The E-Mail Mechanic
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Ah springtime!

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Spring is a wonderful time of the year. My tulips and daffodils are coming up, golf courses are opening for the season, and most importantly, it is now warm enough to start driving the Healey. However, and it is a big however, this is also the time of the year that some much needed maintenance must be done and long-delayed projects completed. There are several that have been the topic of "threads" recently on the Healey List.

Digital cameras

An important part of any restoration is the proper order of the reassembly of the many parts that have been laying around for several years. With the advent of digital cameras, this should no longer be a problem as literally hundreds of photos can now be taken at very little expense. Storing them on a computer or burning a CD enables one to quickly access the photos and use a printout as a memory jogging device. Several years ago, I misaligned my throttle linkage and was able to take quite a few digital photos of a properly aligned BN6 linkage which enabled me to correct my errors.

Recently, a lister had a question about several problems in a transmission and included photos in his email so that other listers could see exactly what was being described. A rule of thumb - always take more photos than you think that you will need because the one that you have not taken is the one that you will need upon reassembly. And, make sure that the photos are properly captioned or indexed so that, several months or years in the future when they are needed, you will know what they portray. In future articles, I will be describing the replacement of my fuel pump and will include photos of the process. In the meantime, to emphasize the importance of photo and written documentation, we have the following exchange.

BJ8 Choke cables

Dave Carpenter recently wrote: "I was putting the choke cable back through the firewall, and have a question about the block the cables are attached to. The cable coming from the dash slides into the center of the block and the cable stop,

then the screw is tightened to hold it. Fine. The two cables to the carbs are slid through the block from the rear, then through the bracket and the sleeves, on out to the carbs. What holds the cable ends in the block? When the choke is pulled, all works fine. When the cable is pushed in, the block slides forward, but the cables don't move, they come out of the block. The PO must have had this happening, because there is a sheet metal thingy bent over the back of the block and held on by the center cable stop screw. This is not in any photos or illustrations, so it can't be right. Should the choke/carb springs be strong enough to pull the cables back and I need to loosen and lube something there? Or is it something else I'm not seeing?

Michael Salter of www.precisionsportscar.com emailed back: You have run into a problem which is pretty common on BJ8s. The only force which pulls the choke off in the original system is a rather convoluted combination from both the high speed idle push rod return springs and the jet return springs. The net result is adequate to return the choke to the beginning of where the high speed idle action starts but once that force is removed the jet return springs alone, acting through a considerable mechanical disadvantage are really struggling to do the job. If everything in the system is in excellent condition, all the way from the knob to the choke arms on the carburetors it will work, but just. Ensuring that the inner and outer cables are perfectly free of kinks, and surface rust and are lightly lubricated helps a lot. Polishing the inner cables with very fine paper is a good idea. I believe that in bad cases the factory used to install a pair of return springs which pulled down on the trunnions fitted to the carburetor end of the secondary choke cables as I have seen several cars which had exactly the same combination of parts to do this that appeared to have been installed for a very long time.

SU Pumps

Another lister emailed: I went for a ride in my 1967 BJ8 yesterday after a 5+ year restoration. Lots of fun until the "new" fuel pump would quit on me once it had to pump more than just idle. The car will idle forever it seems but just romp it for a few 1000 rpms and the pump wants to shut off. It seemed to come back to life after sitting about 5 minutes. I took a look at the points and they were slightly pitted. Readjusted and filed, still had the problem. It seems to be thermal. Anyone else had this problem. What about the new all electronic SU pumps?

Rich Chrysler responded: I've noticed that quite often the new S.U. pumps need to have their "throw" settings adjusted for satisfactory operation. Simply unscrew the 6 screws around the perimeter of the pump solenoid body and carefully separate the pump body from the solenoid flange, taking care that you don't tear the diaphragm. Now turn the whole diaphragm clockwise until when pressing on the central stem you can't quite throw over the points. Then turn the diaphragm

back 4 holes (2/3 turn). Reassemble the pump and tighten the screws evenly. This should give you a good clean throw over of the points. Bench test the action before reinstalling the pump. I just had to do this last week to get a brand new S.U. pump working happily!

What a timely exchange as I will be replacing mine in the next couple of days.

Vital Statistics

These messages and others can be found in the Healey Mail List Archives at "http://www.team.net/archive/healeys" http://www.team.net/archive/healeys

If you are interested in joining the Healey Mail List, all that is necessary is to send an email message to: majordomo@autox.team.net and in the text field enter: **subscribe healeys** and send the message. Leave the subject line blank. Then follow the instructions in the automated email message that you will receive in return. You will not be disappointed. The procedure for subscribing is also described on page 149 of the 2003 ***Austin-Healey Resource Book***.