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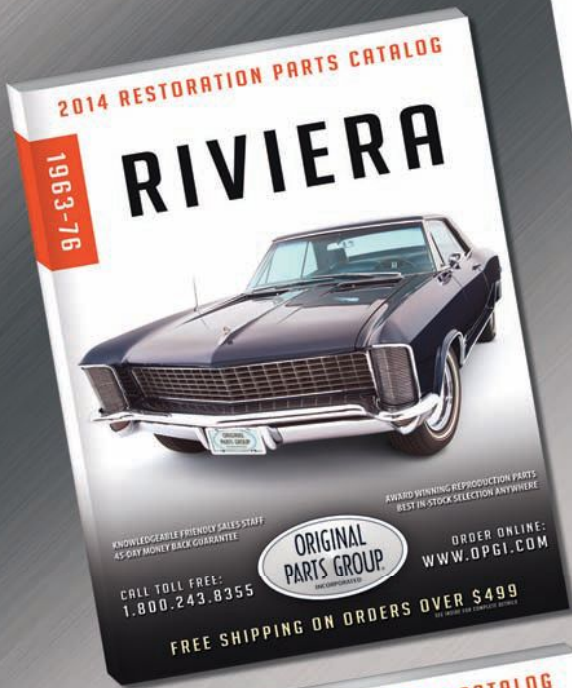
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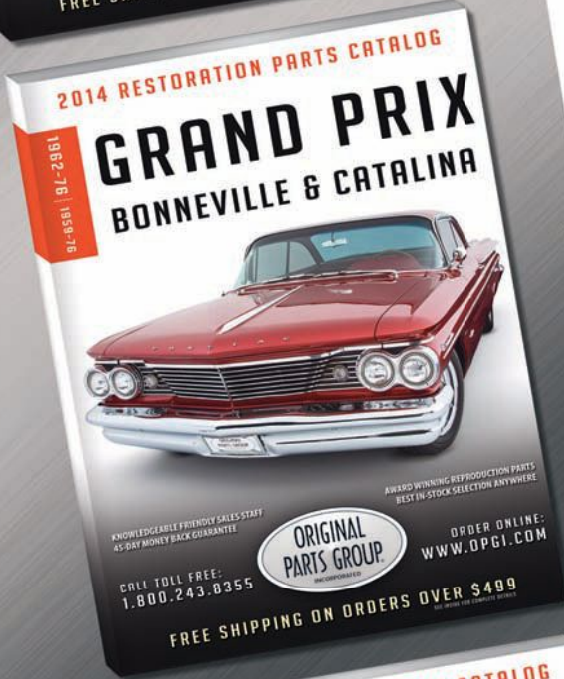
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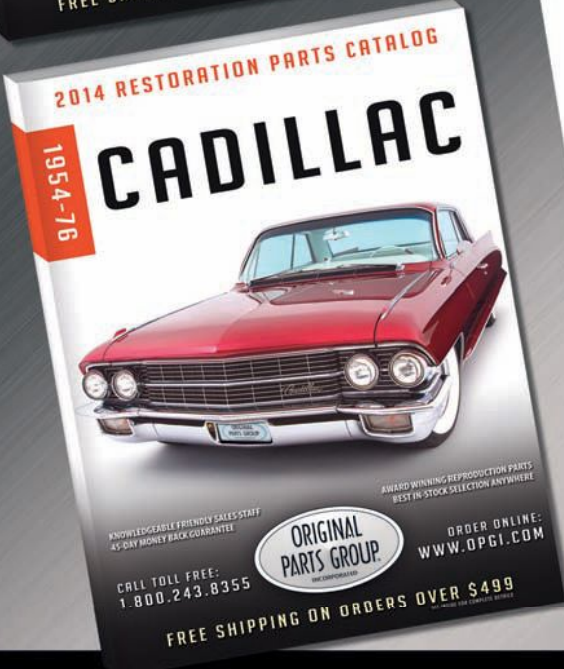
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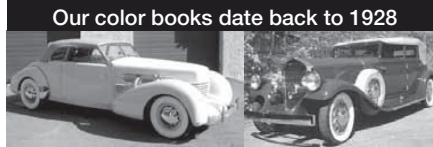
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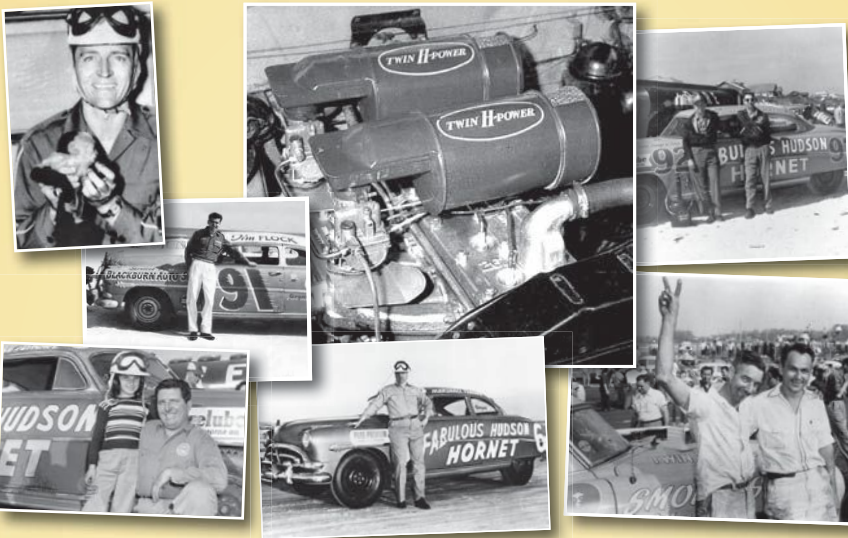
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richardlentinello

100 Years of Dodge

You have to believe that when John and Horace Dodge started building automobiles back in 1914, even they didn't think that 100 years later, new cars would still be built under their family's nameplate. It has been a remarkable achievement, with Dodge quickly becoming an integral part of America's automotive landscape.

Prior to setting up their own automobile company, the Dodge brothers operated a machine shop producing a variety of components for several automobile manufacturers, including transmissions for Oldsmobile and other significant parts such as axles, crankcases and steering components for many other auto producers. However, the shop's biggest client soon became Ford. The Dodge brothers produced Ford's engines, and even owned a minority share of the Ford Motor Company. Like many others, John and Horace didn't get along very well with old man Henry, thus they set out on their own. And the rest, as they say, is history.

Although I've never owned a Dodge, there have been several models at the top of my wish list ever since I was a kid. My favorite Dodge is the 1968 Charger, which I've always considered to be one of the best-designed automobiles of all time. Its shape and lines are positively captivating. Other favorites include the 1967 and 1970 Coronet R/T, 1960 Polara four-door hardtop, 1956 Royal Lancer hardtop, 1961 Dart or Polara hardtop, 1959 Sierra station wagon, and the quirky-looking 1960-'62 Lancer, in any body style. Owning one of those handsome 1938 Westchester Suburban station wagons would also be fun, as would a mid-1930s Convertible Coupe. Oh, and one of those bright-red 1939 Airflow tanker trucks would be a blast to cruise around in, too.

Soon, we're going to honor Dodge's centennial by paying homage to it and its many truly great models. Similar to what we did in issue #87, which celebrated Chevrolet's 100th anniversary, our goal will be to gather a fascinating selection of the different models that Dodge produced through the years—from the first year models of 1914 through to the 1980s. We are

preparing this very special issue for November's *HCC* #122 so it coincides with the release of the first Dodge that rolled off the assembly line on the 14th of the same month in 1914.

If you own, collect or restore Dodge cars or trucks, we would like you to be an integral part of this very special salute to Dodge. To help embellish this commemorative issue, we would love to include personal stories from our readers who have long owned their Dodges. We also want to feature stories on original, unrestored

Dodges, one-owner cars, all-Dodge collections and restoration projects, too; in keeping with *HCC*'s original-spec format, no modified cars, please. So, if you have a Dodge story to tell, we want to hear about it.

When you send us photographs of your Dodge, please provide us with some human interest information about your car such as: why you enjoy owning it; what you like most about its

design; how it drives; and what's so special about owning such a model. And don't forget to tell us about all its pertinent details: year of manufacture, model, engine specs, etc. Please be sure to include your daytime phone number and e-mail address so we can contact you should we require additional information.

You can send either photographs or high-resolution digital images; please provide a self-addressed stamped envelope if you want those photos returned after publication. Most important, please do not send us any irreplaceable old, original photographs that are special to you; we much prefer you send us scanned images of them. Speaking of sending us scans, only high-resolution images will do.

All photographs and stories must be received no later than July 4, 2014. As we're sure you will understand, we will not be able to publish every photo we receive. Nonetheless, give it a shot. Please send your short story and photographs to: *Hemmings Classic Car*, P.O. Box 196, Bennington, Vermont 05201.

Thanks! 🐾



Write to our executive editor at rlentinello@hemmings.com.

