

COLLECTOR'S EDITION: DODGE CELEBRATION ISSUE

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NOVEMBER 2014 #122

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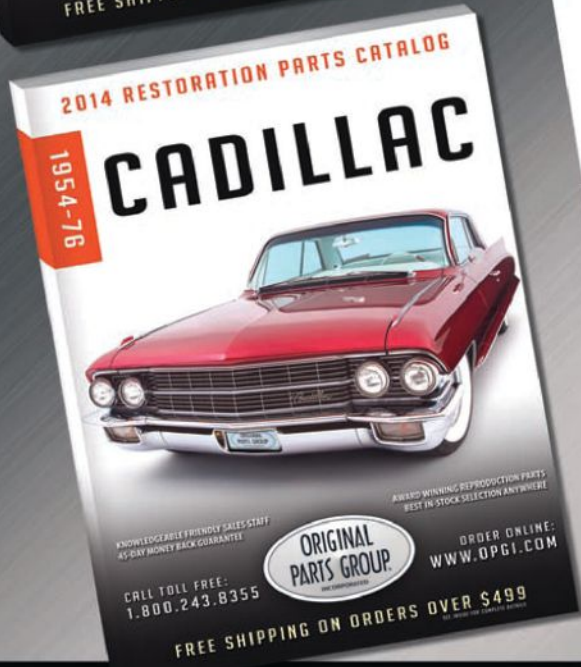
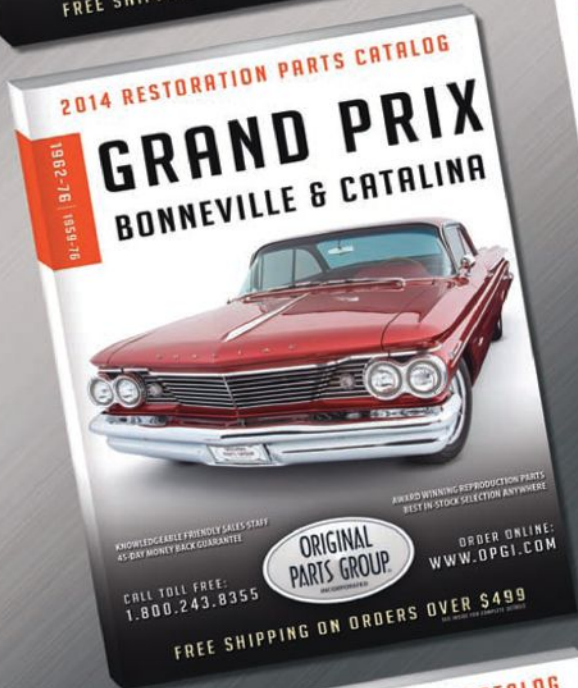
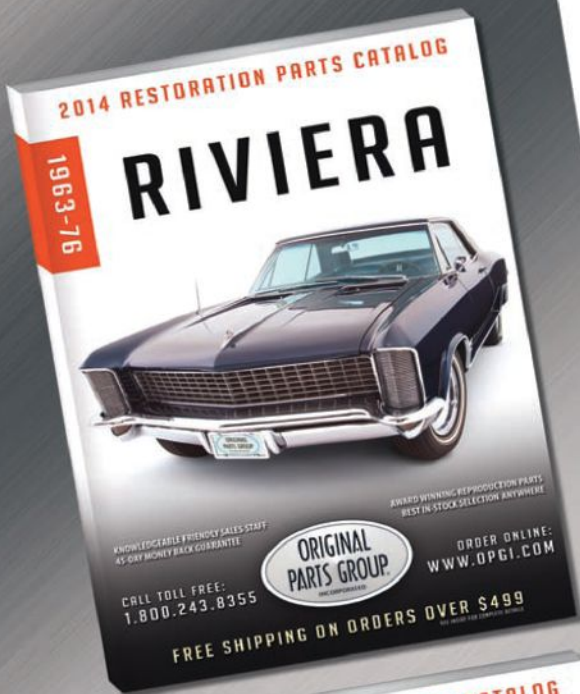
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Dodge Panache

I'll admit it. I love the styling of the 1961 Dart; always have. Probably because it's so unique, with an individuality of design that is unsurpassed. Of course, that shouldn't surprise fans of Dodge-built automobiles, because this exceptional Chrysler Division has always designed and engineered cars its way, much the same as the rebels at Pontiac did under GM.

Dodge automobiles always had a special

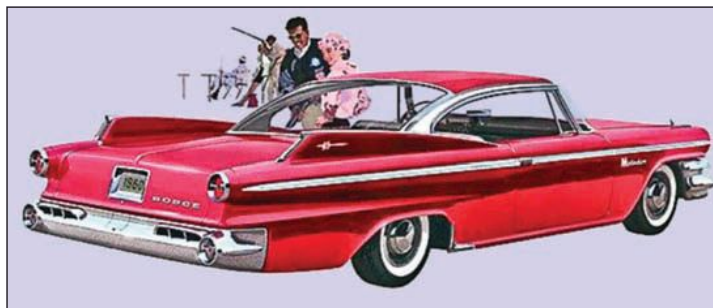
flair, style and elegance about them that is quite distinctive, to say the least. Without question, the one area where Dodge stylists excelled the most was in their cars' rear-end designs. While the 1959 Cadillac gets all the attention as far as the most dramatic rear fins go, the fins on certain Dodge models were equally dramatic, sometimes even more so.

Take the lineup of the aforementioned 1961 Dart, as well as its upscale sibling, the Polara. The way the brightwork trim from the door flows to the rear and then upwards into the rounded rear fin, then accents the topside of the fin as it rises forward towards the door is simply captivating. More dramatic is the Polara's version, with its signature bullet-shaped taillamp inset on the side.

Then there's the spectacular 1960 Polara and Matador models with their striking rear quarter panel design. The further back the quarter panel goes, the more rounded its shape becomes until it fully transforms into a round taillamp. It's then topped by a fairly tall forward-canted fin that ends about a foot short of the taillamp, giving the car its exhilarating appearance. The icing on the cake is the rear bumper that mimics the taillamps above and the lower stainless steel paneling aft of the wheel well, all of which combine to make as unique an automobile as there ever was. This design looks equally dramatic on the four-door Polara hardtop, as the fin flows well into the rear door.

Prior to this awesome design was one that many enthusiasts consider to be even more exciting looking: the 1959 Custom Royal and Coronet models, arguably the wildest rear-end design of them all. Being the final and most exaggerated rear-end treatment of a design that was first introduced on the 1957 models, the '59 version is enhanced with more pronounced

taillamps jutting out of wide chrome bezels. Below the rearmost portion of the wildly shaped fin is an eye-catching wedge of ribbed chrome that makes the fin's sensational shape stand out even more, especially when combined with a two-tone exterior color treatment. All three model years are truly some of the most incredible-looking automobiles of all time, and best represent America's Fifties-era love affair with space-age exploration.



All of the above rear-end designs have their roots in the rear treatment that was introduced on the 1955 model; a design that was then carried over, but in

a more decorative form, into the 1956 models. Both model year Dodges boast fairly intricately formed rear body panels whose pair of protruding, rounded shapes provide the foundation for the twin taillamps that are attached. The taillamp housings are also intricately designed, each with small fins at the nine and three o'clock positions. The actual quarter panel fin is a separate stainless steel piece that's bolted atop the fender. Although small in size, it was a harbinger of things to come: designs that could only have come from Dodge.

As American car styling in the 1960s progressed, with each passing year the beloved fin was slowly being phased out. Dodge introduced many interesting and pleasing designs throughout the 1960s, but none were as exciting and energizing as those designs from the '50s.

Dodge and American car enthusiasts the world over owe a great depth of gratitude to Virgil Exner for styling all of the above-mentioned automobiles. His designs were remarkable, his ideas inventive and his level of creativity truly outstanding. The mark of distinction that he brought to Dodge and the entire Chrysler Corporation was monumental. As these rear-end designs clearly demonstrate, the cars he designed are enduring proof that he truly was one of the greatest automobile designers of the twentieth century. From we Dodge fans everywhere, thank you. 🏎️

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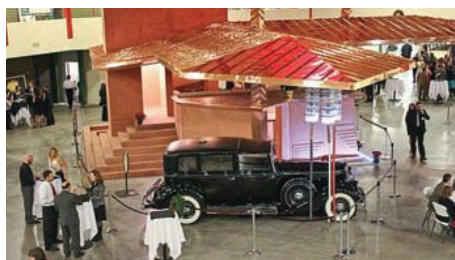
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NOVEMBER

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- 2 • Dayton MAFCA Swap Meet**
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- 2 • Sumter Swap Meet**
Bushnell, Florida • 800-438-8559
www.floridaswapmeets.com
- 7-8 • Springfield Swap and Car Show**
Springfield, Ohio • 937-376-0111
www.ohioswapmeet.com
- 13-16 • Zephyrhills Fall Auto Fest**
Zephyrhills, Florida • 717-243-7855
www.carlisleevents.com
- 15 • MAFCA Indoor Swap Meet**
Albany, Oregon • 541-928-1218
www.mafca.com
- 21-23 • Moultrie Swap Meet**
Moultrie, Georgia • 888-686-2102
www.moultrieswapmeet.com
- 22 • Ancient City AACA Region Car Show**
Saint Augustine, Florida
904-794-1941 • local.aaca.org/ancientcity
- 22-23 • Phoenix Swap Meet**
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Frank Lloyd Wright Filling Station

BUFFALO IS A TOWN WITH A RICH AUTOMOTIVE history, and earlier this summer, the Buffalo Transportation Pierce-Arrow Museum opened its Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Filling Station after years of construction. Conceived by Wright in 1927, but not brought to fruition until now, the two-story facility called for an observation deck, copper roof, and gravity-

fed fuel pumps. The project began in 2002, and now is a permanent display, joining the museum's extensive collection of historic automobiles and memorabilia. The museum is located on Michigan Avenue and is open Thursday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Visit their website for more details at www.pierce-arrow.com.



MARK J. MCCOURT

Hudson Heartland Gathering

HUDSONS WILL ONCE AGAIN CONVERGE ON PIGEON FORGE, TENNESSEE, for the 25th annual Hudsons in the Heartland, which takes place at the Vacation Lodge. The HET Club welcomes all Hudson, Essex and Terraplane car owners and enthusiasts to take part in the car show and swap meet. The event takes place October 23-26. Visit www.hetclub.org or call 865-567-2493 for more information.

Low-Country Classics

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, SOUTH CAROLINA, IS the site of the Hilton Head Motoring Festival and Concours d'Elegance, set to take place November 1-2 at the Port Royal Golf Club. Saturday's event will feature the Car Club Jam-boree, where nearly 20 invited clubs will each display 15-20 of the cars that best represent their club's passion. Cars will be split by group along the 1st and 18th fairways with both American and European makes. The weekend events will culminate on Sunday, with the Concours d'Elegance featuring over 30 classes of some of the finest cars in the Southeast. For more information, visit www.hhiconcours.com.



RICHARD LENTINELLO

WINTER EVENT 2014 Swap Meet & Car Show

November 7-8

Springfield Swap

IF YOU ARE IN THE OHIO AREA ON November 7-8, you may want to consider visiting the Springfield Swap Meet at the Clark County Fairgrounds. In addition to its sizable indoor and outdoor swap meet, the Springfield show has a noteworthy car corral if you are looking to find a new classic to drive home. Keep in mind, this year's event is taking place on Friday and Saturday. Be sure to bring your sweatshirt, and stock up for the long winter before next spring's shows and events. Visit www.ohioswapmeet.com for more information.

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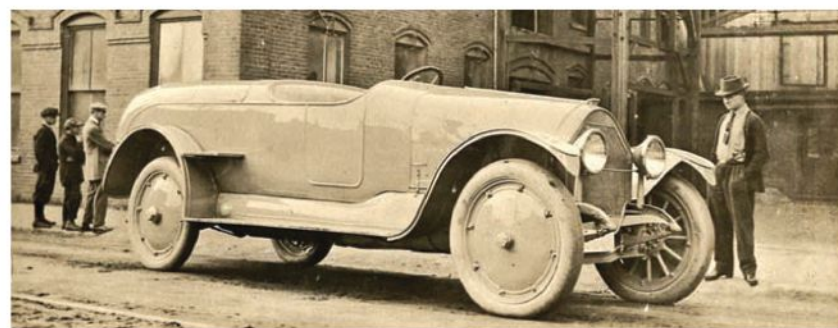
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LIKE ALL HIGH SCHOOLERS, RUSSELL ABRAMS needed an inexpensive way to get to class on time that wasn't long and yellow and seated 40. Fortunately, Abrams had ingenuity aplenty, even if he might not have had money aplenty, so with four months of his time, \$41, and a war surplus belly tank, he built his own three-wheeler.

Dubbing it the *Rockette* (or simply, *Rocket*, depending on the source), Abrams powered his vehicle with a 2-hp Briggs and Stratton engine and claimed to average 100 miles per gallon with it while having no problem finding a parking spot at Lawrence High School in Cedarhurst, New York. Nor did he have a problem registering it with the New York DMV after adding headlamps, a horn and a windshield.

Russell's son, John, explains that his father sold the *Rockette* to Chester Bollenbecker in Rhinebeck, and he'd like to track down the *Rockette* for his father, now in his 80s. "I would love to find the car tucked away in a barn and restore it," he says. Can anybody help him out with that quest?



Pettingell Pearls

OVER ON HEMMINGS DAILY, WE RECENTLY featured a story from Michael Lamm with photos curated by Charlie Beesley from Darrin Stouffer's collection that depict a number of unknown auto bodies of the Teens and Twenties assembled by Pettingell Machine Company of Amesbury, Massachusetts.

As Lamm wrote, Pettingell was well known among coachbuilders of the early Twentieth Century for providing the tools of the trade, but it was not

as recognized for turning out its own coachbuilt bodies.

The bodies ranged from sporting torpedos to massive touring and town cars, and sat atop a number of different chassis: Mitchell, Buick, Franklin, Napier, Mercer, Chalmers, Chandler and more. It's doubtful if any survive today, but the photos at least showed unique approaches to automobile body design. Go to <http://blog.hemmings.com/?s=pettingell> to check out the photos.

RE: 40 Over 8

ON OUR TWITTER ACCOUNT (@HEMMINGSNEWS), Todd Higgins recently sent us this photo of a trackless train he spotted in Berlin, New Jersey, asking what we knew about it. While we can't speak to this particular train, we can draw a link between it and some of the various other trackless trains we've previously featured, most recently in *HCC #120*.

Of the most recent one, plenty of readers wrote in to remind us that the "40 Over 8" on the trains referred to both the capacity of the French boxcars used to transport doughboys during World War I (40 men and eight horses) and La Societe de Quarante Hommes et Huit Chevaux, an organization within the American Legion. "When the WWI veterans started parading in the 1930s and later, they built these on various truck chassis," Gordon Smith of Sterling Heights, Michigan, writes. "Some were very well done. They started disappearing as the WWI veterans aged and passed away."

So it appears these 40 Over 8 trucks, while similar, were all built to varying standards and specifications based on what was available to local chapters of the American Legion. If anybody knows more, we'd like to hear it.



✿ Recently discovered a unique or noteworthy classic car? Let us know. Photographs, commentary, questions and answers should be submitted to *Lost & Found*, c/o *Hemmings Classic Car*, P.O. Box 196, Bennington, Vermont 05201 or emailed to dstrohl@hemmings.com. For more *Lost & Found*, visit <http://blog.hemmings.com/index.php/category/lost-and-found/>.

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Hershey for RM Auctions

THERE'S STILL TIME TO TAKE one of all the roads that lead to the annual gathering of everything classic car in America—Hershey. RM Auctions will host its annual auction on October 9th and 10th in the storied Hershey Lodge location during the Antique Automobile Club of America's Eastern Division Fall Meet. The preview of the event is open to the public. Registration is required to attend the auction. Contact: www.rmauctions.com

Hootenany in Harrisburg

MECUM'S INAUGURAL HARRISBURG AUCTION was host to over 20,000 collector-car and motorcycle fans who deluged the Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex and Expo Center on July 24-27. Total sales for the event topped \$21 million and beat Mecum's own record for an inaugural event, set in Dallas in 2011. Of the 868 cars, 596 sold, and 139 of the 188 motorcycles sold, for an overall 70-plus percent sell-through rate. Mecum is understandably excited about this first event success, and looking forward to future Northeastern auction bonanzas. Contact: www.mecum.com

AUCTION PROFILE

LOOKING BACK INTO WHAT VIRGIL

Exner and his contemporaries considered the future, brings us to Burbank, California, and this 1956 Chrysler Plainsman concept car. The wagon featured a body handcrafted in Italy by Ghia atop a production Chrysler Corporation chassis. Unlike some concept cars that were mostly ornamental, the Plainsman was a fully drivable station wagon.

After a successful show circuit, the rolling representative of Western pioneer spirit traveled south to Cuba where it was family-driven, then even further south to Australia, and then back to America. The engine was replaced with a contemporary 440-cu.in. V-8, and the wagon wore its years in peeling paint and crumbling upholstery, but was a historic example of what the future promised to hold.



CAR	1956 Chrysler Plainsman Concept	LOT NUMBER	3088
AUCTIONEER	Auctions America	CONDITION	3/Original
LOCATION	Burbank, California	RESERVE	Unknown
DATE	Saturday, August 2	AVERAGE SELLING PRICE	N/A
		SELLING PRICE	\$176,000

NOVEMBER

Calendar

Oct. 31-Nov. 2 • CCP Auctions
Mississauga, Ontario • 416-923-7500
www.ccpauctions.com

1 • VanDerBrink Auctions
Atlantic, Iowa • 605-201-7005
www.vanderbrinkauctions.com

6-8 • GAA Classic Cars • Greensboro,
North Carolina • 855-862-2257
www.gaaclassiccars.com

7-8 • Mecum • Davenport, Iowa
262-275-5050 • www.mecum.com

8 • Smiths • Paducah, Kentucky
800-200-6030
www.smithsauctioncompany.com

13-15 • Mecum • Anaheim, California
262-275-5050 • www.mecum.com

14-15 • Carlisle Events
Zephyrhills, Florida • 717-243-7855
www.carlisleevents.com

14-15 • RM Auctions • Dallas, Texas
519-352-4575 • www.rmauctions.com

21-23 • Leake • Dallas, Texas
800-722-9942 • www.leakecar.com

28-29 • Silver Auctions
Fort McDowell, Arizona • 800-255-4485
www.silverauctions.com


28-29 • Dan Kruse Classics
Houston, Texas • 866-495-8111
www.kruseclassics.com



VANDERBRINK

The Friday Collection

VANDERBRINK AUCTIONS announced the upcoming sale of the extensive and eclectic Friday collection of collector cars and vintage motorcycles in Atlantic, Iowa, on November 1. Mr. Friday was a local attorney who also had a passion for collecting everything from economical Fords and Chevrolet coupes to luxurious Cords and Packards. With his passing, the family has decided to sell the collection and let others carry on Friday's appreciation of distinctive old cars and motorcycles. Contact: www.vanderbrinkauctions.com

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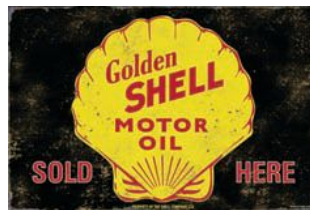
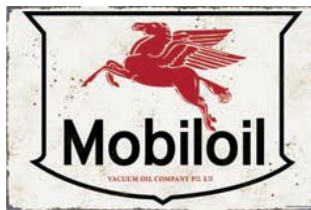
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Weathered Petroliana

IF THERE AREN'T A FEW LICENSE PLATES, posters and petroliana pieces on display, then a garage is just a place to park the car and your snow shovel. The Filling Station has some new vintage-style advertising signs that can help turn your garage into a place to be proud of. These 11 x 17-inch signs have a weathered, rusted look, but are new reproductions printed on tough 22-gauge steel and protected by durable polyester powdercoating. They're available in Mobiloil (HB-257), Aeroshell (HB-251), Shell (HB-253) and BP (HB-252) styles. Cost: \$25 each.

800-841-6622

www.fillingstation.com



Period-Perfect Performance

ONE OF OUR FAVORITE AND MOST prolific automotive artists, Ohio native David Snyder ("Auto Art," HCC #37), recently debuted his new tribute to Yenko Chevrolet, titled "Don Delivers." This colorful piece is his vision of Don Yenko's Canonsburg, Pennsylvania, dealership as it looked in 1969, in the heart of the muscle car era. Beautifully detailed and evocative, "Don Delivers" is available as a limited-edition print, hand-signed and numbered up to 500; it's available on 22 x 28-inch, high-quality acid-free stock. It is also available in the form of 50 artist proofs and 10 giclée prints. Cost: \$95 (Limited Edition Print); \$130 (Artist Proofs); \$1,100 (Gallery Edition).

513-722-9608

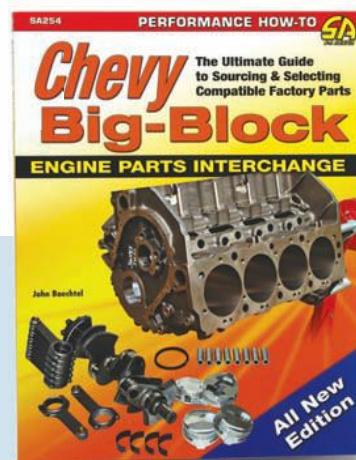
www.davidsnydercarart.com

1940 Buick Estate Wagon

THE REALISTIC WOOD PANELING TREATMENT on Brooklin's new 1940 Buick Series 59 Estate Wagon made our jaws drop as we opened the package. It's not easy to make white metal look like genuine wood, but these British modelers have done an outstanding job on a 1:43-scale collectible that represents one of the 495 examples that Buick built. That woodwork is complemented by the Royal Maroon Poly paint and black leatherette roof, and we like their treatment of the bright metal grille and bumpers. They're calling this Series 59 a Special, when it should be a Super, but that's a trivial note. It's a rare beauty. Cost: \$139.95.

800-718-1866

www.diecastdirect.com



Big-Block Bowties

IF YOU REGULARLY REBUILD BIG-BLOCK CHEVROLET ENGINES, or restore big-block-equipped Chevrolet cars, then you'll benefit from knowing which engine parts interchange with which engines. From cylinder heads to crankshafts, connecting rods to intake manifolds, Chevrolet engineers cleverly designed their big-block V-8s to use many of the exact same parts. Knowing which parts fit where can save you lots of time and money during an engine rebuild.

This definitive reference book lists literally hundreds of factory part numbers and RPOs, thus allowing you to "design" a Chevy big-block V-8 your way, with the chosen parts that you want. Exterior engine components are noted too, and the index of all the different cylinder head castings is quite informative. There's even a thorough listing of all the different engine blocks that have been made, inclusive of all their internal dimensions and specifications. Cost: \$24.95.

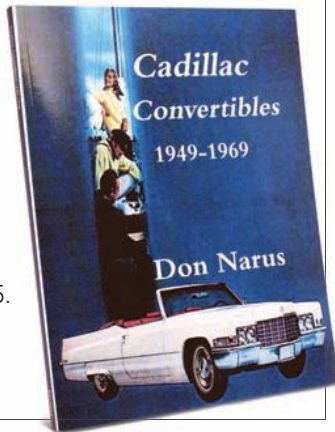
800-551-4754

www.carttechbooks.com

—By Richard Lentinello

Cadillac Convertibles 1949-1969

WE ARE ALWAYS PLEASED TO RECEIVE a new release from automotive historian and author Don Narus, because we know we'll have a useful resource to add to the Hemmings library bookshelf. Narus's latest title focuses on postwar Cadillac soft-tops built through 1969, those that defined the "tailfin era." In usual fashion, this book is a 130-page softcover that is illustrated with more than 250 black-and-white photos and period advertisements. Narus walks the reader through the special features of each model year and offers basic statistics, including price and the number built, also including unique one-off examples and show cars. It's an inexpensive and worthwhile primer for your shelf. Cost: \$22.95. dlnarus@yahoo.com www.newalbanybooks.com



1962 Ford Mustang I Concept

GIVEN WHAT HAPPENED EVENTUALLY, it's amazing to think that at first, Ford intended the Mustang to compete with the Chevrolet Corvair Monza. That explains why the prototype Mustang I was so very different from the later cars that bore its name. And it's a very significant 1:43-scale replica from Automodello, which has done a bang-up job of bringing obscure but significant cars into miniature.

Underneath, this is a highly simplified model whose base screws into its upper shell. But the upper shell is exquisite, with an incredibly delicate wraparound windscreen, fastener tabs, and raised-detail grilles for both air intake and exhaust. The dash has readable instruments in multiple colors, separate brake and gearshift levers, interior door handles and ribbed upholstery with separate seat belts. The Mustang I's stance and ride height are absolutely authentic. The graphics, including the famed galloping pony, are tampo-printed with razor accuracy. This is an essential addition to any collection of miniature Mustangs, especially in 1:43. Cost: \$119.95.

877-343-2276
www.diecastm.com

—By Jim Donnelly

Recycled Tailgate Letters

TURNING THE COMMONPLACE AND CAST-OFF into something new, decorative and completely unforeseen is the hallmark of a fine artist, and that is exactly what sculptor Lisa Richards does. Working under the name MetalHoller Arts, Lisa creates amusing and contemplative sculptures from vintage automotive parts and found objects. We discovered her through her Etsy.com shop, and couldn't resist sharing what we saw.

"My father and I both own classic Chevrolet trucks, a 1948 and a 1958, and they are one of the many reasons I admire and have access to old iron," Lisa explains. Her vision: "Reviving old metal, metal with history, finding ways to exhibit the metal's unique character. I love comparing opposites to highlight the character of the metal."

Lisa's portfolio has encompassed everything from large kinetic motorized sculptures to small illuminated shadow boxes, and her series *Recycled Tailgate Letters* is of particular interest to Hemmings fans. These tailgate letters take many forms; after cutting the letters from the panel, she color-sands them—starting with 220-grade sandpaper and ending with 600 grade—before applying wax and clearcoat. They are then primarily made into charming hanging wall sculptures. Pick a letter or design that is meaningful to you, and enjoy this new way to express your personality. Cost: Starting at \$50.

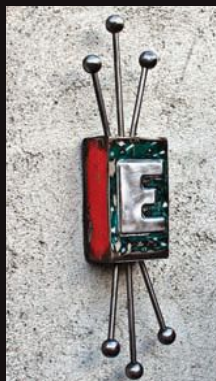
Lisa Richards
metalholler@gmail.com
www.metalholler.com



Chevrolet Tailgate Letter O



Datsun Tailgate Letter S



Chevrolet Tailgate E



Chevrolet Tailgate C



Chevrolet Tailgate V

Truck Tachs

For years, it has seemed that owners of 1973-'87 Chevrolet and GMC trucks have received the shorter straw when it comes to the availability of replacement gauges. Fortunately, Classic Industries has stepped in and now produces reproduction tachometers for 1973-'87 Chevrolet and GMC trucks. These reproduction tachometers are designed to provide a quality, true-to-original look with gloss-black faces, correct font silk-screen markings, and bright orange needles, while also boasting improved electronics for better accuracy. Cost: \$129.

Classic Industries
800-854-1280
www.classicindustries.com



Thunderbird Drums

Are you finding that your Thunderbird is just not stopping as quickly as it used to? Perhaps it's time to replace your brake drums. After not being available for an extended period, Concours Parts & Accessories is once again offering front and rear brake drums for 1955-'57 Thunderbirds. Produced on new tooling and made in the USA, these new drums are designed to ensure that you can enjoy the speed of your T-Bird without having to worry about slowing down five miles in advance. Cost: front \$124.95 (each); rear \$129.95 (each).

Concours Parts
800-722-0009
www.concoursparts.com



Cabinet Appointments

ROGO's high quality bins, cabinets, drawers, racks and assortments are a perfect way to keep your shop neat and organized. Their steel utility cabinets feature two adjustable shelves and a lock attachment for padlocks. Keyhole slots allow for easy wall mounting, so you can put these cabinets anywhere. Ideal for storing aerosol cans, shop supplies, bulbs and more, these cabinets are built for durability using sturdy steel with a rust- and acid-resistant powdercoat finish. These utility cabinets are available in tall or long dimensions. Cost: \$208 (tall); \$252 (long).

ROGO Fastener Co.
800-423-7646
www.rogofastener.com

Ford Fenders

You have been working on your 1936 Ford for years and have your car tantalizingly close to perfect. There is just one problem: Your rear fenders are rusted out beyond recovery. Thankfully, Bob Drake Reproductions now provides reproduction rear fenders to make your '36 perfect. These new fenders for Coupe, Roadster, and Cabriolet body styles (with Sedan and Phaeton fenders coming soon) are all steel and have the same mounting holes and bracing of the originals to give your 1936 Ford back its factory-fresh look. Visit Bob Drake Reproductions' website for more information. Cost: \$1,500 (pair); \$800 (individual fender).

Bob Drake Reproductions
800-221-3673
www.bobdrake.com



Shield Spears

If your 1953-'54 Chevrolet 210 seems to be losing a little bit of its luster, Bob's Classic Chevy has the authentic solution for you. Because the 210 was in the middle of Chevrolet's product line, it has become difficult to find model-specific trim pieces to keep your 210 looking absolutely original. These new rear fender gravel shields are manufactured to OEM specifications, so they fit perfectly, and they are polished to the proper luster. Cost: Spears, \$99.88 (pair); rear gravel shields, \$399.88 (pair); front fender shields, \$79.99 (pair).

Bob's Classic Chevy
866-572-4389
www.bobsclassicchevy.com





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Before they were carved in stone, they were struck in SILVER.

JUST RELEASED: One of America's FIRST Civil War Silver Half Dollars.

As we commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Civil War, collectors are scrambling to add Civil War artifacts to their collections. No collection can be complete without one of the FIRST-EVER Civil War commemorative coins struck by the U.S. Mint: The 1925 Stone Mountain Silver Half Dollar.

Both the coin and the Stone Mountain Memorial near Atlanta, Georgia feature Generals Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson on horseback. The Stone Mountain Memorial was designed by famed sculptor Gutzon Borglum, whose next masterpiece would be the magnificent Mount Rushmore.

Etched in History, Carved in Stone, Struck in Silver!

These 90% silver half dollars were minted in 1925 to raise money for the memorial. Over the years since they were minted, many were spent during the Great Depression, or melted to obtain their precious silver. Today, they can be difficult to find.

Thanks to a remarkable recent discovery, GovMint.com has obtained a limited supply of these desirable Stone Mountain Silver Half Dollars. The detail and relief on these stunning coins make each coin a work of art. It's no wonder they're in such high demand!

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We are now releasing our entire supply of these historic and valuable coins to the public. Each is in lightly circulated condition and comes with an informative story card and a certificate of authenticity.

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You must be 100% satisfied with your genuine 1925 Stone Mountain Silver Half Dollar or return it within 30 days of receipt for a prompt refund (less all s/h).

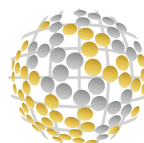
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& Dodge bicycles. That operation was dissolved in 1900. The following year, the brothers were back in business in Detroit, running a precision machine shop with about a dozen employees, and making their first foray into cars by winning a contract to build engines for Ransom Olds. The initial order for 2,000 engines was suitably fulfilled, leading to another deal, this time for 3,000 transmissions. They moved to a larger Detroit plant and in 1903, won another agreement to supply the spanking-new Ford Motor Company with engines, transmissions and axles. They also delivered some running gear to Henry Leland before becoming Ford component suppliers exclusively. It was not a blissful marriage.

Despite their clearly essential role to his success, Ford never publicly credited the Dodge brothers in any way, even after they'd invested their own money in a new Hamtramck, Michigan, engine plant. The Dodges also clashed with Ford underboss James Couzens, who claimed that manufacturing tolerances on the Dodge engines were inconsistent. When Ford announced a major expansion at the Rouge, the brothers angrily sensed betrayal.

That perceived stab in the back was the catalyst that led to the Dodge brothers becoming automakers. They well

knew that the Hamtramck plant would be excess once Ford was on his own when it came to subassemblies. They still had nine years left on their contract when they gave Ford one-year notice in 1913. If the Dodge brothers didn't have the level of explicit respect from Ford that they desired, they certainly had it from everyone else. The news that they intended to produce their own car at Hamtramck galvanized the industry. They divested their Ford stock—after some legal wrangling—enlarged the factory and introduced the first Dodge Brothers car in November 1914. Horace Dodge focused on engineering the product, while John was tasked with administration, finance and management.

It was the domestic industry's biggest single story since the Model T. The new Dodge was America's first mass-production automobile to have an all-steel body. Built by Budd, this advanced bodyshell allowed baked enamel paint to be applied much more quickly and cheaply. Its power came from an in-house 35hp, L-head, inline four-cylinder engine displacing 212.3 cubic inches with four main bearings backed by a sliding-gear transmission with three forward speeds. It was immediately lauded as a durable car, thanks in large part to the brothers' decision to hire

Frederick Haynes, ex of Franklin automobiles, as their production chieftain.

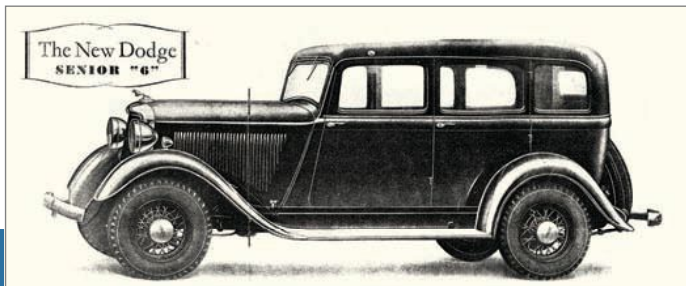
The Dodge listed for \$785, a price point that was competitive with

Ford for a car that delivered nearly twice the horsepower. Just 231 Dodge Brothers cars were built in the first year, but by 1917, annual production had screamed past 100,000 units. Part of the reason was that the newly minted automaker raked in some good publicity from the U.S. Army, which bought several Dodge touring cars for use in pursuing bandits ranging across the Mexican border. One Army officer who prominently used them was a lieutenant named George Patton. The Army ordered Dodges in significant numbers during World War I.

