



of Southern California

Ken Deringer -- July 31, 1926 - November 25, 2011



Ken in his Beautiful 100 Modified at CHW 2011 in Ventura

In This Issue

From the Editor2
From the Pres. & VP3
Calendar of Events4
Birthdays/New Members 4
Historical Stuff5-8
Deringer Memories9-13
Photo Collage10-11
Why I am Thankful14
Recent Club Events15-17
Healey Photo Shoots18
Bits & Pieces19





From the Editor

Mike Scroggie



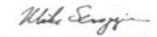
Shortly after the release of last month's newsletter, we were informed that Ken Deringer, another long term club member, had passed away. Our entire membership in mourning again.

Kenny was one of the most well liked and respected members for over 20 years. He has a legendary career as the key machinist with the Dan Gurney racing team, known as All American Racing (AAR). As you can see from Bill Wilkman's Historical column, Ken was also very talented in other respects and disciplines. And a very humble man also...it was difficult to get him to talk about himself. When ever I tried, he would politely change the subject. However, he was always willing to tell you about what Jeanne says was "the other woman in his life"...his gorgeous 1955 black 100 Modified. He built what he thought was the perfect sportscar/hotrod using the classic 100 body and fabricating subtle but perfect

engine and blending the chrome exhaust pipes into the lower body. Other improvements include chrome nerf bars replacing the bumpers, recessed driving lights, side panel vents, custom seats, disk brakes all around, and many more. In my opinion, it simply is the most beautiful Healey I've ever seen and Kenny did it all himself in his shop. And, he started with a rusted wreck that he paid \$500 for. People were always offering to buy his car, including Jay Leno.

I want to extend my sincere thanks to all the members contributing their thoughts and memories of Kenny, especially his lovely wife Jeanne. I'm sure it was quite difficult putting pen to paper so soon after losing the love of her life. But, Jeanne worked through her grief and was very helpful putting this issue together. I would like to also acknowledge Mike Newsome, who has been spending the Holiday Season in the hospital. Be sure to read his poignant article "Why I am Thankful". Mike, you touch us all...get well fast!

Merry Christmas,



OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

President Bruce Steele 714-255-1604 bsteele2@roadrunner.com

Vice President
Peter Roses
818-248-9546
peterroses@sbcglobal.net

Treasurer
Jeanette Daab
909-820-4940
janandgil54@gmail.com

Secretary
Debbie Newsome
949-689-0784
debbie@teamnewsome.com

Membership Marty Hovivian 714-743-5311

marty@martinintegrated.com

Historian Bill Wilkman 951-789-6004 wilkmanracing@aol.com

Newsletter Mike Scroggie 949-240-9716 mike@mikescroggie.com

Regalia
Kathy Scroggie
949-240-9716
kathyscroggie@yahoo.com
Online Store:

www.cafepress.com/ AustinHealeyAssoc Web Page www.austin-healey.org

Bert Van Brande Webmaster-Designer bertvanbrande@yahoo.com

Mike Scroggie Webmaster-Editor mike@mikescroggie.com

The Healey Motor News is the official publication of the Austin-Healey Association of Southern California, a non profit California corporation, and is published for the benefit of its members. Articles represent the opinion(s) of the author(s) and do not express the position of the Austin-Healey Association unless specifically noted. We do our best to ensure accuracy, but cannot be held responsible for omissions or errors.

© 2012, Austin-Healey Association of Southern California, all rights reserved

From the President

Bruce Steele



Since our last issue of HMN, dedicated to the memory of Bill Barnett, we have, as I'm sure you've heard, lost another AHA stalwart, Ken Deringer. Jeanne shared at the Christmas party that a memorial will be held for Kenny January 28.

I don't remember exactly when Kenny first told me that he worked for Dan Gurney's racing team. As a young boy, Gurney was one of my American racing heroes, and Ken's connections to this great period of racing history offered me the opportunity to hear his many stories about Gurney and other racing greats. I always enjoyed sitting with Kenny and just listening. He had many experiences which I would have loved to have lived myself. Wonderful memories.