FRANK HAGERTY

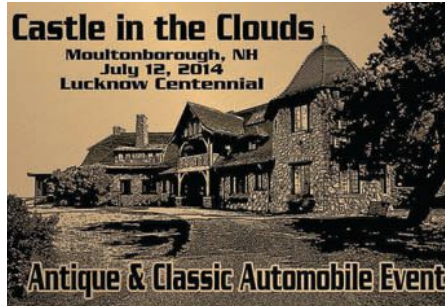
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Castle in the Clouds

IF YOU HAPPEN TO BE IN THE NEW ENGLAND AREA this July, you may want to visit the Lucknow Estate in Moultonborough, New Hampshire. The estate, also known as the Castle in the Clouds, will have a gathering of cars on Saturday, July 12. All production automobiles built before 1975 are welcome. Register before June 28 for the early bird special; admission for spectators is only \$5. Visit www.castleinthecLOUDS.org for more information or to register.



Exner Design Showcase

THIS YEAR'S CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE OF AMERICA at St. John's is scheduled to take place July 27 and will honor the work of famed designer Virgil Exner. To showcase Exner's unique style, there will be a display of Chrysler's 1955-'61 "Forward Look" cars. Expect to see the jet-age-influenced 1955 Plymouth, Dodge, De Soto, Chrysler and Imperial as well as the 1957 models, with their sky-high fins. The display will feature examples from each generation of the genre.

Pickups of the Jet Age will be another special class and will feature an array of pickups from the mid to late 1950s, including a 1955 Chevrolet Cameo Carrier, limited-edition 1957 International Harvester Golden Jubilee and a rare Fargo Sweptside. Also be on the lookout for the "car-truck" hybrid Rancheros and El Caminos. The event takes place at The Inn at St. John's in Plymouth, Michigan. Visit concoursusa.org for more information.

JULY Calendar

- July 8-12 • Cadillac La Salle Club Grand National Meet** • Lake George, New York
614-478-4622 • www.cadillaclasalleclub.org
- July 8-12 • Pierce-Arrow Society Annual Meet**
Warwick, Rhode Island • 401-732-6000
www.pierce-arrow.org
- July 10-13 • Iola Old Car Show** • Iola, Wisconsin
715-445-4000 • iolaoldcarshow.com
- July 11 • Hemmings Cruise-In** • Bennington, Vermont • 800-227-4373 • www.hemmings.com
- July 11-13 • Carlisle Chrysler Nationals**
Carlisle, Pennsylvania • 717-243-7855
www.carlisleevents.com
- July 22-26 • Hudson International Meet**
French Lick, Indiana • 812-334-2430
www.hetclub.org
- July 23-26 • Buick Club of America National Meet**
Portland, Oregon • 614-472-3939 • www.buickclub.org
- July 24 • Hemmings Cruise-In** • Bennington, Vermont • 800-227-4373 • www.hemmings.com
- July 29-August 3 • Hot August Nights** • Reno, Nevada • 775-356-1956 • www.hotaugustnights.net
- July 31-August 2 • AACA Central Fall Meet**
Mequon, Wisconsin • 717-534-1910 • www.aaca.org



VMCCA National Tours

THE VETERAN MOTOR CAR CLUB OF AMERICA has two national tours planned for July. The first is the *Western National Tour*, which takes place July 13-18, in Logan, Utah. Enjoy the Cache Valley and the mountains that surround it, located just north of Salt Lake City. This tour stops at Promontory Summit where a golden railroad spike celebrated the completion of the first transcontinental railroad. The Oregon Trail is another highlight.

The second tour is the annual *One and Two Cylinder Tour* around Bad Axe, Michigan, July 29-August 1. This tour is also open to antique steam and electric cars and pre-1904 four-cylinder cars. Called the *Nasty Hatchet* tour, the name belies the relatively flat, rural and smooth roads organizers provide for the antique machines on this tour.

For more information, visit www.vmcca.org.

High Country T Tour

THE MODEL T FORD CLUB INTERNATIONAL is having a tour in North Carolina's High Country from July 13-18. A car show and judging will take place on the 13th, in downtown Boone. The tour will run along the Blue Ridge Parkway, providing some gorgeous views and scenic overlooks. Some of the stops will include Fort Defiance, Linville Caverns, Whippoorwill Village and Grandfather Mountain, which is home of the Mile High Swinging Bridge. For registration and hotel information, visit www.modelt.org.





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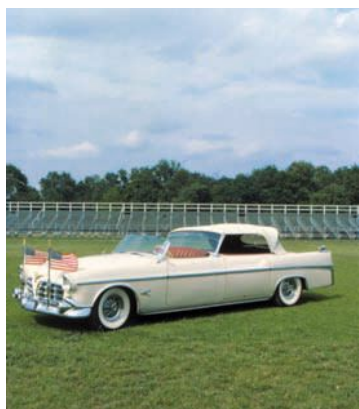
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Though the L.A. parade phaeton is today painted white, the photo depicts the Detroit car.

Sweet Imperial of Youth

READER RICH COLLINS OF HENDERSONVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA, recently wrote in to ask us if we were familiar with a car that appeared in the 1962 film *Sweet Bird of Youth*, starring Paul Newman and based on the Tennessee Williams play. "They showed a dual-cowl convertible, blue metallic in color, with white interior," he wrote. "It also had mild fins with gun-sight taillamps sitting on top."

After a quick perusal of the Internet Movie Car Database's entry on that film, we see

that the car Rich is referring to is one of the three Imperial parade phaetons that Chrysler built in 1952, later updated in 1955, and distributed to the cities of New York, Los Angeles and Detroit, in the early 1960s. Based on its color scheme, we believe the one in the film to be the Los Angeles car, still owned by the city today.

Of course, it's not surprising that an L.A.-based car would appear in the movies, and we see that the same car also appeared in the 1959 film *L'il Abner* and the 1960 Jerry Lewis film *Cinderfella* (painted pink), and it may have also appeared in the 1961 film *The Errand Boy*, the 1987 Charles Bronson film *Assassination*, an episode of *The Man From U.N.C.L.E.* and an episode of the 1950s TV series *The Adventures of Superman*.



RE: Colorful 'Cuda

WE DIDN'T GET A FLOOD OF RESPONSES on the multi-hued Barracuda featured in HCC #116, but the one we did get came from somebody who probably can tell us as much about it as anybody out there. Walter M.P. McCall, a retired Chrysler Canada public relations official, and at the time an auto writer for *The Windsor* (Ontario)

Star, said he can confirm that Chrysler Canada painted the Barracuda—which it marketed as the Valiant Barracuda—in all 17 of the colors that the Barracuda could be painted.

"The car went out one end of the paint booth and back in the other," Walt wrote in April 1965 after the car's appearance at a show in Toronto.

"Masking was carefully applied for the next color and the process was repeated. A number of show visitors made serious offers to buy it."

Chrysler Canada apparently didn't entertain those offers. According to Walter, Chrysler Canada eventually repainted the Barracuda a single hue, most likely in preparation for retail sale.

ThunderStude

MICHAEL NICHOLAS WOULD LIKE TO DISABUSE US of the notion that the Studebaker GT Hawk was entirely the work of Brooks Stevens. It's a pretty strong claim, one that would take plenty of evidence to back up, and he believes he has exactly that with his Thunderbird-roofed 1954 Studebaker.

Reportedly built in the late 1950s for Studebaker by O'Chapps Body Works in South Bend, the car—apparently originally a Commander—has a mishmash of Studebaker design elements to go along with the narrowed Square Bird roof grafted to it and the Lark grille insert.

"This vehicle demonstrates that the design direction for the GT Hawk preceded Brooks Stevens's appointment," Michael wrote. "That makes this car even more interesting in my book."



✿ 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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Twenty Years to Motor City



RM AUCTIONS IS CELEBRATING two decades of its Meadow Brook and St. John's auctions by changing the name of the event to "The Motor City" auction in homage to the past and future of Detroit. The RM Motor City auction and the Concours d'Elegance of America at St. John's will be held at the historic Inn at St. John's in Plymouth, Michigan, on July 26-27. This 1949 Packard Eight Station Sedan, perfect for a Sunday drive into the countryside, sold at the 2013 St. John's auction for \$35,750. Contact: www.rmauctions.com



Authentic Sting Ray

THE MECUM HOUSTON BONANZA OF COLLECTOR CARS, trucks and motorcycles was another huge success for the Wisconsin-based auction house. This well-preserved 1967 Chevrolet Corvette, showing just 2,996 miles on the odometer, was uncovered from a 45-year garage slumber after its sole owner, Don McNamara, passed away. Rumors of the car's existence circulated for years in Colorado Springs, though Don told everyone he got rid of it. The Corvette sold for \$725,000. Contact: www.mecum.com

AUCTION PROFILE

CHEVROLET HAD THE EL CAMINO. Ford made the Ranchero. Even GMC got into the car-truck-car utility ring with its Caballero. While the Australians did build an A-body Valiant-based "ute," American Mopar fans were on their own when it came to these popular and practical vehicles that were neither car nor truck, but a little bit of both.

This custom-built car-truck-car was at one time a 1971 Dodge Demon, which somewhere along the way was converted into a Demonamino - or Dartero - that Mopar never built. The 340-cu.in. V-8 looked intact and was backed by a TorqueFlite automatic. The custom conversion was painted in Demon 340 livery. Staggered-width slot mags and side exhaust made perfect custom sense on a Demon that can haul home a new refrigerator.