John and Horace Dodge borrowed a page from the Ford playbook by eschewing the annual model change for economic reasons, at least initially. Another constant, along with the early mechanicals, was the use of a geometric star as the brand's symbol, which merits some discussion. There's a longstanding libel that suggests the brothers selected it for its similarity to the Star of David to deliberately anger Henry Ford, a man of well-documented prejudices. More likely and less pejorative, according to the Dodge Brothers Club, the star actually encompasses two interlocking delta letters from the Greek alphabet, symbolizing Dodge twice over. The star endured until the 1938 model year, by which time both the founding brothers were long gone. John Dodge died in 1920 from the lingering global influenza outbreak and Horace, heartbroken, lasted only a few months longer.

Control of the automaker then passed to their longtime number-two man, Frederick Haynes. If anything, Dodge Brothers—the name endured for now—enjoyed even greater growth

1933



1936



1941



1946



1947



1948



1950



1951



1952

outside the founders' control. Haynes continued the brothers' commitment to engineering excellence, introducing an all-steel closed car, the first among them being a Type B business coupe. Haynes had already reached a landmark agreement to sell Graham Brothers trucks, first built in Evansville, Indiana, through Dodge showrooms as Graham-Dodges. That began a tradition of commercial vehicles at Dodge that has endured through today's Ram-branded truck line. Dodge marketed its own lineup of commercial cars during this time period, while the Graham brothers focused on heavier-duty trucks, though customarily using Dodge engines and other running gear. By 1924, Haynes persuaded the board of directors at Dodge to buy 15 percent of Graham, making it a Dodge Brothers division. In

exchange, the three Graham brothers earned both seats on Dodge's board and executive slots.

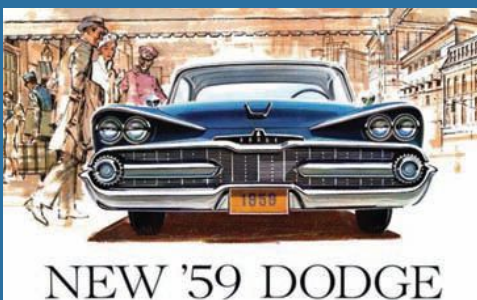
Upheaval was shortly in the air, however. Investment bankers had been sniffing around Dodge Brothers ever since the death of the fraternal duo, but their widows initially refused to sell out. That changed once it became apparent that none of their children were particularly interested in joining the family business. In 1925, Matilda Rausch Dodge and Anna Thompson Dodge sold the company to the Wall Street banking house of Dillon, Read and Company for a staggering \$146 million in cash. At the time, that was the biggest cash transaction of any sort in American history. Months later, the Grahams split the firm, bought out Paige-Detroit, and got back into the car busi-

ness as Graham-Paige. The moneymen made Haynes chairman of the board, but brought in their own choice, Edward G. Wilmer, as Dodge Brothers president. He was an attorney who was considered something of a turnaround specialist, having earlier reorganized Goodyear at the behest of its creditors.

The cars were almost, but not quite, overshadowed by this spectacular corporate realignment. Dodge had unveiled a satisfyingly attractive Sports Roadster for 1926. The next year, it advanced mechanically by offering an upgraded four-cylinder engine with a stronger crankshaft that ran in five main bearings. Four-cylinder cars were starting to dwindle in popularity, even among mass-market buyers, by this point. It's not always common knowledge that Dodge, not Chevrolet, was the

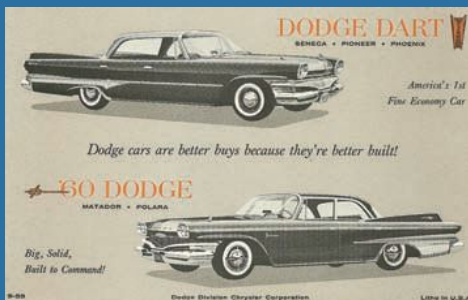
first to offer a really big-volume six-cylinder engine. That came in 1928, when Dodge rolled out a new range of sixes, three models in all, with displacements of either 208 or 224

1957

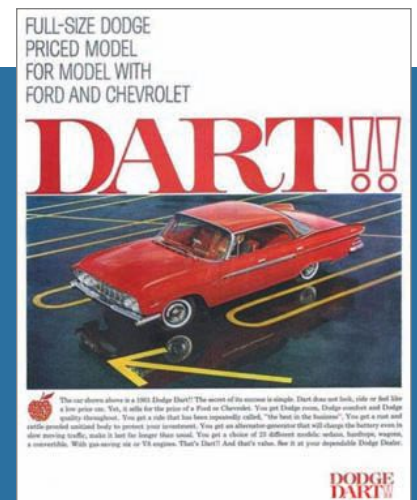


1959

1958



1960



1961

DEPENDABILITY

DODGE

1953

PowerLite!

DODGE

1954

Roy Rogers
and the man from Dodge City

1955

THE FABULOUS NEW DODGE

D-500

DESIGNED AND ENGINEERED FOR HIGH PERFORMANCE

1956

cubic inches. Known as the Standard, Victory and Senior, in ascending order, the new L-head engine could pump out up to 68hp, an impressive number considering that both Ford and Chevrolet were still stuck on four cylinders. Regardless, due in part to the production changeover, sales dipped 38 percent in a single year through 1927.

Meanwhile, more intrigue was waiting to unfold. Elsewhere in Michigan, another entrepreneur was eyeing the doings at Dodge Brothers. Originally a Kansas railroader, Walter Chrysler had turned his attention to cars after buying a Locomobile, tearing it down, and wangling a job from General Motors president Charles Nash. Within a few years, Chrysler was president of Buick. Retiring briefly, he next took over and resuscitated Willys-Overland. That made him enough of a wunderkind in the business that he was building his self-named cars on his own by 1924. He wanted to expand further, having considered, and rejected, a merger with his erstwhile employer, Willys-Overland. Chrysler wanted to buy into existing manufacturing capacity, especially costly

casting and forging plants. Willys-Overland lacked them, but Dodge Brothers, which had made significant capital investments under its founders' leadership, didn't. It was the perfect acquisition target for the growth-focused Chrysler, and it had a highly competitive lineup of vehicles, to boot. Ultimately, it was Dillon, Read that made the first move by tentatively approaching Chrysler. The parties agreed that Dodge would be sold for about 1.2 million shares of Chrysler stock, a reversal of the earlier cash transaction. Within two months of the Dillon, Read deal, Chrysler had introduced Plymouth and De Soto. It was July 1928, and just that fast, the Big Two became the Big Three, with Dodge handing Chrysler a vital rung in its GM-like hierarchy of makes.

Chrysler's first move was to install his top production manager, K.T. Keller, as

head of Dodge—soon with no "Brothers" suffix anymore. Next, the four-cylinder engine disappeared at Dodge. Those same engines went into a revised line of Dodge trucks, with the Graham appellation likewise dropped. As Black Friday approached, Dodge ranked seventh among all U.S. makes with more than 124,000 sales. That didn't last. In 1930, Dodge introduced its first straight-eight engine, with 220.7 cubic inches and 75hp, but sales still plunged by close to 50 percent. Walter Chrysler liked to quip that without Dodge in his pocket, there would have been no Plymouth, yet history makes clear that during the Depression, it was Plymouth's low-priced appeal that rescued Chrysler from insolvency. Defiantly, however, Dodge introduced a fully restyled line of cars for 1932 that, then or now, rank among the

1962 DODGE DART 440 SPORTS-SWEEP

1962

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ROOM FOR SIX OF ONE

OR HALF A DOZEN OF THE OTHER

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CHRYSLER

1963

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packed with advanced, go-quality features

CHRYSLER

1964



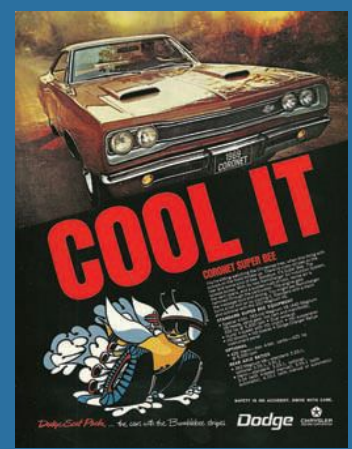
1966



1967



1968



1969

most handsome it ever produced. The manufacturer incorporated a new double-drop frame with a center X-member. The following year marked the first in which Dodge instituted an annual model change, however modest at the outset, focusing on a sloped radiator shell.

From a sales standpoint, the worst had passed. More than 91,000 new Dodge cars found buyers in 1933, elevating the brand to fourth in the national sales race behind Ford, Chevrolet and yes, Plymouth. The recovery edged ahead in 1934, with an even more striking restyling, trademarked by a trio of horizontal strakes on the hood sides and a more radically raked radiator shell. A new 1934 Dodge was sharp, elegant and affordable to many. A pumped-up national advertising campaign saw buyers select Dodges in more volume than Buick and Oldsmobile put together. Sales climbed back above 100,000 annual units.

Things continued to improve in 1935, which was marked by a redesigned body that incorporated integral trunks for the first time. A near doubling of production over 1934's totals saw the three-millionth Dodge, a five-passenger touring sedan, roll out of Hamtramck. As a cost-cutting move, the Dodge straight-eight was dropped, and all Dodges would use the straight-six engine, which dated back to 1934 in its current form, for the remainder of the late-Depression and prewar years.

Dodge continued as the country's number-four brand as a transitional series of 1936 models nudged 275,000 in annual sales. In 1937, all Dodges had rubber bushings incorporated in their body mounts, and the sedans received all-steel roofs for the first time. Dodge trucks continued to grow in size and capacity, and adopted diesel power for the first time in 1939. The car line got another moderate

restyling in 1938, which also turned out to be the final year that "Dodge Brothers" was applied as a name to any model. The straight-six remained at 217 cubic inches, and was now rated at 87hp.

To mark its 25th year of building cars, Dodge undertook a full, top-to-bottom styling change for 1939. The new look incorporated headlamps that were inset into the front fenders, plus a broad horizontal grille with matching hood vent slats. All cars used six-cylinder power, but Dodge returned to building two separate lines of cars—Special and De Luxe—for the first time since 1934. The entire Dodge car lineup was dubbed "Luxury Liners." A minor restyling, with a more prominent and integrated grille appearance, came along for 1940. The technological advance was a new chassis, with all Dodges now riding on a wheelbase that stretched to 119.5 inches, except for a pair of seven-passenger sedans that rode on long 139.5-inch wheelbases. Led by light trucks and scout cars, military production got underway in earnest that year under the auspices of the Lend-Lease program. Growing post-Depression competition saw Dodge now seventh in sales, aft of Pontiac, but still clicking along at 225,000-plus cars annually.

Changes for 1941 were limited to a restyled V-shaped grille treatment. The other cosmetic change was a new logo, based on the Dodge family's coat of arms. Another frontal restyling for 1942 was an even larger and more dramatic grille, but the bigger news was arguably an enlarged version of the venerable straight-six, upped now to 230 cubic inches with 105hp, a heavier crankshaft to reduce vibration, and newly optional Fluid Drive transmission from Chrysler. By the time civilian auto production was cut off in February 1942, defense work was fully underway. For the next several

years, Dodge would be best known internationally for building some very tough trucks in enormous numbers.

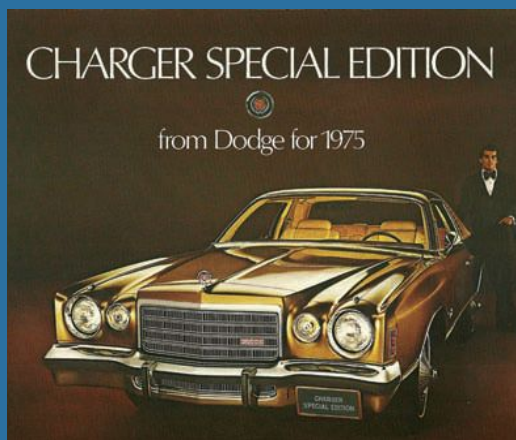
The most prolific Dodge trucks were the T207 and T214 series, which were middleweights with all-wheel drive and the perfect size for a plethora of purposes. Among other things, these rigs served as ambulances, scout cars, light cargo haulers, weapons carriers and command vehicles. Dodge produced more than half-a-million military vehicles during World War II, but just as important, it gained a significant new foothold in the postwar civilian light-truck market. The T207 and T214 became the basis for the militaristically tough Power Wagon line of pickups, one of Dodge's most iconic vehicles in the years that followed peace.

The first postwar Dodge cars were identical to the 1942 models, with one exception—the styling staff made an effort to make them distinctive by more sharply squaring off their wheel arches. All were powered by the 230-cu.in. L-head straight-six, rated at 102hp. Despite the immediate mania for new cars and overheated demand, sales for the bulbous Dodges skidded, dropping the make from fourth to sixth in U.S. sales as the 1949 model year approached. Some leftover 1948s were retitled as 1949 models until Dodge introduced its first truly all-new postwar car in February 1949.

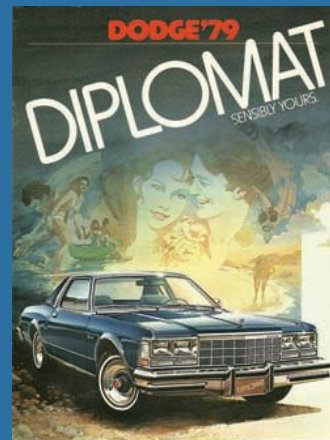
With the exception of their engines, everything about the 1949 Dodges was new. The cars were narrower and shorter than the 1942-based predecessors, riding on wheelbases that began at 115 inches, but were roomier inside. New model nomenclature walked in handclasp with several new body designs, including a three-passenger roadster and a new all-steel station wagon with exterior wood framing and mahogany decals as trim.



1972



1975



1979

A semi-automatic transmission called the Gyro-Matic was likewise new. Buyer enthusiasm was piqued and sales recovered strongly. The following year, Dodge joined the march to embrace pillarless two-door hardtops, naming its entry in the Coronet series as the Diplomat, a name that Dodge would use more than once. The following year, however, K.T. Keller's last as Chrysler's boss, the corporation and Dodge were hobbled when the United Auto Workers staged a bitter 100-day walkout, costing Chrysler an estimated half-million sales of new cars in the still-sizzling postwar market, a dispute centered mainly on union requests for pension boosts.

Most of the corporate innovations in the immediately ensuing years spanned more than one of Chrysler's divisions, beginning with the 1951 introduction of the Hemi and the hiring of Virgil Exner as corporate styling director. At Dodge, the real advancements began in 1953, when it received a downsized, 241-cu.in. version of the Chrysler Hemi V-8, a huge step up in power. Exner's design magic emerged two years later with the arrival of the handsome, mildly finned 1955 models. By this time, the Hemi engine was bored out to 270 cubic inches. The following year, Dodge segued into the emerging performance market by offering the dual-carbureted D-500 V-8, up to 315 cubic inches with 260hp—a very substantial number at the time for a moderately priced car. Extremely low-production, the D-501 arrived in 1957 with more than 300hp, and was sold mainly to drag racers; just 56 were built.

Amid the 1958 recession, sales skidded to fewer than 115,000 cars despite their distinctive Exner looks. A restyling for 1959 was led by deep eyebrows above the headlamps, and the Super D-500 performance package now featured Chry-

ler's new B-series Wedge V-8, with the now-familiar displacement of 383 cubic inches, and up to 345hp with a somewhat troubled electronic fuel-injection setup. Sales recovered measurably, but then came an Exner restyling that combined chopped-off fins and tunneled taillamps, plus the new Dart and Polara lines. The buying public loved it, and Dodge jumped four spots to land sixth in overall 1960 sales. Americans were scaling back their automotive fantasies, and Dodge responded by firing the Lancer into the newly emerging compact market. Within two years, the Dart—at first, it was the loss-leader full-size Dodge—would be stepped back, restyled, and become the marque's compact.

Then came Dodge's Silver Anniversary. Buyers were paying attention and rewarded it with sixth place in national sales. The standard-size Dodges got another full restyling, a trapezoidal roofline making the hardtops particularly attractive. Compared to the mechanical side of Dodge, though, that was almost an afterthought. This, 1964, was the year of the new-generation Hemi, when 426-powered Mopars annihilated the competition in NASCAR, while the candy-striped Ramchargers team led a Hemi assault on the nation's drag strips, as the Stock classes began their wild transition into Funny Cars.

Performance at Dodge, which could trace its roots back more than a decade, was in full cry. For 1965, the Coronet made a return as a new midsize car and within a year, became the basis of the famed fastback Charger, which rode on the same 117-inch wheelbase. The 1966 line was fully restyled from the Dart all the way to the new luxury Monaco series, kind of an über-Polara. Testosterone raged unchecked as the 1970s unfolded, and the Dart and the pedestrian Coronet

grew performance versions. The "R/T" badge came to signify brute horsepower by way of LA small-blocks, enhanced RB big-blocks and, naturally, the Hemi. For 1969, the mind-blowing Charger Daytona was launched with great fanfare due to its sleek bullet nose and elevated wing designed for 200 MPH battles on NASCAR's new generation of mega-speedways. A restyled Charger, known as the "fuselage" body cars, was introduced for 1971.

Dodge, and the rest of Chrysler, had a much nastier hangover from the end of the original muscle era than most of Detroit. It was saddled with huge engines, poor fuel mileage and even worse build quality, as buyers turned their OPEC-needed backs away from excessive size and horsepower. Despite an alliance with Mitsubishi, the upscale Aspen compact that replaced the Dart and a later stab with the European-influenced Omni, Highland Park was in deep trouble.

Lee Iacocca was plucked from the unemployment line to execute a turnaround, which he began by persuading Congress to guarantee Chrysler's debt. The immediate result was that Dodge survived to introduce the innocuous K-car, which rescued the company by morphing its offerings into everything from granny cars to the groundbreaking front-drive minivan. With design brilliance from Hal Sperlich, his erstwhile Ford sidekick, Iacocca became the public face of industrial reinvention, the K-car assuring a future that eventually spawned the revolutionary Ram pickup and the reconstituted Challenger and Charger. Dodge's renaissance from the 1980s onward stands as something of a business miracle. So, if you go out to order a new 2015 Challenger with the savage 707hp Hellcat powertrain, remember that a century of dedicated Dodge Boys preceded you in history. 🐾

Phaeton Elite

With just 542 built, this 1930 Dodge DD Six Phaeton may very well be the only remaining example of its type

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF KOCH



When automobiles replaced horse-drawn carriages, some traditions died hard; the Phaeton body style—named for the Greek sun god’s chariot-stealing son—was one of these. Initially the turn-of-the-last-century equivalent of a flyweight sports car, the style evolved: two or three rows of seats, frequently four doors and only a temporary roof. Differing from convertibles that stowed their soft tops on-board, the entirely open Phaeton did without provision for integrated side windows or curtains, as any protection would be part of a completely detachable roof. It’s a body style that made some sense in the desert Southwest, less so in colder climates where steel-top protection



Dodge's cast-iron flathead six displaced 189.8 cubic inches, offered 5.2:1 compression, and developed 61 horsepower in 1930. To make this Phaeton more roadable, the owner swapped in an externally identical 217-cu.in. L-head six (with 6.2:1 compression) from a 1941 Dodge. This bumped power up by a third, to 91 horsepower.



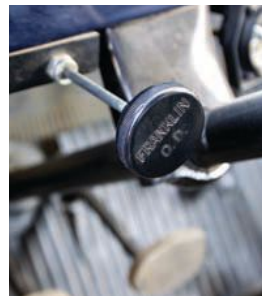
was fast gaining the American car-buying public's trust, and where convertibles offered greater protection, convenience and choice. A Phaeton was a body tub with an engine, and little more. It was a commitment to a lifestyle that fewer people were making.

The automobile seen here is a new-for-1930 Dodge DD Six Phaeton. Dodge's 1930 lineup was the first to bear parent company Chrysler's styling and engineering influence. Chrysler had purchased the company on the last day of July, 1928, too late to exert much influence on any 1929 models. The Chrysler-designed Dodges were lighter, faster, quicker and smaller than the Dodge models they would ultimately replace. They also utilized chassis and engines initially created for the all-new 1929 De Soto CK line. They featured a 109-inch wheelbase; a 189.8-cu.in. L-head straight-six with four main bearings, a chain-driven camshaft, a counterweighted crankshaft, and a mechanical fuel pump; rub-

ber engine mounts; double-acting hydraulic shocks; four-wheel hydraulic brakes; and full instrumentation.

Ads emphasized the Dodge name only, dropping the "Brothers" moniker that previous Dodges had used, although the double-delta Dodge Brothers logo continued on hubcaps for a while longer. What's more, Chrysler swapped Dodge's and De Soto's places in the corporate lineup—making De Soto a higher level model—and Dodge reaped the benefits of a 200-plus percent sales gain year-to-year, launching from seventh to fourth place in the annual sales race.

A full array of body styles were offered on the new 1930 Dodge: business coupe, coupe or roadster with rumble seat, sedan and convertible; a Phaeton was offered on the new-for-1930 DD chassis as well, just as the company had done for years previously. Problem was, by 1930, Phaetons were falling out of style. Just 542



All is as should be inside the Phaeton's interior, save for that overdrive knob. To allow a top speed greater than 40 MPH, the owner installed a mid-1950s Dodge overdrive unit. With a .70 overdrive gear, this knocked the final drive ratio from 4.9:1 down to a reasonable 3.43:1.

1930 DD Six Phaetons were built, and just 234 eight-cylinder-powered DC Series Phaetons. Possibly not helping was the fact that Dodge marketed its Phaeton quite differently from, for example, Ford. At \$440, a 1930 Model A Ford Phaeton was cheaper to buy than nearly any other Model A available at the time. Dodge, meanwhile, considered the Phaeton body style a high-style upgrade, charging \$875—more than any other 1930 Dodge model save for the convertible, which came in at \$60 more.

Ford sold 16,479 Phaetons, against a yearly total of 1,261,053 cars; Dodge, meanwhile, sold just 542 DD Six Phaetons out of a total six-cylinder production of 43,505 DD Six models. In terms of whole numbers, and doubtless in the examples that survived, this makes the Dodge a far rarer car. By the end of 1931, Dodge stopped Phaeton production altogether.

So in 1961, when Richard Kocher was tired of the meager mechanical aptitude of his 1914 Ford Model T Touring and his 1917 Ford Model T Coupelet, and seeking an opportunity to drive something a little more fun on the revived Glidden Tours he participated in, he sought out something a tad more modern. "I always liked Mopar cars, and keeping in mind its hydraulic brakes, a Dodge would have fit the bill."

An ad in *Hemmings Motor News* turned up this Dodge Phaeton, which Richard bought sight unseen from a seller in Montreal, who kept it stored at a farm in Sutton, Quebec. On arrival in Sutton, Richard discovered that "It looked quite rough, but this car has an all-steel body, so there was no wood to rot or replace. The

only missing parts were the two spare wheels. Everything else was there, right down to the 'Dodge 6' script on the radiator core and the spare-tire hold-down pieces." In truth, neither buyer nor seller had any idea of the relative rarity of the 1930 DD Phaeton. The seller just wanted it out of his barn, and Richard wanted something with more oomph for his Glidden tours. That it turned out to be one of so few ever made was a bonus.

As per the license plate still mounted, the Dodge was last registered in 1949 in Quebec, and as it turned out, even in the 1960s, 1930 Dodge wheels weren't so easy to find. Richard said: "I looked for years at Hershey and by luck, I finally found two wheels just as the guy was packing up late Saturday afternoon. The wheels are stamped 'Budd,' with a part number, and dated March 1930—just like the four that were on the car."

After the required work was done and the car was ready for the road, there was one final catch. In 1961, his Phaeton was too new to qualify for the Glidden. The dozen years Richard spent rebuilding it, while maintaining a full-time job and raising a family, eradicated that particular issue. Nonetheless, Richard built his car to drive, and to that end, he made a few largely-invisible changes as he went along. The original 189.8-cu.in., cast-iron, flathead six had just 5.2:1 compression and 61 horsepower, so it was replaced by a larger 217-cu.in. 6.3:1-compression version of the same straight-six engine from a 1941 Dodge, which put out a factory-rated 91 horsepower.

"The rear axle ratio is 4.9:1," Richard tells us, which sounds



The Phaeton roof is not permanently attached, but it is foldable. It rests on one hook on each rear corner.



Period "Vote for Hoover" plate matches one at the front calling for the repeal of the 18th Amendment.

perfect for getting that low-power six to work, but the tradeoff is a deeply limited top speed. "At 40 MPH," Richard says, "it sounded like the engine would jump out of the hood." The answer? "There was a man in Ohio who installed overdrive units in older cars. I found his ad in *Hemmings Motor News*. He installed a Borg-Warner overdrive from a 1955 Dodge [although Dodge and De Soto offered overdrive on their cars as early as 1934]. It was important to find a Mopar overdrive unit in order to preserve the handbrake on the back of the overdrive." The result? All positive. The 2.75 gearing helped acceleration, and the .70 gearing of the overdrive unit knocked that low 4.9 rear gear down to a more manageable 3.43 on the open road. Though not quite to the same degree as the chariot horses of the mythical Phaeton's father, which in the Greek sun god's estimation "scarcely tolerat[e] my control when their fierce spirits are hot," the changes Richard made to his Dodge DD6 nevertheless "improved highway performance a great deal."

Besides keeping his Dodge on a steady diet of

At 40 MPH
it sounded like
the engine would
jump out of the
hood.

For more about the origin of the term "Phaeton," go online to hmn.com/phaeton.



Valvoline 10W-40 conventional oil for the engine, Mother's products for the metal and Westly's for the tires, a few cruising-compatible additions were installed over time. The tonneau windscreen for the rear-seat passengers was one of these, and a second windshield wiper was added for safety. For reliability, Richard has installed a temperature gauge to monitor the radiator, which has a more modern core, plus an accessory radiator stone guard to deflect attention away from the idea that the radiator itself isn't a 1930 piece. "The modern radiator core in the original tanks is a must for the heat and long hills of Arizona and the desert Southwest. Now, on a 110-degree day, the temperature gauge stays right on 160 degrees, up hill or down."

So equipped, and at long last allowed to participate, Richard has taken his 1930 Dodge DD6 Phaeton on a total of 21 Glidden Revival Tours. "We also drove it to and from most of the events," he tells us. "Since we moved to Fountain Hills, Arizona, we've toured New Mexico, Utah, Colorado, Texas, and all over Arizona and California." 🐾



Dodge Royalty

With its striking two-tone color scheme and four-barrel Hemi V-8, the 1954 Royal Sport Coupe is rare, desirable, attractive, and very quick

BY TERRY SHEA • PHOTOGRAPHY BY THOMAS DeMAURO



A mild post-Korean War recession put the brakes on the entire auto industry in 1954, but Dodge and its dealer network suffered a distinct disadvantage with no new or restyled models for their dealers' showrooms. That doesn't mean Chrysler's middle-class division took matters sitting down. While waiting for the clean-sheet "Forward Look" designs of Virgil Exner, set to arrive for the 1955 model year, Dodge instead looked to mechanical innovation for its 1954 models, along with a splash of vibrant colors and some racing-inspired action to stay relevant.



Dodge introduced the Royal in 1954 as a new designation for its top-of-the-line models, including sedan, coupe, convertible and two-door hardtop models; the latter two of which rode on a 114-inch wheelbase, a full five inches shorter than the other models. Slotted in above the Coronet, the Royal was still priced competitively, but entered the market space that we might call “near luxury” today.

Optional on lesser Dodge lines, the same engine was featured in every Royal, Dodge’s so-called “baby” Hemi, the 241-cu.in. Red Ram V-8 that shared its engineering and design with the larger, more widely known 331-cu.in. FirePower Hemi found under the hoods of Chryslers. With a two-barrel Stromberg carburetor and a 7.5:1 compression ratio, the Red Ram V-8 made 150

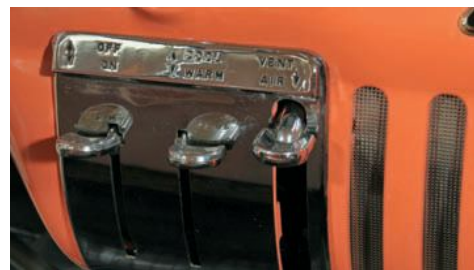
horsepower in 1954, a full 10hp better than the previous year’s Red Ram, which was introduced with just 7.0:1 compression.

The Hemi engine proved a brilliant move on Chrysler’s part. Its hemispherical combustion chambers offered several advantages over more conventional engines with wedge-shaped cylinder heads: better thermal efficiency, central spark plug location for better combustion, room for larger valves, better design for smoother porting and manifolding and plenty of room for more water passages.

Dodge sent four V-8-powered 1954 Royals—two sedans and two convertibles—to Bonneville late in 1953 and came home with 196 AAA speed records, the best being an outright 108.36 MPH on the flying 10-mile test. In the final running of the flat-out



Dodge introduced the Royal line in 1954 as a near-luxury car to slot in above the Coronet, and the automaker gave the car more features and amenities than the standard lines. Two-tone color scheme was carried over to the interior.



Carrera Panamericana Mexican road race, Dodge Royals took the first four positions in their class, as well five of the top six and six of the top nine spots. Dodge's first performance model had proven itself out of the box.

Along with those speed records and race results, the Los Angeles Area Dodge Dealers entered a Red Ram-powered Royal Sedan in the Mobilgas Economy Run for 1954, winning by sipping fuel at an impressive 25.4 MPG. It's hard to believe that Dodge had a hard time finding buyers in 1954 when it sold an engine that succeeded on power and thrift. But the engine was only part of the technical innovation Dodge engineers had readied for 1954.

Besides the new engine, Dodge also offered for the 1954 model year its first fully automatic clutch-less transmission with the two-speed PowerFlite, a planetary-type gearbox with a torque converter. Using fewer parts than the competition, the PowerFlite quickly gained a reputation for reliability and smoothness. Drivers always started out in low gear, and the transmission moved into high gear as the car crested 11 MPH, but would still kick down at higher speeds when a driver needed to accelerate. Before the advent of the three-speed TorqueFlite that became almost universal at Chrysler during the 1960s, the PowerFlite was stout enough to see service behind almost any engine Mopar offered in the mid-to-late 1950s.

With no park position for the PowerFlite transmission, engineers designed an expanding drum-type brake that acted on the driveshaft aft of the transmission. Although today's drivers might find a parkless gear selector a bit unnerving, the brake-on-shaft design worked exactly as planned—assuming the driver remembered to use it, of course.

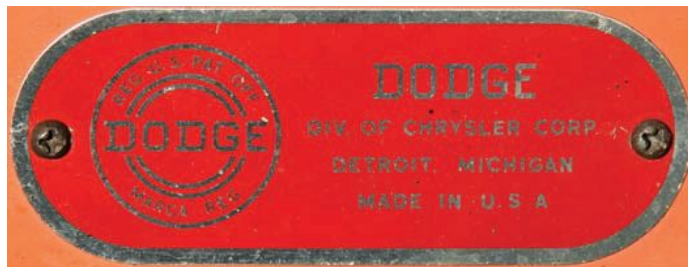
Dodge also offered power steering on all models for 1954, a feature not commonly found on middle-of-the-line brands. Even air-conditioning was on the options list, though at over \$600, it

found few takers.

Mid-year, to big fanfare, Dodge released a Pace Car Replica version of the Royal convertible, which had been chosen to pace the 1954 Indianapolis 500. Appropriately enough, it was named the Royal 500. It also didn't hurt that Dodge was celebrating the 40th anniversary of the 1914 introduction of the Dodge Brothers' first car, and the Indy 500 offered a great way to showcase it. Dodge painted each of the 701 replicas in the same Pace Car Yellow color, gave them the pace car lettering, checkered flags and a chromed "500" badge for the trunk. Each Royal 500 also came equipped with a set of Kelsey-Hayes chrome wire wheels with wide whitewall tires and a Continental kit with the spare mounted behind the trunk.

The actual pace car included some go-fast hardware under the hood in the form of an Offenhauser aluminum intake manifold with a four-barrel carburetor that bumped horsepower to approximately 170. Though all Royal 500s were delivered from the factory with the standard two-barrel setup, for \$87 your local Dodge dealer would sell and install the Offenhauser set-up on your new Royal.

Dodge sold 701 Royal 500s, alas not enough to make too much of a dent in the company's nosediving sales in 1954. To



help boost sales even more, in the spring of 1954, the automaker quietly introduced a special version of the pillarless hardtop Sport Coupe, in two-tone paint. With a Continental kit and wire wheels optional, and no connection to the Indy 500, the coupe wore neither special badges nor any of the Pace Car-replica signage.

Details remain sketchy on the actual program that introduced the car to dealers, and while other colors were said to have been available, the two-tone paint—an early preview of multi-toned Dodges coming for the 1955 model year—seems to have only ever been delivered in the combination of Sarasota White over Spanish Coral, both colors introduced for the spring of 1954 along with Pace Car Yellow. The delicious color combo, seemingly made for summer, has Creamsicle written all over it.

Phil George is no stranger to this special Dodge hardtop. The New Castle, Pennsylvania, resident is on his second one. Having owned this well-kept feature car for more than 15 years or so has given Phil a refresher course in the class of Dodge Royal that he first attended in 1956. “I went down to the Chrysler dealership,” says Phil, “about 19 years old, to buy a new Plymouth and didn’t have any money. And they knew it.”

Some lessons are learned the hard way via the honest truth, but a ’54 Royal Sport Coupe on the lot did offer some salvation to the young, not-so-wealthy Mopar enthusiast. “The salesman knew the family,” Phil continues, “and he said, ‘Here’s the best buy we have out there. It’s sharp and it’s half the price.’ I bought it and never had any regrets because everybody thought it was a new model and wondered how in the world I could afford that kind of a car.”

Phil sold that Dodge Royal a couple of years later, but never forgot about it. Sightings of the car were more than just rare, and it would have stood out, too, owing to the special Royal’s unique paint and hardtop design. “In my lifetime,” recalls Phil,

“Not surprisingly, the Dodge exhibits a Fifties-style pillow-soft ride as it floats along at speed.”

“I know the one I had. I know this current car and, one time, a friend of mine, sent me a picture of one listed for sale in a newspaper in Columbus, Ohio, and it said it had a Chevy V-8 in it and a Mustang front end. Those were the only three examples that I ever knew of.”

