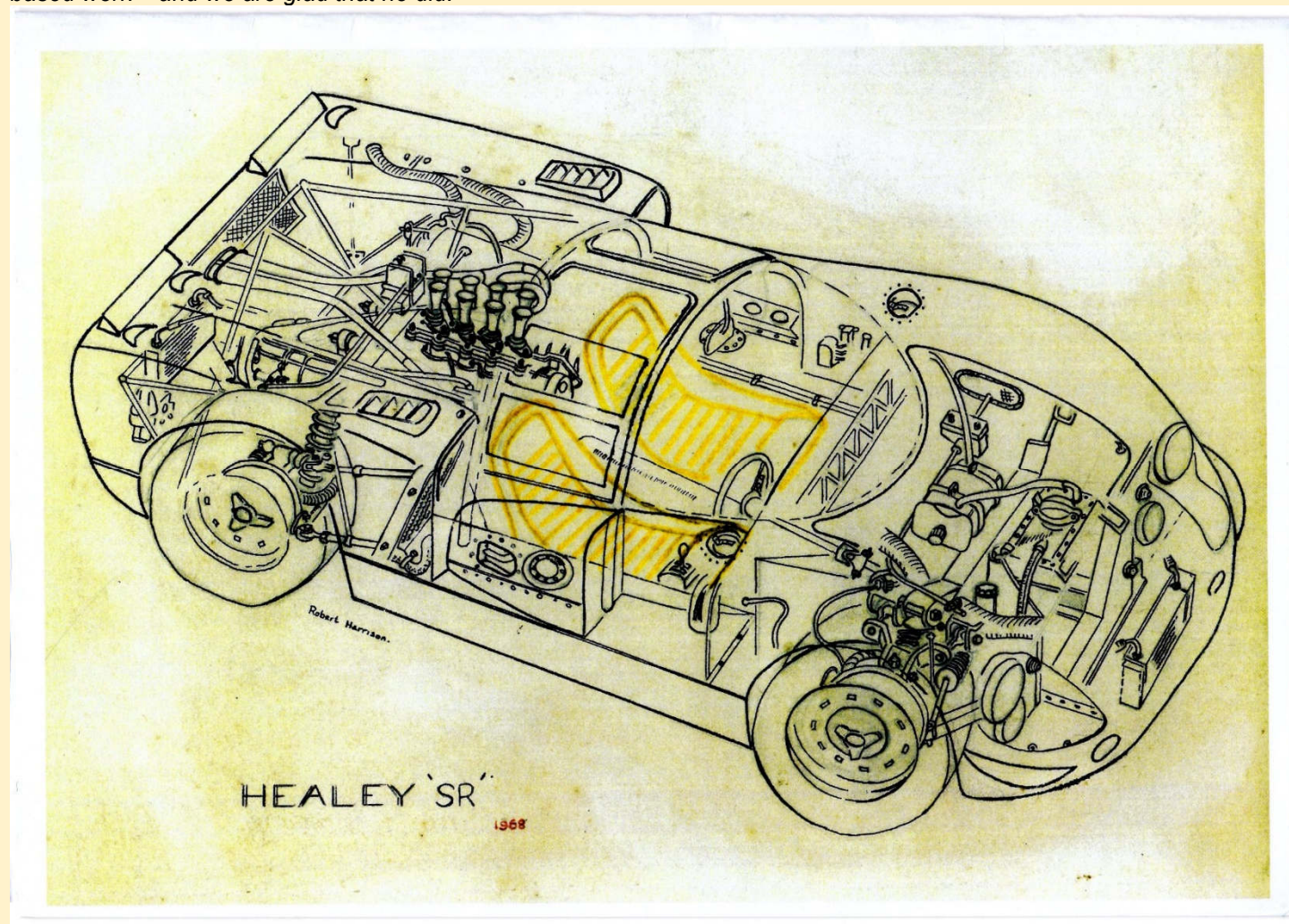


ROB HARRISON – MY OBSESSION WITH HEALEYS

ED - When I opened a Christmas Card envelope, bearing an Australian Postmark, I have a suspicion that it might be from Australian resident and HDC members, Rob and Toni Harrison. Their previous Christmas card had been Rob's freehand drawing of his Healey 100 – this year's is the SR.