CAR
AUCTIONEER
LOCATION
DATE
LOT NUMBER

1971 Dodge Demon
 Auctions America
 Fort Lauderdale, Florida
 March 14, 2014
 115

CONDITION
RESERVE
AVERAGE SELLING PRICE
SELLING PRICE

#3/Custom
 No
 \$12,500
 (Stock Demon 340)
 \$4,840

JULY Calendar

5-6 • Teton Village, Wyoming

Silver Auctions • 800-255-4485
www.silverauctions.com

11-12 • Cape Girardeau, Missouri

Smiths • 800-200-6030
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11-12 • New Orleans, Louisiana

Vicari • 504-875-3563
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19 • Sabin, Minnesota

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www.vanderbrinkauctions.com

24-26 • Greensboro, North Carolina

GAA Classic Cars • 855-862-2257
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Barrett-Jackson Sways Palm Beach

AN ESTIMATED 50,000 PEOPLE attended Barrett-Jackson at Palm Beach, which saw 509 cars result in \$25 million in gross sales. Seven lots brought in \$2.35 million to charities including Rebuilding Together, the Darrell Gwynn Foundation, AARP Drive to End Hunger, Henry Ford Health System, Karmanos Cancer Institute, The Cancer Research Fund at TGEN, and the Boy Scouts of America Occoneechee Council. In the top 10 was this 1946 Ford Sportsman, which sold for \$209,000. Next stop for Barrett-Jackson is Hot August Nights in Reno, Nevada. Contact: www.barrett-jackson.com



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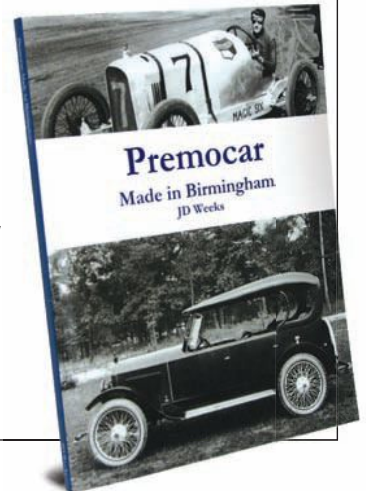


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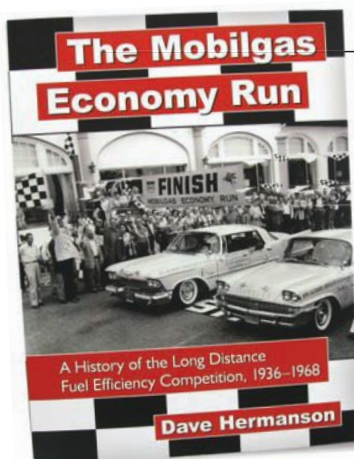
Premocar: Made in Birmingham

THE BIRMINGHAM REFERENCED IN THIS BOOK isn't the one outside Detroit, but instead, the largest city in Alabama, where the Premocar—sound it out; the "e" is long—was built between 1917 and 1923. It was the de facto successor to the short-lived Preston motorcar, lasting until the firm was thrown into receivership and its directors indicted (though not convicted) for securities fraud. The author specializes in historical works about the Birmingham area and other Southern venues, and fills 150 softcover pages with the tale of the Premocar and auto manufacturing in Alabama before it became the assembly hub it is today. It's a story of a highly obscure marque from an industrial powerhouse, and it fascinates. Cost: \$25
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—By Jim Donnelly



Cunningham C-3 Cabriolet

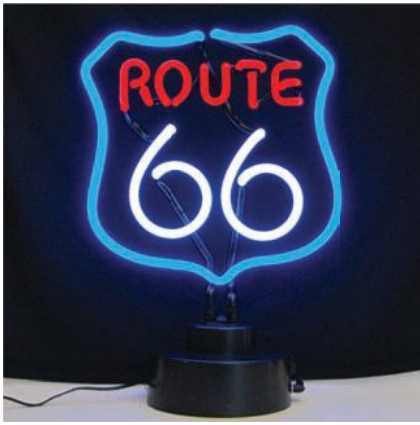
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THE 1950S WAS THE GOLDEN ERA OF AUTOMOTIVE JEWELRY, when even the most basic family cars were adorned with fanciful taillamps and delightful chrome details. The cars of that era made an indelible impression on Lou Carvell, who was a certified car nut from his earliest memories. His lifelong passion for cars and their design elements would manifest itself not only in Lou's multi-car collection, but in the artwork he began creating under the title, REINCARNATION.

"I realized early on, part of what transformed cars from mere transportation to objects of desire had a lot to do with the sum of the parts equaling the whole. Taken out of context as well as out of the car, parts became yet another art form," Lou explains. "My imagination began to run wild. The parking lamp on a 1949 Buick Roadmaster reminded me of a streamlined train. The hood ornament from a '54 De Soto looked like a fighter plane, and a '58 Buick taillamp had a direct resemblance to a cruise ship. When I explained this epiphany to my wife, I was relieved she did not immediately call the psychiatric ward at Bellevue."

This former executive creative director constructs his REINCARNATION pieces by photographing the automotive component and determining how to digitally integrate it into the background he's envisioned. "Many times the part, background, lighting, and my imagination don't work together, and the result is one big mistake. However, when the fit is perfect, the result is REINCARNATION." Original limited-edition framed and signed prints are sized 20 x 30 inches; visit Lou's website for more information. Cost: \$1,500-\$2,500.

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WORLD'S FIRST The 2014 \$100 SILVER PROOF



Collectible
2014 date

Mirrored proof
background

Larger Franklin
portrait

Liberty Bell, quill pen
& July 4th date

Minted in one Troy ounce
of .999% fine silver

Actual size is 6" x 2 1/2"

GovMint.com Announces the Limited Mintage Striking of an Extraordinary Silver Proof —the Newest United States \$100 Bill Struck in Pure Silver Bullion. Discount Price \$99



This extraordinary piece of pure silver bullion has a surface area that exceeds 15 square inches...and it contains one Troy ounce of pure silver bullion!

And now, during a limited strike period, the very first Year 2014 \$100 Silver Proof is available at a special discount price—only \$99!

EXQUISITE DETAIL

The historic 2014 \$100 Silver Proof is an exquisite adaptation of the United States Treasury's newly-designed \$100 Federal Reserve Note. Benjamin Franklin has only appeared on four \$100 bill designs over the last 100 years. This dramatic artistic masterpiece will always be treasured.

.999 SILVER

Best of all, this stunning Silver Proof is even more beautiful than the original, because it's struck in precious silver bullion!

It is a landmark in proof minting, combining unprecedented weight with extraordinary dimension. The specifications for this colossal medallic proof are unparalleled. Each one:

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- Weighs one Troy ounce.
- Has a Surface Area That Exceeds 15 Square Inches.
- Contains 31.10 Grams (480 Grains) of Pure Silver.
- Is Individually Registered and Comes With a Numbered Certificate of Authenticity.
- Is Fully Encapsulated to Protect Its Mirror-Finish.
- Includes a Deluxe Presentation Case.

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Saving the Best for Last

Although Edsel's fate was already sealed, this pair of 1960 Ranger convertibles hint at what might have been

BY TERRY SHEA • PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF KOCH

“Edsel,” as a word, comes with a lot of baggage, both for car people and the general public alike. The short-lived division of Ford Motor Company has the connotation of being a colossal loser—not quite on par with the *Titanic*, but doomed nonetheless—and that’s grossly unfair. Perhaps the great shame is that, by the time Ford had fixed the actual product for the 1960 model year, introducing a sleeker and more sophisticated design, the automaker pulled the plug almost immediately, making just a few thousand cars.

At the Edsel introduction in 1957—production of the 1958s started early, in July of 1957—the new division featured 18 different models across seven ranges that were based on both Ford and Mercury chassis. Ford’s intent was to create a new division between the Ford and Mercury lines while moving Mercury a bit upmarket to better compete with Buick and Oldsmobile. It essentially had two lines within Edsel, the “Junior” models, Ranger and Pacer, based on the shorter Ford chassis and the “Senior” models, Citation and Corsair, based on the longer Mercury full-size chassis, as well as station wagons in multiple ranges. Curiously, Ford priced the “Junior” models between Ford and Mercury and the “Senior” models between Mercury and Lincoln, somewhat confusing the direction the division was headed.

For 1959, Edsel included just 10 models across three ranges, and for 1960 the Corsair models were dropped, with just the Ranger and Villager series remaining. Down from the 18 offered in the first year, just seven body styles were available—including the Ranger sedans, hardtops and convertible as well as the Villager station wagons—and all were based on Ford chassis. Edsel production ended for good on November 19, 1959, and the 1960 models were scarce even then, with just 2,846 Edsels rolling out of Ford’s Louisville plant, including a mere 76 Ranger convertibles, the rarest of all Edsels and, ironically, perhaps the most elegant looking of them all.

With the horse-collar grille not very well received by the buying, or, more correctly, the non-buying public, a massive last-minute redesign came for 1960, and the results were handsome when compared to contemporary competitors. Although the split front grille may look more appropriate to a Pontiac, it certainly represented a vast improvement over the previous Edsels.

