Driveshaft Balancing

The driveshaft on the Big Healeys (propshaft for the purists) is somewhat unique in that it features a sleeve yoke over a splined shaft in the middle. The U-joints mount to the driveshaft at one end and to a flange yoke at the other end. After assembly the unit is balanced by welding weights, similar to the concept of balancing a tire, to eliminate vibration. Upon disassembly the shop manual advises to mark the driveshaft so that it can be reassembled in the same orientation so not to lose driveshaft balance. Original cars often feature a small white line marking the driveshaft sleeve yoke and splines to aid in reassembly.

So what do you do if you forget to mark it? Or if your car is forty years old and has had an unknown number of mechanics work on it through the years? Have the driveshaft re-balanced by a specialist. Look in the yellow pages under “driveshafts” and in Louisville you will find Republic Industries on College Street. Located next to NAPA and across from AC Brake, Republic is the driveshaft wizard in Louisville.
When I had the Metro Ride fleet consisting of large vans and buses I had dozens of driveshafts rebuilt and balanced by them with never a problem.

The cost to rebalance the BJ8 driveshaft was $37.50. It took significant weights to get it in balance and was well worth the effort. I doubt that in 1965 BMC had computer assisted balancing equipment so no telling how good the original balance was. A balanced driveshaft will reduce vibration and extend u-joint life. I had installed my own U-joints, but for $10 each Republic will install the u-joints which is quite reasonable. When you replace the u-joints use the original grease fittings, they are longer than normal and will make it easier to grease in the future.