I had tremendous respect for Kenny's skills. I never saw him actually fabricate; I only saw the results—his beautiful black Nasty Boy 100 with the Buick 215, frenched running lights and boxed-in side pipes. As one who has yet to learn the art of working metal, I greatly admired Ken's talent. One day, perhaps in retirement, I can try to master the skill. If so, I will regret that I could not learn from Kenny.

In fact, Kenny was one of the few men that I have met in my life about whom I can say I wish I had known while growing up. I always perceived Kenny as a kind and patient man, one who would have been an excellent teacher of his craft. A man of these qualities will be truly missed.

I would like to personally and publicly thank Jeanne Deringer and Maria Moreno for their attendance at the Christmas party. You both have helped keep the memories.

Good fun and fun driving,

From the Vice President

Peter Roses



For those those members who attended the Christmas Party, this year's event was of the best attended with good weather and a venue to celebrate the Holidays with friends. John Nikas recapped the success of the Drive Away Cancer program and

Bruce Steele delivered a tearful remembrance for Bill Barnett and Kenny Deringer.

Scheduling our Holiday-Christmas Party during the day seems to be a hit with the membership and we plan to carry that time frame in 2012. So, we have set our next Club Christmas Party at the Shoreline Yacht Club on December 16, 2012 at 12:30 PM.

Just as a recap of the Events from last month please read our article on the Tom Colby Shop tour which allowed for a number of members to have their cars' horse power and torque benchmarked on the Dave Evans Dyno. On New Year's day we start 2012 off with the Tour D' Orange in Costa Mesa. This will be the first year for me participating in the run and this promises to be fun weather permitting.

On January 21st, we have a shop visit scheduled for Star Electric in Monrovia. Star specializes in classic car generators, regulators and wiper motor repairs and is one of those nitch classic car business that is local to Southern California right here in Monrovia. Meet us at the UA and caravan over to Star and receive additional Spirit Points.

Saturday, January 28th Jeanne Deringer is holding a remembrance service for Kenny. Check our Website for detail on time and location. Kenny was a longtime Healey Club member and enthusiast and will be sorely missed.

Looking forward to February we are planning for our annual tech session at my house in La Canada. This year's task will be the installation of door seals (door to scuttle) on our Healey. So, if you want to replace the door seal get your order into British Car Specials or Moss. directly.

As always, look to our Club website for event details and updates.

Lastly we are looking for help with CHW 2012 in Big Bear. If you are willing to help out with Registration, Raffles, Gymkhana, Food coordination or the Car Show please contact me directly. Until next month, **Peter**



Calendar of Events

January, 2012

Jan 1--Tour d' Orange--meet at Fischer & Red Hill in Costa Mesa at 7:30 AM

Jan 1-Million \$ Breakfast Club-Marina Del Rey-5:30-9AM

Jan 4-Belmont Shore British Car Night-6-9PM-Allin Street Terminal, Long Beach

Jan 7-Peninsula Cars & Coffee-Rolling Hills Estates-7:30-9AM

Jan 14-Cars & Coffee-6:30-9AM-Ford/Mazda Campus, Irvine

Jan 15-Golden Cove-9AM-11AM-Palos Verdes-Contact Don Newman

Jan 21-UA Theatre-7-9AM-La Canada-contact Peter Roses

Jan 21-- Star Auto Electric Shop Tour--Monrovia--10AM

Jan 29-Super Car Sunday-Woodland Hills-

Jan 31--Fuddrucker's Cruise Night-Lake Forest-4:30-8PM-contact Greg Adams

February, 2012

Feb 11-Cars & Coffee-6:30-9AM-Ford/Mazda Campus, Irvine

Feb 11-Ortega Canyon Drive-9AM-see website for details

Feb 25--Peter Roses Annual Tech Session--La Canada--9:30AM

FOR MORE ABOUT UPCOMING EVENTS, SEE THE CLUB WEBSITE

Advertising Rates

Effective January 1, 2011

One-Half Page Horizontal.....\$150 (4 1/2" High X 7 1/2" Wide)