Based on the full-size Ford Fairlane and Galaxie 119-inch-wheelbase chassis, the Ranger itself rode on a 120-inch wheelbase, with slightly modified chassis and suspension mounting points, and had thicker rear coil springs. The Edsel did get unique tail and reverse lamps, formed from the tips of mini-wings that emerged from the trunk, but most body panels and glass were shared with Fords. Only the four-door, pillarless hardtop Ranger Sedan, of which just 135 were made in both standard and deluxe trim levels, had no direct Ford model counterpart. The overall effect of the longer and lower look and other contemporary design elements made Edsel less aesthetically polarizing and more pleasing.

Under the hood, all 1960 Ranger models came standard with the Ranger V-8, a two-barrel 185-hp, 292-cu.in. V-8, also known as the Thunderbird 292 when under the hood of a Ford-badged car. Buyers could opt for a high-compression V-8 from the FE engine family, the 352-cu.in. engine with the enthusiastic “Super Express V-8” moniker. Featuring a 9.6:1 compression ratio and a





Finished in Polar White, the rarely seen 1960 Ranger convertible shows the Edsel's major design leap from the horse-collar look of the previous model years to a split grille that appeared to be something right out of the 1959 Pontiac play book.

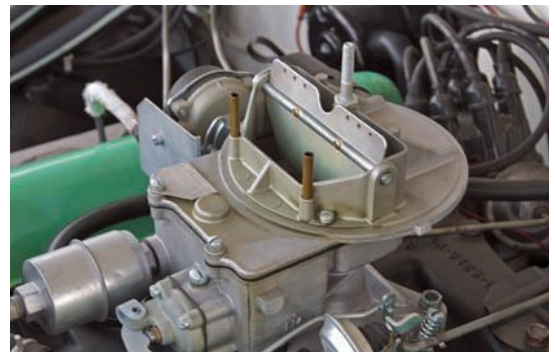
four-barrel carburetor, the Super Express made 300 horsepower and a healthy wallop of torque—381-pound feet. This one, when in Ford model cars, was called the Thunderbird 352 Special V-8. Except for the convertible, a reduced-cost 223-cu.in, 145-hp straight-six was made available for thrifty buyers. The top V-8 with the three-speed Dual-Power Drive automatic transmission could reach 60 MPH from a standstill in about nine seconds, while the Ranger V-8, when equipped with the two-speed Mile-O-Matic Drive automatic, could hit a mile-a-minute in about 12.5 seconds. Along with those automatics, a three-speed manual remained optional.

Although Ford had promised an all-new car for the 1958 Edsel and heavily advertised it in the run up to job one, it turned out to be largely conventional, but with some unique touches, such as a floating, compass-like speedometer in the center of the instrument panel and an optional, Chrysler-like pushbutton automatic transmission. By 1960,

features that had occasionally been troublesome had been abandoned for more conventional fare. Likewise, early quality issues had been fixed for the 1960 models, and the cooling problems, which were not isolated to Edsels, were eliminated when Ford debuted its all-new cross-flow pressurized radiator across all lines in 1960.

Critics will point out that the 1960 Ranger is in many ways little more than a warmed-over Fairlane, but in doing so they will miss the design features, subtle though they are, that made the Edsel unique. From that distinctive split grille to the chrome spear that tapered from just aft of the front wheel well all the way back to the bumper and finally to the protruding taillamps, the final Edsels had their own style. But the spin-off division had the deck stacked against it from the start, as Ford limited its freedom to creating designs that didn't require extensive new tooling. Given these restrictions, the 1960 re-design showed plenty of promise.





The white Edsel still has its original Ranger 292-cu.in. V-8, good for a leisurely 185 hp, and standard in all Edsels for 1960. Known as the Thunderbird 292 in Ford-badged cars, the engine also produced a healthy 292-lb.ft. of torque.

Bob Ray and Jim Wagon both still see that promise today and revel in it. They each own a 1960 Edsel Ranger convertible restored to very high standards. Bob, a retired mechanic and equipment operator, lives in Phoenix, just a few minutes from Jim, an administrator for a motorcycle mechanics school, who makes his home in nearby Glendale, Arizona.

Bob saw his first Edsel when the cars were just off the assembly line, and his affection for them never left him. "I was in the service when the Edsels came out," Bob recalls. "I was stationed in Louisville in 1957-'58, and I saw this reddish convertible. It may have looked strange to some, but it looked neat to me, and I wanted one. Of course, being in the service, I couldn't have it. Once I got married, cars weren't important any more—just surviving was. The Edsel was all but forgotten." Fast-forward a few decades, and with the raising of children behind him, Bob finally had a chance to scratch that Edsel itch.

"We moved to Arizona when we retired," Bob continues, "and with my daughter's help, we ended up finding a 1958 convertible, so I bought it. It was a car that somebody started restoring and then had a heart attack and couldn't finish it. So I got that one already partially done. The bodywork was completed, but none of the mechanical work. We got it in pieces, in boxes. Everything was disassembled." Despite the scale of the undertaking, Bob completed the restoration and still wasn't finished with Edsels.

"In 2007, my son-in-law Scott and another good friend located this 1960 Regal Red Edsel convertible, which needed a complete restoration." For the next two and a half years, Bob had a new full-time job: restoring that Ranger to the highest quality. "Every weekend, every holiday," says Bob, "my son-in-law was here. In the evenings, he would come over and help me. If I got stuck somewhere or decided, 'I am tired of this thing,' the wife would call Scott and say, 'Hey, why





don't you just come over and give him a bump, you know, to get him started again." Bob had restored cars before, but only to what he considers a "driver" standard. Today, Bob and Scott's hard work shows just what two people can accomplish in their garage.

Even Jim, whose own 1960 Ranger convertible remains at a very high standard years after its restoration was completed, concurs that Bob and Scott have done something remarkable: "Because of the pool of knowledge around here, and because of the pool of resources he had to work with, and the guidance he could get, and the fact that he had a few bucks to really do quality, quality work, to my knowledge—and I love my car, which will hold its own—when you park that car next to mine, you basically say, 'Why don't you get that old hag out of here.' I wouldn't even say 'probably,' I would say hands down, it's the finest one in existence. And by quite a long shot. I can't think of any missed details on that car."

Despite his enthusiasm for Bob's 352-powered Ranger, Jim may be selling his own car a bit short. Jim's Polar White Edsel has the standard 292-cu.in. V-8 and Mile-O-Matic two-speed automatic, but otherwise it's equipped with just about every other option Edsel offered. Like Bob, Jim was smitten the first time he saw one, though that was in the

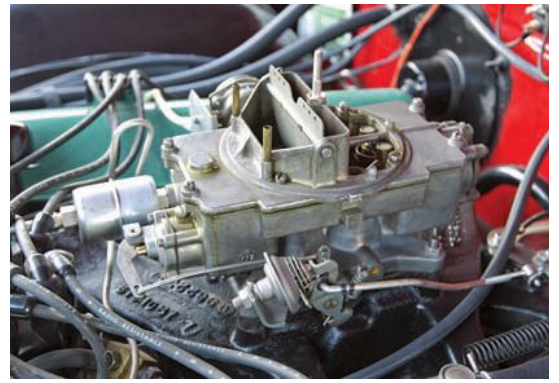
late 1990s. "I first saw a 1960 Edsel convertible probably 17 years ago," recalls Jim, "and I thought, 'That's a beautiful car.' I really like the lines. I like the grille a lot. I like the taillamp treatment on them. Oddly enough, I don't have any real appreciation for the other 1960 Ford models."

Intent on finding a 1960 convertible, Jim first bought one that needed a restoration. Never getting around to restoring it, he sold it and decided to find one that was in better shape. About 10 years ago, Jim heard of a car through the grapevine that had a known history since at least the 1970s. It had undergone a skillful restoration in the early 1980s, so Jim bought the car and has driven it sparingly since. In recent years, with more correct parts now available, Jim has gone about making small fixes here and there, such as installing properly labeled belts, hoses, spark plug leads and the like or, as he puts it, "Just any of the little, minor details that I knew. Because I am very, very familiar with what's required for an authentic restoration, I just went through and put the finishing touches on the car."

Today, Jim and Bob don't drive their cars much, but they do enjoy showing them. They are keen to point out that there are at least five of the original 1960 Ranger convertibles—out of just 76 made—residing in the Phoenix area, a testament

Highly optioned Ranger convertible, restored to a very high standard, remains resplendent in its Regal Red finish. With its two-tone interior and red dash cover and instrument panel, this Edsel shows a lot more flash.





Although an Economy Six was available on other Edsels, the convertible's sole powerplant option was the Super Express V-8, a 352-cu.in. engine with a higher compression ratio than the Ranger V-8, making 300 hp and 381-lb.ft. of torque.

to the enduring fondness enthusiasts have for the much-maligned Edsel.

When Ford first launched the Edsel and sales didn't meet the company's lofty expectations, the blame got passed around, some pointing the finger to the car's advertising and marketing, some to the tough economy at the time, and some criticized the cars themselves. Even the factory workers, thought by some to loathe working on another division's cars, were accused of poor quality workmanship, but that seems a stretch.

In the years since, we've learned that Ford's top management, particularly Robert McNamara and his data-analysis-driven "Whiz Kids" simply did not support the whole endeavor from the beginning and hung it out to dry, dooming Edsel before it could ever gain a foothold in the market. Perhaps McNamara and company were right that Ford could never compete with GM and its five

car brands, but that doesn't excuse the needless hindrances and roadblocks that McNamara and crew seemed to put up to keep Edsel from succeeding.