Fortunately, Phil’s current car avoided the hot rod treatment and remains largely original. With 47,000 miles on the odometer when he bought it, the Royal needed very little work. However, that unique Spanish Coral paint required replacement after spending a few decades fading in California and Arizona, where the car had spent much of its life. “Matching the color was a project,” explains Phil, “because Spanish Coral is listed by a number in the paint chart, but with no colors or anything. The body shop came out and took photographs of it, and I think they hit it right on the nose because I remember the car, and that’s the way it looked.”

Since buying his Dodge, Phil has ticked over the odometer to 53,000, though he puts fewer miles on the car today. As the old Dodge was in such great shape when he got it, it has essentially only required “a bit of TLC” to keep it looking and running right. Well, that’s not entirely true, as Phil had some cleaning to do underneath it: “When I got the car, I don’t know why, but somebody had undercoated it and then re-undercoated and then undercoated it again. And they coated all the mechanical parts, too. I have cleaned all of that off. The undercarriage now looks as good as the top side. But, other than painting the orange, I have done nothing to it. It was a California car.”

Senior Editor Tom DeMauro recently drove Phil’s lovely Dodge after photographing it for this feature. Here, he shares his driving impressions of the car’s performance.

“At the completion of the photo shoot, the most anticipated attraction of the day had finally arrived: I’d get to slide behind the wheel of the Royal V-8 Sport Coupe and take it out for a ride.

“Upon doing so, I am instantly reminded that this is a 1950s



Red Ram Hemi V-8 was a 241-cu.in. little brother to the Chrysler’s FirePower 331 engine. With the dealer-installed Offenhauser intake and four-barrel carburetor, the Red Ram produces 170 horsepower.



owner's view



The important part of this car is that I had one when I was a kid, and I really liked it. I was sitting down at Hershey one day, watching a car in the car corral for a guy, bored to tears, and there was the Hemmings tent sitting over there with the flag up, so I went over and bought a *Hemmings*, just for something to do. And, lo and behold, there this car was in it, and I got all excited and bought it.

The one I had back in the Fifties was exactly like this one, with the exception that this car I have today has an Offenhauser aluminum intake with a four-barrel carburetor. The Royal I had before wasn't quite as dolled up as this example. It didn't have a Continental kit, didn't have power steering, didn't have power brakes. And, also, the wire wheels on this car were an add-on.

car, as the steering wheel/seat/pedal relationships are indicative of the era. The wheel is huge, to provide leverage for the more prevalent non-power steering cars, despite the fact that this Dodge had optional power steering. The angle of the steering column results in a bus-like positioning of the wheel, and with the 'chair height' front seat adjusted forward for my short legs, the ornamental 'Power Steering' medallion is about six inches from my chin.

"The seat, though it's a little bouncy and offers no lateral support (after all it is a bench), is still quite comfortable. Think living room sofa. A twist of the key brings the Red Ram Hemi to life instantly, and it settles into a low idle. A pull and twist of the large chrome handle under the dash releases the emergency brake, and with my foot on the brake pedal, I shift the two-speed PowerLite transmission from neutral into drive. You read correctly, there is no park position, which means maintaining proper operation of the emergency brake is paramount, since it keeps the car from rolling when parked.

"Once underway, the 241-cu.in. Hemi with the addition of the dealer-installed Offenhauser intake manifold and Carter four-barrel carb accelerates as you'd expect a 170hp V-8 to do in a luxury car, smooth but not fast enough to be uncivilized. The single upshift is mild.

"Not surprisingly, the Dodge exhibits a Fifties-style pillow-soft ride as it floats along at speed.



The narrow bias-ply tires like to follow road irregularities, and the early power steering system allows turning with minimal effort, but there is some extra play in the system on-center. Around the turns, the front coil springs and rear leaf springs reveal their boulevard intentions via moderate body lean.

"Phil warned that the brakes would require attention, as the pedal is located several inches higher than the gas pedal, which takes a little getting used to.

"A full set of gauges (except for a tach) feature fonts and faces designed to add an aura of class to the interior. The centered Royal emblem and the clock near the passenger side also contribute to a luxurious appearance. Overall, the cabin is bright, airy and spacious. Visibility is good at the front and sides, but is somewhat limited in the rear by the sloping roofline.

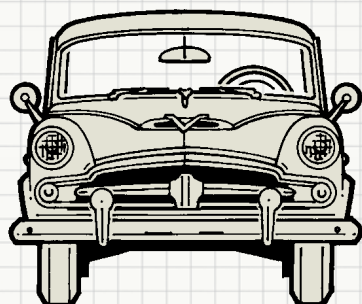
"If time travel is your thing, then this Royal V-8 can certainly transport you back to 1954 in style and provide enjoyable cruising, as long as you don't unfairly compare it to later cars or try to buckle your seatbelt, because like many cars of the era, this Dodge doesn't have them."

For Phil, this Dodge takes him back to the Fifties as well, though more like to 1956, when he bought his first Royal. Perhaps he was disappointed nearly 60 years ago to not be able to buy that new Plymouth convertible, but you'd never know it by the way he still loves his Dodge Royal. 🐾

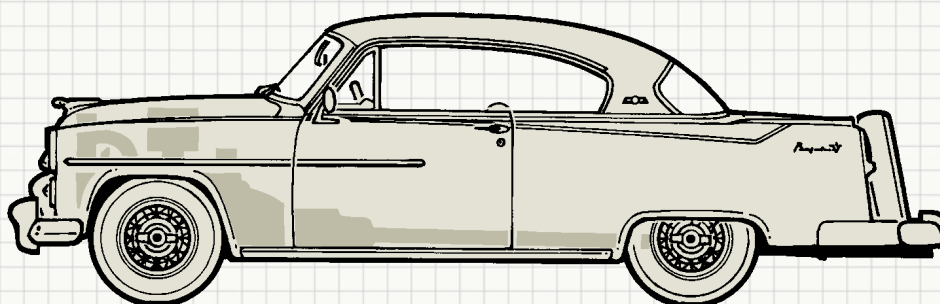


1954 DODGE ROYAL

ILLUSTRATIONS BY RUSSELL VON SAUERS, THE GRAPHIC AUTOMOBILE STUDIO
©2014 HEMMINGS CLASSIC CAR



55.9 inches



114 inches

SPECIFICATIONS

PRICE

Base price	\$2,503
Options (on car profiled)	PowerFlite automatic transmission, \$189; power steering, \$134; Offenhauser intake manifold and four-barrel carburetor (dealer installed) \$87

ENGINE

Type	Red Ram V-8, cast-iron block and cylinder heads; hemispherical combustion chambers
Displacement	241.3 cubic inches
Bore x Stroke	3.4375 x 3.250 inches
Compression Ratio	7.5:1
Horsepower	150 @ 4,400 RPM (170, as equipped)
Torque	222-lb.ft. @ 2,400 RPM
Valvetrain	Hydraulic valve lifters
Main Bearings	5
Fuel System	Stromberg two-barrel carburetor (factory installed); Carter four-barrel carburetor on Offenhauser aluminum intake manifold (dealer installed when new)
Lubrication System	Full pressure, gear-type pump
Electrical System	6-volt
Exhaust System	Cast-iron manifold, dual mufflers

TRANSMISSION

Type	PowerFlite two-speed automatic with planetary gears and torque converter
Ratios	1st 1.72:1 2nd 1.00:1 Reverse 2.39:1

DIFFERENTIAL

Type	Hypoid gears; open driveshaft with semi-floating rear axles
Ratio	3.90:1

STEERING

Type	Monroe link-type with worm-and-roller gears; power assisted
Turns lock to lock	4.5
Ratio	20.4:1
Turning Circle	39.5 feet

BRAKES

Type	Hydraulically operated steel drums with vacuum-servo power assist
Front/Rear	11-inch drums

CHASSIS & BODY

Construction	Double-drop steel frame with four crossmembers
Body Style	Two-door, six-passenger pillarless hardtop coupe
Layout	Front engine, rear-wheel drive

SUSPENSION

Front	Independent upper and lower control arms, coil springs, linkless anti-roll bar; hydraulic shock absorbers
Rear	Live-axle on semi-elliptic leaf springs; anti-roll bar; hydraulic shock absorbers

WHEELS & TIRES

Wheels	Wire wheels
Front/rear	15 x 6 inches
Front/rear tires	7.10 x 15

WEIGHTS & MEASURES

Wheelbase	114 inches
Overall Length	199.5 inches
Overall Width	73.9 inches
Overall Height	62 inches
Front Track	55.9 inches
Rear Track	58.8 inches
Shipping weight	3,355 pounds

CAPACITIES

Crankcase	5 quarts
Cooling System	19 quarts
Fuel Tank	17 gallons
Transmission	12 quarts
Rear Axle	3.25 pints

CALCULATED DATA*

Bhp per cu.in.	0.71
Weight per bhp	19.74 pounds
Weight per cu.in.	13.92 pounds

* Numbers used here are for 170hp, not 150hp

PERFORMANCE

Top Speed	108.4 MPH*
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*Source AAA Record

PRODUCTION

Dodge made 64,802 Royals in 1954, of which 3,852 were Sport Coupes

PROS & CONS

- + Very rare
- + Distinctive color combination
- + Early Hemi V-8 with period-correct mods

- Very few exist today
- Unknown production details
- Exterior trim hard to find

WHAT TO PAY

Low
\$6,000 – \$8,000

Average
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High
\$22,000 – \$27,000

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IN HCC #120, THE AUTHOR INCORRECTLY STATES that the featured two-tone gray Cadillac is a Series 62, rather than the correct designation, which is a Series 61. Normally this would be “no big deal,” but in this case, the two models are different automobiles, the Series 61 having a smaller GM B-body and the Series 62 having the larger C-body. There are many differences, but the most obvious is the bottom of the doors. The Series 61 B-body door bottoms curve outwards to cover the running board (as seen on the featured car), while the Series 62 C-body doors do not.

Pontiac, Oldsmobile and Buick all used the B-bodies as well, where the C-body cars were only used on Olds 98s, Buick Supers/Roadmasters and Cadillac Series 62s.

Normally I wouldn't say anything, but the Classic Car Club of America accepts the Series 62 as a “Full Classic” and does not accept the Series 61. I would hate to think some poor guy wanting to join the CCCA would buy a car like the Series 61 in your article, thinking it was a Series 62 and then being told by the CCCA that his car didn't qualify as a true Classic and that he couldn't show his car at a CCCA concurs.

Ralph Hubbard
Pasadena, California

THE CADILLAC SERIES 62 utilized the big, four-window GM C-body (shared with the Buick Super and Roadmaster and the Oldsmobile 98), while the Series 61 in your photos used the smaller B-body. The six-window fastback B-body Series 61 sedan (same shell as Pontiac Streamliners and Olds 70 Series cars) was a much rarer model than the Series 62 sedan; somewhere around 8,500 were manufactured in 1947 as compared to around 25,000 Series 62 sedans.

I suspect, as resources were still scarce moving into 1947, it made financial sense for Cadillac to allocate steel to the higher priced, higher profit Series 62s. Buick did the same, making only Supers and Roadmasters in 1946-'47, not reintroducing the B-body Specials until 1948.

Matt Desy
South Windsor, Connecticut

GREAT STORY ON THE INTERNATIONAL TRAVELALL. (HCC #120 “History of Automotive Design”) The one thing missed,

though, was the late 1960s Travelalls converted to ambulances. Many hundreds saw service as ambulances across the country. Police, fire departments and hospitals used these vehicles for many years as ambulances.

Robert Walton
Chelmsford, Massachusetts

REGARDING STEPHEN LOMBARDO'S QUESTION about column-shifters in HCC #120, I've had a couple of six-cylinder Chevrolets (1952 and 1969 models) with the shifter on the column, and found them to be very easy to drive. I've also had a couple of Saab 96s and one Peugeot, with a four-speed on the column, and also liked those cars. As you pointed out, the reason for putting the shifter on the column was for better passenger room when the car was equipped with a front bench seat. In the 1960s, when manual four-speed transmissions became popular on performance-oriented cars, it was considered better to put the shifter back on the floor, as these cars had bucket seats anyway, and it was possible to shift faster because the linkage was more direct.

Allen Willyard
Loveland, Colorado

BOB PALMA'S COLUMN on automobile brand loyalty in HCC #120 was very interesting, but seemed to miss what really caused the demise of brand loyalty by car buyers. “Badge engineering” became the rage in the 1980s and '90s by virtually all the U.S. manufacturers. When a customer could go into a Cadillac showroom and find a Chevrolet Cavalier with Cadillac badges and a Cadillac price, brand loyalty died. Brand loyalty in the auto industry was really a two-way street. The brand provided uniqueness and individuality for the buyer and the buyer became loyal to the brand. GM was probably hit hardest by people losing brand loyalty.

Marty Richelsoph
Cave Creek, Arizona

TO ANSWER READER DUANE HAYES in HCC #119 about why only California got the 350-cu.in. V-8 option in the 1975 Chevrolet Monza, it was because California had enough potential buyers that Chevrolet couldn't ignore the market, and the fact that the 262-cu.in. V-8

emissions could not be certified for use in that state. You'll remember that California had its own emissions regulations that were sometimes stricter than the 49-state regulations.

The package that was certified for sale in California for 1975-'76 was a 350-cu.in. V-8 mated to a Turbo Hydra-Matic; this was absolutely the best and smoothest powerplant ever used in a Vega or H Special Monza. I had the opportunity many times to use a 1975 Monza with this powertrain combination for a 600-mile round-trip commute from Los Angeles to Mammoth Mountain, and I also rented a 1975 Monza with the 2.3-liter four-cylinder engine and two-speed Powerglide automatic transmission, and it is hard to understand how these two cars were related after driving both.

Also, the trim and build quality of the Monza seemed substantially improved over a new Vega. They were built in two different assembly plants, so perhaps it could just be that Monzas from the Ste. Thérèse, Quebec, plant weren't spit out quite as fast as Vegas from the Lordstown, Ohio, plant. It just seemed that the standard Monza finish and trim were of a higher standard level.

Rande Bellman
Boston, Massachusetts

IN RICHARD'S COLUMN, “CONFUSED DEFINITIONS,” in HCC #120, he missed the most abused terminology of all, the phrase “Fully Restored” when it's used in classified ads. Such as: “Fully restored 1936 Ford (or other), with a 350 small-block, Fatman steering and disc brakes”! Really?

Kurt Baltrusch
Great Falls, Montana

HATS OFF TO YOU, RICHARD! “CONFUSED DEFINITIONS” should have a permanent spot in each issue of HCC. People get the misperception that cars 25 years and older are antiques, in part because many states, including my own, offer “Antique Car” plates for any car that meets the 25+ year qualification.

When asked, I tell people that my mid-'70s full-sized Pontiac convertible is neither a classic nor an antique, and it may not even be a popular collector car, but it sure does bring back happy teen-aged family memories for me.

James Sessions
Natchez, Mississippi

The Dodge in My Life

This month, we commemorate the 100th anniversary of Dodge, and I, for one, am out there with balloons and confetti. Some people think I only care about independent brand cars, but thankfully, I'm much more rounded than that. I say hooray for Dodge! Truth be told, I've had three Dodges in my

lifetime. Two were owned by me: a well-used 1963 Dart I bought as a young man and sold a week later for a \$150 profit (a lot of money back then) and an all-black 1979 Omni 024 hatchback coupe that the neighborhood kids thought was real cool. I kept that Omni a long time, and it provided great service. I still miss it.

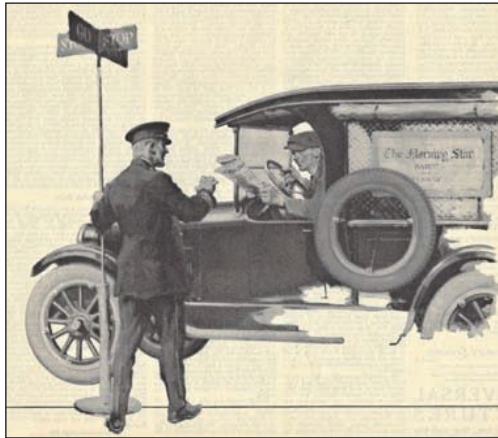
The third Dodge was actually the first one in my life. It was a 1926 Dodge Brothers truck my father bought on a whim. He'd never owned a collectible car or truck before, never even mentioned wanting one. But one day, he came home towing a rusty old truck with four dry-rotted tires behind his trusty 1963 Buick Le Sabre. He must have woken up that day deciding he wanted to restore an old truck. The Dodge had what my father called a "fruit wagon" body, which is formally referred to as a screen-side. My mother wasn't happy about the Dodge, and always referred to it as "that rusty old thing."

As I've mentioned before, we were a family with seven children and very modest means, so you may wonder how the old man afforded this new acquisition. Well, the old Dodge didn't run, the screen body was completely shot and the tires nearly flat. The seller told Dad he could have it for \$40 if he'd get it off his property pronto. Dad pumped up the flat tires, roped the Buick and Dodge together at the bumpers, and towed it home.

Luckily, Dad was a great shade-tree mechanic. He cleaned the spark plugs, filed the points, fiddled with the advance curve, spit in the carburetor and did heaven-knows-what-else, and in a short time, the Dodge was running sweetly. Total expenditure was about zip.

I helped clean up the old truck and watched as Dad fixed the minor amount of rust on the cab and fenders. Then he cut up some lumber and made a new body for the back. He didn't want a

screen-side, so he decided to build a pickup body—he was a pretty good self-taught carpenter. The cab floor boards were rotted, so the old man made up new ones and fitted them in. Once the clean-up and bodywork were done, he brush painted the truck in the original black, and it probably looked about as good as when it was new—he was a pretty good painter, too. For the bumpers and radiator shell, the old man used the budget approach, painting them with silver paint, and they came out looking fairly nice.



The tires represented a slightly bigger challenge, but Dad was resourceful. He found some good used tires and mounted them himself after patching the tubes. He had to do some other mechanical work, but by now I've forgotten what it was. I know it took a while to get the ahooga horn working right.

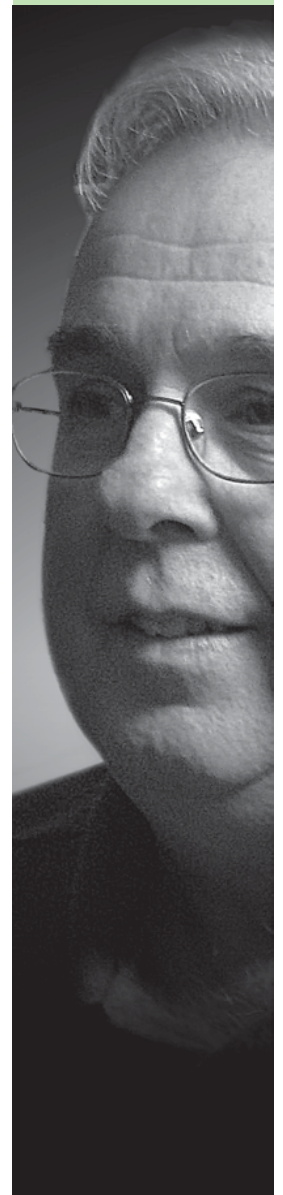
I was just a kid back then, maybe 13 years old, so obviously I wasn't allowed to drive the old Dodge. But I had a paper route for the *New Haven Register*, and on Sunday mornings when the papers were particularly heavy, the old man and I would load up the Dodge, and he'd drive me on my route. Did I mention he never bothered to register the truck? He didn't see the point, since he only drove it around the neighborhood. Plus he didn't want to spend the money.

One day after we finished up my paper route, Dad decided he'd drive downtown for some pipe tobacco. We drove in and almost made it out of town when a young policeman pulled us over. "Excuse me sir, but do you know you're driving with no license plates?" My father replied sure, he knew. "Can I see your registration?" "Ain't got one," said Dad. "The truck's not registered." "Well," said the cop, "don't you know that's illegal?" The old man got a little huffy when he replied, "Well of course I know that—I'm not stupid. Just give me a ticket, so I can get the hell out of here." He had the young cop so shook up that in the end he said—"Well, just drive it home sir, and we'll forget the whole thing."

On the way back, the old man looked at me and said, "Don't ever try anything like that; the cops will let an old man go, but never a kid."

Wise words. 🐼

Did I mention he never bothered to register the truck? He didn't see the point, since he only drove it around the neighborhood.





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Aunt Dorothy and the Dart

She never had much luck with cars, my Aunt Dorothy, who was my mother's sister. In a very early edition of this column, I recounted the amusing but ultimately sad tale about how my father had presented Aunt Dorothy with his moderately used 1951 Mercury Sport Sedan. I was in the car when the flathead V-8 backfired through the carburetor, convincing her that the Mercury was about to explode, never thinking that the fuel mixture was simply in need of adjustment. The Mercury ended up as an outdoor lounge chair in the midst of a stand of plum trees.

Here's the next chapter of that story. Since my aunt refused to drive the Mercury, which she considered to be either deadly or jinxed, it was time for her to find another car. A new car—a first at my grandmother's house. She drove north along Route 53 to Cresson, Pennsylvania, to a Dodge dealer located at an intersection along historic U.S. 22, at the foot of the Allegheny Summit. I can't remember the dealer's name, even though I went to college not far away from it. The site today is the location for a major Sheetz fuel stop and convenience store. In any case, Aunt Dorothy headed over to the Dodge dealer there and took her pick of the somewhat-limited offerings in the new-car inventory.

Aunt Dorothy selected herself a Dart. Not just any Dart, but the new compact version of this already-familiar Dodge nameplate. It was a four-door sedan in the Dart 270 range, a step up from the poverty-stricken 170 model, which meant that her car had carpeting instead of rubber floor mats, a little ritzier grade of vinyl interior coverings, and a little more chrome inside and outside. The compact Dart was arguably the freshest offering Dodge had in its lineup for 1963, and buyers were clearly grabbed by it. More than 130,000 Darts hit customer targets that year, the Dart 270 leading the way,

from a popularity standpoint, with 55,300 sold.

After dealing with the inscrutable cantankerousness of the Mercury's big flathead, Aunt Dorothy was probably glad to get a simpler engine. Most of the 1963 Darts used the 170-cu.in. version of Chrysler's virtually bulletproof Slant-Six, although an aluminum-alloy 225-cu.in. version was offered as a factory option. My aunt's Dart 170 was hooked to an optional TorqueFlite three-speed automatic transmission, controlled by pushbuttons on the left side of the instrument panel. I've got to admit, those pushbuttons transfixed me. I'd never seen such a system before. It reminded me of *The Jetsons*, where Jane could step over to the Foodarackacycle, punch a button and instantly be served a full-course Thanksgiving dinner.

Best I can remember, Aunt Dorothy was neither a particularly attentive nor careful driver. She always seemed distracted, almost obsessively fiddling with the Dart's AM radio. Even at that age, when I was in third grade, I wondered how much she was aware of her surroundings and other traffic, as we hurried along the high-crowned Pennsylvania two-lanes. Without question, that compact Dart got a workout whenever she pulled it out of the driveway.

But, by golly, that Dart lasted a full 20 years, Pennsylvania potholes, PennDOT salt slatherings and everything else. To be sure, its once-handsome body was painfully perforated by the time she sold it, but it's also clear that the Dart transformed Aunt Dorothy into a Mopar fan. She swapped her Dart for a Plymouth, a new K-car-derived Acclaim. That Plymouth eventually ended up in my wife's hands. She got a flat in it driving home one winter night. Opening the trunk, she learned that the floor had rusted through, admitting so much water that the spare was frozen in place as if it had been floating in the Arctic. But that's another story. 🐾

“Aunt Dorothy

selected herself a

Dart. Not just any

Dart, but the new

compact version

of this already

familiar Dodge

nameplate.”





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you do it?'

I asked.

Gordon's

reply: 'So I

can find

it in the

parking lot.' //

Legendary Automobile Designers

At the recent dedication and opening of the Lincoln Motor Car Heritage Museum in Hickory Corners, Michigan, I was reminiscing with a long-time member of the Michigan Region of the Classic Car Club of America about the early days of the region, specifically, about the automotive legends who had attended club events.

I began going to CCCA events in the Michigan Region in the 1960s. The Grand Classics were often held at Greenfield Village, and the host hotel was the Dearborn Inn (originally built by Henry Ford as an airport hotel). The Grand Classics, the precursors to today's concours d'elegance, featured the great American and European Classics of the 1920s, '30s and '40s. The awards dinner, an evening affair, was often held at the Ford Museum's Lovett Hall.

The dinner speakers were a who's who of the Classic Era. Among those joining the region for the weekend and speaking at the dinner were designers Ray Dietrich, Howard "Dutch" Darrin, Herman Brunn and Gordon Buehrig. I also recall Indianapolis 500 drivers Peter DePaolo and Mauri Rose.

As a young college student at the time, I didn't fully grasp the unique opportunity this presented, to meet these individuals who were so involved with the automobiles that we gathered to admire. By the 1970s and 80s, while many of my fellow enthusiasts and I were starting our business careers, many of these automotive greats had passed away. All too soon they were gone.

Fortunately, some wrote articles for magazines such as the CCCA's *Classic Car*, while others recorded oral histories. Of course, the best part for many of us was meeting these individuals and talking to them about their respective work during what we now call the Classic Era.

Unfortunately—for me—I was not able to spend as much time as I would have liked with Ray Dietrich, who was a special favorite of mine. Today, I own a 1931 Lincoln convertible sedan that he designed; I wish he were around to talk about the car.

A designer with whom I was able to spend

some time with over the years was Gordon Buehrig, who created designs for the Auburn, Cord and Duesenberg automobiles during his early years. He is, arguably, most famous for his design of the Cord 810.

I found Gordon to be an extremely gracious individual. After getting to know him, I decided to write a profile of him for *Industrial Design* magazine. To do so, I had to dig a bit deeper into his background and career. As he recalled the development of the Cord 810, begun in the summer of 1935, he took special care to name all of the individuals who worked with him on the project. More than 40 years after the car's introduction, he could have taken sole credit for the car's development, but clearly, that wasn't his style.

During one of our visits he invited me to join him and his lovely wife, Kay, for lunch at the Grosse Pointe Yacht Club. I remember walking through his garage where I spotted a 1936 Cord 810 sedan that Kay had bought for him several years earlier. Next to the Cord was a nondescript blue 1980s Oldsmobile sedan that caught my eye because the lower portion of the car was painted a soft red. "Hmm," I thought.

During our lunch, we continued our discussion about Classic automobiles and the Classic Era. To my everlasting regret, I trusted all of this to my memory and a few scribbled notes. But realistically, the presence of a tape recorder would have been out of place.

Our discussion finally moved into automobile design of the 1980s. I could tell that he and I shared a lack of enthusiasm for much of what was being designed at that time. He asked me if I knew design instructor Strother MacMinn, and I said I did. Gordon smiled and said, "Strother says these cars all look the same—like a used bar of soap."

I decided this was the time to ask him about the significance of the red lower portion of his Oldsmobile. "Why did you do it?" I asked. Gordon's reply: "So I can find it in the parking lot."

I never forgot those comments. And I'll never forget Gordon Buehrig and the other designers from the Classic Era I was lucky enough to meet so many years ago. ☺



Grabbing Life by the Horns

For one hundred years, owners of Dodge cars and trucks have been immensely loyal to the brand; now 57 owners explain their reasons why

BY RICHARD LENTINELLO

Dependable. That's the one word we hear over and over again from readers who own Dodge vehicles. Regardless of model or year of manufacture, reliability and durability play an important role in maintaining allegiance to the Dodge brand. Comfort, outstanding design and unique styling are the other key factors in why these owners adore their Dodge cars and trucks. Their tales are inspiring, moving and downright noteworthy.

1946 **D24 SEDAN**

Brenda Suttle; Lenexa, Kansas

Our Dodge stands out, with its deep ebony paint and loads of bright, shiny chrome. The column-mounted shifter gives more front seat room, and all instruments and radio controls, whose tubes remain the original ones, are within an easy arm's length; even the clock and vacuum windshield wipers work. It's a proud car as it makes its way down the highway. When we were young, we all felt cool and safe to be inside such a strong and durable vehicle.

It does drive like a tank, but once on the road, it goes. It was built for moving, and still does a great job at that. The best thing is that it was my father's car, and when I'm in it, I see him sitting next to me.



1933 **BUSINESS COUPE**

Daniel Walsh; Nine Mile Falls, Washington

The sloping grille, chrome headlamp buckets, long hood, suicide doors and low roofline are nicely tied together with the embossed belt line that travels from the front to the back. It all comes together, producing a very attractive car. Embossed spears on the front fenders add a unique decorative touch.

It travels down the road nicely, with its hydraulic shocks and brakes, and the interior is surprisingly comfortable. This car is original down to its paint and factory pinstriping.



1956 **MAYFAIR**

Charles Woodside; San Antonio, Texas

Built in Canada, this Mayfair is similar to a Plymouth Belvedere from the A-pillar back; it combines the best of Dodge and Plymouth styling. Their soaring fins, dramatic side trim, and daring two-tone paint combinations set them apart from the 1955 models and gave them a more finished look. Mylar thread woven into the upholstery complemented the Mylar trim on the seats, and the vinyl and patterned cloth door panels are true works of art. The two-barrel, 277-cu.in. V-8 and two-speed PowerFlite automatic provide adequate, if not exhilarating, performance.

At shows, guys my age typically smile as they approach the car, but the smile changes to a look of puzzlement as they try to reconcile the Dodge grille with the Plymouth fins. They know something is not right, but it takes them a while to figure it out.



1957 **ROYAL D-500 HARDTOP**

Dennis Sagvold; Glendale, Pennsylvania

The styling is directly related to the space race at the time. I always liked things that were different, and I definitely liked the Forward Look. It drives well on the highway and is heavy enough to hold the road well. With the Hemi V-8, it has the power when you need it.

1950 MEADOWBROOK

Mike McDowell; Yukon, Oklahoma

Its design epitomizes “beauty through simplicity.” The lines flow naturally, without excessive chrome trim to distract the eye. It was quite an engineering marvel to have designed a car that is not extremely large on the outside, but yet is so very cavernous on the inside. And its interior has this great smell, like a fine wool suit that’s been stored in a cedar chest for years.

I never cease to be impressed with how smooth the flathead-six and the Fluid Drive perform when taking off from a complete stop. Its effortless, smooth flow of power gives the impression of built-in lasting quality, and the ride is excellent and surprisingly quiet. It lets me know that it’s perfectly capable of cruising at 65 MPH on the highway, but as soon as I stop paying attention, it settles back into a steady 55.



1975 DART SWINGER

Chris Holley; Montgomery, Pennsylvania

I like the Dart’s conservative, boxy body style that is smooth, clean and easily recognizable. The absolute best part of the 1967-’76 two-door hardtop Darts is the side view. The body line peak flows from the front fender to the door and then a slight hump into the quarter panel, with the C-pillar enveloping the concave rear glass. The C-pillar angle is mimicked by the fender wheel opening tapering behind the tires, making a smooth, clean look. With the windows down, this body style looks exceptional.

Equipped with the smooth and quiet 225-cu.in. Slant Six, its acceleration is adequate. The TorqueFlite 904 shifts smoothly and without hesitation, and power steering works well, but does not provide the best feedback, due to the “over assist” making the front end feel light. The interior appointments are sparse, with just a few options that are easily reached, and the bench seat is minimally padded compared to late-model cars, but they are both adequate. Overall, the Dart Swinger is quiet, smooth, and a joy to drive.

1949 SPECIAL DELUXE

Bruce Castle; Calgary, Canada

I like the sedan’s profile; it sits high and has plenty of headroom, and its sides are more slender compared to the design of the 1946, ’47, and ’48 Chrysler products. I also like the pattern of the checkerboard grille—it sets the Dodge’s appearance apart from other makes—and the fact that they placed the taillamps back up on the edge of the rear fenders as they did in 1941. This was the only year that Dodge and Plymouth had the ripple bumpers, which make this car even more distinctive and very stylish.

It’s a pleasure to drive, and has great visibility, an upright and comfortable front bench seat, and smooth-shifting gears with armstrong steering, due to the radial tires, which have improved the ride, handling and braking considerably. It idles so quietly and runs so smoothly, you hardly know the engine’s running.



1958 CUSTOM ROYAL LANCER

John and Juanita Flammer; Akron, Ohio

We like the Dodge’s long and low look, its swept-wing tailfins and its unique color combination. More importantly, we enjoy owning it because it has been a member of our family since it was brand new.

It drives very smoothly and handles very well, considering it does not have power steering. The brakes leave a lot to be desired, since they are not power assisted either. The overall handling is very good, especially with its original-style bias-ply tires. It does have a small amount of body lean in sharp curves. The torsion bars help the body lean considerably, yet give it a stable ride.

1952 CORONET SIERRA STATION WAGON

Laura and Richard Griffin; Reno, Nevada

She is not stylish or flashy, but an elegant lady. There are no gaudy fins or other dramatic body configurations to get in the way of its crisp, clean lines. Nothing is stuck on or appears as an after-thought—everything fits together and forms a continuity from tip to tail. The taillamp and front turn signal lenses are plastic, which is a mystery, as the lenses on the 1952 Plymouth wagon are the same shape and are made of glass. No, the lenses are not interchangeable—we have tried!

The Sierra was made as an all-purpose family vehicle. The rear seat folds down (with one hand) making a level deck from the rear of the back seat to the trailing edge of the tailgate. The deck is 3/4-inch marine plywood, with polished stainless-steel runners. These runners line up perfectly when the rear seat is folded down and the tailgate dropped. The wood deck and panels in the back earned this car the nicknames “tin woody” or “inside-out woody.”

The stance is wide enough and the wheelbase long enough to make for a very comfortable ride. Driving it is an awesome experience, with its Fluid Drive transmission. Once in first gear, simply back off the accelerator and the transmission shifts by itself into second gear. While the original straight-six (it has not been rebuilt) will never beat anything off the line, there is plenty of power to cruise comfortably at 60 MPH. The ride is smooth and sturdy, and the large steering wheel makes it easy to turn and park even without power steering.

Owning this Sierra is a privilege, and driving it is a pleasure. We love this car and have no intention of selling her—ever.