One-Half Page Vertical.....\$150 (8 1/2" High X 3 1/2" Wide)

One-Quarter Page.....\$85 (4 1/2" High X 3 1/2" Wide)

Business Card......\$50 (2" High X 3 1/2" Wide)

Contact: mike@mikescroggie.com 949-240-9716

Birthdays

1/1 Jess Pena

1/1 Barbara Meng

1/2 Judy Ebright

1/3 Lois Dunne

1/3 Steve Kirby

1/3 Kathleen McHarris

1/3 Lois Dunne

1/5 Ellie Jordan

1/7 Dick Boyd

1/7 Marcia Scharfen

1/7 Charles Dutton

1/7 Bob Hanley

1/8 Ken Carr

1/10 Geoff King

1/10 Tom Spangler

1/12 Jim Linn

1/14 Bill Feldhorn

1/15 Jan Schmidt

1/17 Fred Stewart

1/19 Julie Pena

1/20 Joerg Hubl

1/20 Karen Goldsworth

1/20 Ruth Doherty

1/20 Glen Rumpel

1/25 Ken Martin

1/26. Dan McLean

1/27 Paul Moritz

1/27 Kathleen Scroggie



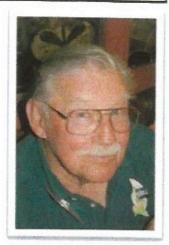
Historical Stuff

By Bill Wilkman

ATRIBUTE TO KEN DERINGER - 1926-2011

Human nature is funny. There are people who, before you even meet them, telegraph a sense of boldness, presence, and leadership. Then, there are others who are so quiet and so understated, you almost are unaware of their presence in a room. Interestingly, the former often do not measure up to their brashness and the latter just as often prove to be people of depth, talent, accomplishment, and drive. There is certainly room on this planet for both of these types and everything in between. But, somehow when you get to know the quiet "power-packs", it really sticks with you and influences you in ways you could never have imagined.

I remember when I first met Ken Deringer. He was standing at a club event with a stack of photographs. Now, any car nut knows this type of scene is equivalent to a moth and a porch light. Try as you may, you cannot resist craning your neck over the shoulders of the other car nuts to see what is pictured. So, when I spied Ken and his photographs across the parking lot, the fifty-yard dash record was likely broken that day.





As I approached the scene, I could see that the photos were of a very clapped out Austin Healey 100. And, there was unassuming Ken, talking about his plans for this car. There would be frame modifications, a V-8 engine with driveline to match. Exhaust pipes would pierce the side of the car and fog lights would be Frenched into the front valance. On and on he went, describing in an understated, matter-of-fact sort of way, all he had in store for this car. I looked at the car, then I looked at Ken, then I considered the ambitious plans. "It'll never happen", I thought. "Like so many car dreams, this one will end with a pile of parts and a 'For Sale' sign." Ken bought this rusting hulk of a Healey in 1992 for \$500, a bit overpriced, if you ask me. Ken Carr

helped him cart the iron oxide remnants of this once proud car to Deringer's garage. And, there the process started, a meticulous endeavor that would take ten-years to complete.

I'd long forgotten about Ken's Hulk-100 when I brought my recently refurbished 1951 Austin A40 Devon to a British car show in San Diego. I was there, not only to show my Devon, but also to take detailed photos of the Sprites in attendance to be used for guidance in the restoration of my Bugeye. So, one of the first destinations on my list was a visit to the Healey section. Camera in hand, I shot photos of every nook and cranny of the Bugeyes on display. Then I strolled over to the Big Healeys. And, there my jaw dropped to the ground. Standing out like the Hope Diamond at a swap meet was the most beautiful custom Healey 100 I'd ever seen. And, who was that guy standing next to it? Hmmm, looked just like Ken Deringer. But, that couldn't be the car I'd seen in Ken's photographs a few years ago...or could it? Whammy number two. Not only was I staring at the most stunning custom Healey I'd ever seen, but it was, in fact, the car I figured would never even see primer. In that moment I had a newfound respect for this unassuming guy who never bragged, but always exceeded expectations. When Jay Leno tried to buy the car at a Queens English car show in Los Angeles, Ken responded: "I don't want to sell it. I want to drive it!" That was Ken Deringer in a nutshell.

