



Healey Fiesta & Healey Escort

The story of the last two Healey /Ford
associated cars in conjunction with
Ford Europe and Ford USA

1978/79.....1982/83



Healey Museum in Holland will have the Healey Fiesta on display from late April to early June 2014

Healey Fiesta

Gary Kohs of Michigan USA, founded the "Marketing Corporation of America" in 1966. Two of his main clients were Ford and VW. He had the idea of promoting the Fiesta through an association with Healey, to produce a Healey Fiesta based on the US specification car built in the Saarlouis German factory.

Harry Weeks produced renderings of what the original Healey Fiesta might look like based upon the US 1600 cc version at this time not available in Europe until the MK1 XR2 of 1981. This 1600 was very restricted to 66 bhp under US smog regulations, and the idea was to get Healey Consultants to really modify it to compete with the Mini Cooper of the time. Gary Kohs purchased from Ford USA a Diamond White standard model and shipped it to Healey Consultants at Barford, Warwickshire England, between 1978 and 1979.

The car underwent major modifications. It was stripped and repainted in British Racing Green with yellow pin striping, but not before the bodywork was given some major panel beating, flaring the four wheel arches in steel to accommodate the 6" Minilite alloy wheels, a major air dam fitted to the front, and the interior stripped out and a roll cage fitted in the rear seat section and the spare mounted in the rear. Front racing seats, modified suspension and dashboard together with major engine changes carried out by Broadspeed the then leading Ford Escort and Mexico race/rally specialists.

Gary Kohs not only visited Barford to oversee the project, but he also attended a whole years' National Motor Shows, 4 in all at New York, Chicago, Detroit and Los Angeles, where the vehicle was fitted with Trade Plates to get round the LA smog emission controls so that Tony Hogg of Road and Track could road test the car and really put it through its paces. The write up was very positive and the Healey Fiesta featured in the August 1979 edition of R & T can be bought on eBay where it was on the front cover, and of course the MK1 Fiesta won the 1978 Design Council award. This should have been a limited edition run of a further 998 Healey Fiestas as the chassis number is HF-001.

A 24 page brochure will be available from World Wide Austin Healeys www.wwah.org with all the reprints and factory photos and information at the time on both the Healey Fiesta and the Healey Escort. A limited edition of 999. Price £5.00 plus postage, this will enable the Museum to finance the shipping from the USA to Holland and back.

Fiesta clubs of Europe & Ford Classic Magazines will be notified.

Details of the Healey Museum and Hotels etc can be obtained from :-

Opening hours:-
Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday
11-00 am to 17-00 pm

Healey Museum, Bergseweg 28 q
3633 AK Vreeland The Netherlands
Tel: 0031 681 733 208
eMail:- info@healeymuseum.nl



Healey Escort

Following the decision by Ford to stop importing the Fiesta, Gary Kohs went ahead with the Ford policy to promote the Ford Escort USA model 1981 which was fitted with the CVH 1.9 engine but had no other body similarities to the European Ford Escort.

By using the information gleaned from the Fiesta modifications, an agreement of sorts to use the Healey name again was proposed, and both Ford and Firestone promoted this modified version with a set of postcards and promotional items. Again renderings were provided, by Harry Weeks, both drawings are in the brochure to follow. Geoffrey Healey made two visits to Detroit to liaise with Gary Kohs on this project, but this time all the modifications were carried out in house under Gary Kohs supervision, but with input via Geoffrey Healey from afar, the Healey Escort was entered in to Pro 100 rallies in the Northern part of the USA and not only won its class but a couple of the events outright, in 1982/3.

All these photos and details are in the brochure which will be available in the earlier Part of 2014. Ford decided in their wisdom that a Healey Escort would not produce increased sales and went their own way offering EFI and Turbo charged versions of the 1.9 litre versions.



Harry Weeks rendering of the Healey Fiesta



Stock Diamond White US Specification Fiesta