1948 D24 DERHAM CLUB COUPE *John White; Sacramento, California*

My Club Coupe is a one-off car built by Derham. My father, who was a VP General Manager at a large New York City Dodge dealership, had a special relationship with Derham. Over the postwar years, he had some 20 special Dodges made by Derham to attract attention in his Dodge showroom on Broadway. This is the only Derham Dodge that survived. It was a tribute to Studebaker's Starlight Coupe, with its wraparound rear window.

I am thrilled to have the opportunity to own this unique Dodge, because I've known the car since I was eight years old, and I love the checkerboard egg-crate grille in particular. One day, my father took me to the Derham factory outside of Philadelphia, and I

watched the car being built. While my father talked to the Derham brothers, Jim and Enos, I walked around the three-story building with its creaky wood floors to see Derham's custom transformations of Cadillacs, Lincolns, Chryslers and, yes, even a Dodge. I saw it arrive for its debut at the dealership, and I saw it hang around for two years before being sold. It wowed the crowds for a time, but then when the new models came in 1949, it remained unsold and was then banished to a branch in Brooklyn across from Ebbets Field, where it finally sold in 1950. I was fascinated with the car, and was able to purchase it at the 2012 Gooding auction in Scottsdale.

1950 CORONET SEDAN

Don Cunningham; Ceres, California

I liked the design of the 1949 Dodge cars, but when the 1950 models arrived, I liked them even better. The grilles were bolder and gave the cars a reliable, stronger look. Four-door cars always appealed to me, and the Coronet had the looks and room for six passengers. The fairly long wheelbase of 123 inches gave it a more flowing appearance, even though the silhouette was a bit boxy.

It drove very smoothly, and featured the optional Tip-Toe Shift Gyro-Matic semi-automatic transmission. But the acceleration was slow from stop in normal forward gear; the car actually started out in what would be a second gear ratio. However, that M6 transmission was extremely durable, and the slow take-off was very smooth. Visibility all around was just excellent, and it cruised at speeds of 60-65 MPH very comfortably. The car was just plain solid, and I loved it.



1952 B3B PICKUP

Jack Spring; Burnt Hills, New York

The visibility of the truck's "pilot house" design is wonderful. That flathead six is one great, reliable engine. It drives like a truck, but not badly, and is comfortable at about 50 MPH. I enjoy owning it because it is different, and it always attracts attention.

1970 CHALLENGER R/T

Jack Brown; Delanson, New York

The design of the Challenger is classic, with its modified Coke-bottle shape, long hood and short trunk. It typifies the era of muscle cars and stands up even today with the new generation of Challengers. With the proper slight nose-down stance, there aren't many meaner-looking cars. Only the 1968-'70 Chargers come close to the visual appeal of the '70 Challenger.

With new tires, ball joints and brakes, it does pretty well on the road, but it has all the numbness of over-boosted power steering and sloppiness that were typical of cars of that era. That's part of its personality.



1963 880 CONVERTIBLE

Robert Joyner; Richmond, Virginia

I like its simple, flowing lines. There are no fins, unusual grilles, slanted headlamps or excessive chrome. The windshield design largely eliminated the "dog leg," which made entry to the front seat awkward. The split front seat backrest on the two-door model makes entry into the back seat very convenient. The dash is simple and well laid out; the gauges are easy to read and well arranged. The pushbutton transmission is cable-operated, simple in design, and almost foolproof. Some 50 years of trouble-free use support this statement.

It drives and rides well at any speed over any surface; the torsion-bar suspension is superb in all situations. There is adequate power from the 383-cu.in. V-8, and gas mileage in the upper teens is acceptable. The TorqueFlite shifts smoothly, and I only hear the engine speed change. I can drive this car for hours without tiring. It's a pleasure to own.



1956 CUSTOM ROYAL LANCER

Clyde Horst; Lancaster, Pennsylvania

I love its two shades of blue, with the touch of white around the taillamps, and the Forward Look with the "jet" fins. The Dodge emblem on the convertible top is a very nice and rare touch.

It is equipped with the 315-cu.in. Super Red Ram V-8 producing 218hp. And with its pushbutton PowerFlite transmission, coupled with power steering and power brakes, it provides sure-footed, well-handling performance with plenty of power to spare.

At shows, I'm struck by people's comments regarding the '56 Dodge's reliability and performance. Comments like, "When growing up, our neighbors had a '56, and they had it for years and years and years." And, "Those '56 Dodges gave all comers a good run for their money!" Perhaps Dodge said it best in its promotion of the 1956 lineup: "A new world of adventure is waiting for you... discover the difference in Dodge!"



1915 TOURING

Steve Thompson; Stockton, California

My dad started his love affair with this Touring car in 1948 when he bought it, then displayed the car in the showroom of his dad's Dodge dealership, Thompson Motors & Son.

My brothers and Dad were at a swap meet when Dad started looking through an old book, and there it was, a picture of his beloved Dodge in the 1932 marathon race to Reno, Nevada. Dad purchased the book, and new piece of the Dodge's history was found. There was always lettering visible on the body, but now we had the history. If you look closely, you can still see the lettering today. Dad never missed a chance to talk about his beloved 1915 Dodge Touring to anyone who would listen.



1966 CORONET 440

Stam and Joyce Zervanos; Wyomissing, Pennsylvania

We like its overall design, particularly the front grille treatment. The split recessed grille and inward slanted turn signals give the car a bold crisp look. The body has a low, wide appearance, with clean straight lines. The rear quarter panels have a subtle resemblance to the late '60s Coronet Super Bee and R/T designs.

It has been very reliable. It handles both back roads and open highway driving with ease. The 318-cu.in. V-8 runs very smoothly and has more than enough power for us. As with most cars of this era, the sensitivity of the power steering takes a little getting used to. It's a fun car to drive.



1960 DART PHOENIX

Dennis and Suzanne Neuser; Platteville, Wisconsin

Dodge nailed it with the 1960 Dart Phoenix convertible. From its headlamps to tailfins, it's a beauty. From the pushbutton drive to its original suspension, it drives just like it drove in the 1960s. With plenty of power from the stock 318-cu.in. four-barrel V-8, it's just a pleasure to drive.



1929 DA SPORT ROADSTER • 1928 VICTORY 6 SEDAN • 1924 BUSINESS COUPE ROADSTER

Gerry Egland; Redmond, Oregon

Many people have never experienced the pulse of a Dodge Brothers four-cylinder engine at idle or at work. Its long stroke, encouraged by an enormous flywheel, makes unique chugging sounds and almost soothing vibrations.

My black 1924 business coupe and green 1928 Victory 6 are both unrestored originals, including paint, interior and mechanicals. My blue and yellow 1929 DA sport roadster, which I restored, was originally sold in Milan, Italy.

The overall appearance is what I like best about Dodge vehicles, and their early use of all-steel body construction, hydraulic brakes and other design advantages. I use the word "robust" when comparisons arise.

On the road, finding my cars' sweet spot is the key to driving enjoyment and endurance for both the car and driver. They all have good road manners.



1948 DELUXE SEDAN

Bob Vaughn; Pequot Lakes, Minnesota

My grandparents purchased our 1948 Dodge new, and it has been in the family ever since. We like the design of the 1940s-styled fenders, and still it has a smooth-flowing, rounded design, with lots of attractive chrome inside and out. It's not clunky or boxy-looking like many cars of that era.

The seats are a comfortable chair height, making it easy to get in and out of, as well as sit in. It's easy to see out of, with lots of interior room, but still isn't too long. The unique butterfly hood makes for easy access to the engine compartment.

The Fluid Drive is easy-shifting, and nothing beats leaving it in second gear without using the clutch in the winter on icy roads around town. These cars had a fantastic suspension for their day, and it still provides a comfortable and enjoyable ride at current highway speeds.

1963 D-100

Dave Sinclair; Eagle, Idaho

I like the truck's wide, muscular stance. With no power steering or brakes, it's not a handful at all, but in fact, drives quite easily. Radial tires have reduced the steering effort, and the drum brakes do an excellent job, requiring very light pedal pressure. Everyone knows it's me when they see the dependable Dodge!



1965 CUSTOM 880 STATION WAGON

Fred Dole; Colchester, Connecticut

I fell in love almost immediately with its smooth lines—everything is right about this car, from grille to taillamps. Because I'm a station wagon lover, the styling of the Custom 880 wagon with the wood trim was especially beautiful-looking. Its full-length roof rack fits the smooth lines of the body style perfectly, and the combination of that roof rack and the simulated wood trim is overwhelming. Dodge did a perfect job.

My 880 wagon drives beautifully. It shifts through the gears smoothly and the 383-cu.in. V-8 has more power than I need. I think it's the most beautiful wagon on the road.



1927 CABRIOLET COUPE

Kenneth Lilley; Silver Lake, Kansas

Our Cabriolet Coupe has several desirable design features. It's a four-passenger car—counting the rumble seat—with a rear curtain that folds up; and the headlamps, bumpers, and radiator shell are nickel-plated instead of chrome. The rumble seat and folding top are what I like most about the design, and also the fact that it has a BUDD all-steel body.

The four-cylinder 212-cu.in. "Fast Four" engine was designed with five main bearings, which makes it run smoothly, and will cruise effortlessly at 50 MPH. It holds the road well and provides a smooth ride. The vacuum-tank fuel pump works well and keeps the engine running well.

We enjoy owning this Dodge, because of how well it runs and handles, and also because of its rarity; this particular body style was only produced for 72 days!



1957 ROYAL D-500

Wayne Maddox; Westminster, Colorado

While so many cars of the era were loaded with garish trim, Dodge kept it to a minimum, allowing the Royal's beautiful, flowing lines to be seen. The tasteful use of side trim allowed some great possibilities for two-tone paint schemes. I love the clean grille and front-end design as well as the simple, uncluttered design of the back end. Inside, the dash is perfectly symmetrical and all dials and gauges are easy to read. The "ribbon" speedometer lets you know instantly how fast you are going, and all controls are within easy reach.

This car is a joy to drive. The torsion-bar suspension gives a nice, comfortable feel to the road. Power steering makes going around corners and parking effortless, and the D-500 Hemi V-8 responds instantly to the demands of the throttle. The TorqueFlite goes through the gears firmly, but gently. I have owned it now for 36 years and still get a twinge of excitement when I see it in my garage!



1964 DART GT

Daniel Shepherd; Connersville, Indiana

I absolutely love the design of my Dart. What struck me most about it was its front end; it reminded me of the Chrysler turbine car. I like the way the hood corners contour around the headlamp and the small bumper exposes the whole grille. It's a unique design.

It has no power steering and no power brakes and handles corners very well—it rides so smooth with the torsion bar suspension and has a lot of pep for a small 273-cu.in. V-8. With its manual four-speed, as you go through the gears getting up to speed there is no oversteer, and you can easily keep up with traffic. It drives as well as many newer cars.



1965 DODGE PHOENIX *Timothy McKern; Forestville, Australia*

Contrary to what your eyes might tell you, this car is not a Plymouth Fury. In the early 1960s, Chrysler had established quite a strong following in Australia for a large V-8-powered car, particularly amongst country purchasers who looked for a vehicle capable of towing and covering the large distances presented in rural Australia. This car, until 1964, was the American Dodge Phoenix. Luxurious and well equipped by prevailing Australian standards, it sold very well.

In 1965, Chrysler elected to sell the Plymouth Fury in lieu of the American Dodge, as its full-sized car, but still market the car as a Dodge. The reasons for this are unclear, as it seems most of Chrysler Australia's historical records were destroyed in Mitsubishi's takeover in 1981. It is thought that Chrysler Australia believed a big car was the right product for the market. Dodge had developed an excellent reputation with buyers in Australia, while Plymouth was less well known.

Not wanting to jeopardize their branding reputation, Chrysler Australia decided that the Canadian Plymouth Fury should be rebadged as a Dodge Phoenix. The cars were shipped from Chrysler's Canadian plants to Chrysler Australia's plant in Tonsley Park, Adelaide, South Australia, in complete knock-down-kit form.

The trim level selected appears to be about similar to the American/Canadian Fury II, while the dashboard

was straight from the 1965 Dodge Monaco and adapted for right-hand drive. In order to improve local content, some parts were produced in Australia, such as the seat coverings and door trims.

The Phoenix was initially sold only as a four-door sedan running a 318-cu.in. V-8, but beginning in 1967, a four-door hardtop with the 383-cu.in. V-8 was offered. The big Dodge remained on the Australian market until 1972, having commenced in 1960.

Basic details, such as the numbers of cars produced, have been lost. It is thought about 400 each of 1969-'72 sedans and hardtops were produced as "Limited Edition" models and perhaps slightly more of the earlier models.

I have been a long-term Dodge driver, having bought my first Phoenix in 1987, a white 1968 sedan. I did many great trips with this Dodge, the most amazing of which was a 3,500-mile trip from Sydney to Ayers Rock. The Dodge did not miss a beat in the mid-summer heat of over 100 degrees.

Recently I bought a beautiful 1965 Dodge Phoenix sedan, cream with turquoise interior. The big 1965-'68 "C" body Chrysler products, under the design stewardship of Elwood Engel, were in my opinion, amongst the most beautiful cars ever produced. My 1965 Dodge Phoenix is no exception. I love its design—the slim, crisp silhouette and long bonnet. The spare application of ornamentation and

consequent reliance on body character lines mean there is not an ounce of fussiness in the Dodge's appearance. The formal style of the steeply raked rear screen combines with the beautiful forward thrust of the front fenders and grille to suggest a car in motion. A formal look with just enough hint of the rakish.

This car is incredibly original, with 113,000 miles on the odometer. It still bears its shiny original paint, and the interior is untouched.

I love driving it, and it's easy to handle, with traditionally light coaxial power steering (so light it sometimes makes me feel that I am at the helm of a trawler in a North Atlantic gale), effective power drum brakes and a TorqueFlite transmission. Vision is great, with the "filling the envelope" design allowing good visibility of all corners. The drivetrain is really quiet, and the untouched engine is superbly smooth and provides more than adequate power. Handling is surprisingly good for a car of its bulk and vintage, while the ride is still supple. Looking out over that vast hood is pretty special.

Owning this Dodge for me means that I am preserving a part of our automotive heritage, in particular a vehicle from that time when American cars were so highly esteemed in Australia's motoring landscape.





1929 VICTORY SIX SPORT ROADSTER

Gary and Carolyn Gray; Mt. Vernon, Ohio

This particular model is a six-wheel roadster, with matching trunk, hydraulic brakes on all four wheels, rumble seat, leather upholstery, side curtains, 58-hp six-cylinder engine, seven-bearing crankshaft, and fold-down top and windshield. It's a pleasure to drive. Just pull the starter cable, then pull the choke cable out and then back in quickly, and we are up and running. Fuel is delivered via a vacuum tank, and we have found this system to be just as reliable as modern fuel pumps.

Dodge has always used the word "dependability" as their advertising logo. We can truly attest to this: You always feel it will start, it will go, and it will get you home. During all those miles and years of driving it on tours, it has never failed to start and run. It has always completed a tour.

1964 DART 170

Brian Gardner; North Platte, Nebraska

Simplicity is the key to this car. It's a very basic sedan that has an abundance of glass area, so it is very possible to see all four points of the car when driving and parking it. Although it's simple, it still has a certain dignity and hints of the "wedge" design of the Chryslers of the time. The interior is highly functional, and it rides very well.

It's very basic, with its 170-cu.in. Slant Six engine and three-speed manual transmission. While the powertrain is smooth and almost indestructible, it is not a particularly powerful car, and responds better to more casual driving. Without any power-assisted steering or brakes, it's still very easy to drive and park and handles well. Just don't be in any hurry to get to the next stoplight!



1924 DELUXE SEDAN

John Ryan; Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin

I bought my 90-year-old Dodge back in 1968, and it has been driven only 24,313 miles since new. I like the straight lines of the body, as they give it a sleek, boxy look, and the large windows provide a great view of the scenery. For a car of the 1920s, it handles well and provides a smooth, comfortable ride. However, it is underpowered, top-heavy and hard to shift. Its 212.3-cu.in. four-cylinder engine develops only 30-35 hp. It has a three-speed transmission with a backwards shift pattern, which is why I love the challenge of driving it.

1965 POLARA

Carter Sandvik; Fargo, North Dakota

The 1965 Polara has a very clean and crisp design; it's not overdone. The roofline on that era of Mopar products is one of my favorite. The best part of the interior design is the seating; you feel like you are in command of your driving and the road. You don't feel like you are sitting on the floor struggling to see over the front fenders.

Its ride feels as it did when new: comfy, but controlled. It drives great. Of course, our addition of power steering helped that. The 440-cu.in. V-8 that we installed years ago has more than enough power to get you where you're going, yet it's an easy engine to maintain. But, of course, the main reason our family enjoys owning this Dodge is the fact that my parents bought it new.



1957 CUSTOM SIERRA SPECTATOR

Stuart Suede; Alhambra, California

This is a design by Virgil Exner at his best, with swept-wing styling emphasizing soaring tail fins, large glass areas and low-car stance, with its 14-inch wheels. I also love its elegant sweeping wagon roofline and two-tone paint, and the fact that there's no grille—there's only a Dodge medallion surrounded by chrome bumpers.

"Spectator" designates it as a nine-passenger wagon—the rear-facing back seat is the "spectator" seat. There's something special about a finned car, and a station wagon brings back childhood memories for us baby-boomers.



1970 CHALLENGER

Steve Duncan; Villa Ridge, Missouri

I like the styling of the Challenger's interior, which is very comfortable with its high-back seats, easy-to-read gauges and Pistol Grip shifter. And the hideaway windshield wipers help to see the big hood as I'm cruising down the road. It drives very well, and I really like the manual steering, although it's a little hard to parallel park; but on the road it's a real pleasure. With its 440 Six Pack, manual four-speed and Super Track Pac, there's plenty of power, and the factory power brakes are a real plus.

1965 DART GT

Bill Weil; Cincinnati, Ohio

I really like the unique look of the trim that wraps around the headlamps and grille; it makes for a very recognizable, clean appearance. The design is user-friendly, so it's roomy, easy to get into and out of, has good visibility, a large trunk, and is easy to access and work on the engine.

It cruises effortlessly at 65 MPH; however, you have to be very cautious to not tailgate the car in front, because the stock drum brakes don't respond like disc brakes. Other than that, it's an enjoyable pleasure to drive.



1955 CUSTOM ROYAL LANCER

Real Perras; Morrisville, Vermont

I bought this Dodge brand-new, and we've been companions ever since. It's the best driving car I have ever owned, and I've driven it over 100 MPH many times. It's very comfortable on long trips and has never left me stranded.

Over the years, we made nine trips between California and Vermont, with this Dodge performing flawlessly every trip.

I love the way they made it look so beautiful. The way they designed the dash, and its Cameo Red color, with the white convertible. It was and still is very flashy. When I drive this Dodge, it really makes me feel like I have a piece of American Pride.



1954 SUBURBAN STATION WAGON • 1956 D-500

I like the simplicity and straightforward functionality of the Suburban's design and also the color which gets a lot of attention. It drives very nicely; not too heavy, and even with radials it steers easily. Fitted with a 270-cu.in. Hemi V-8 and 1955-spec Power Pak and 3-speed overdrive transmission, I love its performance. It's very quick and satisfying and fun to drive. And because of its utilitarian character it can carry whatever I want in the rear. It's great for camping.

I have wanted one of these D-500s since they came out. I read all the tests and the



1922 TOURING CAR

Felix Ruscillo; Venetia, Pennsylvania

I am the second owner of this touring car. It is an engineering marvel. The simplicity of its 92-year-old design is marvelous. The 12-volt electrical system features a starter-generator that is chain linked to the crankshaft. The starter draws electricity and turns the engine at a low RPM, with the engine starting immediately. Once it starts, that starter becomes a generator and the electricity flows in the opposite direction to satisfy the electrical demands of the car. It has a three-speed transmission; however, the shift pattern is different from most autos. To reverse, the gearshift is pushed toward the steering wheel and toward the rear of the car in the same direction you want the car to travel. Isn't that an intuitively better design? To go forward in low gear, you do the exact opposite.

This car was not meant for long-distance driving. It doesn't have a heater or windows, but instead, glass side curtains, and has only one manually operated windshield wiper on the driver's side.

It drives like you would expect an antique to drive. With its 212-cu.in. engine and low gearing, you only use first gear in parades or where a really low speed is needed. Anything over 35 MPH, and the engine sounds like it is really straining. Downshifting from third to second in hilly country means you have to double clutch, because the transmission gears are not synchromesh. It is truly dependable.



1959 SIERRA SPECTATOR

Roger Irland; Phoenix, Arizona

From the graceful sweep of the headlamp brows to the also graceful sweep of the cut-out taillamp bezels, there's a lot to like. The 1959 Dodge is one of those cars that looks good in any body style.

One of the reasons I've chosen to focus my collection on Mopars is their handling qualities. This car is always very poised on the road, even if the pavement is less than smooth. She also doesn't shy away from the twisty bits, even on bias-ply tires. The 361-cu.in. Red Ram V-8 has plenty of guts to keep up with traffic. Of course, the fact that I've driven her back and forth across the country several times also speaks to her driving qualities.



Jeff Paley; Santa Barbara, California
legendary racing history and drooled over the specs of this Dodge super car. I like that the D-500 is fairly rare and is the only 1956 Dodge with a Hemi V-8 and Chrysler suspension, steering, and brakes. It's a very solid, heavy duty, beautiful and stylish sedan...a real wolf in sheep's clothing.
It's also enjoyable to drive except that, with the large 225/70 R15s tires, it's a bear to steer at very slow speeds, however, it does drive smoothly and handles well at normal driving speeds.



1932 UF-10 1/2-TON PICKUP

Quentin Robbins; Woodland, Washington

This is a "project truck" that sat in my woodshed for some 15 years. Kind of a basket case, but it's basically all there. I just finished going through the engine, and will now rebuild the brakes. It's powered by a four-cylinder flathead.

It's a unique little truck, with a tall, upright cab, and has hydraulic brakes and an all-metal body. My goal is to make it mechanically street legal, but leaving it looking like a fresh barn find. I think that is a good goal for battered basket cases, especially for old workhorses like this Dodge obviously was.

1979 OMNI WOODY

Jeff Masoner; Arlington, Virginia

Built with the "Premium Wood-Grain Package," the Omni remains an efficient hatchback design today, and I appreciate that it was available with color, design, and options that were tailored to the American market, making for a very good-looking subcompact car that didn't look like a basic inexpensive economy car. Its Teal Frost Metallic paint makes for a great-looking car that looks anything but "economy."

The interior has comfortable and well-padded teal velour bucket seats, deep teal carpet, and, of course, wood-grain trim. The automatic transmission, power steering, air conditioning, and soft suspension all make for a nearly luxurious ride.

The engine has a lot of pickup, the transmission shifts smoothly through its three speeds, and the power-assisted rack-and-pinion steering and brakes are precise and have good feel. The engine always lets you know that it's there, with its unrefined idle and sound, which gets very buzzy above 50 MPH. It's a nimble, fun-to-drive car that can fit into a small parking space and yet has four doors and room enough to bring three friends along.



1948 DELUXE

Robert Ullmer; Vandalia, Ohio

I was a proud 12-year-old boy when Dad bought this car brand new. He paid \$15 extra for its beautiful metallic green paint. And it had a beautiful chrome dash with a radio and two-tone gray wool interior. I was always fascinated by the speedometer when it changed from green, to yellow, to red. It has been driven over 100,000 miles.



1937 SERIES D-5 TOURING SEDAN

Gary Eckenberg; Duluth, Minnesota

September of this year marks the 50th anniversary of my relationship with this Dodge. As a pre-teen looking for a classic car, I only knew that I wanted a car with the headlamps mounted above the fenders.

I think the '37 Dodge is one of the most attractive designs of the era, with its full body-line chrome trim arching over the rear fenders, the subtle rakish slant of the grille, and the sweeping curve of the humpback trunk all giving the Dodge an aggressive look even while parked. Add to this the stylized ram hood ornament, and you've got a superb example of Dodge's Deco design that enticed car buyers to "Switch to the big new Dodge" in 1937. One of those ads touted Clark Gable as switching to the 1937 Dodge, because "it handles magnificently...it's astonishingly economical...and has all the swift smoothness I enjoy in driving." I agree!



1950 WAYFARER SPORTABOUT

Jean-Guy Gagnon; Fort Pierce, Florida

I am enamored with the classic, subtle lines of the fenders. It emits a nostalgia that evokes the history of Dodge. I appreciate the roundness of its lines, the roll-up windows with their curved design, and the single bench seat resting under a low-slung folding roof.

I relish looking at my Wayfarer, realizing that this is not your typical classic car, but a car that has a certain countenance, an undeniable pedigree that expresses excellence. I've been the proud owner of this beauty since 1986.

As soon as I crank it up, my roadster starts to purr, settling into a smooth and quiet idle. The fluid transmission definitely eliminates tire-burning take-offs. The drive is sluggish, but it is a charm, even a great pleasure to just cruise on the scenic roads at a speed between 45-50 MPH. It's very dependable for a 64-year-old car, has never let me down on the road and has always brought me home. I value the simplicity and ease of maintenance, and the ready availability of parts at local stores.

I treasure riding my Wayfarer in sunny Florida accompanied by my lady wearing her straw hat, her long hair floating in the wind. It makes me feel like a young man again.



1969 CHARGER R/T

Mike Feldman; North Easton, Massachusetts

My Charger looks timeless. The scalloped doors and hood give the impression that it's moving forward even while standing still, and the infamous Coke-bottle shape of the fenders blending into the doors and then into the quarter panels reinforces this appearance of moving at high velocity. The other standout feature is the sail panels that flow from the rear roofline into the top of the quarter panels, then continue into the decklid and the mini ducktail wing. And its quarter panel-mounted gas cap supports the NASCAR racing theme that, at the time, was a huge influence in car sales.

I enjoy cruising down the back roads. There is nothing like the sound of a 426 Hemi, no matter what speed you are driving at. Being a B-Body with 3:23 gears, the car just feels so calm on the highway. When you step on it, you hear the carbs sucking in the volume of air and the exhaust rewarding you with that infamous roar. Today, the 1969 Charger is an icon, a testament to its enduring and creative design.



1937 SEDAN DELIVERY TRUCK

Johnny Sunderland; Soddy-Daisy, Tennessee

The design is an interesting blend of a front end that captures the nostalgic look of the generation in which it was built, and a back end that reflects a look of modern-day designs that have returned to a simplified appearance. I appreciate the comfortable driving and roominess inside, and the front windshield that cranks out four inches to allow a gentle breeze to flow through. The stainless metal installed on the hood stands out on the sleek front, and the tear-drop headlamps draw attention to the aerodynamic look of the fenders, which beautify the appearance. The all-steel design gives a sense of durability and security.

The real pleasure I have from owning it is the fact that my grandparents purchased this Dodge truck brand new in April 1937 for their grocery store. Because my grandmother only used this truck for delivering groceries and accumulated just 33,000 original miles, the flat-head six-cylinder still possesses the power and stability with which it was originally designed.



1939 LUXURY LINER SPECIAL

John Daly; Helmetta, New Jersey

I always admired the front end of the 1939 Dodge since I was a child. The nose and the teardrop front-end is stylish, and the built-in headlamps are smooth looking, reflecting a nice design flow. The interior is very attractive, especially the woodgrain effect which shows elegance.

This car drives perfect. It keeps up with traffic and doesn't have any problem driving at 55 MPH. It handles bumps in the road with little effort but due to its weight and high roof, does not take turns very well. Most of the time you cannot hear the six-cylinder engine running, and I do enjoy driving it and the praises from onlookers.



1956 ROYAL SEDAN

Leland and Janice Ober; Irwin, Pennsylvania

This is a fun car to drive. It's equipped with power steering and power brakes, and the 315-cu.in. V-8 keeps us moving along with everyday traffic. I like its two-tone hood, with the large chrome ornament and the big rear fins. The turquoise-and-black combination gets many compliments and thumbs up when we are out with the car.



1961 DART SENECA

Cary Slevinsky; Calabash, North Carolina

I really like the Seneca's reverse-slanted fins, which appear to grow out of the fenders at the base of the "C" pillars and then taper towards the rear. Its sturdy construction is one reason why it became the mainstay of Highway Patrol and Police units in 27 states.

Being a base model Dart, it's a very attractive car in its original Aztec Gold finish and a white top. This fine car is equipped with the Economy 225-cu.in. Slant Six and with its 145hp is very peppy for its size and it gets great gas mileage. Even the A/C unit that's mounted under the dash still blows cold on hot summer days. But what I like most about this Dodge is that it always starts right up, and it still gives a great ride.

1919 SPEEDSTER • 1920 SPEEDSTER RACER

DeWayne Ashmead; Fruit Heights, Utah

This 1919 Dodge Brothers Speedster reminds me of the Stutz Bearcat. It's minimal, crude, and fast. I like to describe it as two seats on a frame with wheels and an engine. It looks ready for the action that the Roaring Twenties promised. And it delivers.

The car is fast. It has been clocked going over the mountains of Utah at 83 MPH. That being said, its speed is also frightening. There are no seatbelts, no protection for the driver or passenger, no front brakes—only mechanical rear brakes—and narrow wood spoke wheels. The steering is very sensitive and over-correction can easily occur if the driver loses concentration. The gear changes require double clutching to keep from grinding the gears (no synchromesh). While the transmission has three forward gears, first gear is a "stump puller." Generally, I start in second gear. I have to anticipate stops considerably before they occur. Panic stops require the added use of the emergency brake, which slows the driveline. In spite of these characteristics, I enjoy the experience of cruising in it on the back roads with the cutout wide open.

As for my 1920 Speedster, when this car was offered to me, it was a basket case, but complete, except for the carburetor. I almost turned it down, but having the supercharger still bolted to the block convinced me otherwise. As I restored the car over a 2½-year period, I came to admire the engineering that went into its original



construction. For example, a traditional vacuum tank was insufficient to support the supercharger, so the gas tank was pressurized to push more fuel to the carburetor and supercharger. The engine, by its very nature, used oil, so an oil reservoir was constructed under the seat of the passenger/racing mechanic. It can deliver supplemental oil on demand to the engine while the car is still racing. Those and many other details continually amaze me. I don't know who originally designed and built the car, but his thinking went far beyond what the average automobile offered in its day. And that, more than anything else, attracted me to it.

This car is very fast. It can easily exceed 100 MPH, yet the

wheels and brakes are totally inadequate for its speed. It's a two-person job to obtain maximum performance from the car. The driver is required to focus on acceleration, speed and braking. The riding mechanic monitors and adjusts the pressure to the supercharger, the oil pressure, the fuel tank pressure, etc. He keeps track of the engine temperature and voltage, and adjusts the Clymer headlamps in the windshield for night driving.

This Dodge was ahead of its time as far as technology was concerned. Every time I drive it, sit in it, or even just look at it, I marvel at what it took to conceive and construct this car.



DODGE COLLECTION

Jack Dyson; Phoenix, Arizona

My love affair with Dodge began in April of 1968, when I was hired by Chrysler as a Dodge service rep in Philadelphia. My job required a lot of travel, so in order to stay out of trouble when in a strange city, I would look for old cars in the evening. Today, our family's collection totals 13 Dodges. My 1968 Dart GT convertible is an absolute blast to drive, with its 340 V-8, while my '68 Charger I consider to be one of the best-looking cars of all time. Other models of note include a '68 Dart GT hardtop, '71 Coronet, '74 Dart S/E hardtop and '88 Daytona Turbo 2. Trucks include a '74 D-100 pickup and a '78 Li'l Red Express, among others.



1990 DAKOTA SPORT CONVERTIBLE

Gordon White; Bryan, Texas

This is the first stock pickup convertible since Ford's Model A. There were only 909 made this year. It has a 3.9-liter V-6 with a four-speed automatic, A/C, power windows and power steering. And it drives great, but is noisy at highway speeds. Best of all, I can put the top down and can carry cargo in the bed.

1964 DART GT CONVERTIBLE

David Jackman; London, Ohio

On March 21, 1964, my parents bought this Dart brand-new, paying a total of \$2,650, plus \$79.50 sales tax. They drove it all over the U.S. and pulled a trailer to the Canadian Rockies and to Mexico. It lived up to its slogan as being a "Dependable Dodge." The 225 Slant Six engine and drivetrain are quite impressive. It handles well with its torsion bar suspension, and the 111-inch wheelbase made it a nice-sized car with plenty of room in the back seat for a truly nice four-passenger convertible. Its styling is timeless, which I really like.

It has been driven 102,000 miles, and has not even had the valves adjusted. Even the convertible top is original. It handles well, with good performance. I enjoy the pushbutton transmission and particularly like the bucket seats. Its trunk is gigantic. It averages 23 MPG and is a good parade car as it does not overheat.

I also own a 1965 Custom 880 convertible that I bought brand new. It does not handle as well, as the suspension is too soft; so, when I want to drive a Chrysler product, I normally drive the Dart. It's an excellent car.



1925 TOURING

William Carothers; Columbus, Indiana

I've owned my five-passenger Touring car since 1965; it's one of 16 different models Dodge produced that year. The speedometer has always worked and now shows 25,502 miles, but it has been restored due to sitting under a tree for years on a farm in Coldwater, Michigan. The only thing that is not original is an electric fuel pump that I installed to replace the old vacuum pump. It's not a show car but we have had a lot of enjoyment with it over the years. It's almost one of the family.



1954 ROYAL

John Rowerdink; Pinehurst, North Carolina

The features I like best are the Hemi V-8 engine and the PowerFlite automatic transmission—both still work perfectly. The engine was rebuilt, but the transmission has never been worked on, other than to change fluid and replace the seals. Every time I drive it, I'm reminded how perfectly the engine and transmission work.

It drives beautifully. Everything just seems to work great, and it's pretty amazing for a 60-year-old car. It seems like the more I drive it, the better it runs. It cruises nicely at highway speeds, and the engine has that nice, throaty exhaust sound that old V-8s seem to have.





1925 C CAB BREAD DELIVERY TRUCK • 1928 SENIOR SIX CABRIOLET

Robert Molner; Oswego, Oregon

This bread delivery truck is based on a Dodge Brothers truck chassis and fitted with a custom built "C" cab. After we installed new tires and brakes and fixed the radiator and fuel tank, it started right up and ran great; it could be delivering bread again! It idles at just 375 RPM, and brings such great memories to everyone who sees it.