Historical Stuff cont'd

By Bill Wilkman

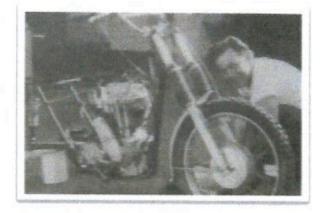


No offense to the Nasty Boy owners out there, but I'm not a big fan of putting V-8 engines in small cars. It's just me. While there are some nice ones out there, often, the big Detroit engines seem to invade the car, making it not quite a hot rod and not quite a sports car. Too often, they just do not look like they belong together. But this car was different. Its execution was coordinated, integrated, and artistically carried out. Everything looked "factory", even though Healey never built such a car. In my opinion, if Donald Healey had ever made a Healey V-8, this is what he would have built. Apparently, I'm not alone, as Gerry Coker is said to have made the same observation after seeing Ken's car.

So, who was this mild-mannered reporter from the Daily Planet? Who was this guy who could be holding the door for you in one moment, and in the next be ripping down the highway in his own gawdawfully beautiful creation? He was a special man indeed; one I will never forget.

Ken was born on July 31, 1926 in Taft, California. He lead a life of hard work and adventure as a young man, surfing with Duke Kahanamoku in Santa Cruz for fun and working on his dad's commercial fishing boat to make money. Ken's

first "official" car adventure happened at the age of 14, when he drove his family from Santa Cruz to Santa Monica. From family sedan, he graduated to chopped hot rods, keeping Santa Monica Boulevard alive with the sound of open exhausts and burning rubber. Ken also loved motorcycles, favoring the venerable Italian make of Ducati. But, when the U.S.A. entered World War II in 1941, surfing, fishing, chauffeuring, and hot-rodding would have to take a back seat. Ken was not one to shrink from a sense of duty and like so many of the "Great Generation", he served this country in World War II. His branch was the Navy and his home away from home was the Philippines.



Ken was one of those unique people, made up of equal parts of intelligence, vision, and drive. He could envision a project, including all its component parts, and then, systematically and carefully make it happen. Often working alone, he carried out his projects in every detail, machining many of the needed parts himself and then assembling them into the entity he had envisioned. Yet, he was fully capable of working as part of a team as well, contributing to a complex outcome while inspiring others to do their part. That a person with these qualities and skills would become a machinist would not surprise anyone. And, that's just what Ken did after the War. He cut his teeth working for several research, development, and manufacturing companies. His work included the design and fabrication of numerous special parts for aerospace firms.

But, there was never a time when he didn't think about cars. Over the years, he owned hot rods, a Duisenberg, a Packard, a '57 Chevy, a '62 Cadillac and numerous other cars. He was very involved in the Bird Owners Club in the late 1950s and early 1960s and made his T-Bird scream with a 427 engine swap.

With such a love for cars, it was as natural that Ken would eventually find work doing what he loved.

SINCE 1974

Historical Stuff cont'd

By Bill Wilkman



were his favorite years by far." In 1968, Ken left AAR to try his hand at conquering other automotive frontiers.

From 1968 to 1990, Ken had the enviable job of restoring and maintaining vintage cars for wealthy collectors. Among his clients was famed musician and guitar string manufacturer Ernie Ball. Ernie was partial to Model T Fords, and Ken did ground-up restorations on seven 1917 Ts for Mr. Ball. One of these cars was shipped to Ireland for exhibition in a museum there. Ken picked up the bug for Model Ts too, and there is still a partially restored T in his garage.

Ken also restored and maintained cars for General William Lyon, the well-known land developer and the person responsible for building the air museum at the

Orange County airport. Ken restored a 1935 Phaeton for General Lyon to 100 point concours condition. Ken also maintained the car collection belonging to prominent Orange County developer Don Koll.

Ken retired in 1991 to concentrate on his own car collection, other hobbies, friends, and to spend more time with his wife Jeanne. But, according to Jeanne, he never slowed down. "He was always building or tinkering with something in his beloved shop."