Launched in a rather tough economic climate in 1958, perhaps the worst time financially for Americans since the end of World War II, Edsel, an entirely new car line, actually sold fairly well, besting De Soto, Studebaker and Lincoln and finishing just a few hundred cars behind Chrysler. Perhaps Ford set its sights a little high as those relatively decent returns (the best launch of a new car company since Chrysler started Plymouth in 1928) could have portended a better future.

As it is, people like Bob and Jim keep the flame burning brightly, proudly showing and displaying their Edsels. For them, the name has strong meaning, too, but it's a much sweeter sound to them. 🐦



“I was stationed in Louisville in 1957-'58, and I saw this reddish convertible. It may have looked strange to some, but it looked neat to me, and I wanted one.”



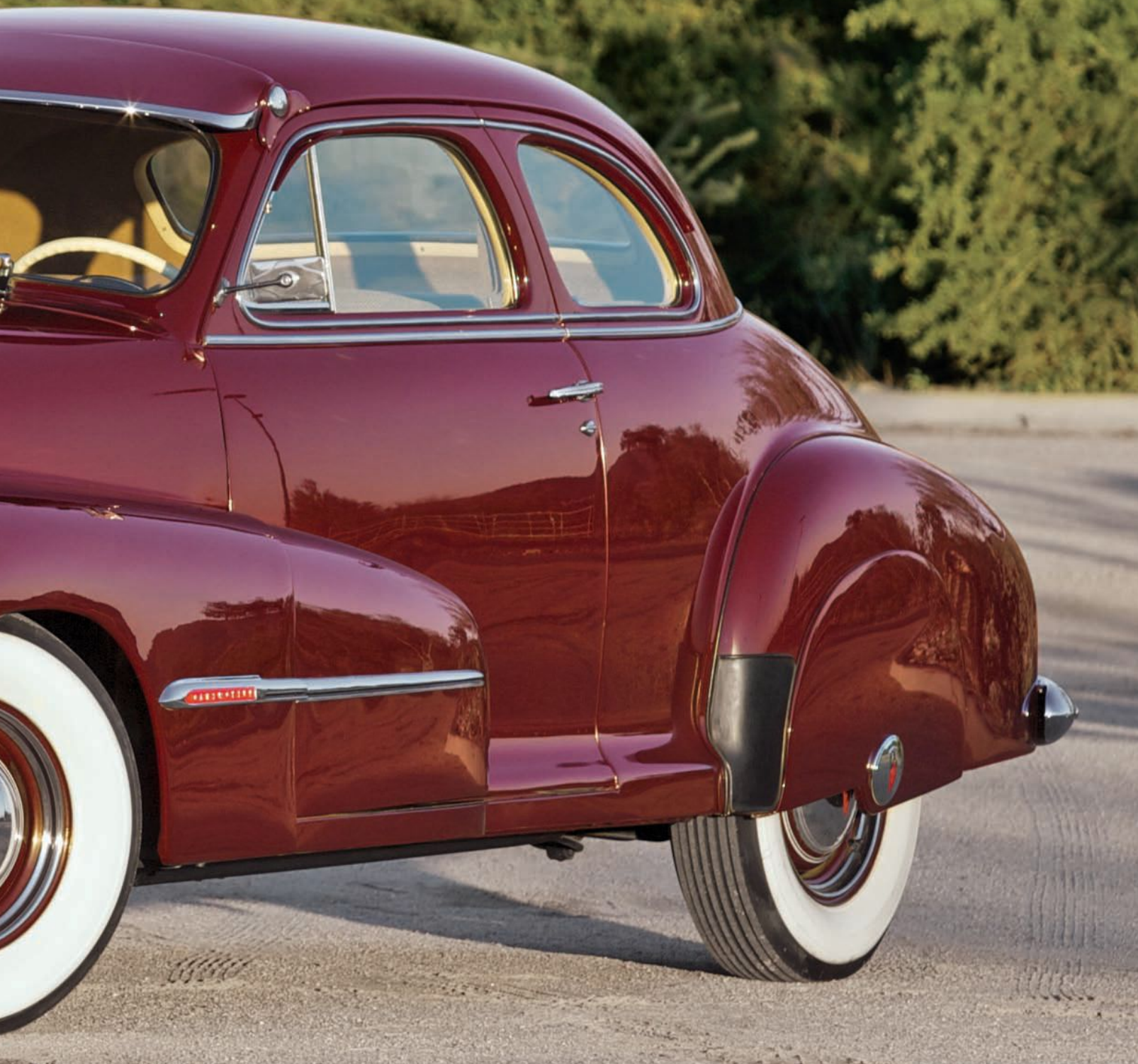
A Valiant Effort!

Armed with the Hydra-Matic transmission, for 1947 Oldsmobile created a Model 66 Club Coupe that allowed thousands of disabled vets to get back behind the wheel

BY TERRY SHEA • PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF KOCH



Following World War II, after America had mobilized like never before to fight in places most soldiers had never heard of, a few American automakers stepped up to provide alternative driving controls for soldiers who returned missing limbs or



suffering from other disabilities, but none made quite the effort that Oldsmobile did with their Valiant program.

When their factories were converted almost exclusively to military production as key members of the “arsenal of democracy,” Detroit automakers reaped immense profits during

the war, so making controls for disabled veterans was the least they could do. And, given the apparently extensive involvement between the Nazi war machine and two of their biggest suppliers before 1942—General Motors and Ford—perhaps more than a little guilt may have factored into their decision to



Although this Oldsmobile was relatively well appointed, it is the push/pull combined throttle and brake that makes it unique today. Pictured above, the linkage, attached to the steering column, and aided by a large vacuum canister to boost the brake performance, allowed a person to control the car without the need to use his legs.

take care of our GIs.

"Adaptive controls" (as they are most commonly called today) were nothing new, as the Model T's hand-controlled throttle and near-ubiquitous availability had made it a natural solution for handicapped drivers, though it was somewhat awkward given that drivers still needed to depress a high-neutral-low gear pedal and a reverse pedal. Even President Franklin Roosevelt kept a 1938 Ford with a set of custom-made controls at his Georgia estate. But the production of such modified Model Ts was largely local and ad hoc, and the sheer volume of post-World-War II soldiers with debilitating injuries

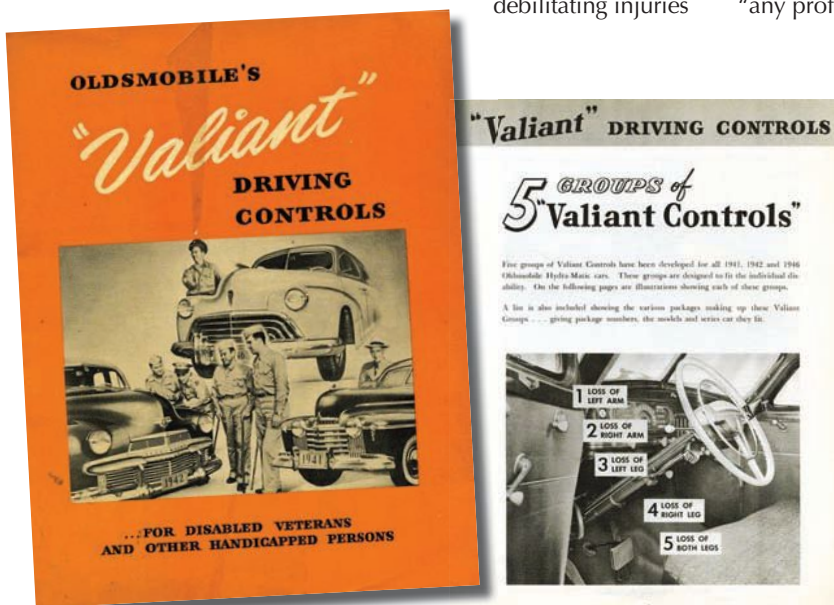
hoping to return to a normal, civilian life resulted in a great demand for cars built to accommodate handicapped drivers.

In June of 1944, just weeks after the D-Day invasion, Michigan Governor Harry Kelly, who lost a leg in World War I, strongly advocated to the automobile manufacturers that disabled veterans deserved a place on the road and that the industry should do everything possible to prevent an unfair exclusion. Clearly, Kelly saw how important driving would become in postwar America.

The Ford Motor Company released literature announcing that hand controls would be made available to any veteran without "any profit incentive," and quoting Henry Ford, declared that, "No man who lost a limb in the armed services of our country during the war is going to have to pay anything extra to drive a Ford automobile."

Oldsmobile really dedicated itself to helping veterans by converting some 30,000 cars in the immediate postwar years to adaptive controls. Long before Plymouth ever considered the name for its compact car offering, Oldsmobile called its system for handicapped drivers "Valiant Driving Controls," owing to the fact that vets who returned with amputations were often referred to as "War Valiants" or simply "Valiants."