My Senior Six Cabriolet has a unique look to it, and the Dodge Brothers Club indicates there are only seven others known to exist. I like the sturdy design of its wire wheels, and its special body, with the front half of its roof being solid, while its rear half is a convertible. And it drives great.

1956 CUSTOM ROYAL LANCER

Margaret and Don Carson; Tequesta, Florida

It's a very dependable car, and an absolute pleasure to drive. My parents owned one; I drove it to high school and always thought it was a cool car with the tailfins. It is absolutely beautiful.

It's surprisingly powerful and gets up to 60 MPH in just over 10 seconds. It is very comfortable, quiet and fun to drive. At highway speeds, she cruises stable and easily at 70 to 75 MPH. The ride is nice and smooth—although the bias-ply tires are not as steady as radials, they do give a nice ride. The seats are soft and feel like a sofa, so it's a great car to take on long trips. Last year, we put about 460 miles on it in one weekend, as we love driving it anywhere. The more we drive it, the more we are amazed at how nicely preserved everything is.

This Lancer is a wonderful piece of history that we can enjoy. There will never be cars like this again, and we try to do everything right and with original parts, in order to keep the car exactly as it came from the factory. It's a wonderful American automobile. We love it!



1956 B-3-B DELUXE EXPRESS

Mike Hughes; Alexandria, Virginia

The wraparound windshield and large windows in the wide cab make it seem spacious, light and airy compared with the contemporary Chevy and Ford trucks. There is a large glovebox in the middle of the simple, symmetrical painted dash, which makes it useful for the driver to use. And the running boards run the full length between the fenders; the wide cab extends out over the running boards so that they are barely noticeable. Finally, take a look at the rear fenders. This same stamping was still being used on Dodge Stepside trucks over 30 years later. Talk about timeless design.

The "Poly" V-8 transformed the Dodge trucks into sparkling performers. First gear is almost unnecessary, unless starting off on an uphill grade. Most driving is done in second and third only, but once under way, it's rarely necessary to shift. It pulls smoothly and effortlessly from 10 MPH in third gear, even up the mountain. Despite being nearly 60 years old, in many respects it really does drive like a much newer truck.

1952 CORONET

David Felderstein; Sacramento, California

I have other cars that are much flashier than this Dodge, but somehow, this Coronet is more important. It's such a good driver that it's a pleasure to get behind the wheel and go somewhere. It has good ventilation, great visibility, and a nice seat.

It keeps up easily with normal traffic. It's powerful. It's comfortable. It handles magnificently. However, I switched back to a set of bias-ply tires; with the radials, it just wasn't right. The suspension had a lot of reverberation through the car, and it kept popping hubcaps. I decided I was going to try bias-ply tires instead, and it was much better.

As to its Fluid-Drive transmission, I really have it dialed in; it's very smooth. The way you drive this car is, you put it into gear just one time, unless you want to go in reverse. If you just went forward, you would never have to move the shift lever—ever! There is no neutral start switch, so you do have to be conscious.

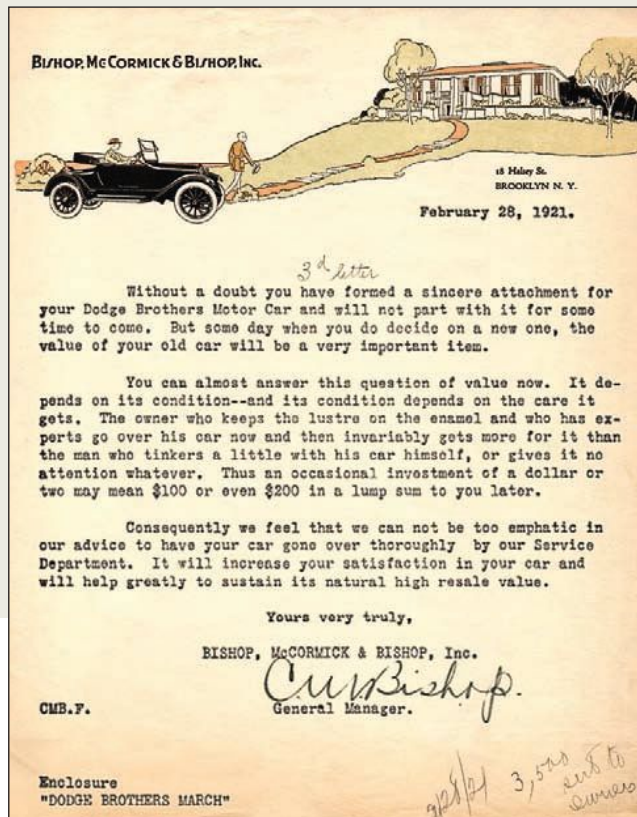
The things that you do with this Coronet are kind of in a slowish motion. Slowed down. Everything is kind of slower. I find it very competent. It's floaty, there's no doubt about it, but it tracks very straight. The steering is extremely excellent. Chrysler engineering was always absolutely the top of the game. These cars drive down the road spectacularly well. There's no other way to put it. They're excellent road cars.

[Ed: Look for a full feature on this unrestored Coronet in an upcoming issue.]



Promoting the Product

Dodge's Direct Mail Campaign 1917-1921



BY WALT GOSDEN

Automobile manufacturers take different approaches to generating sales of their respective automobiles. In the early years of Dodge production, the company did not target customers who favored Packard, Pierce-Arrow, Locomobile, and the like, sending them lavishly produced sales brochures. Instead, the car market that Dodge set its sights on was one that Ford, Chevrolet, Essex and others had been selling to for some time.

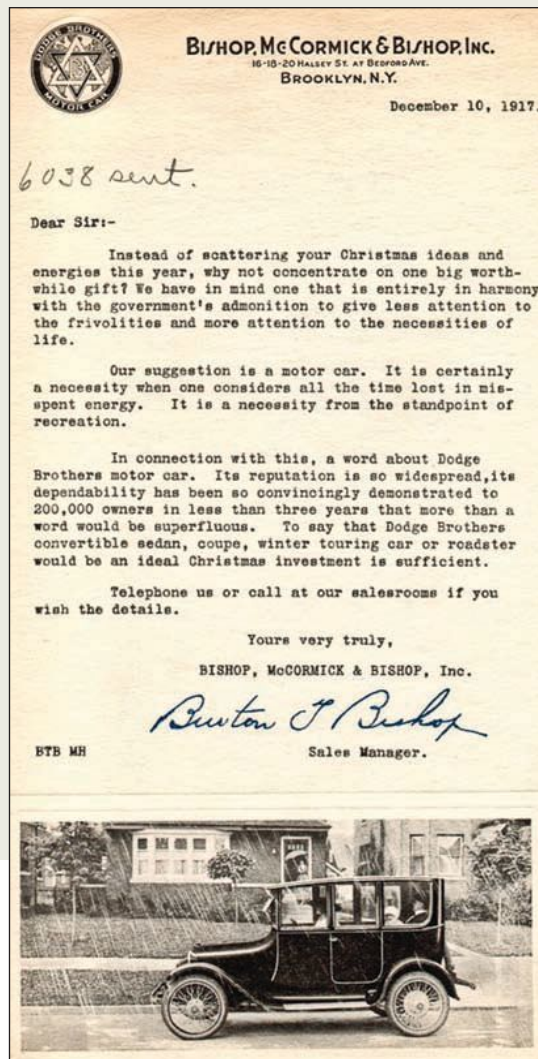
In those early years of Dodge production, there was no television, and radios were just starting to become more popular due to major broadcast stations springing up in large cities. The movies were still silent, so new cars were promoted via glass lantern slides shown on the screen before and after the main feature. Printed paper—magazines, newspapers and direct-mail letters—was the primary medium through which auto manufacturers contacted the general public.

One of the earliest Dodge dealers was located in Brooklyn, New York. Becoming an authorized sales agent soon after Dodge was founded in 1914, Bishop, McCormack & Bishop would continue to be the primary Dodge dealer for more than six decades. The strategy used by Dodge and Bishop, McCormack & Bishop was a direct mail campaign designed to generate interest in owning a car in the New York City area where public transportation such as train, subway, trolley and ferry service ruled. They wanted the public to know that Dodge cars were reliable and

rugged, thanks to their all-steel bodies; were of great value for the money; and were appealing—especially their new enclosed sedan and coupe body styles as compared with current “open” cars, and especially to prospective first time car buyers.

Kings County, where Brooklyn is located, was the main bedroom community for Manhattan and had a huge population. The Dodge Company decided that attractive sales letters illustrating its cars—especially the closed body styles—with a friendly but very persuasive message, be sent out en masse to get people into the showrooms, and once that was achieved, sales, they thought, would most likely follow.

The letters were written to appeal to a specific type of customer. Each letter and envelope was hand typed with the name and address of the prospective customer to personalize it, as was the etiquette of the era. Mailing labels weren't in popular use yet, nor were the current popular terms of “occupant” or “current resident” used in place of proper surnames.



Mrs. J. L. Benning,
184 Clinton St.,
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Dear Madam:-

Fresh air, proper clothing, wholesome food, and all things that keep one fit and able to meet extremes of temperature and the strenuousness of life, are forms of common sense insurance.

One of the finest examples of this kind of life insurance is the modern Sedan automobile. It insures quick, comfortable transportation and complete protection in any condition of weather. It is always ventilated - and yet always dry. It is warm in Winter - cool in Summer - and perfectly adjustable to every intermediate variation of temperature.

You will enjoy, with your family, the money you spend for this kind of insurance. Two hundred and fifty days out of every calendar year are sure to be clear and bright. They will be pleasure days. And just as surely, one hundred or more days of every year will be stormy and disagreeable. But they will be comfortable days for you if you own a Sedan.

You need a Sedan. You will want Dodge Brothers Sedan. You will have one when you need it most if you order it now.

Very truly yours,

BISHOP, McCORMICK & BISHOP, Inc.

Burton J. Bishop
Sales Manager.



Mr. Jack Ross,
22 H. Jamaica Ave.,
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Dec. 17th, 1921.

Dear Mr. Ross:

Can you imagine a more delightful surprise than a Dodge Brothers Sedan for Christmas?

Picture this handsome, substantial closed car rolling up in front of your home on Christmas morning, and the exclamations of joyous appreciation with which its appearance would be greeted by the family.

Easily driven and easily parked, ready always to take its place at any social gathering, to travel downtown on business or to go on a shopping tour, it is beyond all doubt the ideal gift. And the many important refinements which Dodge Brothers added to its appearance and equipment recently---shortly after the price reduction---make it more desirable than ever before.

You can depend on this car for satisfactory performance and low upkeep cost. And you can safely count on giving yourself and family the treat of your lives if you will follow our suggestion and see us now about Christmas delivery.

Sincerely yours,

BISHOP, McCORMICK & BISHOP.

B. T. Bishop
Sales Manager.



BISHOP, McCORMICK & BISHOP, INC.



18 Halsey St.
BROOKLYN N. Y.

February 5, 1921

Mr. Tod Backe,
807 Classon Avenue,
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Backe:

Due to the general tendency of Dodge Brothers Motor Cars to run straight thru winter and summer with little or no attention, some owners are inclined to overlook the importance of having their cars inspected from time to time.

We know from experience that cars regularly looked after by our Service Department run better, stand up longer and bring more money in the used car market.

Perhaps your car has had better than ordinary care and will need little or no adjusting. On the other hand you may be burning more gasoline than you really should. In either event it will be well worth finding out from our experts. If our inspection shows that it will be necessary to work on the car we will advise you just what is needed and the actual cost of doing it before proceeding. So the fact that you bring your car in does not in any way obligate you.

For the good of the car and for your own satisfaction let us suggest that you have this inspection made at once.

You have had three letters from us, suggesting that you bring your car in for inspection, but as yet we have not had the pleasure of seeing you.

If lack of time prevents you from bringing in your car, just write or telephone us and we will gladly send for it. If there is any other reason, of any kind, that is holding you back, tell us about it. It is to the interest of all Dodge Brothers owners that we should know these things, because your interests are our interests, and it is our constant aim to see that each Dodge Brothers owner gets the maximum satisfaction out of his car.

Please let us hear from you.

Very truly yours,

BISHOP, McCORMICK & BISHOP, Inc.

J. Benney
Service Department.



1732 sent to owners who had no service.

A lot of typists behind their Underwood No. 5 typewriters were kept busy.

Bishop, McCormack & Bishop sent out this series of letters in mass mailings of 2,000 to 9,000-plus pieces at a time. Some

targeted specific professions—one urged doctors to buy Dodge's coupe body style. The same addressee could receive a blitz of three or more letters over a period of four to six weeks. Quite an aggressive promotional campaign for 90 years ago. ☺



330 At 300,000

Driven 302,000 miles to date, this largely original Slant-Six powered 1963 Dodge 330 makes sedan driving enjoyable again

MARK J. McCOURT • PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD LENTINELLO

It's funny how we take things for granted... how something that was once ubiquitous enough to be part of the scenery would so gradually disappear that few would notice it was missing until presented with it again. The cars that fill our day-to-day lives, year in and year out, certainly fall into this category. This is the case for a 1963 Dodge 330 four-door sedan, a basic, affordable family car that was built in the tens-of-thousands and once seen everywhere, and yet in standard form, is virtually unique today.



Slant-Six engine was rebuilt in 2003 after providing nearly 300,000 miles of reliable service. Now overbored to 238 cu.in. and fitted with dual exhausts, it has a lot more get-up-and-go.



It was fond memories of a long-gone 1964 Dodge Polara that drew Villas, New Jersey, resident Richard Rininsland to our feature 330 sedan; "I bought a brand-new red Polara two-door hard-top off the showroom floor in September 1964, when I was 21 years old. It had a three-speed on the column and a 330-hp, 383-cu.in. V-8; I got a great deal on it because it was a leftover. Nobody wanted a three-speed stick—they wanted the four-speed, which was new for 1964."

And like most lifelong car enthusiasts, Richard quickly developed an affinity for his marque of choice. "Everybody has Chevrolets and Fords, and Mopars are the rare ones," he explains. "I love 1962 models, '63s and '64s. But the 1962 cars are impossible to find now, because they've

all rusted away—and those that are left cost a fortune." Being also partial to Dodge's 1963 lineup, Richard hit the jackpot when he found an advertisement for this 330.

Considered the base standard-sized model of "The Great New Dependables" line, the 330 was available in two- and four-door sedan forms, as well as a six- or nine-passenger station wagon. All variants were of unit-body construction—this made rust repair on these corrosion-prone cars difficult and expensive—and they shared a torsion bar-and-ball joint front suspension and an asymmetrical leaf spring, live-axle rear. The standard engine was the famed 225-cu.in. Slant-Six; with an 8.2:1 compression ratio and single downdraft carburetor, it made a healthy 145 hp at 4,000 RPM and 215-lb.ft. of

“If people ask, I’ll tease them and say it’s a Max Wedge... and then I pop the hood and we all laugh.”





Although the interior's appearance belies the car's mileage, there is some wear evident in the cracked steering wheel, frayed front passenger cloth upholstery and a split in the vinyl front bench top. A similar split atop the rear seat has already been patched.

torque at 2,800 RPM. Those craving more could opt for the 383 "Power Pack" or 426 "Competition" V-8s, with ratings ranging from 330 up to 425 hp.

The original purchaser of Richard's 330, C.H. Lee, traded a two-door 1956 Chevrolet and \$2,150 in cash for this car, when he bought it from the James Motor Company of Reidsville, North Carolina, in July 1963. To the \$2,301 sedan, he added a pushbutton TorqueFlite three-speed automatic transmission (\$191.80), a Forced Air Ventilation heater (\$74.40), deluxe wheel covers (\$18.55) and undercoating (\$12.85). A transistorized pushbutton AM radio was fitted at a later date, and notably absent from the accessories list were power steering and power brakes. This car's \$2,711.67 total invoice would be the equivalent of today's \$21,121, but we would expect a modern \$21,000 car to have carpeting, rather than the colored, textured rubber floor lining of the 330!

We know about this Dodge's original purchase price, as well as how its Slant-Six engine had achieved an amazing 289,000 miles at the time of Richard's 2008 purchase—it's now just shy of 302,000 miles, and increasing by about 2,500 a year—by the incredible stash of maintenance records, documentation and spare parts that came in the trunk. Lee had fastidiously maintained the car, storing it in a climate-controlled garage, for the 41 years that he owned it. He treated it to a re-spray in its original Medium Blue paint in 1985, but the vinyl-and-cloth bench seat interior upholstery remained from the factory. In 2004, Lee's widow sold the car to its second owner, a long-haul truck driver who had little time to use or enjoy it. After driving it only 400 miles in four years, he sold it to

Richard, who has added about 12,000 miles to the five-digit odometer.

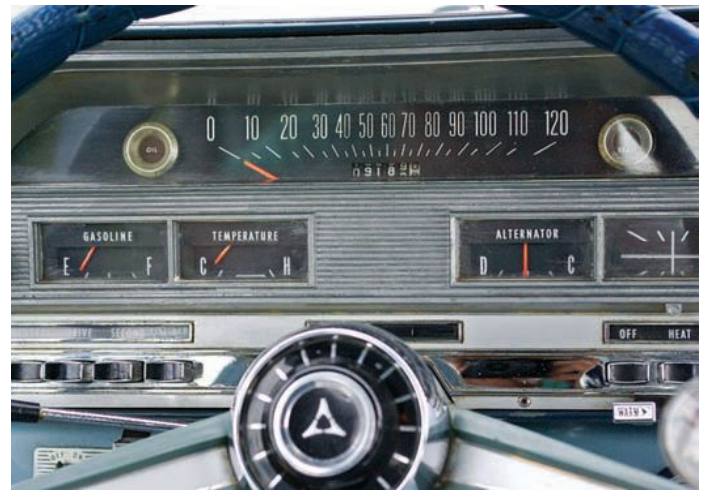
If you encounter this 330 at an event like Pennsylvania's Carlisle Chrysler Nationals, you'll be hard-pressed to believe that odometer has rolled over so many times. The pale metallic blue paint is holding up pretty well, despite being touched up in areas to keep surface corrosion at bay—a few bubbles can be found, but there is no rust in the floors, trunk floor or quarter panels. The interior is equally presentable, despite some fraying to the front passenger seat cloth (which he typically covers with a blue pillow), a repair to the vinyl on top of the rear seat and a yet-to-be-mended tear atop the driver's seatback. The heavy-duty floor lining could pass for loop-pile carpet at a distant glance, and the steering wheel does exhibit a few cracks, but still appears nicer than it has any right to, considering its age and mileage.

Richard had added a couple of custom touches to this Dodge to remind him of his 1964 Polara, most notably the dual exhausts with Cherry Bomb mufflers—"They sound pretty neat!"—and the painted black steel wheels with small center caps. Although he has four original sets of full wheel covers, he likes to run the small caps to create a "sleeper" look. "If people ask, I'll tease them and say it's a Max Wedge... and then I pop the hood and we all laugh," he says with a mile-wide grin.

The Slant-Six may not be a fierce tower of power, but it still makes the 330 fun to drive.

"I had the engine rebuilt this past winter," he recalls. "It was punched out .030-over, to about 238 cubic inches. It runs well and has great pick-up. With the rebuild and the dual mufflers, it will

No. 2037	
July 10, 1963	
STOCK NO.	KEY NUMBERS
	IGNITION TRUNK
1963 Dodge 330 2dr	2301.00
PRICE OF VEHICLE	
FREIGHT HANDLING AND EXCISE TAX	73.00
OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT	
ACCESSORIES	297.60
TOTAL	2771.60
SALES TAX	40.07
TOTAL	2711.67
COST OF INSURANCE	
COST OF FINANCING	
TOTAL	
SETTLEMENT	
DEPOSIT	
CASH ON DELIVERY	2150.00
USED CAR -	
TYPE	
1963 Chevrolet 2 dr.	
SERIAL NO.	561.67
ENGINE NO.	
PAYMENTS OF \$	
PAYMENTS OF \$	
TOTAL	2711.67



stay with the traffic of today! I fitted radial tires, which greatly improved the ride and handling, although the original bias-ply spare is still in the trunk, and it's never been on the ground. The original 904 'typewriter' transmission was rebuilt once, and it shifts smoothly whether you use all the buttons, or if you just leave it in drive. Remember, though, that the 330 has power-nothing... four-wheel drum brakes with a single master cylinder, and manual steering. This doesn't bother me, though, because that's what I grew up driving. I just give myself extra room to brake, and watch my speed and the idiots on the road."

So how does this Dodge's third owner keep this high-mile driveable dream in top shape? "I'm trying to keep it original, using NOS parts, and hoping we don't get into an accident or it's not damaged. There's very little rust for it being 51 years old, and Zaino polish products bring the paint up nicely. I use Armor All and fabric cleaner

on the interior. I change the oil and filter twice a year with Castrol," he explains.

Richard notes that people of his generation are especially drawn to this car, which also attracts younger onlookers due to its unusual-but-hand-some styling, what the showroom brochure called its "Straight-Line Design." These early-Sixties Dodges were once commonplace, but rust and attrition have taken their toll on the number of roadworthy survivors, and his is only the second six-cylinder 330 listed in Galen's Tag Service Mopar registry.

"I know it's a plain-Jane model with a six-cylinder engine, but I purchased it right," Richard says. "I wasn't necessarily looking for a four-door car, but this one was rust-free, and I love original cars. I enjoy the attention it gets at shows, where I display it with the documentation and paperwork, and when people give me thumbs-up as I'm driving it. This car brings back memories of the best times in my life." 🐾

The pushbutton TorqueFlite automatic transmission has been rebuilt once and continues to work flawlessly; the five-digit (plus tenths) odometer has rolled over three times and counting.





Budd steel wheels were propped in place and real door handles were used, but everything else was carved and shaped wood. This includes the body, hood and fenders. The hood and cowl were varnished to give the appearance of what a polished paint surface would look like.

Bound by Steel

Dodge Brothers joins with Budd Manufacturing to introduce the all-steel car body

BY WALT GOSDEN • PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF THE WALT GOSDEN COLLECTION

From its very first cars, the Dodge Brothers Motor Car Company of Detroit had a close bond and working relationship with the Edward G. Budd Manufacturing Company of Philadelphia. The four-cylinder Dodge Brothers cars were sturdy automobiles mechanically that withstood all kinds of abuse their owners subjected them to. Dodge needed bodies that could equal their mechanical resilience, and that's where the Budd-built all-steel body made a perfect partner.

Edward Budd had designed all-steel passenger cars for trains for the Pullman Company in the early 1900s. The industry standard for decades for automobile coachwork had followed the practice and principles of horse-drawn carriages—wood structural framework covered by thin metal

panels. Budd hired Joseph Ledwinka who perfected arc welding steel for production work, and a mountain of patents to protect the process resulted. This led to the production of all-steel car bodies featuring separate stamped steel body sections welded smoothly together.

The Edward G. Budd Manufacturing Company was started in 1912, and its fine-quality products grew the company rapidly. The Budd wire wheel came in 1916, followed by solid disc wheels, which were manufactured under license from the Michelin Company according to their design. By 1923, Budd designed its own disc wheel and focused more on these than the wire wheels they also made.

The series of photographs we see here are of examples of Budd's activity and promotion from approximately 1923. At



There was no interior or fabric top on this wood prototype that was built full scale by Budd's pattern makers. Note the pile of lumber behind the car on the floor.

At the Budd plant, this is an all-wood mock-up for the new Dodge styling as suggested by Budd. The headlamps and shell were wood as well, and were painted silver to note that they would be plated.

A factory enamel emblem was attached to the shell as was a Boyce Moto-Meter. Note the 4 x 4 wood beam that simulates a front axle that is supported in place by wood blocks.

that time, the company had its plant at 25th Street and Hunting Park Avenue in Philadelphia. Edward Budd was President and General Manager.

The mock-up of the sedan body was all made of wood. Smaller wood bodies were made up from plans by most body builders in their own plants. They would be approximately 12 inches high, 15 inches wide and 30 inches long. These mock-up models could easily fit in a car to be brought by salesmen to various automobile manufacturers to show them a three-dimensional example of the style of body that the body builder/supplier could offer. If interest was shown by the prospective car companies, then full-size mock-ups in wood



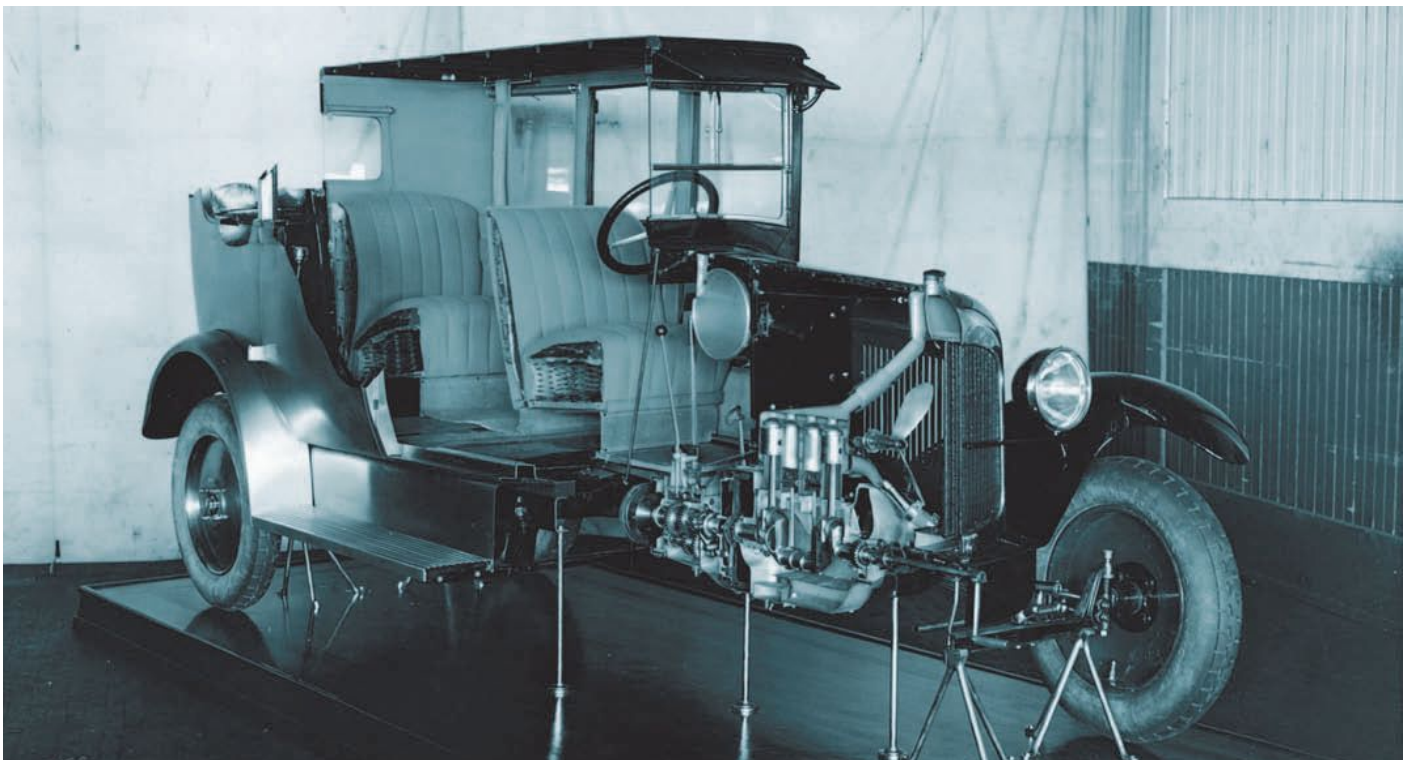


This three-dimensional cutaway clearly illustrated exactly how the well made stamped-steel panels of the body were constructed. Precise welding techniques joined the individually stamped pieces together to form a rigid body, free of rattles.

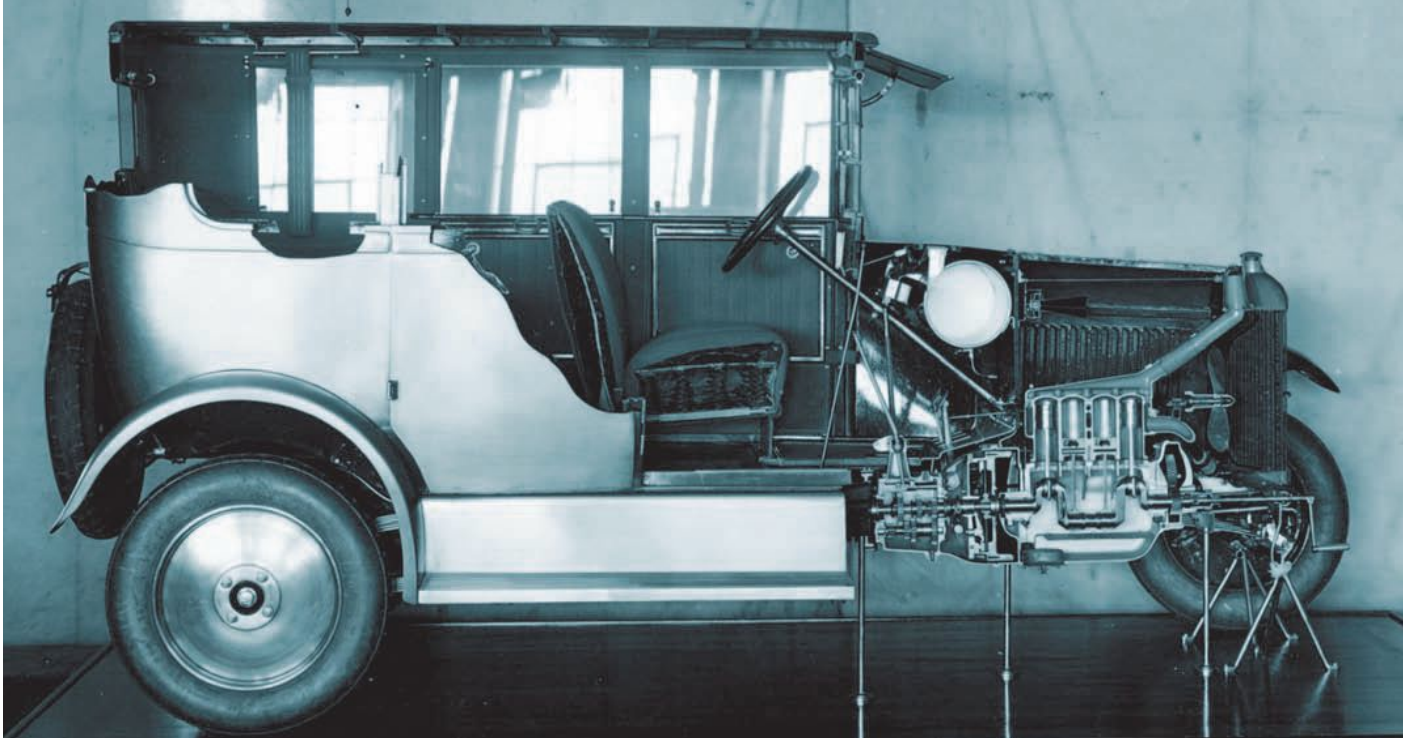
were made. This was long before the clay, foam, and computer-generated models we are used to seeing and reading about came into being. Even the radiator shell and headlamps were crafted from wood. You will note in the photo on the previous page that the axles are pieces of lumber, most likely 4 x 4 inches in size,

with the Budd pressed-steel wheels propped up against them to complete the presentation of a full-size car.

A Moto-Meter and off-the-shelf stock door handles were fitted to give as true a representation of what the car would look like at full scale when finished in steel. Everything was



Citroën built all-steel bodies based upon construction principles that were patented by Budd. A license agreement between Citroën and Budd had been signed in the early 1920s after a visit to the Budd plant by Citroën company representatives. Budd got a new Citroën 5CV chassis that also included the hood and shell and made a cutaway example of what the car would look like. Dodge used the bodies built by Budd based on the same patented principles of construction. Both cars were of nearly similar proportions.



The profile of the Citroën sedan with disc wheels bears a close resemblance to the Dodge of the era. The all-steel welded construction eliminated the issues of loose joints that plagued wood-framed bodies. Less than ideal road surfaces of the era would shake loose the wood frames, which were fastened together with screws. The welded-steel coachwork eliminated that issue.

made of wood, not just the body, but the fenders, hood, splash aprons, etc. The radiator shell and headlamp rims were painted silver to convey the appearance of plated metal, and an enamel Dodge Brothers emblem current to the era was also fitted.

Although the body and fenders were left painted in a matte black primer, the hood and cowl area were varnished to suggest the luster one would see in a new car's paintwork. There was no interior, and the wood there was left in its natural state. All of the small details that would appear on a steel production car were created in wood—beltline and window frame moldings, sun visor, and cowl and hood bands. The prototype had no glass windows, but it seems that a lightweight cloth was tacked in place across the roof bows where the waterproof canvas roof insert would be on a production body.

The full-size cut-away model is on a French Citroën chassis, and the photographs were taken at the Budd plant in the same era that the Dodge mock-up was photographed. Citroën management from France had visited the Budd plant in Philadelphia and came to an agreement to license the Budd-patented manner of body construction. It was good sense on Budd's part to request a chassis from Citroën to create the sliced-and-diced cut-away version you see here to show what the construction of the body panel structure looked like internally. The same principles of construction were used to build the all-steel sedan and coupe bodies for Dodge, which is why we included these images with this story. Budd was also active in trying to persuade Mercedes-Benz to build Budd's patented all-steel bodies under license. Budd even went so far as to import a Mercedes-Benz chassis and built a low-profile, all-steel, six-window sedan body with Budd steel wheels. This car was exhibited at the Auto Salon early in 1926. At \$30,000 it was the most expensive car at the Salon. 🚗

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AT THE NEW YORK SHOW IN SPACE B 135-136

William Collins Jr.

From GM B-bodies to Motorhomes, with DeLoreans in between—Part II



JEFF KOCH

BY THOMAS A. DeMAURO • PHOTOGRAPHY AS CREDITED

When last we spoke of the professional accomplishments of William “Bill” Collins Jr., in Part I, he had just finished working on the highly-regarded 1973 Grand Am. His next major undertaking was the 1977 full-size B-body (and C-body) redesign, dubbed “Project 77,” for which Bill was named project manager.