In 1963, he went to work for Dan Gurney, becoming the second employee on the Dan's payroll. Gurney was another one of those understated packages of depth, talent, accomplishment, and drive. Dan cut his teeth racing a Triumph TR-2 and, over time, became one of the most successful American race car drivers. From driving, he expanded to manufacturing, opening All American Racers, a company that turned out some of the most important Formula, Indianapolis, and Sports Racing cars in history. Ken worked as a machinist in the Research and Development Department of AAR. He also crewed for Dan and the many top drivers who raced for AAR. The accompanying photo was taken in 1965 at the Indianapolis speedway. Ken is at the far right. Jeanne Deringer, Ken's loving wife, said "These



Ken's first Healey adventure began in 1986 when he bought an Austin Healey 100-6 from a widow in his neighborhood. The had lingered outside under a cover for years, serving more as an impromptu children's playground toy, than a thoroughbred sports car. Ken paid \$3,500 for the car, got it started and nursed it down the 405 freeway, non-functional tail lights, questionable tires, and sputtering engine making the trip quite an adventure. True to Ken's form, he restored this car to such a level of perfection that it was a frequent prize winner at the club's California Healey Week events. He later showed

Historical Stuff cont'd

By Bill Wilkman

the to its former owner and she responded by breaking down into tears to see her old car so lovingly restored. Ken's work had that affect on people...

Ken joined the Austin Healey Association in 1987, seeking support and camaraderie from others with these irascible little cars. And, in the club he and Jeanne found many kindred souls. Ken and Jeanne proved to be important additions to the club as well. Ken generously shared his stellar fabrication and engineering skills with the club's membership. His cars were often prize winners at car shows, and his hand-fabricated pinewood derby cars were often winners at the Club's annual competitions.





The accompanying photo shows just a few of the plaques, trophies, and accolades earned by Ken over the years. Jeanne enhanced the club with her outstanding social and organizational skills. Just two years into her membership in the club, she was already serving as the club's secretary. In 1990, she served as nominating chair, and in 1992 she assumed the office of Vice President. If I'd had more research time, I'm sure I'd have found other offices and duties performed by Jeanne. And, whenever Jeanne and Ken were together, the result was sheer fun for all involved. The accompanying photo shows the couple at a club Turkey Shoot. And, it pretty much says it all. Jeanne is already aiming and firing at the targets while Ken is still pondering the mechanics of the rifle and how he'd redesign it if he had the chance.

This club is richer for having enjoyed Ken's talents and wonderful personality. And we are all poorer at his passing. But, Ken left an indelible mark on the Austin Healey Association, one that has helped make this club the great

organization it is today.



My thanks to Jeanne Deringer and Mike Scroggie who provided much assistance, including photos, quotes, and stories for this article.



FREE Parts & Accessories Catalogs

Choose From These Catalogs:

- Austin Healey TR2 TR3 TR4 TR4A
- · MGA
- · MGB & MGC
- AH Sprite & MG
- Midget
 - . Spittire & GT6
- * TRR

TR250

TR7 & TR8





Online Ordering ... Fast, Simple & Safe www.VictoriaBritish.com

Ken Deringer Memories

By Various Members

The King of Cool - Following my last operation my bladder capacity was reduced to one more befitting a small girl. This past summer at California Healey Week, returning from the restroom in the hotel lobby I passed Kenny Deringer resting on a bench outside. I stopped to chat and he explained that he was steeling himself for the walk back to the park where the car show was being held. I asked if he wanted company and offering my arm we left for the five hundred yard stroll with stops every few minutes to allow him to rest and catch his breath. So began the highlight of the weekend for me.

I always held Kenny in awe from the first meeting to our last. For a vintage racer, Kenny was the king of cool and he epitomized those steely eyed missile men who created winning race cars out of small shops in the sixties to take on the Ferraris and Lotuses that held sway over Formula One in the golden age of racing. During each stop, he would lean against a planter or wall and tell me what it was like to work for Dan Gurney's All American Racers when there were less than a dozen employees and fame was still distant in the future.