When it was first announced in 1946, the Valiant program offered hand controls for Hydra-Matic-equipped 1941, 1942 and 1946 model-year Oldsmobiles. For the 1946 and subsequent model-year cars, customers could get the Valiant controls installed at the factory or via a kit supplied to the dealer. Oldsmobile made the system available into the early 1950s, before, it seems, the lawyers got scared, and liability concerns encouraged the company to scrap the program and sell the patents to a third-party converter.



Oldsmobile's 1946 brochure included an extensive explanation of the Valiant control systems, along with a parts lists, installation information, and testimonials.



Oldsmobile's expertise in building fully automatic transmissions allowed its vehicles to be most easily converted to disabled-friendly operation. Simply lacking a clutch pedal put its cars ahead of the rest. Available as an Oldsmobile option from the fall of 1939 (and from 1940 with Cadillac), the four-speed Hydra-Matic Drive transmission was at the forefront of a rapidly modernizing industry. GM's—and the industry's—first fully automatic transmission proved so rugged and reliable that it was used in tanks. Due to these gearboxes, the M5A1 Light Tank proved itself in battle as a relatively easy to drive piece of armor. GM later advertised the transmission as "battle tested"—an honest boast for the industry giant.

For the most severely disabled vets who were missing legs or were unable to use them, Valiant controls included a hand-operated brake-and-throttle combo mounted to the steering column that allowed for pushing a lever to accelerate and pulling back on it to slow down, actuating the power-assisted brakes—a technology still several years from being available as a regular, production-line option.

With one of the most complicated procedures of driving a car entirely automated once the car is shifted into "D" (Just think about all of the highly coordinated motions between both feet and both hands required to shift a manual transmission!), Oldsmobile engineers could focus on improving a car's accessibility to an injured vet, such as relocating the starter button and high-beam switch from the floor to the dashboard or adding a large, wing nut-type knob for the windshield wipers, making it easier to operate for a person equipped with a prosthetic hook in place of his hand.

To address the various kinds of injuries veterans were facing, Oldsmobile offered five different groups of Valiant controls, as well as a selection of individual parts. After all, a veteran missing an arm had different needs from one missing a leg.

Consisting of a steering wheel ring (think: spinner knob) on the left side of the wheel and a directional signal lever on the right side of the steering column, Valiant Group 1 controls were produced by Oldsmobile for people who had lost their left arms. Valiant Group 2 controls, for those who lost the use of their right arms, mounted the spinner on the right side, while the directional signal lever and, more important for southpaws, a gear selector were located on the left side of the steering column.

The Group 3 controls, designed for people who lost their



The large black vacuum canister in the engine bay was an anomaly for regular production cars in 1947, and power brakes would not be a standard option for several more model years. As part of the Group 5 Valiant controls for vets who had lost the use of both of their legs, this brake-boosting feature was plumbed to a special plate in the carburetor for the vacuum lines, and could be installed by the factory or by a dealer mechanic. Oldsmobile likely used parts initially designed for a heavy commercial truck.



left legs, consisted solely of a hand dimmer switch because the Hydra-Matic-equipped car could otherwise still be driven with the standard setup. For veterans who lost their right legs in the war, the Group 4 controls added a wider brake pedal, a dash-mounted starter solenoid and the hand dimmer switch on the steering column.

Designed for those who lost the use of both legs in battle, Group 5 offered the most comprehensive controls for valiants. Along with the dash-mounted starter button and column-mounted dimmer switch found in the Group 4 package, Group 5 cars also included the vacuum brake booster for power assist. The brake booster allowed the driver to accelerate by pulling a lever on the steering column, which was connected to the throttle, and to brake by pushing on the lever, which actuated the boosted





brakes. Without the vacuum assist, a very significant amount of arm strength would be required to operate the brakes with the hands.

All Valiant-equipped Oldsmobiles remained operable by a fully abled person, as the added pieces were supplemental to the standard controls. Unfortunately, over the years, most of these supplemental controls were often scrapped by subsequent owners, leaving almost none of these historically significant cars extant today.

Fortunately, the very well restored 1947 Oldsmobile Model 66 Club Coupe featured on these pages retains its full Group 5 setup, making it a very rare example. Jim Schultz, president of the National Antique Oldsmobile Club explains, "I've been to a lot of national meets, and I am well versed and well entrenched in the Oldsmobile circles, and I've never seen one of these cars before." Roger White, Associate Curator for Road Transportation at the Smithsonian Institute, says, "It's the first car that I've run across that still exists, but it doesn't mean it's the only one."

Recently, Jim had a chance to drive this car—which he praises for the quality of the restoration completed on it in the 1990s—and share his experience with HCC. "I wanted just to see how one of these cars operated and just how primitive it was or was not," he says. "So, I fired this thing up, and of course, the first thing I noticed was that it had a push-button starter, which didn't come in until 1948 on the Ninety-Eight models. And it ran like a top. It had the six-cylinder with the Hydra-Matic. Inside five minutes, I had it down. You pull down to go and you push up to stop. So, we took off, and I drove it probably five or six miles, and it was pretty much effortless driving.

"The car would stop on a dime. You just push up, like using your foot. You just start easing into the lever, and it would begin slowing down. And if you really had to stop the car, you just push the lever up, and the car would come to a complete halt in a hurry. I didn't use my legs at all while driving it. Once I realized how things were going to work and how easy and how stable it was, my mind pretty much took over, and I just used the hand controls. That's how easy this car operated. It was an eye-opener



to say the least. The car drove miraculously with the handicapped controls. I was very, very impressed by how well that car worked."

The Valiant program included a priority ordering system for vets at a time when the general public was scrambling to get their hands on any new cars they could. Funding was even made available via the Veterans Administration to get disabled vets into cars and—not coincidentally—the amount stipulated by law was the cost of a Hydra-Matic-equipped two-door Oldsmobile sedan. Oldsmobile brought examples of the cars to V.A. hospitals to both train drivers how to use them and to even recruit some recovering soldiers to sell them.

Former Senator Bob Dole, a decorated infantry officer whose battlefield injuries in Italy in 1944 left medics questioning whether he would survive or not, let alone recover, actually sold the cars while rehabilitating at Percy Jones Hospital in Battle

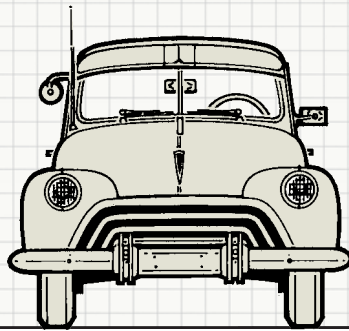
Creek, Michigan, an Army facility that specialized in the fitting of prosthetic limbs. However, it appears that Dole's career as a car salesman was short lived. In an email to HCC, Dole admits that he sold "about six cars there before I was told that it wasn't appropriate."

Roger White from the Smithsonian remarks, "Generally speaking, I think the Oldsmobile Valiant program was the biggest, busiest and most productive one. The figures I have say about 30,000 conversions were done that continued up until the early Fifties." The breakdown between Lansing-built and dealer-installed Valiants, however, remains unknown. The program was also briefly revived for Korean War veterans. Culturally, a 1947 Valiant-equipped Oldsmobile is featured prominently alongside Marlon Brando in his first film, 1950's *The Men*, which is about a paralyzed vet adjusting to society.

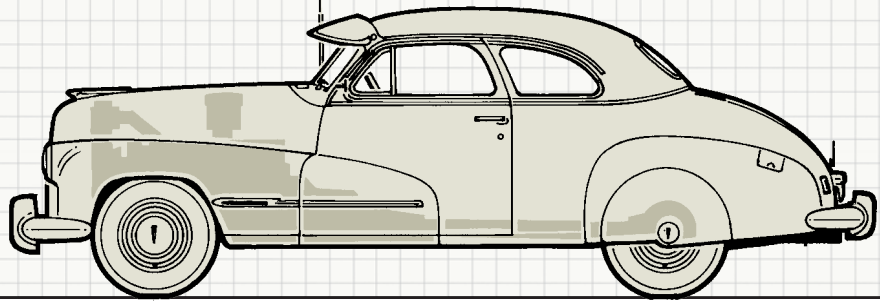
GM's effort with Oldsmobile proved more than worthwhile, as plenty of soldiers, sailors and airmen were able to get back behind the wheel despite injuries that would likely have otherwise kept them from driving. Though adaptive controls today are more readily available and more extensive, the Valiant program proved an effective tool at exactly the right time. 🐾

1947 OLDSMOBILE 66 CLUB COUPE

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



58 inches



119 inches

SPECIFICATIONS

PRICE

Base price \$1,308.00
Options (on car profiled) Group 5 Valiant adaptive controls

ENGINE

Type L-head straight-six; cast-iron block and cylinder head
Displacement 238 cubic inches
Bore x stroke 3.5 x 4.125 inches
Compression ratio 6.5:1
Horsepower @ RPM 100 @ 3,400
Torque @ RPM 190-lb.ft. @ 1,200
Valvetrain Solid valve lifters
Main bearings 6
Fuel system Carter single-barrel downdraft carburetor
Lubrication system Full pressure, gear-type pump
Electrical system 6-volt
Exhaust system Cast-iron manifold, single exhaust

TRANSMISSION

Type Hydra-Matic four-speed automatic
Ratios 1st 3.66
2nd 2.53
3rd 1.45
4th 1.00
Reverse 4.31