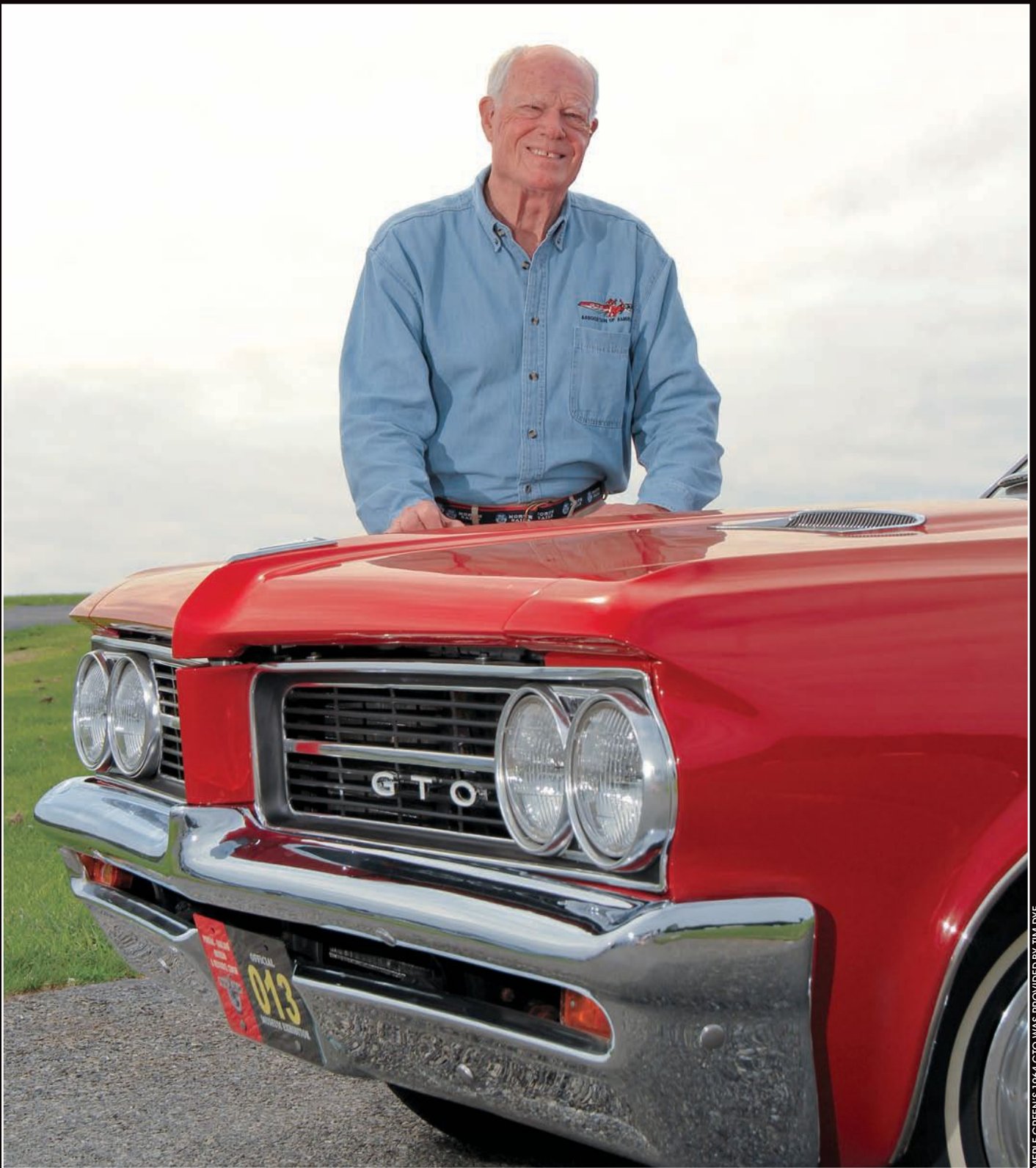
The mandates for Project 77 were to reduce size and weight, while retaining style, comfort and roominess and improving fuel mileage and ride qualities. “The corporation proposed that development be done in a common location, and the chief engineers of the car divisions chose me to head up the program,” Bill recalls. “One

of my responsibilities as project manager involved ‘politicking’ those same chief engineers to get them to agree on a package that design staff could work with.”

Computer finite-element modeling, plastic model stress analysis and aerodynamic wind-tunnel testing were employed to meet the directives. According to Bill, this platform was also the first to incorporate the metric system. “A committee promoting it approached me and I said, ‘Okay.’ We didn’t ask anyone, we just did it. About the time I had the basic parameters set up for the platform, in 1974 John DeLorean lured me away from GM and Bob Dorn took over.”

When Project 77 was completed, the

Chevrolet Impala and Caprice, the Buick Le Sabre, Pontiac Catalina and Bonneville and Oldsmobile Delta 88 Royale, rode on a 116-inch wheelbase, down from 121.5-124 inches (the C-bodies used a 119-inch, down from 127-130 inches), and were, on average, 11 inches shorter, 4 inches narrower and 800 pounds lighter than previous models, and fuel economy was up about three MPG, with no loss in performance. The exterior styling followed what GM V.P. in Charge of Design Staff Bill Mitchell called the “sheer look,” and the cars had more headroom, legroom and luggage space than the 1976 models, not to mention improved handling. *Motor Trend* named the Caprice Classic its Car



MERLE GREEN'S 1964 GTO WAS PROVIDED BY TIM DYE



“I feel fortunate to have had the opportunity to engineer four diverse vehicles from the ground up...”

DMC
DE LOREAN MOTOR COMPANY
WILLIAM T. COLLINS, JR.
Vice President — Product
100 West Long Lake Road
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48013
(313) 645-2210, TWX: 810-232-5113 DELOREAN BDHS

ROCKY ROTELLA COLLECTION

of the Year, and Oldsmobile paced Indy with a Delta 88!

By the time the new B- and C-bodies hit the streets, Bill was nearly two years into development of the DMC-12 sports car at the DeLorean Motor Company. It was to be the consummation of both men's aspirations to produce and sell a moderately priced two-seater, which was initiated in the 1960s with the scuttled Pontiac Banshee.

"We did the basic packaging and layout," Bill recalls. The body was designed by Giorgetto Giugiaro of Italdesign. A prototype was completed in late 1976, and the first production DeLorean models appeared in 1981.

The DMC-12 featured 304 stainless steel over fiberglass body panels. Its chassis began with a steel central backbone that split into wishbones at either end. On a 94.8-inch wheelbase, unequal length upper and lower control arms with coil springs, shocks, an anti-roll bar and rack-and-pinion steering comprised the front suspension. The independent rear suspension had diagonal trailing radius arms with upper and lower links, coil springs and shocks. Power-assisted four-wheel disc brakes, 10-inch front and 10.5-inch rear, were employed, and aluminum alloy wheels measured 14x6 in front and 15x8 in the rear, and had Goodyear 195/60R14 and 235/60R15 tires. Front/rear weight distribution for the rear-engine car was 35 percent/65 percent.

Filling its engine bay was a fuel-injected 174-cu.in. aluminum PRV (Peugeot-Renault-Volvo) SOHC 2.85-liter V-6 with 130hp (U.S.-spec), which was attached to a PRV five-speed transaxle, or an optional three-speed automatic with a 3.44-gear final drive.

Curiously, the DMC-12 was produced in Dunmurry, Northern Ireland, an area with political unrest. "Actually, we were very close to going to Puerto Rico for the same type of deal that Ireland was offering," Bill says. "John was always looking for someone to pay the bill... we never had any money. He chose Ireland, but I was unhappy because I knew that we would have to do the rest of the engineering in Europe.

"We approached Porsche, but the timeline and costs didn't work. I wanted to set up our own engineering in Coventry, but John was speaking with Colin Chapman at Lotus. They had similar egos and bonded." Soon after Lotus took over final production in 1979, Bill decided to leave DMC.

"Looking back, the biggest mistake we made on the DMC-12 was not having a decent engine," Bill laments. "Because of John's remarks toward GM in his book with J. Patrick Wright, *On a Clear Day You Can See General Motors*, GM wasn't about to



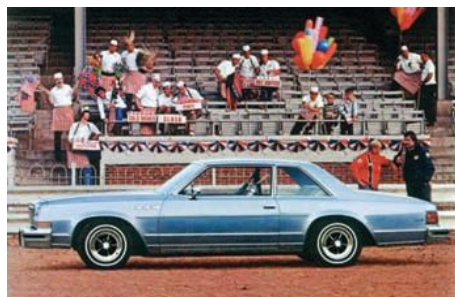
For 1977, the popularity of the B-body redesign was enhanced when the Delta 88 became the Pace Car for the Indy 500. A run of 2,401 replica hardtops were built for the street.

sell us an engine. Otherwise it was a good car, but not a Ferrari."

Bill's assessment was confirmed in "DeLorean vs. the World," published in the December 1981 issue of *Car and Driver* magazine, where the DeLorean was pitted against a Corvette, a 280 ZX Turbo, a Ferrari 308GTSi and a Porsche 911SC. The DeLorean was lauded for its styling, ergonomics and for the fact that it actually existed. It came in last place in all of the performance categories, except for the skid pad, which was a third place tie with the 911SC. On a brighter note, the DMC-12's 18-MPG observed fuel economy was the best of the group, and its \$25,600 price tag was mid-pack.

By 1982, the Northern Ireland plant went into receivership, some say due to overproduction, and DeLorean's highly publicized legal issues ensued. Ultimately, he was acquitted in 1984, but it was too late to save the company. A new company, also called the DeLorean Motor Company, but with no relation to the original, was born in 1995. Currently, DeLoreans are built to order in Humble, Texas, using many NOS and OEM parts.

The Le Sabre and Caprice Classic were also included in Project 77, and the Caprice won the Motor Trend Car of the Year Award.



Following his departure from DMC, Bill was named head of product planning at AMC. "I was in the wrong place," he admits. "A couple younger guys were way more aggressive than I was, and they ran around me." The silver lining was the fact that the Renaults that AMC was selling at the time helped channel Bill's creativity toward his next project. "I would drive home various Renaults and look under hood and think, 'This could work for a FWD motorhome [later becoming rear-engine RWD]!'"

Bill left AMC and founded the Vixen Motor Company in 1981. "I look at Vixen as the culmination of all my experiences from starting with a clean sheet of paper and building a car from the ground up," Bill proclaims. "I possessed an overview of how to build a whole car that I would never have gotten had I been a spark plug engineer for Chevrolet. I also learned from John DeLorean what to do and what not to do to



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A fully-equipped galley that will accommodate double sink, and optional electric ice refrigeration.

See your colorful demands with a microwave, double sink, and optional electric ice refrigeration.

The superior performance of Vixen's permanent, full-sized double bed. Plus, a convenient second double bed.

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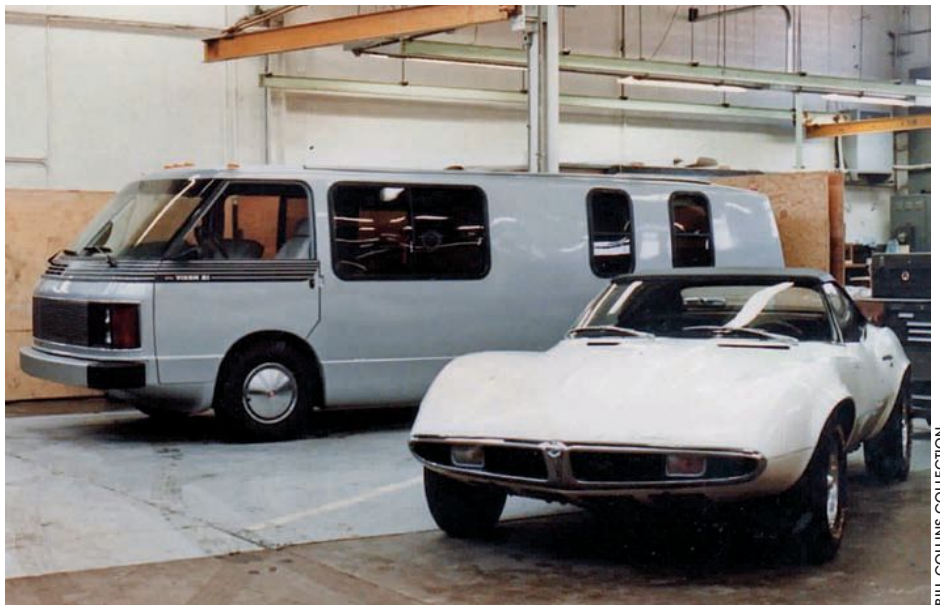
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raise money to launch a company. I didn't call it the Collins Motor Company. I'm a behind-the-scenes guy who gets things done—I didn't need my name on it."

Bill started the company with partner Bob Dewey, a finance executive with whom he had worked at GM and DeLorean, but it was also a family endeavor. Bill's wife, Nina, designed the interior, and his daughter Jennifer, who was studying Industrial Design at the Massachusetts College of Art, developed the nautical-style restroom/shower and came up with the name "Vixen."

Inspired by a 1973 cross-country road trip in a GMC motorhome, Bill's concept behind the Vixen 21 (for 21-foot) TD (turbo diesel) Class "A" motorhome, was to increase efficiency and comfort through enhanced engineering, design and aerodynamics, effective space utilization and common sense. Then sell it for about \$35,000.

Many motorhomes were too tall to fit into a standard garage, but at 76 inches in height, the Vixen did. Yet when parked outdoors, the pneumatically-controlled cathedral roof could be lifted to provide six-and-a-half feet of headroom.

Many motorhomes had the aerodynamic drag of a brick tied to a sail, but the Vixen possessed a drag coefficient of .295 thanks to its wind-tunnel-developed design and a flat underside. By comparison, Chevrolet proudly advertised the 1982 Z28 as having a less slippery .369.

Many motorhomes had large fuel-guzzling gasoline engines, which were required to lug around the excessive weight of their bodies and chassis, but the Vixen sported a lighter 148-inch wheelbase chassis and fiberglass body (about a 5,100-lb. curb weight) and employed a 115hp rear-

Bill's first ground-up design was the Banshee in the 1960s, and his last was the Vixen in the 1980s. He still owned the white Banshee prototype when he built the Vixen prototype-1, which he refers to as "Dash-One."

mounted turbocharged 2.41-liter BMW six-cylinder diesel engine and Renault five-speed transaxle capable of 30 MPG at 55 MPH. A gasoline engine was later offered to meet California emissions.

To Bill, common sense dictated that a vehicle designed for the road should be repairable using readily available parts. To that end, GM G20 series van suspension, steering and brake systems were employed up front (a de Dion tube layout in the rear), and a Cadillac automatic-level ride system, a Harrison cooling and A/C system, a Ford clutch master cylinder, and VDO gauges were used.

Augmenting the experience and expertise of its founder, the Vixen's development also benefitted from computer-aided design, wind-tunnel testing at the University of Michigan and track testing.

Built in a 135,000-sq.-ft. plant in Pontiac, Michigan, the Vixen was introduced at the 1986 Detroit Auto Show. By March, regular production had begun. The Industrial Design Society of America presented it with its Industrial Design Excellence Award that year, and the Vixen 21 TD also received an Excellence in Design nomination from *Design News* magazine.

Another model, XC, was an eight-passenger limo that retained the same drivetrain but had a fixed roof, more seating, no dinette set or shower and had upgraded audio-visual systems.

Later, an SE was pushed into production by executives within the company against Bill's better judgment. It used a



165hp GM 3.8-liter V-6 gasoline engine and a four-speed automatic transaxle. The now-fixed roof provided six-and-a-half feet of headroom, but the Vixen would no longer fit in a garage. It also had heavy oak cabinetry that added weight.

"These executives felt that the SE would save the company—it didn't," Bill concedes. "We were still doing things like GM and spending too much money."

Despite rave reviews from the press and winning awards, after 574 (or 578 or 587, depending upon the source) Vixens were built, the working capital was exhausted, assumed-higher gas prices never materialized and the Vixen Motor Company ceased production in 1989. Bill then did consulting for Pontiac and a few other firms before retiring in 1992.

Today, the Vixen Owners Association is very active in keeping the legacy of the Vixen alive, and Bill, at age 82, is still busy with business ventures. "Right now, I'm involved in a family entertainment center that has a restaurant, bowling alley and a nine-hole golf course," he says.

Looking back on his career, Bill says, "I feel fortunate to have had the opportunity to engineer four diverse vehicles from the ground up—the Banshee, the 1977 GM B-body, the DeLorean and the Vixen. And," says the 6-foot, 2-inch tall engineer/entrepreneur, "you can actually fit in every one of them!" ☺

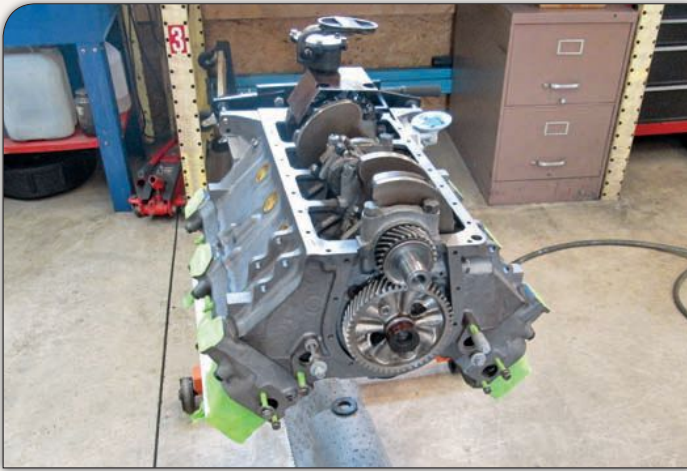


Reborn Hawk

Careful considerations, rare finds and a superior finish are combined to produce a 1964 Studebaker Gran Turismo that's second to none— Part II

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY MATTHEW LITWIN
RESTORATION PHOTOGRAPHY
COURTESY OF MATTHEW WENDT





Earlier in the restoration, the 289-cu.in. Studebaker V-8 had been delivered to the local NAPA machine shop, which performed a .030-overbore, cylinder head work and reassembly of the bottom end. Final assembly and paint is about to commence at this stage.



Having been originally equipped with the optional power front disc brake system from the factory, new replacement components were obtained and installed while the chassis was being restored. The system required Matt to hunt for proper wheels as well.



The chassis restoration has been completed. This includes the installation of the rebuilt engine, the Borg-Warner automatic transmission, installation of the dual exhaust system and the freshly rebuilt Paxton supercharger and corresponding parts.



After all of the metal work had finally been completed, the body was partially reassembled and delivered to the body shop. Skim coats of body filler are in the application and sanding phase. Note the fabricated dolly to help move the shell around.

In last month's Part I of this restoration profile story, we recounted how Matt Wendt of North Tonawanda, New York, went home to Wisconsin to select from his father's collection a driver-level project car: a Studebaker he could refurbish as needed and drive regularly.

Matt chose this 1964 Gran Turismo Hawk, one of just 70 assembled with the supercharged 289hp R2 version of Studebaker's 289-cu.in. V-8 engine. For Matt, it was a dream come true. Complete and stored indoors since 1976, the Hawk was in desperate need of new paint, brakes, rocker panels and, at the very least, a thorough tune-up to make the engine functional once again. But when he got

the Gran Turismo to his home in New York, the driver-level project immediately blossomed into a body-off restoration, dictated in part by a lengthy repair list after a second, closer assessment of his new Studebaker.

With help from his father, Peter, Matt began cutting away the remaining sections of rotted rocker panels and welded in reproduction replacements. After removing the interior upholstery, the duo also made repairs to the floorpan and transmission tunnel, the latter of which was aided by an original section removed from a parts car Peter had in his Wisconsin collection. After the initial round of rust repairs were completed, the body shell, removed body panels





With the filler work completed and sanded smooth, several layers of primer were applied and allowed to cure between coats to help ward off unwanted shrinking. Each coat was also sanded in order to achieve a superiorly smooth surface for paint.



Bordeaux Red, a correct model-year factory color, was chosen versus the original Golden Sand color. The paint was PPG DBC Concept single-stage, matched to sections of original panel that had not been exposed to UV light and other dulling elements.



After the paint cured and the body was returned, it was positioned on a two-post lift before it was carefully lowered to the completed chassis. Using new mounting parts, the two were finally reunited after several months.



The front fenders, which also received the same paint process, received some of its componentry, such as the headlamp bucket and vent door. Note the application of painter's tape, done to protect the edges of the finish, preventing unwanted chipping.

and the frame were delivered to Blast Off in nearby Buffalo for media blasting, after which they were sealed in a coat of epoxy primer. The media blasting revealed a few additional, though minor, areas that needed attention on the body, whereas the frame was devoid of damage.

Once he had completely finished repairing the body, several of the panels were reattached to the body, which Matt then mounted to a dolly he had fabricated earlier. He then delivered the sub-assembly and remaining panels to Paint Works in Newfane, New York, in the fall of 2012. This was the same paint shop tasked with finishing the exterior of Matt's Avanti II, so he was familiar with

their quality of workmanship.

A skim coat of lightweight filler was applied to the body and then carefully sanded smooth using the step method, moving from aggressive-grade paper to fine grade. Although it often seems easy, this is a critical process that eliminates slight imperfections that become obvious once paint is applied. The body was then given a coat of primer and, once allowed to cure, was also sanded smooth. This step was repeated several times. Although the original exterior color was Golden Sand, according to the data plate, Matt opted to have his Studebaker finished in Bordeaux Red, one of several colors correct for the model year. For this, they selected PPG DBC Concept single-stage paint carefully

matched to sections of original panels from parts cars that had not been exposed to the elements.

"During the primer and paint process, I had to contend with the stainless steel rain rail trim," explains Matt. "It was in poor condition, was extremely thin, and very difficult to remove and install. Unfortunately, reproduction trim pieces are not available. During the course of the restoration, every single piece of trim was polished as best as possible.

Peter meticulously removed the best pieces of rain rail trim from several of his parts cars and had them delivered to Matt. A large number of chrome-plated trim parts from the interior and exterior were sent to Niagara Custom Plating



Few interior parts were reproduction material, such as the headliner. Described as unforgiving, the material had to be carefully positioned and secured. The most difficult areas were the complex C-pillars. The chrome ribs are restored originals.



Front end reassembly is well underway, including the installation of the front fenders. New wiring is already in place, as is a refurbished radiator. Chrome trim and the front bumper, already restored, are next on the list to reinstall.



A previous owner had already used NOS vinyl upholstery to change the interior color from brown to black. Its long-term storage ultimately resulted in exceptionally minimal wear, meaning the upholstery was reusable, the exception being the seatbacks.



Here, the rear side interior panels have already been installed. Note the one upgrade that will ultimately be hidden by carpet and seating: the Dynamat sound deadening mat on the floorpan. As the product implies, it decreases noise transfer into the cabin.

in nearby Niagara Falls, and to Custom Plating Specialist in Brillion, Wisconsin. As for the stainless steel pieces, Matt chose to refinish those himself.

As the body was going through its refinishing process, Matt turned his attention to the chassis. Although up to this point, the chassis had been used as a ready-made platform for transporting the body to be media blasted and painted, it still had to be stripped and refinished. Once the suspension was removed and the paint was stripped, Matt used black automotive-grade enamel to refinish the frame. After it cured, he rebuilt the suspension—the key parts of which were cleaned and painted as well—and brake system. Here again, another slight issue

arose. According to Matt, “This car came with power disc brakes from the factory. It’s a nice option, but like other makes, Studebakers equipped with front disc brakes used different wheels than those wheels fitted to drum brake-equipped cars, in order to clear the calipers. And, of course, the wheels that were on the car were incorrect. We then had to find the right pair of wheels to fit to the suspension in order to make the completed chassis moveable.”

While work progressed on the chassis, Matt sent the 289 to the local NAPA machine shop. There, the block was bored .030, and the heads were rebuilt with hardened valve seats. “They assembled the short block for me,

which is something they prefer to do to help eliminate the question of liability should something happen,” Matt says. “I completed the rest of the assembly and ultimately painted the block. The Paxton supercharger was complete, but the impeller was destroyed; all the fins were broken off. Having sent it off to Paradise Wheels in San Marcos, California—the company that bought the service rights to Paxton—it was returned in time for me to attach it to the engine once that was ready to be installed back in the chassis.”

The Borg-Warner “Powershift” three-speed automatic transmission had been rebuilt using NOS parts and new seals. After the engine, transmission and drive-shaft were bolted back onto the chassis,



the chassis was then ready to receive the refinished body. This was back in May 2013.

To facilitate the process, Matt utilized his two-post lift to lower the body onto the chassis, making alignment easier. New body mounts were used, along with new fasteners. The next step was to start installing the new wiring harness.

Matt's Gran Turismo had originally been finished with brown vinyl upholstery throughout; however, a previous owner had already reupholstered the interior with new-old-stock black vinyl, which Matt and Peter had deemed usable early in the restoration process. Much of it had already been cleaned and readied for installation. Although the Hawk did not come with much in the way of spare parts, a pair of NOS interior door panels were included, which are very hard to

find today. After the panels were carefully installed on the doors, which were removed to help with access to the interior, the hand-painted woodgrain inserts were affixed.

A new headliner was also fitted, along with refinished chrome ribs. "Installing the headliner was a challenge," Matt tells us. "Neither the NOS material or the reproduction material is forgiving; they don't stretch, which means when we got to the complex curves of the rear C-pillars, we had more difficulty installing it without wrinkles than we originally anticipated."

With the headliner complete, the rest of the interior could be installed, starting with a hidden upgrade in the form of Dynamat sound deadener on the floorpan. The instrument panel and its gauges were next on the list, which also helped

complete a large portion of the wiring harness reassembly, along with the rear side panels. Another upgrade was added to the cabin: an AM/FM radio.

According to Matt, "My dad had found a 1964 Hawk parts car, which he bought because it had the Studebaker AM/FM in it; they are exceptionally rare and very desirable. Earlier, I had found some NOS vinyl inserts for the front seatbacks, but the same parts car had an even better set. We picked the best pieces out of the two sets at our disposal to complete the bucket seats."

As tasks were being accomplished with the interior, reassembly was an ongoing process with the exterior. While the front fenders were still separated from the main body, the headlamp buckets and select pieces of trim were installed. This helped further expedite the



rest of the wiring assemblies, although Matt cautions prospective restorers that panel alignment requires a careful test-fit process before each can finally be secured. Installing trim was also a delicate process, not only to avoid damaging the paint, but also the trim. A perfect example was the aforementioned roof rain rail trim. According to Matt, "They are really thin and delicate; it was nerve-racking re-installing them."

In April 2014, the Studebaker was finally complete, just in time for the Antique Automobile Club of America's Eastern Spring Meet in nearby Amherst, New York, where it easily won a First Junior award. Further and far more significant testament of the quality of work done to this Gran Turismo can be found in the results from the Studebaker Drivers Club National Meet, where it earned an incredible 399 out of 400 points and "Best of Division." Still, Matt's both honest and humble about the restoration, and gives us a peek at what may be next on his list.

"This truly was a father-and-son project. It gave us the excuse to travel



the 1,400 miles to see each other more. The sheetmetal work was new to me and overwhelming. My father taught me how to fix it right and make it look factory-original, including how to use a spot-welding machine and various metal-forming and finishing techniques.

Without my dad's expertise and encouragement, it would have stalled during the metal work and not be finished, at least not to the level it is today. My wife, Christine, encouraged me as well, and she's mentioned that a convertible should be next." 🐾

owner's view



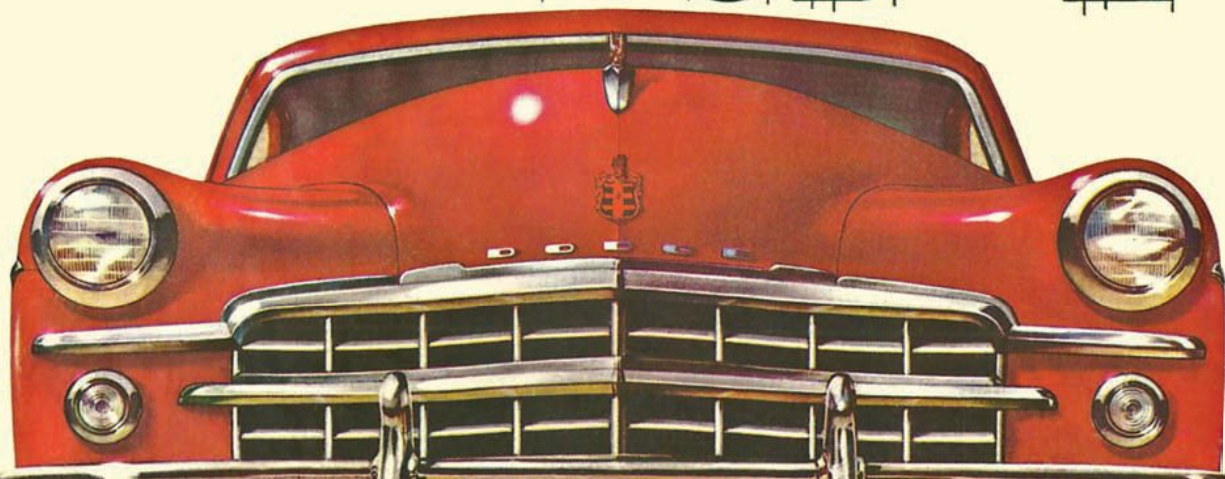
It was a pretty honest car, in spite of the metal work needed, and had the right drivetrain. Having changed my approach to the project after getting into it, I found it interesting how you need to be good at so many skills to completely restore a car. I learned several lessons along the way. First, spend the money and time on the parts that are hard to do once the car is together. If you need to save time and money, do it on parts that are easy to change later. Fancy tires and radios can wait. Second, expect needing to do things over again, sometimes three times to get it right. It is part of the experience. Finally, find a good forum to review technical information and things to avoid, and read the shop manual.

1949 Dodge

SEE

the daring new

DODGE



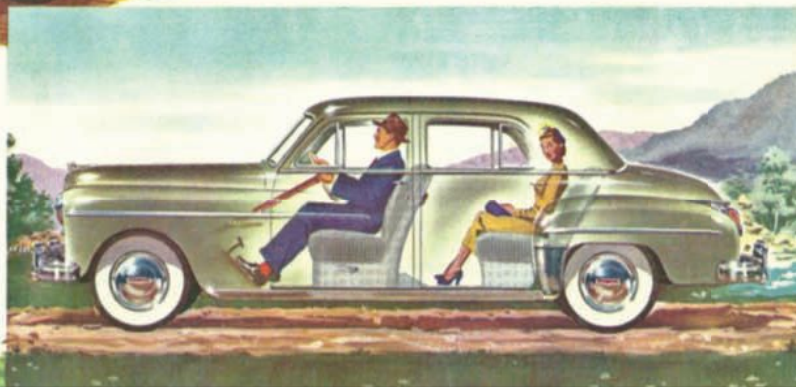
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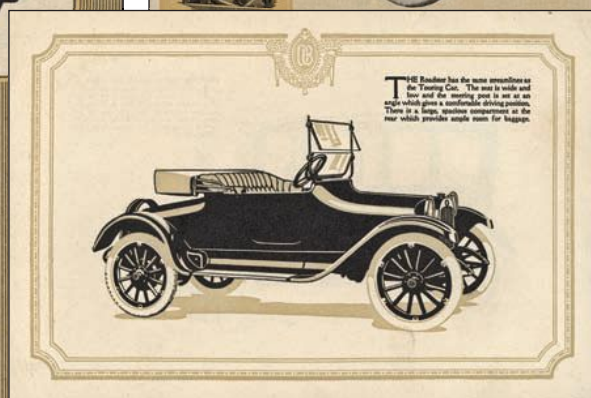
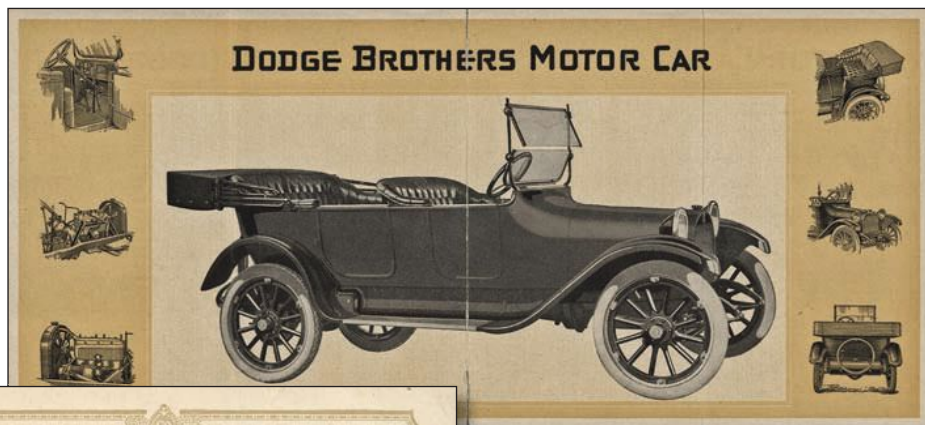
150 1955-1957
210 1955-1957
Beauville 1955-1957
Bel Air 1953-1976
Biscayne 1958-1972
Brookwood 1958-1960
Caballero 1978-1988
Camaro 1967-2014
Caprice 1966-1985
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Nova 1962-1979
Malibu 1964-1986
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Townsmen 1955-1959
Yeoman 1958



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52
YEARS OF
EXPERIENCE

It Speaks For Itself



the car, relying instead much more on written descriptions. They assured buyers that “Dodge Brothers have brought... an extraordinary experience, immense production capacity, and complete financial independence.”

One 1915 catalog, simply titled *Dodge Brothers Motor Car*, extensively uses the written word to describe the strength of the engine: “All vital parts which are subject to strain are made from Chrome Vanadium steel ... The real grain leather gives richness to the upholstery and the cushions are comfortably sloped ... Many qualities which cannot be shown in the specifications reveal themselves in a most satisfying way when the car is in actual use.” The literature produced in 1915 is good sales material, but for me it has one shortcoming: poor illustrations that are barely more than line drawings. I think the illustration used in the 1914 catalog was better than any drawing used during 1915.

