

The Cape restoration of the "Monte Carlo Healey"

By steve norton

PART 5



This episode leads us to the completion of the car including its first public appearance!

When a car is trimmed it is a sign that the car is well on the way to being completed but the arrival of a fresh interior can make you re-examine other parts and some can benefit from fresh detailing.

We looked again at the way the roll cage integrated with the trimmed interior as the mounting plates were unavoidably flattening the carpet.

This would look unsightly when Carl uses the car with the roll-cage and hardtop removed so we have made alloy plates and fitted them at these mounting positions which now look fine against the trim.

Carl also asked if we could fit a hood, he



assures me that even on the Riviera there's an outside chance he may get caught in a shower!

This was discussed at the outset and in preparation for this we have removed the awkward BN4 hood frame mounts replacing them with the far easier BT7 alternatives and the rear of this car is not designed to accommodate passengers.

We have installed removable access covers in place of the standard rear seats and the standard folding seatback was unnecessary so we needed to find a neat method of bundling the folded hood as it is now in view when the sun comes out again!

Whilst designing the leather spare wheel straps in the boot it dawned on me that some quality leather straps would do the hood job in a neat and attractive way and some quality leather straps in the cockpit brings some added Englishness (if there is such a word!)

Our attention now turned to Carl's works hardtop.

Carl had asked for a works ventilation hatch and this was prepared when the shell was painted some time ago but having



assembled quite a few of these tops over the years I knew too well that the fun was about to start.

Adding the aluminium trims to the edges of the shell is simple but fitting the rear screen is a completely different affair especially when we spent the first 3 hours trying to fit a 2 seat screen into this 4 seat hardtop, embarrassing to say the least and my reaction is unprintable!

We manufacture the screens so there was no excuse but if you ever compare the two types side by side the differences are subtle.

After more cursing the screen was finally fitted and the hardtop becomes far more rigid and easier to handle before fitting



the trimmed headlining frame, corner brackets, clamps and hooks.

After a bit of gentle persuasion (with a large rubber hammer) the hardtop now sits on the car like it grew there especially with the addition of our enamelled Donald Healey Motor Company badges.

These final jobs were important given that this car was about to feature in the production of our ground breaking promotional DVD.

Carl's car has been perfect for this and a copy of the DVD featuring his car will be included in the Swedish European Meeting guest packs and will be available to all Austin Healey enthusiasts.

At the start of this final instalment I mentioned the cars first public appearance and this really was the icing on the cake for everyone at Cape involved with this special car.

Every CapeSport car is unique in the way it meets the requirements of the owner and somewhere in the process of its evolution a bit of magic finds its way into the detail and it was on its public debut when we realised just how potent this factor was.

When you live with a car every day during its restoration you can't anticipate the reaction it will get from those that see it

for the first time.

Recent weeks at our workshops have been pre-occupied with preparations for this year's anniversary of the Austin Healey Sprite – 'the Frogeye' at the Goodwood estate here in the UK.

The planned celebrations were so impressive we could not ignore this chance to display our cars and being able to display AHX11, our CapeSport 100 and Carls CapeSport 3000 could not be missed.

AHX11 in its unique ice blue metallic is one of the earliest pre-production 100's in existence and drew admiring and knowledgeable comments from Austin Healey aficionados.

The CapeSport 100 is dark British Racing Green and is the epitome of raw classic motoring at its best, it was for sale and everyone wanted to take it home!

Yet it was Carls 3000 in centre position that was surrounded by enthusiasts from the moment we unveiled it to the moment it went back under cover three days later, if we had charged for every photograph we would have made a fortune!

It is a fitting tribute that many owners who cannot undertake a project as grand as this can take ideas from Carl's car to inspire their own improvements and upgrades at home which is fundamental to our CapeSport ideas.

These stories often go full circle and I am reminded that when Carl asked me how I would restore his car I simply replied "as if it was my own" and I'm sure I'll be checking the car right up to the second Carl collects it.

Before I sign off I'd like to thank the officials and members of the Swedish Austin Healey Club for featuring and reading this story and I wish you all success for this years European Meeting and beyond.

Cheers – Steve

This was the fifth and last part of Steve Norton's interesting story of how Carl Flormans "Monte Carlo Healey" was restored. Steve has made a great effort for The Enthusiast to write all these five articles. I like to thank Steve a lot for this and me and all members who are joining TEHMIS later this summer are looking forward to see the car in reality. Thank's again Steve, see you in July. //Tommy