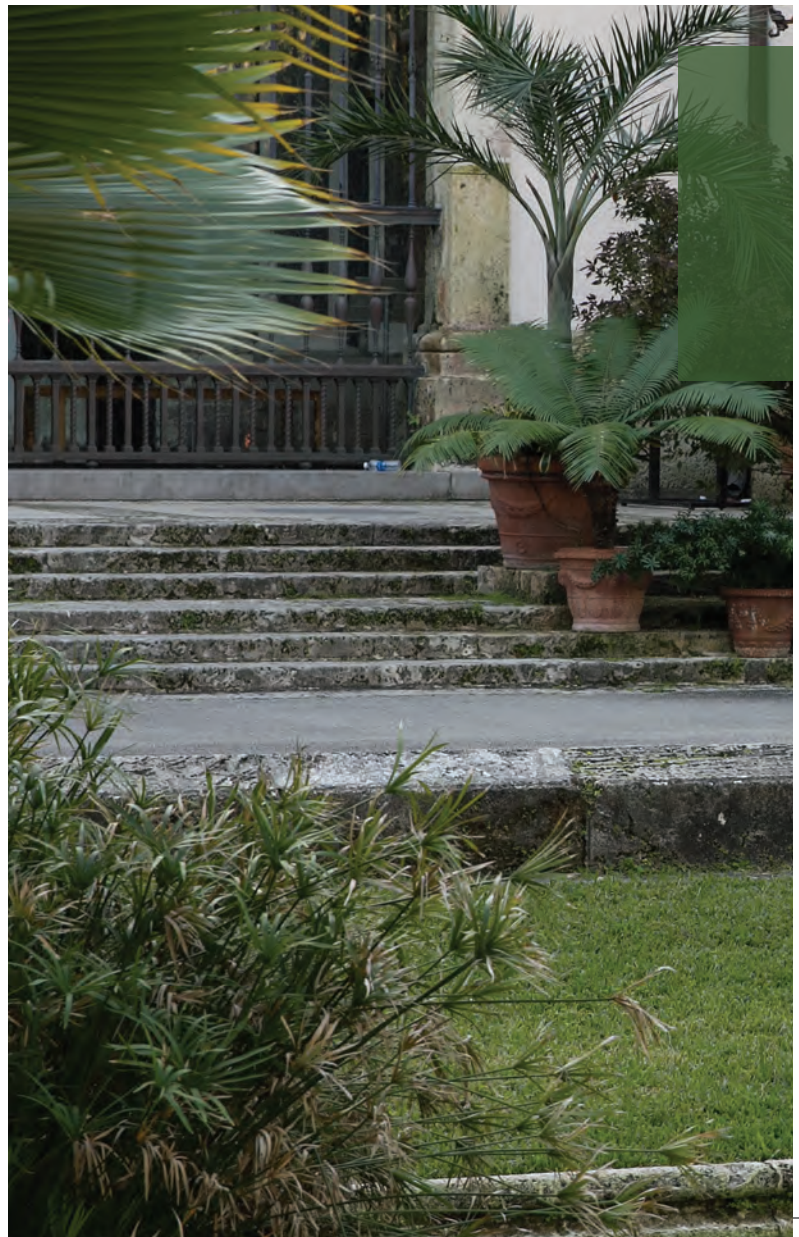
leg room whatsoever, but a couple of children could fit). Changes in 1962 included the introduction of wind-up windows, a wrap-around windscreen and updated grille.

Plans were being made to create a successor to the 3000 series. BMC created several prototypes fitted with a 4.0-liter engine designed by Rolls-Royce. Due to the enormous costs of complying with U.S. safety standards, Austin-Healey 3000 production ended in late 1967.

I became acquainted with the Austin-Healey marque in the spring of 1969. It was a wonderful time to drive a sports car in Connecticut. I had just returned home from a three-year stint in the U.S. Army with service in Vietnam and Germany, and was in need of a car. One evening while driving my parents' 1965 Chevrolet, I met a high school friend at Del's diner. He was sitting in beautiful blue 1967 Austin-Healey 3000. We talked a while and he took me out for a spin. I was in love with the car and its surprising performance, so I set out to find one for myself, locating one in Essex for a good price. It was red with a black interior and bias-ply 3/4-inch white sidewall tires.

The spoked rims were painted silver, but needed to some work. On one particular Saturday, I took off each wheel and cleaned and wire brushed them. Then I masked off the tires and hubs and proceeded to spray silver Rust-Oleum paint on the spokes. Spring turned to summer, and summer turned to fall, and I was having a ball driving the car. Unfortunately, fall turns to winter, and in Connecticut that means snow and ice. I had enrolled in Middlesex Community College, which was a 21-mile drive from home. Three inches of ground clearance and eight inches of snow are not a good combination and I quickly realized that I needed a different car if I was going to commute to college and go to work every day. I traded my beloved Healey and some cash for a 1969 Chevrolet Camaro at Shoreline Chevrolet. (No, I don't still own the Camaro, but I wish I did.)

Thirty years after buying my first Austin-Healey, and now living in Miami, I attended an AACA South Florida Region car show on a beautiful day at Peacock Park in Coconut Grove. Among the many beautiful cars on display was a blue 1967 Austin-Healey 3000. I was in love again. I didn't realize how much I missed that car, and so I ultimately set out to find another one. To my pleasant surprise, I found one in the Classic Cars for Sale ads in the *Miami Herald*. The car was in Coral Gables and after a little negotiating, it was priced right. It was completely restored, shiny and clean and ready for me. I took a day off from work to complete the purchase and register the car, then drove



around for most of the day accepting smiles, nods and waves. It felt great.

It's been a reliable car for me, and all I ever do is polish and drive it. I showed it at one AACA Winter Meet, where it received its First Junior award. Since I didn't have a clue about showing a car and the fact that it had too many aftermarket parts on it, I decided to put it in two more meets as a "Do Not Judge." I had been driving it for eleven years and it showed, and I was too busy working the show to do the final prep on the show field to have a chance at a Senior award.

The car has won the Best Austin-Healey award a couple of times at the All-British Car Show in Boca Raton hosted by the Gold Coast British Car Club. I've also shown the car at many of the South Florida Region's shows and won awards. I no longer have it judged as I have no room for more trophies.

I am content with keeping up the appearance of the car and making sure it is mechanically sound. It's a driver and so am I.



“... one of the greatest additions to the sports car world in many a moon. It has loads of luggage space and will appeal to on-the-fence sports car fans who just haven't bought a sports car yet, though they have wanted to.

— Tom McCahill