While the first Dodge Brothers car was available in 1914, there were less than 400 cars manufactured that year. Most people consider cars produced in late 1914 to be 1915 models, and Dodge Brothers gets credit for producing 45,000 cars during its first model year. This is the highest production total for a first-year manufacturer in the history of the industry. The automotive company’s literature got off to a slow start in 1914, but finished strong in 1915. Of course, there are 99 more years of consistent, quality Dodge literature just waiting for you to discover. Happy Birthday, Dodge! 🎂

WHILE THE VIEW FROM HENRY FORD’S vest pocket was great, the Dodge Brothers decided to venture out on their own as automobile manufacturers in 1913. Their first car wouldn’t roll out of the factory until November 1914, but the brothers would be the fourth largest auto producer by 1916. Their strong start was certainly due to their manufacturing background, financial strength and sound business acumen.

Like the automobile production itself, sales literature for the Dodge Brothers car was somewhat limited in the beginning, but quickly increased in quality and quantity.

Published during the last quarter of 1914, the first piece of Dodge Brothers sales literature ever produced was simply titled *It Speaks for Itself*. More of a teaser than anything else, it is a basic two-sided sheet of paper that is folded to 3½ x 6¼ inches and opens to 13½ x 6¼ inches. It features black-and-yellow ink, a list of vehicle specifications and an illustration of the touring car. The title of the brochure

says it all—there is no description of the car or the riding experience. The specifications describe the Dodge Brothers offering by listing common features like steel springs, hickory wheels and electric lights. The brochure did not capitalize on two notable features of the initial Dodge Brothers cars: a 12-volt electrical system and all-steel bodies.

I personally find the *It Speaks for Itself* approach to be quite bold. Sure, industry insiders were aware of the Dodge Brothers’ reputation and quality, but would the average car buyer make the leap from a brand-new car name and its manufacturer’s connection to Ransom Olds and the Ford Motor Company? It is fair to assume, however, that the Dodge Brothers’ decision to leave the supply end of the industry and become a full-fledged automobile manufacturer left them with little time to worry about sales literature.

During the 1915 calendar year, Dodge Brothers produced at least three catalogs to sell the company’s touring car and roadster. That year, they finally used more than specifications to sell

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Desirable Dodge Mirada

IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR AN '80s car, you may have a Cordoba on your list, but why not consider its Dodge counterpart? *Mirada* is a Spanish word that means "to look, glance or gaze," and this underdog is definitely a car that will make you want to take a second look.

Only available as a two-door coupe manufactured from 1980-'83, the *Mirada* was a sportier entry in the personal luxury car class. Built on the J-body platform, it was around 800 pounds lighter at 3,375 pounds and rode on a 2.3-inch-shorter wheelbase (112.7 inches) than the car it replaced—the Dodge Magnum. The platform was shared with the new Chrysler Cordoba and the 1981-'83 Imperial. The J-body platform was also an evolution of the Aspen/Volaré F-body platform.

When you really think about it, most cars are just evolutions of prior platforms. Somewhere under every bonnet is a part that dates back a couple of decades.

With lighter weight came the availability of a smaller engine, the unstoppable 225-cu.in. Slant-Six or 318-cu.in. V-8, mated to a 904 TorqueFlite automatic, or the 360-cu.in. V-8 mated to a 727 TorqueFlite. Fewer than 100 *Miradas* came equipped with the larger V-8, designated *Mirada* CMXs.

Around 53,000 *Miradas* were sold during its four-year run, making it one of the rarest of the '80s personal luxury cars, adding to its appeal today. What do I always say? You will be the only one in a Dodge *Mirada* at the car show.

Aside from its initial target market, Chrysler was hoping to revive its early 1970s NASCAR success with *Mirada*-based race cars, since a Mopar hadn't won a race in a few years. At the request of Lee Iacocca, Richard Petty's team built and tested a Dodge *Mirada* race car; Junior Johnson's team also built one. Petty's team liked how the car looked and were pleased with the result until they realized the drag coefficient was quite high, and the *Mirada* couldn't travel faster than 185 MPH. On average, the pretty Dodge was 8 MPH slower than the competition; Perhaps they should have tested a Nash Airflyte? Petty eventually switched to Buick Regals, which I am sure pleased Telly Savalas.

On short tracks, the *Mirada* could



1981 Dodge *Mirada*. Its every line conveys the feeling of action and response. Even when it stands at rest. With its standard equipment at the ready. Equipment that includes one of the finest six-cylinder engines ever built... Chrysler's legendary Slant Six. An engine that has been improved upon and constantly refined over the last two decades to offer a surprising combination of power, economy and dependability. With new hydraulic valve lifters offered for the first time this year. When in motion, *Mirada's* response is immediate. Its ride smooth and controlled. Its road manners impeccable. For beneath its shining sculptured skin lie the heart and soul of unmistakably fine engineering and a commitment to quality materials and assembly that are the ultimate reasons for *Mirada's* masterful performance and overall automotive excellence.

hold its own as proven by Buddy Arrington, who managed 17 top-ten finishes from 1981 to 1984, but never won.

They may have appeared on race tracks, but out of the showroom, *Miradas* were sedate cruisers. The Slant-Six engine maxed out at 90 hp, and the optional 318 with a two-barrel carb was rated at 155 hp (California buyers had the four-barrel version which made 185 hp). The 360 cranked out 185 hp, but so few went out the door with that engine, it is less likely you will find one. Now that I said that, one will appear in the *Hemmings* classifieds.

The front suspension of the *Mirada* utilized the transverse torsion bars that first appeared on the Dodge Aspen. The rear was suspended by leaf springs with an anti-roll bar. There was an optional Sport Handling Package with heavy-duty components front and rear. To stop the *Mirada*, power front disc and rear drum brakes were used. Steering was power-assist.

The *Mirada's* roof sported an opera window incorporated into the shape of the C-pillar on the base model, and a chrome strip started at the bottom of the opera window and extended across the roof. Other models were the S or SE and the CMX. The S or SE offered a landau vinyl roof, covering the rear section and framing the opera window. Options included a power sunroof the first two years or a glass T-top for every year except 1983.

Inside, you could order a column or floor shift for the TorqueFlite; seating options were vinyl or leather bucket seats or a 60/40 split-bench seat. Obviously, with

the bench seat, you had to order a column shift. And yes, an eight-track tape player was still available. Prices hovered around the \$8,000–\$11,000 range, depending on year and options.

If you remember the commercials for these, then you know they isolated the front and rear suspensions with thicker rubber, used a vibration absorber in the propeller shaft, and added insulation up, down and around. They also achieved weight loss with little reduction in size from the Magnum through lighter components under the hood, including the A/C compressor and heater core, a lighter fuel filler tube and even lighter rear seats.

New for 1980 was the lighted entry. By pulling on the driver's side door handle, you activated the interior lights and illuminated the keyhole surround.

The *Mirada* was a car whose target market was dwindling. Efficient front-wheel-drive cars were becoming the norm in just about every size, and the personal luxury market was becoming a thing of the past along with opera windows and vinyl roofs. Chrysler was also embracing front-wheel drive more than any other car company.

I found three Dodge *Mirada* owners, but when I contacted them to get their impressions of these beauties, they each had sold their *Miradas* only moments before I called. I don't know if they were avoiding me or were tired of their *Miradas*. I'll go with a positive spin.

If you own a Dodge *Mirada*, people will constantly offer to buy it, making a *Mirada* a very desirable Dodge. 🐾



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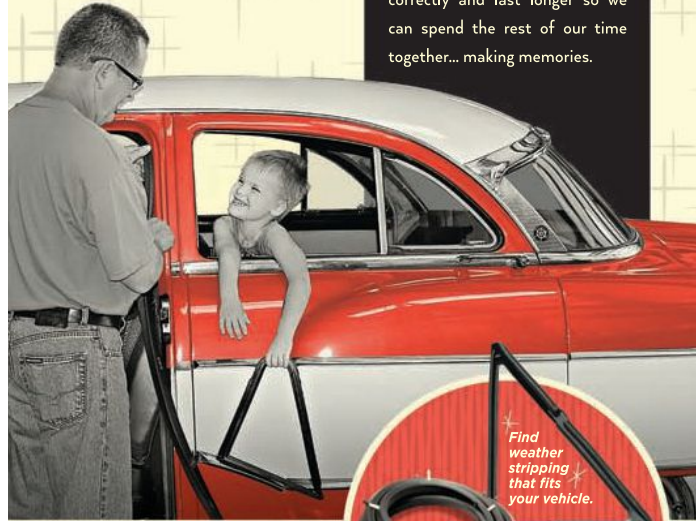
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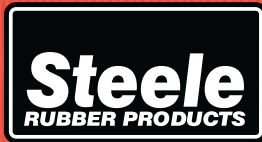
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Tex Colbert

HISTORY HAS NOT ALWAYS BEEN KIND TO THE LEGACY of Lester Lum Colbert. His time at the pinnacle of Chrysler Corporation coincided with some important technical advances and some of the finest postwar styling that the company ever created. He resigned somewhat ignominiously when his tenure abruptly turned stormy, a plot that included personal attacks and leaks by a muckraking journalist, the kind of material that could have fed a potboiler on Washington intrigues.

The fact is that Colbert—whose nickname was “Tex” and whose middle name, Lum, was a truncation of “Columbus”—deserves to be remembered for his accomplishments, the first

being a highly unusual career track for a senior auto executive. He was born in 1905 in rural Oakwood, Texas, the son of a well-to-do cotton farmer who had a desire to see him become an attorney. By all indications, Colbert was at best lukewarm about joining the bar, but still excelled academically at the University of Texas and graduated from Harvard Law School. Despite indifferent grades at Harvard, Colbert landed at a top New York City law firm whose senior partner had Walter Chrysler as a client.

Colbert was subsequently assigned to the Chrysler corporate account, working out of Detroit. At age 30, he so impressed Chrysler president K.T. Keller that he named Colbert as vice president at Dodge. He later became a top officer in managing Dodge’s wartime production efforts, especially complicated radial engines for the B-29 bomber, winning a commendation from Army Air Forces General Hap Arnold. At war’s end, Keller named Colbert president of Dodge, and upon his own retirement five years later, made him his own handpicked successor.

Until very late in his term as Chrysler president, Colbert seemed destined to be recalled as one of the truly great ones. He oversaw the introduction of the first Chrysler Hemi and postwar V-8s at both Dodge and Plymouth. Chrysler’s products enjoyed a reputation for superb engineering. Colbert vastly expanded Chrysler’s manufacturing capacity in anticipation of the booming market in new vehicles. He also commissioned a study by McKinsey & Company, the management consultants, which called for decentralization of manufacturing and a push for international sales. Also under Colbert’s watch, Chrysler acquired Briggs, the body manufacturer, and produced the early works of Virgil Exner’s styling.

In addition, the Colbert era saw Chrysler join the compact ranks with the Dodge Lancer and Plymouth Valiant—both powered by the immortal Slant Six engine—and Chrysler widen its footprint in American motorsports. And then came 1960. Colbert had ascended to Chrysler’s chairmanship and named William Newberg as his successor, in Keller fashion. Almost immediately, Newberg resigned. It turned out he had raked in \$450,000 from suppliers in which he had a hidden interest. Newberg repaid it, but sued Colbert, blaming him for Chrysler’s mismanagement. The suit was ultimately settled, but not before the syndicated columnist Drew Pearson revealed that Colbert’s wife owned shares in a supplier that she dumped right before Newberg’s ouster.

Investors rebelled at Chrysler’s annual board meeting, and Colbert was forced to quit. He was allowed to remain on as chairman of Chrysler of Canada until he was eligible for his pension. Colbert later moved to Florida, where he died in 1995 after having been active in energy exploration and philanthropy. 🐾



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Hemmings Dodge Die-Casts



BACK IN THE LATE 1970S THROUGH to the late '90s, subscribers to *Hemmings Motor News*, and model car collectors as well, all looked forward to autumn when Hemmings would release its latest die-cast model for the upcoming Christmas season. It was an annual event much the same as the new-car introductions in dealer showrooms from years back, except in a much smaller scale.

During the 30-plus years that Hemmings has been offering commemorative die-cast model car and truck collectibles, three of the vehicles have been Dodge models: a 1936 Panel Delivery, 1936 pickup truck, and a 1947 Canopy Van. In keeping with the Hemmings tradition, all of the models were finished in Hemmings' signature colors of dark green with yellow lettering.

Marketed and distributed by a company called Spec Cast, the models were actually produced by a manufacturer

called Liberty Classics of Libertyville, Illinois. Formed in 1991, Liberty Classics produced models not only for Spec Cast but also for Racing Champions, Canadian Tire, Car Quest, Pep Boys, NAPA and others.

Besides cars and trucks, Liberty produced several vintage airplanes, which Hemmings also offered to its readers—in green, of course. They were the Ford Trimotor and a DC-3. Like the others, they were made in China. Production numbers varied depending on the model; the planes were limited to just 2,500 copies each, while the cars had runs of 2,500, 5,000, or more.

Both 1936 Dodge models were done in 1/28 scale, while the 1947 Canopy Van was produced in the more common 1/25 scale. This Canopy Van was a huge hit with its opening doors, canvas side panels, detailed interior and chromed rearview mirrors. With a retail price of

\$32.95, it sold out very fast, as expected.

The 1936 Dodge Panel Delivery, which was offered back in 1995, was actually a bank. The pair of rear doors opened to reveal a slot through which coins could be deposited. A key, which was attached to the model's undercarriage, opened an adjoining door so the money could be retrieved. Like most of the Hemmings vehicles that were also banks, production was higher; some 12,500 of these Panel Delivery truck banks rolled off the assembly line.

Though all of the Dodge die-cast metal models have long been sold out, you can still easily find these well-made, and quite heavy die-cast models for sale at Hershey and Carlisle, and many other major swap meets. Pre-owned models have been seen on various on-line auction sites with asking prices not much more than \$25 each, although new, mint-in-box offerings sell for much more. 🐾

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Advanced Strategy

The Distributor Vacuum Advance Unit

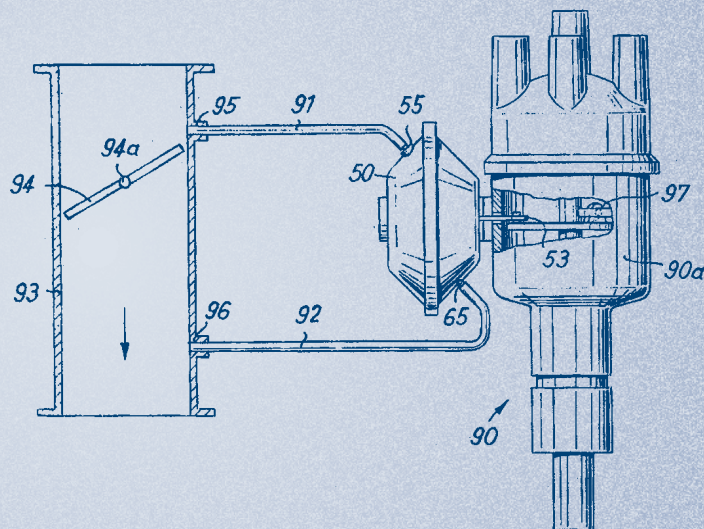
March 23, 1971

H. KALIPPKE ET AL.

3,572,301

VACUUM ADVANCE MECHANISM FOR IGNITION DISTRIBUTORS OF INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINES

Filed Dec. 26, 1968



ILLUSTRATIONS COURTESY OF THE U.S. PATENT OFFICE

JOB: Distributor Vacuum Advance Unit

BY RAY T. BOHACZ

AS THE AUTOMOBILE ENGINE progressed from its early days, a good many advancements and changes took hold. The ignition system was no stranger to this evolution.

Until Charles Kettering invented the electric starter (it's more correct to refer to it as a cranking motor, not a starter), internal combustion pioneers employed a crank-start apparatus, necessitating that the ignition system provide its own electrical power. This required the use of a magneto, since there was no storage battery to supply voltage to a coil. This basic design is still used today on small pull-start engines. When the storage battery was introduced, though, it allowed for a rethinking of how the spark plug was arced. Thus the distributor ignition system was born.

A magneto used a centrifugal timing advance system, as did most, if not all, early distributors. Then, as the bar was being raised in all aspects of engine

performance and fuel economy, a vacuum advance was attached to the distributor housing. By the late 1950s, and most certainly by the early 1960s, every American production car engine was equipped with a vacuum advance canister. It remained in use until the early 1980s when electronic timing advance was integrated into the modern ignition system.

Within the automotive community, the vacuum advance was looked at to a certain extent as a mystery; it was almost thought unnecessary for the engine to run fine. One could make a convincing argument that it was the internal-combustion-engine equivalent of a person's appendix or tonsils. "Who knows why it is there?" some undoubtedly thought. "If it becomes a problem, just get rid of it."

THE NEED TO ADVANCE

The reason why a gasoline engine requires the spark timing to be advanced in relation to the piston's position in the

bore has been studied in detail in past installments of Mechanical Marvels. Thus, this primer will include only a cursory overview of the concept.

The basic need for initiating the arc of the spark plug sooner as engine speed increases is rooted in one simple fact: Once combustion has begun, the piston travels faster than the flame spreads across the bore. By the time enough fuel will have been consumed to raise the cylinder pressure, the piston would be past the inflection point. This condition can be improved by arcing the spark plug while the piston is still on its way to top dead center (TDC). Then, the expanding flame will be able to push the piston down in the bore, and the conversion from chemical to mechanical energy is completed.

The amount of "lead," or head start, the flame requires to keep up with the piston is not determined in a single dimension of engine RPM alone. The burn rate of the fuel, the amount of motion or

stirring that the fuel-air mixture experiences in the bore, and—of greatest importance to vacuum advance systems—the volumetric efficiency (V.E.) of the operating state, all contribute to the equation.

Volumetric Efficiency, or how completely a cylinder can fill with a charge, affects the level of turbulence within the bore. The higher the V.E., the more motion or turbulence is induced and the less head start the spark needs to keep up with the piston, since the flame expands at a higher velocity under such conditions.

The problem Detroit faced was how to induce this desirable state, especially in light of the fact that V.E. cannot be accurately determined by engine speed alone. For example, an engine can be at 2,000 RPM in neutral; under light load in first gear, pulling onto a street; under high load in top gear; and under minimal load when coasting down a hill.

ENGINE VACUUM AS A BAROMETER

If the ignition lead is not advanced from that which is achieved through mechanical means, fuel economy will suffer. The ignition timing must be advanced sufficiently to compensate for the reduced

V.E. and the inherent slow burn rate of the charge.

There are two systems by which spark timing can be controlled and engine efficiency can be maximized. “Speed-sensitive advance” is a mechanical or centrifugal advance system consisting of weights that work to move the distributor cam ahead of rotation.

In contrast, a “load-sensing” system relies on vacuum to advance the distributor, and this system became the more common one over time.

Engine vacuum is determined by the size of the throttle opening and engine speed, and is therefore an excellent metric for load. The higher the engine load, the less vacuum will be present in the intake manifold. Especially useful under part-throttle cruising conditions, a vacuum advance system satisfies the needs of the engine under various loads, independent of speed.

In the middle to late 1970s, when different emission control strategies were being experimented with, designs that fed vacuum to the canister via full-time engine vacuum and through a thermal switch were tried. However, the most

common modern vacuum advance (1950s and up) was mounted directly to the distributor housing and is comprised of a vacuum or depression chamber that is sealed by a flexible diaphragm that is spring-loaded in opposition to the manifold depression acting on it.

The vacuum side of the diaphragm does not actually communicate directly with the intake manifold, but is connected, in most applications, to a ported or timed vacuum source at the base of the carburetor, while the other side of the diaphragm is vented to the atmosphere and connected to the distributor breaker plate with an arm or link.

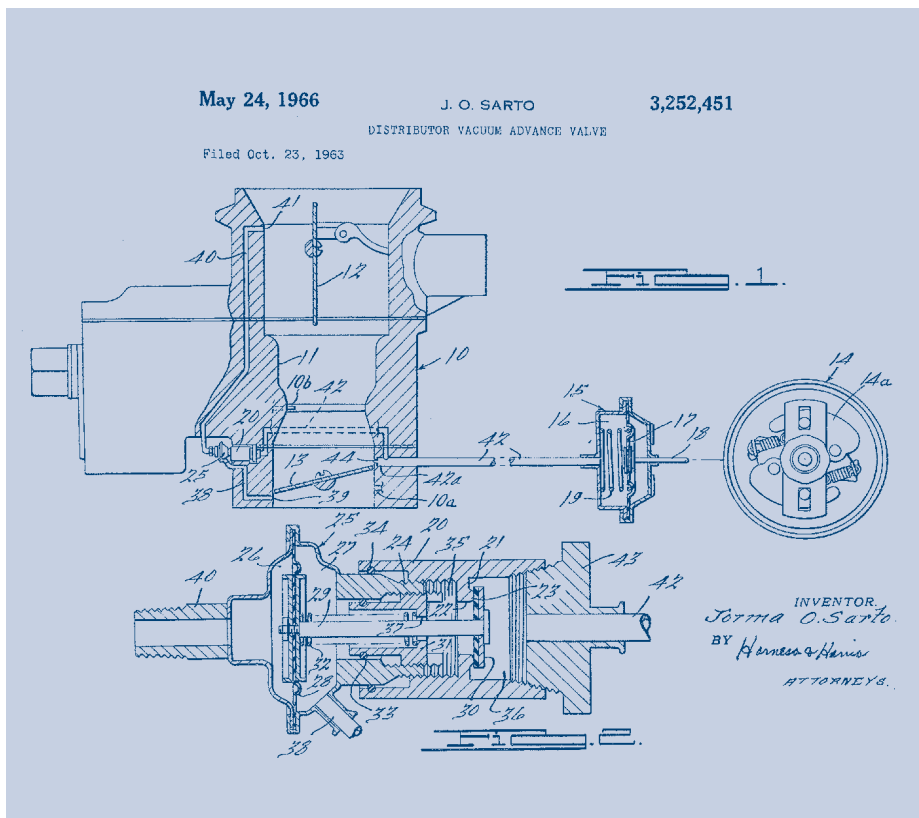
As the intake manifold depression increases, the pressure acting on the other side of the diaphragm forces it to move in opposition to the control spring. The resulting linear motion of the diaphragm is then converted into one of rotation at the distributor breaker plate. This results in the movement of the breaker plate and thus, the breaker-point rubbing block in relation to the cam that is used to open and close the points.

Under high-vacuum conditions, the timing can be advanced over and above the total of the base setting (position of the distributor) and the mechanical advance. Just as important, under full acceleration or power demand, when V.E. and piston speed are higher, the vacuum system is negated, thus making it passive in operation. This response is logical, since it automatically reduces the amount of advance, as the burn speed is improved due to conditions in the cylinder bore.

Varied by application-specific needs, most if not all vacuum advance systems can influence the timing by 15 distributor cam degrees. This translates into double that figure on the crankshaft, or the ability to advance the timing 30 degrees (as seen with a timing light).

A good many vacuum advance canisters offered a means for adjustment, but few mechanics knew about them. This adjustability was especially common on Chrysler products. It allowed an amount of additional advance to be tuned via an Allen wrench through the vacuum hose nipple connection on the canister. The adjustment, depending on design, was traditionally not a total-travel setting, but was instead used to alter the amount of advance for the engine vacuum produced.

For example, it would allow the alteration (either more aggressive or passive) of the timing at a given load. If the engine



The earliest vacuum advance systems employed a timed vacuum signal from the carburetor, originating from above the throttle plate, as seen in this illustration. Some later engines used full-time vacuum (below the throttle plate) during the peak of the emission-control era.

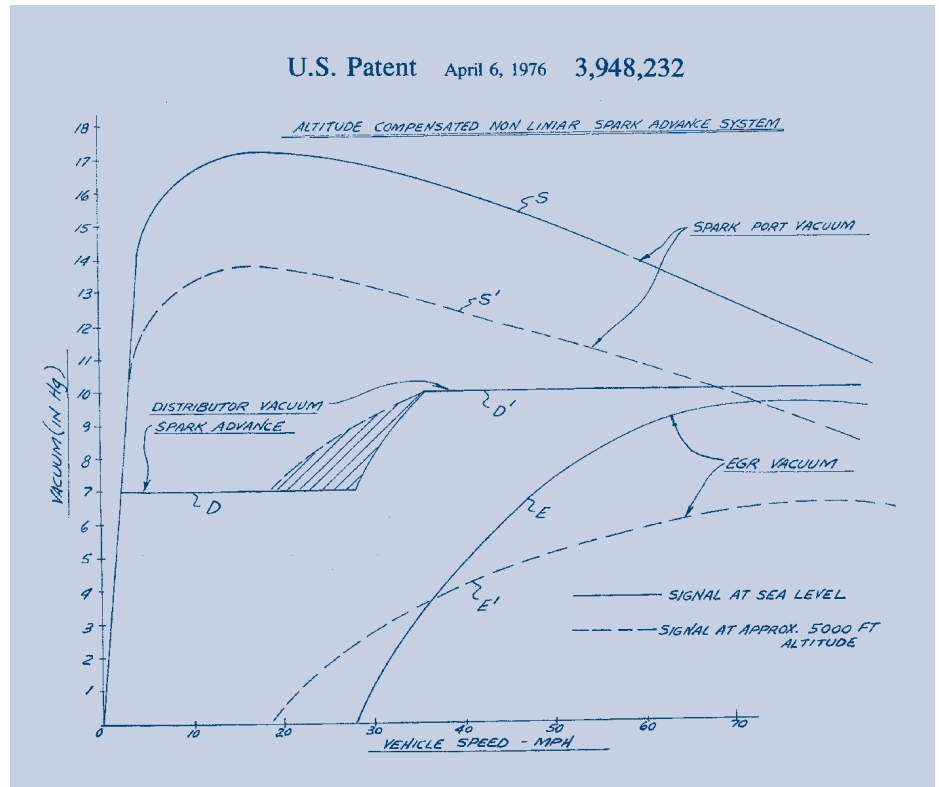
had a part-throttle, light-load pinging concern, then the knowledgeable mechanic would confirm at what load it was occurring and then tweak the setting to change the curve created by the movement of the breaker plate. Since this adjustability was often not known, many mechanics simply disconnected the hose to the vacuum advance, negating it completely and incidentally curing the pinging.

CHECKING A VACUUM ADVANCE UNIT

To properly confirm the operation of the vacuum diaphragm, all that is required is a timing light and a handheld vacuum pump. If the engine does not have a degreed balancer or timing plate with a good deal of resolution, then a timing light with an advance or adjustment feature is necessary.

With the engine turned off and the distributor cap removed and, if necessary, the distributor rotor removed, connect the handheld vacuum pump to the advance canister. Create vacuum by operating the pump, while watching for movement of the breaker assembly. The diaphragm should be able to hold vacuum, and the breaker plate should rotate freely when the vacuum signal is supplied and then removed. Such a result confirms the integrity of the canister and that the breaker plate is not frozen in place, or binding. Once movement and integrity is confirmed, the next step is to plot the curve.

With the engine running at idle, and the timing light and vacuum pump in



Fuel economy and emission standards forced the use of exhaust gas recirculation (EGR). This required a more sophisticated vacuum advance system that compensated for the reduction in V.E. caused by altitude changes and EGR being fed to the cylinder.

place, begin applying a signal in defined incremental steps such as 0 inches Hg, 2 inches Hg, 5 inches Hg, and so on. At each incremental point, chart the amount of advance issued by the vacuum unit. Do this until the unit runs out of resolution; this is the maximum amount of advance it is capable of.

If the vacuum canister is adjustable, you can now alter the setting and repeat the test so that you can determine the influence that each turn of the calibration screw has on the amount of timing.

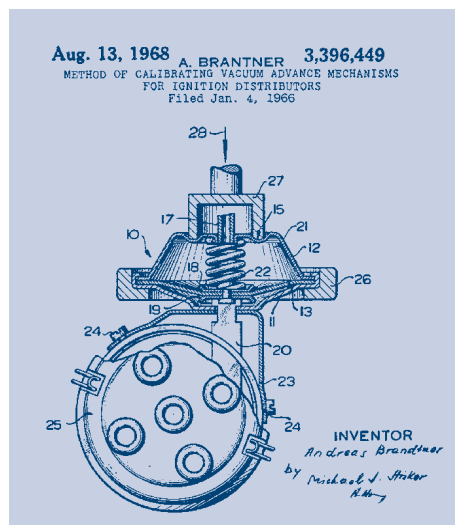
Now, with a vacuum gauge attached to engine vacuum, such as the intake manifold, and the vacuum advance canister connected as intended by the factory, take the car for a ride. If the engine seems lazy or begins to ping at a certain operating state—say, a light pinging is heard at 2,000 RPM and 10 inches Hg—note that load with the vacuum gauge. When back at the garage you can reference your notes to see how much advance the canister is issuing at that signal. With the engine at idle, tweak the adjustment and confirm the change with the timing light. You may want to take 2 degrees of advance out of the vacuum unit and then road test it. If the condition

no longer exists, then you have found the optimal setting.

Often, a novice will alter the position of the distributor (static timing) to cure a condition such as the example stated above. This is the wrong approach, since the entire ignition curve is being changed to tune out a ping induced from too aggressive a vacuum unit. The result is an engine that may no longer ping at light load, but is down on power, throttle response and fuel economy throughout the operating range. In essence, that novice just negated the entire premise of a vacuum advance unit.

As Detroit technology progressed, both the vacuum and mechanical advance units were replaced by electronic controls, but the basic premise remained the same. Engine RPM via a crankshaft or a distributor sensor was still used to determine total timing. A vacuum or manifold absolute pressure sensor was employed to create the part-throttle advance curve. The simple vacuum advance canister still lives on, now part of an advanced electronic control with a complex algorithm.

As with most things in life, things were much simpler back in the old days. 🏎️



The tuneable vacuum advance is adjusted for optimal performance by inserting an Allen wrench into the vacuum nipple. This allowed the rate of advance to be tailored to the engine and operating conditions.

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Lee Runk

Management Trainee

Chrysler Corporation, Dodge Main, 1962-1988

I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN THAT MY three-month assignment as a management trainee at Chrysler's Dodge Main plant would be an unusual one, when Tom Kowalsky, the Labor Relations supervisor, interrupted my orientation to ask if I had visited the Ford Rotunda building during my short time in Detroit. I answered in the negative, and he responded: "Well, you better get your ass over there because it's burning down!"

It was November 9, 1962, the day that a roof repair at the iconic Rotunda building went terribly wrong, and it burned to the ground in just two hours.

I was just a snot-nosed 22-year-old then, and Dodge Main was a sprawling complex of dozens of big and small buildings, elevated crosswalks, basements and tunnels. At its peak, Dodge Main had employed 40,000 people, but still in 1962, 14,000 people assembled 104 cars per hour on two separate assembly lines, making Dodge Main one of the world's highest-capacity assembly plants.

My assignment was in Labor Relations, but relations with the union were tense enough that there was reluctance to add me, as a new element, to the bargaining chemistry. I was asked to sit in a seldom-used little meeting room, which was hardly the size of a closet, and to wait further orders. None came. After a couple days of total isolation, I began to walk the assembly line. I would start on the eighth floor, where stampings were welded into completed car bodies, and follow production, floor by floor, down to final trim and inspection.

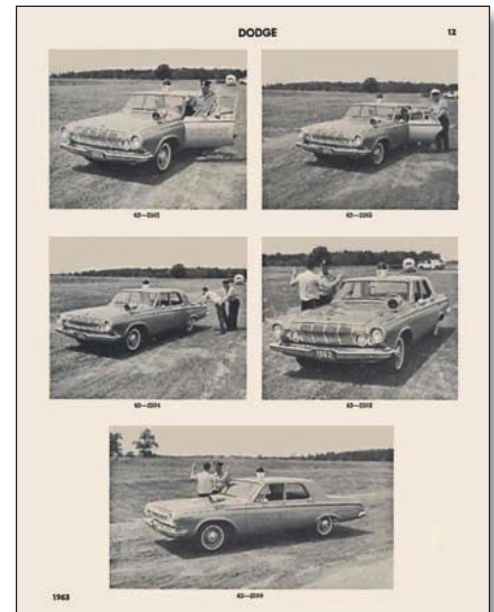
Every few days, I would stop to see Kowalsky and tell him I was going nuts from inactivity and could he please find me something to do. Finally, my big break came. Kowalsky sent me to the sixth floor of the Manufacturing Building for an important assignment. This was the Cut and Sew department where hundreds of women on hundreds of sewing machines stitched together seat covers.

Apparently, there was a restriction on formal time studies. I was issued a yellow lined pad and a pencil and assigned to a nice middle-aged sewer named Stella. I was told to never look at my watch except



to note the day's overall start and finish time. From that point, my assignment was to record a single hash mark for every seat cover she completed. That was it. So every fourteen or fifteen minutes, I would poise my pencil and make a mark. I was more bored than Stella, so after a few hours we struck up a conversation and chatted for the next two days as I recorded 54 hash marks. I described Stella to the coordinator as a good, steady worker. But when I approached Stella on the third day I knew something was wrong. She glared at me and wouldn't even say hello. I sought out Kowalsky and asked what they had done to Stella. "Well, you said she was working pretty steady, so we raised her quota by 20 percent." The resulting uproar put an end to my first taste of industrial action. Soon, it was back to the isolation booth, along with more trips to follow the assembly line, that time, in greater detail, plus pestering Kowalsky to please find me something to do.


After several weeks, Kowalsky sought me out for a "very important assignment." I was sent to the Police Car Make Ready building, a one-story affair where about 15 cars were moved from station to station and fitted with police radios, lights, sirens, door and hood decals, etc. Apparently, the city of Sacramento, where these cars were destined, required that as the last operation a "Certified Manage-



ment Representative" punch the last two digits on each vehicle's data plate. Since the foreman of the area had his hands full chasing parts and problems, he had appealed for help for this challenging task. My job consisted of punching these sequential digits every twenty minutes or so, signifying successful completion of the car. Again, tedium set in, and I spent time observing the fitment process, always ready to stamp the key digits when the police car was judged to be complete. Then disaster struck!