The 1967 Indianapolis 500 with Butch Wilson, Mike Holmes, Dan Gurney, John Miller, Hardy Allen, Howard Millican and Ken Deringer behind driver Jochen Rindt.

Originally employed by Dan Gurney Racing, Kenny was carried over to the newly created All American Racers (formed by Dan Gurney and Carroll Shelby with Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company support) in 1964 as one of the two mechanics. That first cadre of talent was described by Road & Track as "the best people from all over the world of racing" and to think that Kenny was there from the start always made me feel special to know him.

With each stop he regaled me with stories that were too absurd to be made up – impromptu races with station wagons on the then new 405 – his first visit to the Brickyard at Indianapolis – to creating the Eagle Formula cars that would best the Europeans on their own turf – Kenny was there for it all.

Every time he spoke of the past his eyes twinkled and he laughed at how young and reckless they all were while working out of that little shop in Santa Ana. The walk to the show may have taken us almost an hour, but it was an hour well spent. Very rarely does one get to speak with a hero on almost equal terms but he always treated me as a friend for which I will always be grateful. Kenny and Jeanne were there at Auto Club Speedway with the Nasty Boy 100 and knowing that for those few laps we were driving together on the same track is a memory to be treasured.

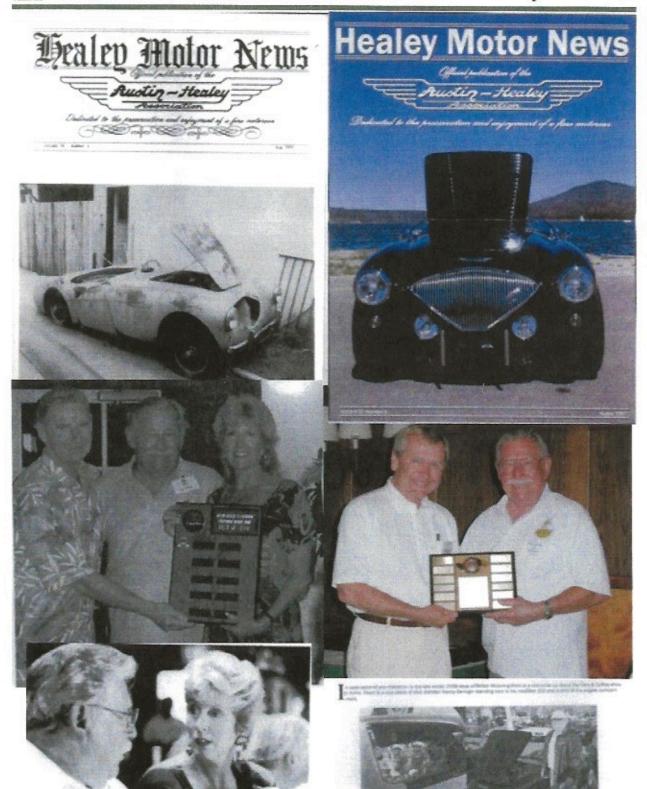
I will miss Kenny, his friendship and stories from back in the day. All too often heroes disappoint under scrutiny. He just got better the more you listened and learned. Godspeed Kenny.—John Nikas

Kenny was always someone you wanted to talk to. Not just about Healeys but about his life in general. He had wonderful stories about his childhood years. Like fishing all night since that was the family business and then going to school when they got back to shore. He could tell you a lot about fishing, the ocean and many other subjects.

While he was building his Modified he came to visit me to see if I had a Sprite steering rack that might work for him. He was quickly able to eyeball it and conclude "I think I can make that work". He was a great fabricator and innovator. All those years as Dan Gurney's machinist had honed his skills. He had the ability to envision what he wanted and then build it.