I think that it is fair to say that Rob shares the magnificent obsession that many HDC members share – but he has taken it just a little further. As a result of an email exchange, Rob very kindly agreed to allow us to share some of his Healey based work – and we are glad that he did.



To Rod and family
wishing you happiness and good health
for 2020

Merry Christmas
and

Happy New Year!

Cheers from



Rob & Toni (HARRISON)

THE ARTWORK THIS YEAR IS A DRAWING I DID WHILST STUDYING ENGINEERING IN 1968. I COPIED IT FREEHAND FROM A CUTAWAY BY VIC BERRIS IN AUTOCAR THAT YEAR. I DON'T THINK I'D HAVE THE PATIENCE TO DO SUCH A DIFFICULT SUBJECT (ANYWAY, PHOTOCOPIERS RUINED SUCH LABOURS OF LOVE) - THESE DAYS!

During the 1950's my hobby was drawing cars and sending them to motor dealers requesting the latest sales brochures. As a result I received a lot of very nice brochures and in one particular case, the sales manager of Sydney's Aston Martin dealership, arrived at our home with the first Aston Martin DB4 to reach the country and took me for a spirited drive along our Northern Beaches reaching at one stage 120 MPH. British sports cars were always my favourites and when it came to buying my first car in 1965, it had to be a Healey.

There were approximately 1200 new 100/4's sold in Australia, however only less than 30 six-cylinder 100/6 and 3000 were sold new. They were quite expensive in Australia and by the time all the duties were paid they ended up about stg 1300 more than the price in the UK. In other words, double the price. So, my budget allowed

me to buy a rather tatty 100/4 - which I proceeded to convert into a 100/S, but in late 1966 the last new 3000 MK111 to arrive in Australia was for sale new at a MG Parramatta dealership.

The temptation was too great as a new car had all the advantages of a warranty and as I liked to do long trips in the weekend, it was superbly reliable.

During this time I worked as an Operator [jobber] for a Stock Broker but was studying Engineering in the evenings and two subjects I elected to do were model making and technical drawing. When I bought the 3000 there was a subscription form for Safety Fast magazine in with the handbook, which I duly filled out and posted off to Abingdon. Early in 1968 there appeared in Safety Fast some tantalizing drawings and information about the prototype Healey being constructed at the DHMC. As more information became available, I was able to estimate the dimensions of this car - and I drew up technical drawings based on these figures during my technical drawing classes. Then in my model making class we were all given a project and of course I decided to make a 1/12 scale model of SR in wood. Following the completion of the model I happened to buy Autocar magazine and was thrilled to find a full-page cutaway of SR, drawn by Vic Berris if I remember correctly. As I was



still interested in drawing freehand [mainly from small pictures on the petrol company swop cards] I took on the challenge of drawing the SR cutaway.

It took me ages to draw but drawing such a complex design

leaves one with a real appreciation for the original, but I was happy enough with my effort.

Unfortunately, with photocopy machines

becoming popular in the 1970's I lost my desire to draw freehand as it was so easy to photocopy a drawing. In later years I was inspired to draw cutaways such as the Austin Healey 100 which was printed in Headlines last year. In this case I studied the chassis and drew that first and then drew the components on top of that but modifying the engine and transmission to reflect what I had planned to do with my own 100.

In the mid-sixties a law prevented artists from drawing cars for sales brochures because the authorities thought the artists used too much artistic flair making the cars look more racy or streamlined than they actually were. So, photographs replaced artwork and as a result the commercial artist virtually disappeared.

ROB HARRISON.

PS - I got the tech drawings that I created in 1968, reduced so I hope they are OK. The roof line was too peaked as I wasn't sure of the actual dimensions from the Safety Fast artwork and also the glass [perspex] area is too large. Perhaps I'm too critical.

ED - Yes Rob, you are. Rob is also the owner of the Healey XR - See Headlines - Autumn 2017 - P12