I had successfully stamped number 14 and then number 15; I wandered around rehearsing number 16 over and over. When the next car was completed and my big moment came, I got ahead of myself and carefully stamped it number 17. Chaos ensued. I thought of the old limerick:

*There was a young man from France
Who waited ten years for his chance
...he muffed it... 🐞*

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TAPPET TREATMENT

Q: I have a 1965 Ford Falcon with a 289-cu.in. V-8 that has a couple of noisy lifters that quiet down after a mile or so of driving. However, they sporadically run noisy/quiet. No pattern. The noise just comes and goes. There's also some smoke on start-up—left bank only. If I go in and replace the lifters, rockers, pushrods, what about the camshaft? The noisy/quiet thing is getting on my nerves.

Jerry Collard
Aurora, Colorado

A: Replacing the lifters without replacing the camshaft is a bad idea. There are a couple of things you could try, however, before installing a new camshaft, lifters, and timing chain. The least invasive is to change your oil and add a product like Marvel Mystery Oil, Sea Foam or a quart of automatic transmission fluid (don't overfill; leave room for the additive). Drive your car a few miles, then change the oil again. The hope is that the additives will act as a solvent and clean your lifters enough to allow them to function correctly.

If you can locate the noisy lifters, it is possible to disassemble them, clean them and reassemble them. Or if necessary, rebuild them using internals from a new lifter. This would allow you to retain your old lifter bodies and keep your current camshaft as well.

The easiest way to find the noisy lifter is to run the engine with the valve covers off. Sometimes by pressing on the rocker arms you can make the noise change, revealing which lifters are making the noise. Alternatively you could tighten the rocker arms slightly, listening for the noise to change. Sometimes a little fiddling with the preload adjustment like this will even cure the noise. An accurate oil pressure gauge might give you some insight as well. Sometimes a sticky check valve in the oil pump will hang open, allowing oil pressure to drop suddenly. Then the valve will close again, restoring oil pressure.

The smoke on startup is probably due to valve seals allowing oil to leak into the cylinders after the engine has been shut off. Though it's less likely your problem, the noise and the smoke on startup could also be indicative of worn valve guides. Usually guides and loose valves that are noisy make a different sound than the tick, tick, tick of a faulty lifter.

SHAKY SHAKEDOWN

Q: A couple of winters ago, my son spotted a 1984 Chevrolet Citation five-door hatchback, four-cylinder with less than 28,000 miles for sale. I had previously owned a 1981 and later an '82 Citation, and thoroughly enjoyed them for their legroom and cargo carrying capacity. After having talked to the owner, I had my son and his buddy go down to Kansas City and tow the vehicle home. By spring, all of the fluids had been changed, along with spark plugs, EGR valve, oxygen sensor and belts. The car ran great except for two persistent problems.

The power steering is extremely stiff when turning right until the engine is fully warmed up by driving a few blocks or by letting it idle long enough in the garage. Obviously this problem might be solved by a power flush, or I could just replace the rack-and-pinion unit with a new one. The more perplexing problem is that the car vibrates badly when in drive or reverse at idle and when being held at a stop using the brake. The steering wheel vibrates rather violently until you accelerate down the street. Once moving, things are seemingly vibration-free. We replaced the original engine mounts, including the upper one. All that work did not solve a thing, so I am hoping you might have a possible solution to this under-load vibration issue.

Harley Goff
Mankato, Minnesota

A: To address the steering issue, replace the rack, and be sure to flush the system so that any metal particles from the old rack don't harm the new one.

The vibration could be a rough idle due to an issue with the EGR. It's possible that the new aftermarket EGR you installed is faulty or, if so equipped, the solenoid that controls vacuum to the EGR is no longer working. You didn't mention whether the car has power brakes or not, but sometimes a rough idle will occur when braking when there's a problem with the brake booster. Try plugging off or crimping the hose to the booster and seeing if the rough idle goes away.

You might also want to perform a compression check. It's possible with such an old car that has seen so little use, that the rings in one of the cylinders could be stuck or that the valves in one or more of the cylinders are sticking or not seating

properly. At low RPM, such as when the engine is under a load, the problem would cause it to labor and shake. (These engines weren't known for being particularly smooth to begin with.) I would also check all of the rubber vacuum lines and intake boots for cracks. Finally, check that the engine cradle-to-body mounts are tight and in good condition.

STALLING STAR CHIEF

Q: My 1956 Pontiac Star Chief Catalina starts very well when cold or when hot if the stops are for short periods. However, when hot and sitting for a period of time, it will start and then stall when given the throttle. Eventually, by pumping the gas pedal, it will start and, after about three attempts, it will clear and be fine. I have installed an electric fuel pump, but the issue remains.

Allan Bixby
Via email

A: When your car sits after it has been run, underhood temperatures actually rise. So, the problem could be vapor lock, where the fuel vaporizes before it reaches the carburetor causing it to stall. But, because you used the term "clear out," it makes me think that it could be fuel percolation where the fuel is boiling out of the bowl, out the nozzle and into the intake manifold.

First, make sure that something isn't causing your engine temperature to spike, like a faulty thermostat or a sticking manifold heat riser. (Do you have an accurate engine temperature gauge installed on the car? If not, then you need one). Then, be sure that the fuel line isn't touching any engine heat sources. A heat shield or a spacer beneath the carburetor could also help.

You might want to alter the way you start the engine when it's hot. Instead of pumping the accelerator, try starting the engine by just turning the key. If the fuel is percolating and you pump the accelerator pedal, you are richening the mixture, causing the engine to load up and quit. Also, make sure that when the engine is hot, the choke plate is completely open so that you're not richening the mixture further.



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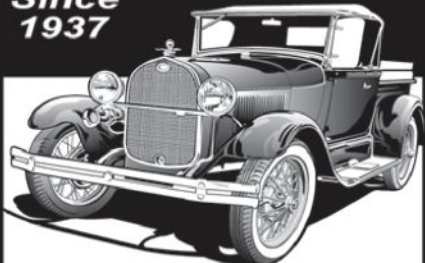
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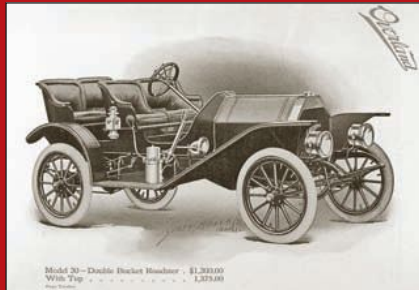
THE DODGE BROTHERS, suppliers of parts for the Ford Motor Company, make plans to build a new production facility in Hamtramck, Michigan.



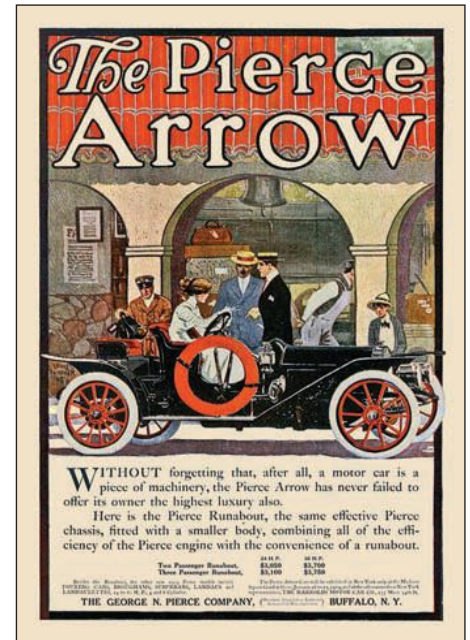
THE TRANSCONTINENTAL CAR RACE from New York to Seattle ends with Henry Ford's Model T taking first place. The race takes 22 days and 55 minutes, with an average speed of 7.75 MPH.

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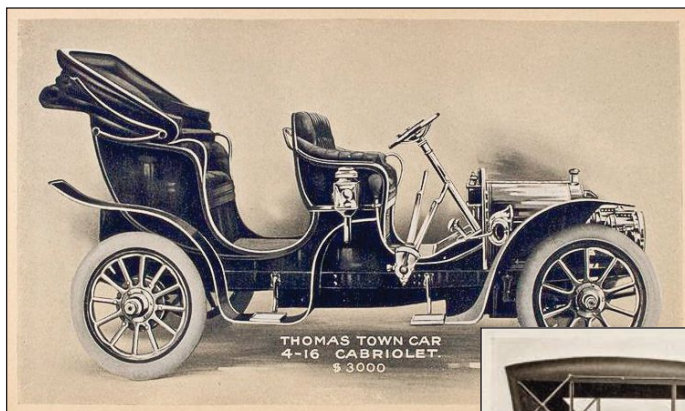
- New house – \$4,000
- Annual income – \$544
- One gallon of gas – \$0.06
- New car – \$1,150
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- Cigarettes – \$0.15 pk/10
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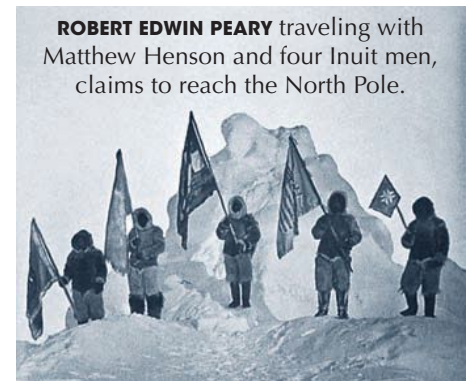
OVERLAND'S LINEUP INCREASES TO FOUR DIFFERENT MODELS, running from the Model 30 Roadster to the Model 34 six-cylinder roadster that features 35 hp and a 116-inch wheelbase. The Model 30, 31, 32 and 34 offer a wide variety of body styles and are available starting at \$1,300.

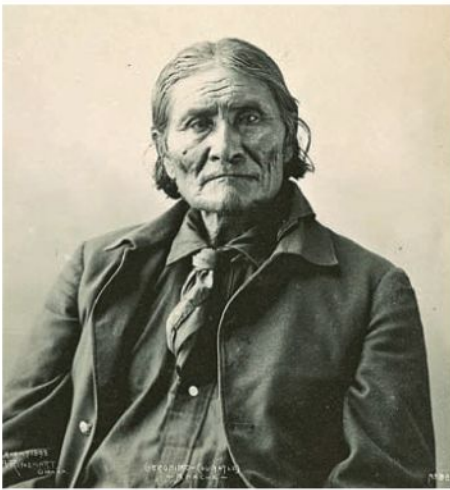


PIERCE-ARROW'S RUNABOUT is now available for the Model 24 and Model 36. The smaller-body Pierce-Arrow starts at \$3,050 for the Model 24, and \$3,700 for the Model 36. The column-shifted three-speed transmission has been replaced with a floor-mounted four-speed for better motoring. In addition, several other body styles and model options are available.



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FAMOUS APACHE LEADER GERONIMO dies from complications of pneumonia, exacerbated by a horse-riding accident at Fort Sill, Oklahoma.



ROScoe "FATTY" ARBUCKLE makes his film debut in the short comedy film *Ben's Kid*.



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FREE CATALOG

My Trusty But Rusty Dodge Dart

"YOU NEED A CAR? I HAVE ONE YOU can take for free. Just come and get it."

It was the summer of 1986, and I needed wheels. Our 1978 Chevrolet Monza had been totaled the previous winter, and our '73 Caprice Estate was irreparable. My poor wife was forced to push a baby carriage—our two kids inside—several blocks to the nearest supermarket, while I rode the Metro Bus to my job in downtown Buffalo.

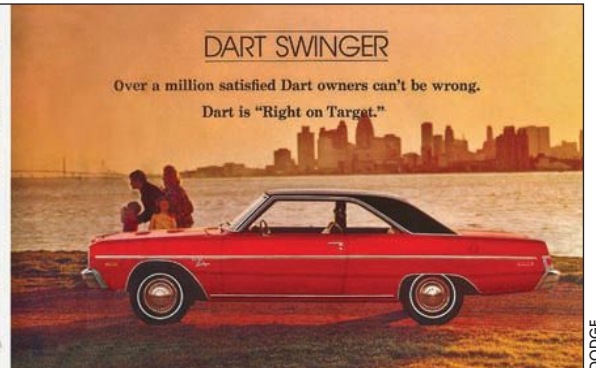
Then, a friend of the family heard of our plight and offered a tempting solution: a 1975 Dodge Dart Swinger. For free! And it ran! I couldn't pass it up.

Sadly, the car turned out to be more "temporary" than "tempting." In short order, I realized that I was doing *him* a favor, not the other way around.

Anyone who has lived in Western New York can guess what kind of shape the Dart was in when I took it away. In the 1970s, our cars disintegrated apace due to heavily salted winter roads, our generous tax dollars making us more safe in the short term, more unsafe in the long.

Chrysler products of the day seemed especially susceptible. Someone—my brother, perhaps?—coined the term "Mopar Rot" to describe it, and he helpfully painted it on the side of his own Dodge Dart, with arrows highlighting areas of concern. Furthermore, not long before my one swingin' week with the Swinger, I'd seen an early '70s Duster on a lift. Its rusted-out floor had been replaced with a street sign. Look up and you'd read "Speed Limit 25." Wise advice.

An aside: Our Caprice had also provided a handy lesson in rusted floors. I often enjoyed barreling through deep puddles along the roads, and Buffalo's reputation for precipitation is well-deserved. One day, while driving to the in-laws, I was complaining to my wife. She had just put a run in another new pair of stockings; in fact, she'd probably caught them on some rust while entering the car. As I pontificated about the high cost of hosiery, about being more careful, about money not growing on trees, etc., I spied a particularly large puddle. I deftly turned our boat into the wash—and got sprayed in the face with gritty puddle water. "Next



time, make sure you glub glug gurgle!" The water shot right up from somewhere between my feet, and hit me square in the aviators. My wife looked like God had just answered her prayers.

So, yeah. Buffalo. Somewhat damp; rusty cars. And 11 Buffalo winters had taken their toll on the Swinger. The fenders were practically flapping in the breeze. You could kick 'em for a humorous display of falling rust. One day, I tried buckling a baby seat into the back, but the seat belts were stiff and unyielding. Through my determination to be "safe," sort of, I managed to yank both belts out of the floor, anchors and all.

The car had other anomalies: no parking gear, for instance, which made parking it—and finding it later—a bit of an adventure. Oh, and the brakes were somewhat seized-up. You couldn't get going without first driving it in reverse for a short distance, to heat up and expand the calipers.

I suppose any one of these issues should have failed my Dart in a state inspection, but it was the brake problem that clinched the deal. I managed to get one good weekend out of the car; then duty called and I drove it to a shop for examination.

Unfortunately, I'd arrived a little too early in the morning. I parked at one of the unopened garage doors and waited nervously for the proprietor—we knew him as "Bucky"—to arrive. He had the fiery eyes of Dennis Hopper, and he would steam and fester and rub his face with intimidating, grimy hands, castigating car owners who didn't lubricate their vehicles on a regular basis. So as I waited, I knew I was in for trouble.

Finally, the wrench-wielding curmudgeon meandered in and opened the garage door. And then I remembered—too late—that the brakes would likely have seized by then.

"Pull it in," he impatiently grumped. I fired up the Slant Six (the one part of the car that still worked properly), put it in gear, stepped on the gas, and... the car groaned a bit, but there was no forward movement.

"Uh, it won't go unless I back it up for a bit to heat up the brakes."

"Get out," he thundered.

I gingerly got out and stepped away from the vehicle. He climbed in, slammed the car into reverse, did several angry doughnuts in the parking lot with one leg hanging out the driver's door, then hustled the car into the service bay, stopping it with a jerk and a chirp of its bias-ply tires.

An over-the-phone deal between Bucky and my father-in-law netted me a replacement vehicle from Bucky's lot—a 1976 Chrysler Cordoba, only \$200. Another rusty Mopar, yes, but a step up from the Dart, even if it did lack rich Corinthian leather. (In place of the leather, it had some kind of plain black cloth interior, which smelled like someone had downed one too many Coronas and barfed on it.)

This was not the end of the Dart, though. I had a friend who competed in Enduro races. He was happy to take it off my hands and, um, "compete" with it. Yes, we really were quite young back then!

I wish I had been there for its one and only run. My friend told me afterwards that the Dart ran a lap or two, got nudged, and collapsed like a house of cards. 🍀

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A Job Well Done

Dodge's 1939-'47 light trucks hauled the Ram brand through WWII



BY MIKE McNESSOR • PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF KOCH

Dodge rolled out its striking new “Job Rated” truck design for 1939, featuring streamlined styling and an all-steel cab with a two-piece windshield that could be opened at the turn of a crank for increased ventilation — heady stuff for prewar pickups.

This was a significant truck in the history of the Ram brand as it would haul the company through WWII and emerge ready for the postwar-era surge in light truck demand, boasting improvements forged and tested on the battlefield.

Dodge's 1939-'47 light trucks were offered in 1/2-, 3/4-, and one-ton varieties throughout the production run, but the nomenclature changed a little from year to year. The Job Rated trucks had stronger frames than previous Dodges because they used steel with a higher

tensile strength. In addition, the rails extended further forward past the engine than earlier trucks and Job Rated rigs used beefy channel-type bumpers that helped to tie the frame rails together. A variety of wheelbases gave buyers greater options to suit their hauling needs: The 1/2-ton rode on a 116-inch wheelbase, the 3/4-ton on a 120-inch wheelbase and the one-ton was available with a 120- or 133-inch wheelbase.

There were three flathead sixes used in Dodge's light trucks throughout the Job

Rated Era. A 201.3-cu.in. engine initially rated at 70hp (82.5hp in 1941) was standard issue in half-ton trucks. Three-quarter and one-ton trucks used a 217.76-cu.in. engine from 1939-'41, rated at 77hp, then at 82hp and at 85hp in 1941. From 1942-'47, 1/2- and 3/4-ton trucks were equipped with the 217.76-cu.in. engine, while one-ton trucks stepped up to the 230.2-cu.in., 102hp six-cylinder. A three-speed manual was standard issue, while a four-speed with a compound first gear was an option. Oil filters and oil-bath air



A Carter BB downdraft carburetor trickles fuel to the 228-cu.in. L-head six-cylinder used in this Canada-built truck. U.S.-built light trucks were equipped with a 230-cu.in. straight-six. Heavy duty oil-bath air cleaner was used on Dodge trucks following WWII battlefield torture testing.

cleaners were options on Dodge trucks, as were heavy-duty generators.

Year-to-year changes on Job Rated trucks were fairly minimal. They all had a center cowl vent for increased ventilation, though vent windows in the doors wouldn't appear until 1946. The 1939 truck had a unique front-end/grille treatment that was changed in 1940. Also in 1940, Dodge trucks began using sealed-beam headlamps and were equipped with marker lights mounted on the headlamp housing. Half-ton trucks that year adopted the safety-oriented system of using left- and right-hand thread lug nuts on opposite sides of the truck.

Mechanically, the trucks are all very similar, with leaf springs at all four corners and solid axles front and rear. After WWII, there were some changes made to production truck chassis parts due to reliability issues that cropped up during military service. For instance, the 1946-

'47 trucks were equipped with housing vents on live axles—a spring-loaded valve in the vent could automatically reduce pressure when it built up inside the axle. This helped reduce seal leakage and failure. Stronger differentials and larger axle shafts were also used in postwar trucks, and steering boxes were beefed up and made heavier.

This month's feature truck was brought to its show-worthy condition by Paul Christensen of Thousand Oaks, California. It is relatively unusual, as it's one of about 2,000 Canadian Dodge one-ton trucks and one of about 850 DD series trucks built in the Windsor, Ontario, plant (there were about 4,000 built in Detroit) for the 1942 model year. It's worth noting that 1939-'47 Dodge trucks of any stripe are not difficult to find, and restoring one of these trucks isn't terribly complicated, as the parts supply remains abundant. Dodge light trucks were used extensively by the

military during WWII, so many spare parts were purchased by the government and later sold off as surplus. These trucks also have some components in common with Dodge cars, which further bolsters the parts supply stream.

While this truck is a Canadian-made DD2-33, it is virtually identical to the American WD21, long-wheelbase one-ton. One of the minor differences is the size of the engine. The Canadian trucks used a 228-cu.in. engine, while American trucks used a 230-cu.in. engine. Both are flathead six-cylinders and use the same transmission bolt pattern, though the block sizes are physically different.

The Dodge belonged to Paul's grandfather and was growing roots on the family farm in Alberta, Canada, until 1989 when Paul drove the one-owner rig back to Salt Lake City, Utah, with his wife and son following in the family's Ford Crown Victoria.



A three-speed transmission was standard, but this long-wheelbase one-ton was equipped with a rugged non-synchromesh four-speed. Spartan dash includes optimistic 80mph speedometer flanked by gauges for engine temperature, oil pressure, fuel level and amps.



It would be rare to drive a rolling pre-WWII-vintage heirloom 600-plus miles without incident, and Paul's trip had its exhilarating moments.

"We had left the [Canada-U.S.] border crossing near Cut Bank, Montana, and when I stepped on the brakes, there weren't any."

After rolling precariously through an intersection using the handbrake lever (connected to a driveshaft-mounted brake) to bring the Dodge to a halt, Paul regrouped and got the truck to a muffler shop. There, he could see that the brake line had popped off the master cylinder, allowing the fluid to pump out. It was a fairly easy fix, and soon the Dodge was rolling again. Now, if only he'd remembered to release the emergency brake afterward....

"I left the handbrake on, and it caught on fire," Paul said. "Luckily, we were able to put it out with a fire extinguisher."

Then, about an hour from Salt Lake City, there was a run-in with a Utah Highway Patrol officer.

"He pulled me over because I'd lost [power to] the taillights," Paul said. "He sent me to a convenience store and told me to get a flashlight and tape it on the back."

As you've probably gathered, this road trip story has a happy ending. Paul made it to his parents' house in Salt Lake City and had the truck shipped to his place in Southern California.

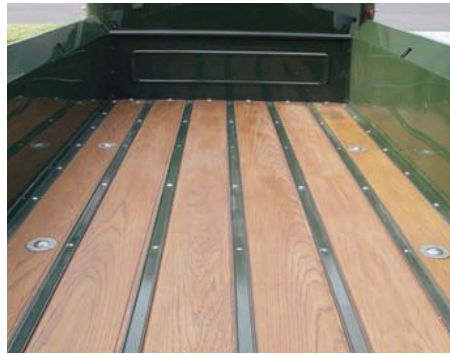
Once home, Paul disassembled the

truck and restored it to its current condition. As the truck had been used primarily around the farm, it wasn't rusted, but it was dented and scraped. The tailgate was missing, as were the decorative rear hubcaps.

"It was a two-year process," he said. "It was missing the tailgate and missing the rear hubcaps. Other than that, everything was there. There was no rust at all. In Alberta, they don't use salt, and it's pretty dry. Most of the dings and dents were from combines backing into it while it sat in the barn."

Paul completely rebuilt the truck's engine and its accessories, but left the non-synchromesh four-speed transmission and the 4.30:1 rear axle alone. The truck's springs are original, but the bushings were replaced, as were the front kingpins and pitman arm. The original steering box was in good shape and returned to duty with just an adjustment.

When all of the dents had been worked out, the truck was painted by a local body shop in green and black acrylic lacquer. 🏠



Flawless finishes on the wood floor and bed sides of this 9-foot box mean it's officially retired from rough farm work.



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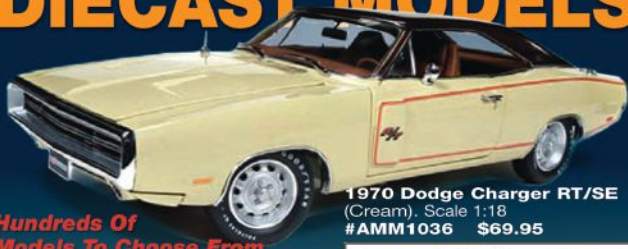
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2014 FALL SHOWDOWN



Northbound from Winston-Salem

McLean Trucking hauled heavy into the Northeast



BY JIM DONNELLY

IMAGES COURTESY OF THE JOHN MASON COLLECTION, INTERPRETED BY FRED GRUIN JR.



Even after President Dwight Eisenhower had decreed its formation, the Interstate system wasn't fully completed

for decades. Until then, America largely moved on two-lane roads that were transitioning from macadam to blacktop. If you were a Southern trucker, or hauled for a freight line based in Dixie, you knew the way up north: U.S. 17, the original Dixie Highway laid out by Carl Graham Fisher, U.S. 220, U.S. 301, and the big kahuna, U.S. 1. Any number of drawling drivers could run 'em blindfolded. To avoid New Jersey Turnpike tolls, rigs trailing exhaust plumes geared their way across the roads of central and southern New Jersey. The destinations were often the warehouse and port districts of the New York City metro area.

The roll call of trucking outfits reads like a roster of fallen flags from the South. Back in the 1950s, they included Akers, Carolina, Johnson and Pilot. You could make a claim, though, that at the top of the heap stood the scarlet tractors and aluminum trailers of McLean Trucking, out of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, the conglomeration founded by Malcom McLean (see *HCC Pioneers #121*), a visionary who

amalgamated a bunch of smaller trucking firms into a big one, applied his name to it, and later invented the modern cargo container. By the early 1950s, when Fred Gruin Jr. began taking these photographs, McLean was a huge player on the East Coast freight scene, sending more than 3,500 trucks on the road.

However inadvertently, Fred became a pioneering photojournalist of

trucking history. The lead photo shows a GMC-pulled McLean rig alongside an early 1950s Chrysler as they both exit the George Washington Bridge and enter U.S. 46 in Fort Lee, New Jersey. Fred said that truck was typical of a mid-1950s McLean lashup—a gasoline-fueled GMC tractor with a simple box trailer, maybe 40 feet—heading south from New York with any cargo it could take on for delivery in Dixie.

Fred spent a lot of time with his childhood (and current) friend, John Mason, whose father was an executive with Chase Manhattan handling transportation accounts, including both McLean and Johnson plus the Western Maryland and several other railroads. "I think that as a result of all this, John was a McLean fan. My father worked for *Time* magazine, and we'd drive down to the bridge from our home in West Nyack, New York, and he'd drop us off at the bridge while he took the bus into Manhattan. John and I both had Brownie cameras, and they weren't very good for taking vehicles in motion. We had to wait until the trucks were stopped, so we'd go to the toll booths, the Fort Lee Diner on U.S. 1, or the gas stations nearby."

The accompanying photograph was snapped outside the diner, showing a McLean GMC with added-on sleeper box parked alongside a straight-frame Dodge truck, while a Studebaker rolls south on U.S. 1 in the background. The GMC's trailer is lettered for a predecessor outfit. "That company, CMX, was a company McLean owned called Carolina Motor Express, and it was later merged into McLean when the company was being built," Fred explains.

If you were a kid growing up in the early 1960s, or maybe a toy collector today, you may recall that McLean Trucking was immortalized in miniature by Dinky Toys, which introduced a die-cast model of a McLean trailer pulled by a "Cannonball" GMC cabover tractor. They're still around. Fred told us you can expect to pay about \$300 for a mint example if you find one online or in a classified. That reflects McLean's longtime devotion to GMC. As Fred points out, "Johnson typically used Internationals, while Akers usually had Macks. If you wanted to do business with the manufacturers, you had to use their trucks. It was like somebody who wanted to make a delivery to Mack Trucks in Allentown (Pennsylvania) pulling in with a GMC, Mack wouldn't let them in the gate."

As we noted, the southbound McLean fleet generally picked up loads where they could. What were the northbound trucks carrying up to New York? Remember, they were out of the Piedmont regional in North Carolina. The correct answer is cigarettes. Are you surprised? ☞



We enjoy publishing period photos of authentic, old-time working trucks, especially from the people who drove them or owned them. If you have a story and photos to share, email the author at jdannelly@hemmings.com.

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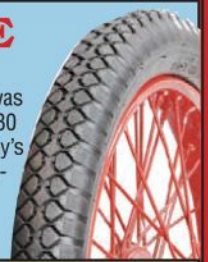
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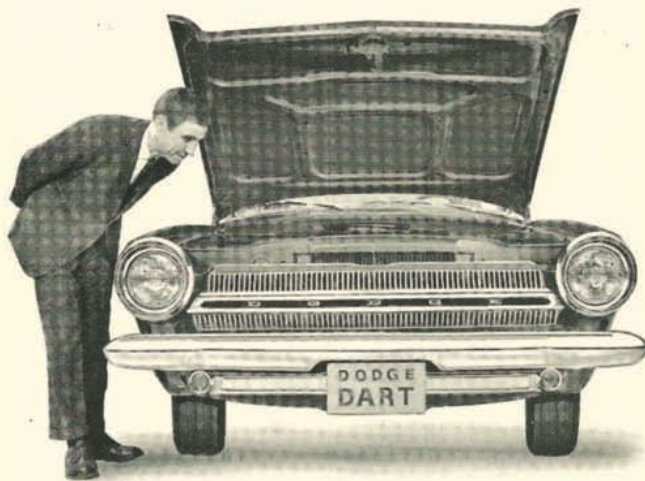


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“The Dodge was outstanding for cars of its era. It had hydraulic brakes, aircraft shock absorbers, and the best engine mount system available...”

jimrichardson

The Green Swamp Rat

My best friend Frank and I finished high school and embarked on careers as dishwashers at the Sierra Junior all-night coffee shop in Bellflower, California. The year was 1960. We both had cars—he a 1949 Ford and me a 1947 Chevrolet—but a customer told us that there was an old car in her mother’s backyard that we could have if we would just go get it.

We knocked on the door and a whiskey voice croaked: “It’s out back.” We went into the backyard and discovered that it was full of weeds five feet tall. We saw no car, so we knocked on the door again.

An elderly lady opened it, took the Pall Mall from her bright red lips and shouted: “Dammit, it’s right there!” pointing at the weeds. And then she slammed the door.

We stumbled through the nettles and came upon a derelict 1937 Dodge D5 four-door. Its tires were flat, and it had been sitting for years. The windows had started to delaminate, but on the plus side, nothing was missing and there was not much rust. The upholstery stank of rat droppings, but it was intact except for a rip along the top of the driver’s seat.

The engine looked complete, but the radiator was full of muck; the oil looked like tar and the gas reeked. We inflated the tires and drained the stale fuel out on the ground, figuring it would help kill the weeds. We then changed the oil and flushed the cooling system.

Then we took the battery out of my Chev and put it into the Dodge. We sloshed a little gas into the carb, and tried the starter. After an almost interminable amount of cranking, the old engine coughed and stuttered to life in a cloud of blue smoke. We were thrilled.

I opened the back gate and jumped in the car. As we eased down the alley, we laughed as the old beast shambled along. Then we got to a cross street and tried to stop. The pedal went to the floor. We rolled across the street and bumped the curb as another car swerved to miss us and its driver proffered a rude gesture.

We managed to get the car to Frank’s parents’ home by creeping along, downshifting, and using the parking brake. After that, we went

to work. We found some recaps, and we cleaned the upholstery with carbon tetrachloride until the smell went away. Then we went over the paint with cutting compound and polished it. The primer showed through in a few places, but it looked respectable.

The engine was shot, so we picked up another from a 1951 Dodge at a junkyard. It boasted 230 cubic inches and made 103 hp, which was 23 more than the original engine offered. That sounds anemic today, but that engine, coupled with the stock 4.10:1 rear end ratio made the car almost swift up to 60 MPH.

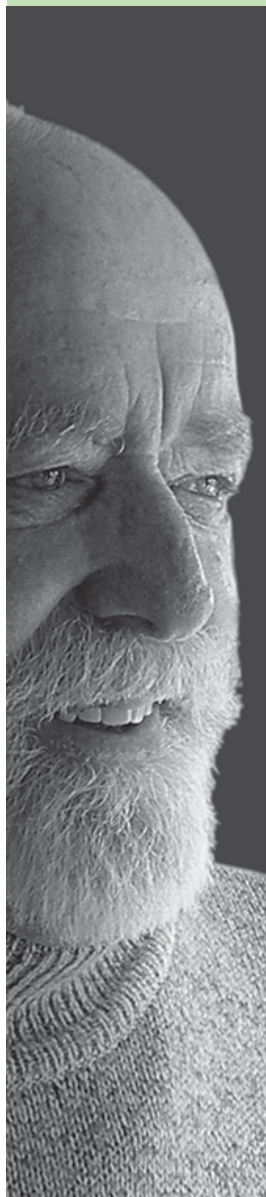
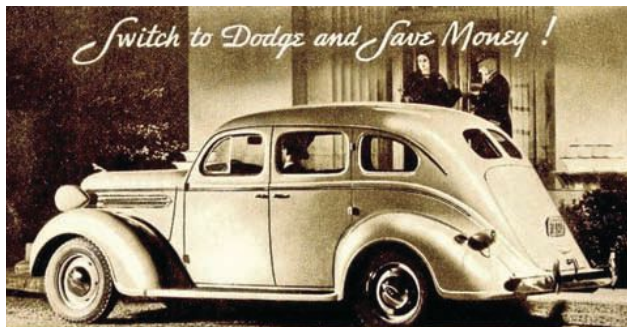
The old D5 Deluxe saw Frank

through college after his Ford self-destructed. My ’47 Chevrolet Fleetline sedan died, too, when a knocking rod took out a chunk of its block. But, of course, the Dodge was a better car than either the Ford or the Chevrolet. It had aluminum pistons, insert bearings, plenty of oil pressure, a good cooling system and an open driveline that was rugged and easy to work on.

The Dodge was outstanding for cars of its era. It had hydraulic brakes, aircraft shock absorbers, and the best engine mount system available, called Floating Power. It was a bit of an ugly duckling, but it was comfortable and roomy inside, which made it great for trips to the drive-in movies. And, best of all, it never let us down. Years later, Frank sold it to a longshoreman in our neighborhood, and it never let him down either.

Sure, we both wanted more glamorous cars in order to wow the fair sex, so after college Frank bought a GTO, and I bought an MGB, but neither of them was the car that 1937 Dodge was. Of course, it didn’t help that Frank was a regular at Lions Drag Strip with his GTO, and I often gave my MG a damned good thrashing through Big Sur. But neither of those cars was a trouble-free loyal servant like the old D5 sedan.

These days, I’m past driving the stuffing out of cars, and I long for another comfortable, durable Dodge. That’s what the Dodge brothers set out to build in 1914, and that is how Dodges remained through the golden era. Not only were they well engineered, but they were beautiful to look at, unlike our 1937 model that we called *The Green Swamp Rat*. 🐉



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