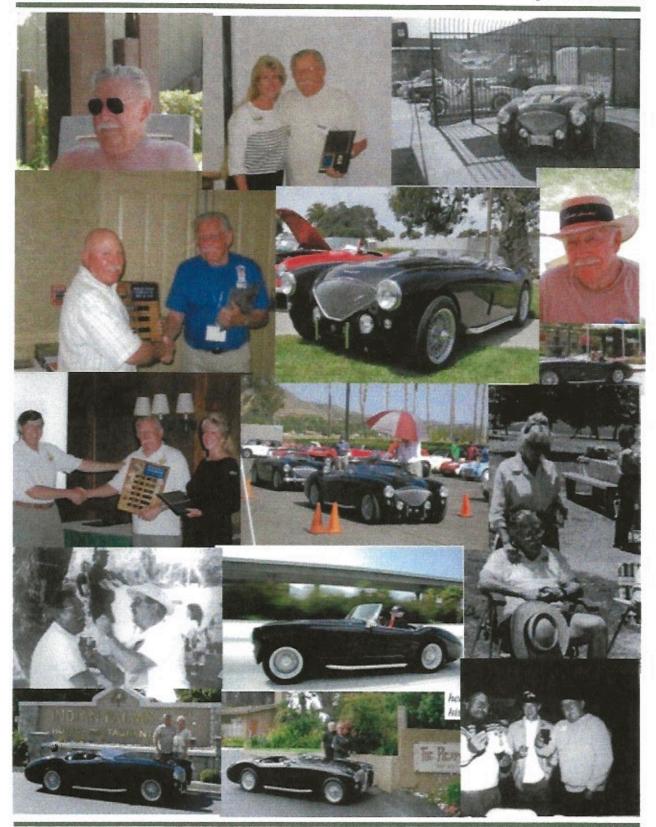


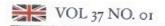
More recently, at CHW Ventura, we had go kart racing and there was Ken out there competing with the group. At the end of our runs we had a grudge race for the Top 7 drivers



"Me get the tab?" You get the tab!"

Cars and Coffee Show





Deringer Memories cont'd

of the day. And, there was Ken in the final 7. You just have to admire that kind of spirit. You have to love that kind of guy. Kudos Ken...I'll miss you.—Ron Davies

We have known Ken and Jeanne for a long time, so it is a great loss. He was always right there to help everyone with his great expertise. He will be greatly missed. – Jeanette Daab

Very often when I put on a belt, I think of Ken. When I was first "selected" to be president of the Healey club, I was talking with a group, Ken said to me "we can't have our new president out of uniform". When I put on my belt I missed one of the loops. So Ken made sure I fixed my belt. Ken was one of a kind and just an all around great person and we will definitely miss him, a lot. – Gil Daab

I can just see Kenny grinning from ear to ear! I remember him telling stories of the old days with cars, and the pride he showed in his Healey, like his yard, all done perfectly. His loving relationship with Jeanne was beautiful to behold. He'll be deeply missed as one of our Healey clan, a friend, a loving father, step father, and husband.—LeRae

There are many wonderful events and meets I remember sharing with Kenny since he and Jeanne joined the club. It goes without saying that he was a remarkable craftsman with his car. He didn't need to brag about his work - the car spoke for itself. However, it is his personality, character and integrity that fill my memory most. When he received Best of Show for his modified BNI, he was so moved, gracious, humble, and accepted the trophy with gratitude. He got a standing ovation. He was kind, had a gentle spirit, and was so dedicated and loving toward his dear Jeanne.—Gloria Fisher

Kenny was one of the nicest guys I have ever met.... a true GENTLEMAN. He was always vary understated in his manner, not reveling how much knowledge he had about the automotive scene, early racing adventures and all matters pertaining to Healeys as well.

Evidence to this was the remarkable job he did in creating the best looking and best crafted modified Healeys I have ever seen.

We all will miss Ken, but we retain a lot of good memories.

--George McHarris

A Serendipitous Fall Night in 1977

I was immediately smitten by the handsome, dark-haired man who offered to help when my car wouldn't start after work one September evening. He was quiet and shy, but quite knowledgeable with cars, I knew, since he restored and maintained a car collection for his boss at a facility next door. He fixed the problem in no time and I left to pick up my young son.