DIFFERENTIAL

Type Hypoid, semi-floating gears
Ratio 3.90:1

STEERING

Type Worm and roller
Turns lock to lock 4.5
Ratio 19.1:1
Turning circle 37 feet

BRAKES

Type Hydraulically operated steel drums
Front 11-inch drums
Rear 11-inch drums

CHASSIS & BODY

Construction Steel body in steel ladder frame
Body style Two-door, four-passenger coupe
Layout Front engine, rear-wheel drive

SUSPENSION

Front Unequal length A-arms, coil springs, hydraulic lever shocks, stabilizer bar
Rear Solid axle, coil springs, hydraulic lever shocks, stabilizer bar

WHEELS & TIRES

Wheels Stamped-steel discs with drop-center rims; lug-bolted to brake rims
Front 16 x 4.50-inches
Rear 16 x 4.50-inches
Tires Goodyear
Front: 6.00 x 16
Rear: 6.00 x 16

WEIGHTS & MEASURES

Wheelbase 119 inches
Overall length 204 inches
Overall width 75.4 inches
Overall height 66.1 inches
Front track 58 inches
Rear track 61.5 inches
Weight 3,616 pounds

CAPACITIES

Crankcase 5 quarts
Cooling system 18.5 quarts
Fuel tank 19 gallons
Rear axle 3.75 pints

CALCULATED DATA

Bhp per cu.in. 0.420
Weight per bhp 36.16 pounds
Weight per cu.in. 15.19 pounds

PRODUCTION

Oldsmobile made 14,297 Series 66 Club Coupes for 1947. There are no specific records of how many were produced with Valiant controls, either from the factory or at the dealership.

PROS & CONS

- + A genuine piece of history
- + Unique driving controls
- + One of ????
- No spares for Valiant controls
- Without looking closely, no one would know it's so special
- One of ????

WHAT TO PAY*

Low \$4,000 – \$9,000
Average \$10,000 – \$16,000
High \$17,000 – \$24,000

*Non-Valiant equipped model

CLUB CORNER

National Antique Oldsmobile Club
121 North Railroad St.
Myerstown, Pennsylvania 17067
www.antiqueolds.org
Dues: \$38/year
Membership: 1,300

Oldsmobile Club of America
P.O. Box 80318
Lansing, Michigan 48908-0318
517-663-1811
www.oldsclub.org
Dues: \$40/year
Membership: 1,500



LOOKING AT THE FRONT-END views of the beautiful 1967 Oldsmobile in HCC #115, I am reminded of my days working at Oldsmobile in the 1960s. The front-end design of the 1967 Oldsmobile 88s and 98s was a nightmare for the folks at Final Car Assembly. Because of the complex design of the grille, it was very difficult to achieve a uniform gap between the hood and across the three grille sections; also, between the left- and right-hand grilles and the front fenders and fender extensions—the most troublesome part being the center grille, as the thin horizontal grille bars often appeared to be inclined upwards to meet the nose of the hood.

As I recall, the front clip was sub-assembled on a merry-go-round. During this sub-assembly process, it was critical to align the three grille sections properly. The front clip assembly was then attached to the chassis. This was followed by the front bumper and hood. Any grille misalignment during sub-assembly of the front clip then became very apparent. Also, any other tolerance stack ups during front-end assembly contributed to the problem. Looking at the car, you can imagine that a lot of adjustment and tweaking was then required to achieve a uniform gap, hood to grille and fenders to grille.

Fortunately, for 1968, the front-end design of the full-size Oldsmobile was much simplified; likely after plenty of “kicking and screaming” by the people at Final Car Assembly. And with some input from the financial people.

On another topic, note how the headlamps on this 1967 Oldsmobile are recessed into the front fenders such that they are not visible from the sides. It was design situations like this that led to the FMVSS requirement mandating side marker lights beginning with the 1968 model year.

Patrick Bisson
Flushing, Michigan

REGARDING FORD’S PRESENCE at the 1934 *Century of Progress*, after the 1933 Fair, Ford realized that a great public relations opportunity had been missed, and luckily for them, the fair commissioners decided that since the fair had made money in its first year, it would be held over for another season. That was a rare occurrence; world’s fairs typically run from May 1st through October 31st, or thereabouts.

Henry Ford had lost his self-assurance during 1932-’33 when company fortunes slipped as Ford slid to third in sales. Fred Black, the Ford Motor Company publicist, tells us, “The reason we were not in the 1933 World’s Fair was that we couldn’t get Mr. Ford to make up his mind. We had gone over the plan, and the fair officials saw me a number of times. We were all set to go in and put on an assembly exhibit.”

Ford had shown an assembly line in 1915 at the San Francisco fair. Black continues, “We never got him over to look at the Chicago site. Then, finally, one day the fair representatives came in and said we would have to hurry to get into this fair and get anything done. Ford would have to get another idea, as General Motors had decided to build an assembly line.” Naturally, Ford was angered and said he wouldn’t have a damned thing to do with their fair.

In a resounding success, 20 million visitors had seen the fair in 1933. They saw Hudson, Nash, General Motors, White, International and a host of others, but no Fords. In the waning days of 1933, Edsel Ford summoned Black to his office. As was typical, it was poor Edsel who reasoned with Old Dad, and between himself and Black, they convinced Henry to get into the 1934 fair.

GM didn’t undercut Ford; it was Henry’s own waffling that did him in. The Rotunda on the fairgrounds was completed quickly, as were all the fair buildings, since they were never considered to be permanent. The structures were plywood and stucco, or siding, etc., with quickly finished interiors for the exhibits and/or sideshows for a fair season lasting six months.

When the fair ended in 1934, it was decided that the Rotunda would be erected in Detroit. That building took 18 months to build, as it was intended to be permanent, and more substantial

materials were used. At that time limestone was used for the facing of the structure.

The “1933 Thirty Years of Progress” medallions that are often attributed to the *Century of Progress* only commemorate Ford’s 30 years of existence and have no connection to the COP. Surely a nice collectible, but often misidentified.

Larry Kargol
Orland Park, Illinois



I FOUND THE ARTICLE on the 1950 Oldsmobile 98 in HCC #113 to be extremely interesting. I note Jeff Koch’s apparent disappointment at the somewhat leisurely off-line acceleration of the featured car, stating, “Nothing’s jumping here.” A little remembered detail concerning the 1950 Olds Hydra-Matic may explain the disappointment. You see, most, if not all, of the 1950 model run of Oldsmobile Hydra-Matics were set up to start in 2nd gear if the quadrant was in “Drive.” First gear was accessible by selecting “Lo.”

The Olds 98 I drove as a teenager was converted back to the original first-gear automatic start, and I can tell you that acceleration off the line was anything but sluggish. The mechanic who converted my Olds back to a full four-speed automatic told me that Oldsmobile went to the second gear start in 1950 because too many owners were complaining of burning rubber on take-off with the previous year’s newly introduced Rocket engine!

As a typical 17 year old, I thought “laying a patch” at stoplights was great fun. After receiving my first ticket for “competitive driving” on the public streets, I limited my drag racing exploits to rural roads. Great fun, thrilling and stupid. As a 70-something, I don’t drive that way anymore, but I really miss that Oldsmobile. What a car!

Tom Andrews
Angola, Indiana

Sole Survivors

Recently, I traveled to York, Pennsylvania, to attend a Studebaker swap meet. It was a big indoor show, and I planned to stay in the area for three days, so I made arrangements for a room in a hotel I thought was just outside of town. As things turned out, it wasn't; it was smack dab downtown in a section called Historic Downtown York.

I arrived there well after dark, and I have to say, the street life at that hour was, umm, lively. And a trifle scary.

But the next morning, while driving to the show, it was light out, so I was able to see things much better, and came to appreciate the area a little more. I also had the good luck to notice a nearby large brick building with a beautifully painted sign that read "York Motor Car Company." Beneath it was a painting of a locally made Pullman automobile.

Pullman? I wasn't sure if I'd ever heard of that make, and if I had, I'd long forgotten it. Musing further, I reflected that I'd never actually seen one and probably never would. After all, how likely is it that an example of an obscure make like Pullman would survive? Think of all the various scrap drives that have occurred over the years, and all the wear and tear a 100+ year-old car would go through, and then add in how difficult it is to find parts for long-out-of-production cars, and you can imagine that the odds of one making it to today are slim. But when I mentioned my thoughts to a local enthusiast at the show, he assured me that, in fact, several Pullman cars still exist in the area, and I soon learned that they had been produced by the York Motor Car Company from 1905 to 1917.

Over the years, I guess I've been to hundreds of car shows, and in that time, I've seen quite a few relatively unusual makes, like the Continental Beacon, Zipper electric car, Rickenbacker, Ajax, etc. I've seen Auburns and Appersons, Knoxes and Nashes, Stutzes and Studebakers. I've also seen 1895 and 1898 Riker automobiles, and I've ridden in 1902 and 1910 Ramblers. But I've never seen an Acme, built in Reading, Pennsylvania, from 1903 to 1911. I've never seen a Chadwick, also made in Pennsylvania, from 1904 to 1916, or a Roamer, a Peterson, a King, or a Jackson. And I've also

never seen a Foster automobile, though several companies made them, including one possibility that was reportedly built just a few miles from my home in Connecticut. My point is that there are probably lots of nearly unknown automobiles out there that have survived.