Kenny and I began dating, found we were very happy and content together, and there we were! He loved my son Brian and me, and Linda, his daughter. We married three months later, and so began our life together as a family. Kenny had so many wonderful qualities that made him unique in this crazy world. Family always came first (his love of cars was not far behind, of course). He was truly one of the remaining old-fashioned men. Honest, trustworthy, modest and humble — a rarity in a world when life is moving so fast and good manners and morals are all too often left behind.

Kenny never met a person he didn't like. If he did, he sure didn't tell me! He loved and respected his friends and would do anything to help with no expectation of anything in return. His vast knowledge, many talents, and life experiences endowed him with the ability to complete every task to the high standards he set for himself, regardless of size or complexity. I'm very proud of this shy, quiet man who was so dedicated to perfection and a job well done, no matter how long it took. He taught our children the importance of persistence and perseverance, pride in completion, and the reward of just knowing they gave it their all.

I could not have asked for or loved a better man with whom to share 34 warm and wonderful years, whether it be in travel, laughter and new adventures with Healey pals, the marriages of our children, becoming grandparents again and again with each new little miracle's birth, or just holding hands while walking on the pier. I truly believe Kenny left us all with a little piece of his humor, his zest for life, his never-ending stories, his ability to strive for perfection and remain humble, his love of family and friends.

Lucky me for having car problems that fall night in 1977!

Jeanne

HMN

Deringer Memories cont'd

One of my early memories of Ken Deringer is with a group of Healey club men sitting around in lawn chairs at some event. The discussion was about car modifications, and I wasn't participating or paying much attention. Ken then starting telling about how when he worked with Dan Gurney, he had built a tubular frame for a Lotus that Dan would drive. I thought, "Wow, another blow-hard name dropper, as if we didn't already have enough of them!" But looking back I realize that he was not bloviating, just telling it like it was.

Some time after that I was looking at some old car magazines from the 60's, Road & Track I think, and there was a photo of Dan Gurney and Ken standing by one of Gurney's cars. The caption was something like: Dan Gurney and Ken Deringer, his chief machinist with the Lotus 19B. Ken was the second employee hired by Gurney when he formed All American Racing. He, along with Bill Fowler, the other employee, extensively modified a Ford powered Lotus 19B that was raced successfully in the mid 60's. Ken Deringer was the real deal. I learned to listen and pay attention when he talked about his automotive adventures.

Ken's talent was on display in his modified, custom-bodied 100. If you have attended Healey events in Southern California in recent years, you have seen the stunning black car with the frenched headlights and Buick V-8 engine. It was usually seen winning trophies. The workengine, body, upholstery, suspension, etc, was all done by Ken himself. But I think he did farm out the final paint. He was irrefutably a man of great talent. He was always willing to share his talent and his time helping others work on their Healeys.

He was also a neat freak. His workshop was cleaner than our kitchen. Ron Olfuson, club member and contractor, built Kenny's workshop. He complained (when Ken wasn't listening), that he couldn't get things done because Ken was always cleaning up. According to Ron, every time he cut a board, Ken would rush over and sweep up the sawdust. That's probably an exaggeration, but he did always want things to be neat. Ron confessed that he sometimes asked Ken to go to the hardware store for more nails, or whatever, just so he could work in peace for a while.

In December 1992, my wife Karen and I met up with Jeanne and Ken in Hawaii. It was just a few months after Hurricane Iniki. Iniki's recent visit was the reason we could get a timeshare in Kauai in December.

The Deringers' anniversary is December 18, the same as mine. Curiously, Karen's anniversary is December 17 (long story). Anyway, we had a great dinner at the Bullshed Restaurant and went back to the condo to imbibe a bit and watch a movie. The movie of choice was "Weekend at Bernie's" (1989). That became one of Ken's favorite movies. We even reconvened a couple years later to watch "Weekend at Bernie's II," the sequel. Over the years, the conversations have drifted back to Bernie's many times. It seems like whenever the four of us were together, Bernie was part of the conversation.

Our lives, and our club, are diminished by his passing. I miss my old friend. I think I'll go rent a movie.... you know which one.—Carroll Goldsworth