All of this concerns me. In the history of America's automobile industry, thousands of brands have come and gone, most of them obscure or only locally known. And of course, most of them date to the period 1895-1925 when the industry was going through the inevitable process of winnowing out the small fish from the big ones. How many of those makes built in that 30-year period have completely vanished? More importantly, how many have just one or two surviving examples?

It would be nice if we had a national database that listed all existing examples of "lost" makes. In order to compile such a comprehensive record, a research team would need to contact all the automotive museums in the country—probably in the world, actually—to ascertain what makes and models they have in their collections. Likewise, the team would have to reach out to as many private collections as possible to find out what cars they had. And lastly, word would need to go out to private individual collectors, asking them to report on the obscure and one-off makes they own. Obviously, it would be quite an undertaking, and I can see it easily requiring years to complete. But I think it would be important to do.

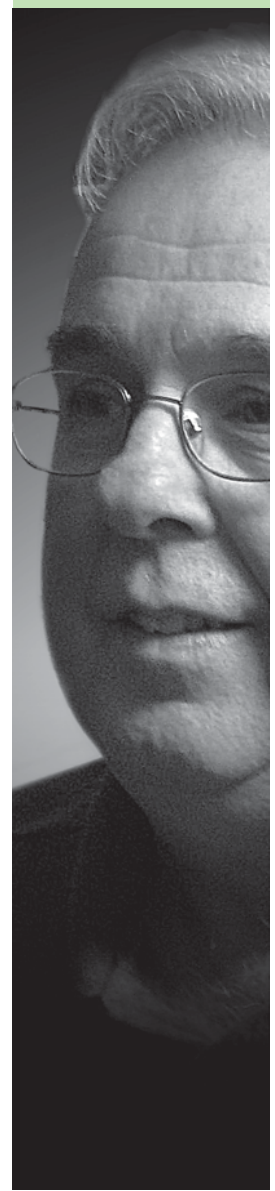
Now the big question: Who should do this? It should be an organization with the right skills and knowledge needed to wade through thousands of obscure brand names, as well as the passion to get the job done; someone like the Society of Automotive Historians, perhaps. Or maybe the National Automotive History Collection in Detroit.

Either way, it would take money. Every time I suggest federal funding, I get deluged with hate mail, so let's just say it'll require donations from generous people in the hobby.

Anyone out there interested in taking on this long-term commitment? 🐞



“Every time I suggest federal funding, I get deluged with hate mail, so let’s just say it’ll require donations from generous people in the hobby.”



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Hard Men, Harder Steel

I learned a long time ago from one of my peers that if you want to be good as a journalist, it's essential that you have the broadest grasp of information possible. You get that by reading. Anything you can get your hands on, even if it doesn't seem germane to your interests at first. So I was leafing through *Western Pennsylvania History* magazine, published by the Senator John Heinz History Center in Pittsburgh, and spotted a fascinating article that I'd like to share with you.

The author was Joel O. Lubenau, an engineer who holds an advanced degree in radiological health. His story was the tale of two brothers from Bridgeville in western Pennsylvania, named James and Joseph Flannery, who started out as funeral directors. They bought a hometown company that specialized in heavy fasteners called staybolts, which were used to attach the firebox of a steam locomotive to its boiler under extremes of heat and pressure. They began looking for stronger steel as raw material and became aware of vanadium, a moderately radioactive element first identified in 1801.

Research in Europe had already demonstrated that alloying and heat-treating standard carbon steel with less than one percent vanadium greatly boosted the steel's tensile strength. In 1905, James Flannery became aware that large deposits of the metal could be found in Peru, with concentrations in the ore of up to 15 percent pure vanadium. He sent a couple of metallurgists on a harrowing trip across the Andes to investigate, then sent his brother to buy a particularly rich vein, exchanging a carpetbag full of gold coins for the deed and mining rights.

Around the same time, Henry Ford was setting speed records in his 999 race car. On the sand in Ormond Beach, Florida, Ford spotted a French-built Panhard that had been badly wrecked in a high-speed spill. He noticed that despite being severely bent by impact, its steel frame had not sheared. The reason, he learned, was that Panhard was using vanadium steel in its frames. He resolved that the same material

would be extensively used in the new, lightweight automobile that Ford was planning to build.

Their Peruvian purchase ensured that the Flannery brothers controlled the world's richest known vanadium deposit. They founded a new firm after an Indian scientist in their hire discovered a new process to reduce the ore. Immediately, the price of a pound of refined

vanadium plunged from nearly \$4,800 to five bucks. That was step one. Step two was the brothers' hiring of a British metallurgist named J. Kent Smith, who targeted the new Ford Motor Company as a potential vanadium customer. The Flannery brothers dispatched Smith in 1906 to meet with Ford's production manager, Charlie Sorenson. The biggest immediate obstacle was finding a supplier to make the steel in enough quantities that could keep an automaker in business. Initial batches from furnaces in Canton, Ohio, were promising, but the quality deteriorated in subsequent lots.

Smith goes down as a critical figure in the early auto industry by dint of his taking over the Canton operation personally. The first large-scale "heats" of vanadium steel that Ford would accept were produced in early 1907. This steel went into the first Model Ts that Ford began building the following year. Fully half the steel in a Model T would eventually be infused with Peruvian vanadium. Eventually, the Flannery brothers were responsible for 90 percent of the world's vanadium production.

There's more to this story. Their sister was diagnosed with inoperable cancer, which directed the brothers' attention to the radioactive properties of vanadium, as Marie and Pierre Curie were conducting their early experiments with radium. The Flannery brothers, who died within a few weeks of one another in 1920, were crucial figures not just in the early auto industry, but in founding nuclear medicine by introducing vanadium as a substitute for radium in the United States.

See? Pick up something and read it. You never know what you might learn. 📖



“Eventually,

the Flannery

brothers were

responsible

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production.”



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Lincoln at the 1926-1927 Salons

Lincoln's first appearance at the New York Salon was in 1921. Both Fleetwood and Murphy exhibited their coachwork on the Lincoln chassis. The distributor/sales agent was York Motor Corp. at 217 West 57th Street in Manhattan. Then in 1922, Fleetwood, Judkins, and Holbrook displayed their coachwork on Lincoln chassis.

Holbrook's offering was a seven-passenger limousine. Fuller-Luce were the Lincoln agents advertising in the salon catalog doing business at the same address as the York Motor Corp. had previously. Brunn announced in 1923 they were "consulting body engineers for the Lincoln Division of Ford Motor Company." Fleetwood and Judkins continued to exhibit their coachwork on Lincoln chassis.

By the time of the 1926-'27 automobile salons, New York was in its 22nd consecutive year, Chicago was in its 12th, and it was the first year for the Los Angeles salon. All salons were organized by The Automobile Salon in New York. The New York salon was held November 28 to December 4, 1926, at the Hotel Commodore; the Chicago Salon was January 29 to February 5, 1927, at the Hotel Drake, and the Los Angeles salon was February 12-19, at the Hotel Biltmore.

At this time, Lincoln adapted the theme of a "travelogue of art and transportation, down through the ages," and issued a large color magazine with that title. The dozen topics of art and time periods (Gothic, Renaissance, 18th century French, Empire, etc.) were applied to the design of the coachwork on most (if not all) of the cars displayed at the three salons, starting with New York. In addition to the Lincoln magazine, numerous advertisements in color were placed in the souvenir catalogs issued for the salons. There would also be black-and-white advertisements paid for by the local Lincoln dealer network in the respective cities.

In New York, Park Central Motors on Park Avenue and 46th Street heavily promoted its "expert advice of an experienced organization," and competition came from Theodore Luce

Lincoln Motor Cars on Broadway. He had been one of Lincoln's earliest dealers, as noted previously. Roslyn Motors out on Long Island had three showrooms "located at points most convenient for Long Island residents"—Roslyn, Flushing, and Southampton.

In the 1926 New York Salon catalog, both Lincoln and Packard spent a small fortune on advertising to see who could get a picture placement of their respective makes mentioned most. The salon's promoter must have loved this fierce competition, as ad revenue flowed in.

The Chicago Salon that took place after the New

York Salon saw the Lincoln dealers of Chicago band together to take a two-page ad listing all 10 dealers, and even had a map showing the approximate location of each one. They promised "neighborhood service of unusual character."

The Los Angeles Salon catalog did not list Lincoln dealers by name to direct customers to go to for purchase of a car, as they were listed in the catalogs of New York and Chicago. Not far from Los Angeles, in Oxnard, was the authorized Lincoln agent for Ventura County, A.J. Dingeman who was very active in Lincoln sales and service in that area.

Perhaps the most unusual and striking in appearance of the theme "Lincolns of the 1926-'27 salons" was the "coaching" era represented by a brougham built by Judkins. It was a blend of the English tally-ho coach on a car chassis. The Lincoln promotional material stated, "The picturesque smartness of the coach, always alluringly attractive, lives anew in motor car design." I'm sure it drew crowds at all the salons. As to it being "picturesque," well, it definitely was striking! Noted automotive illustrator Roland Stickney did a watercolor rendering of this Judkins creation for use in promotional material. Fortunately, the car has survived and is in the National Automobile Museum in Reno, Nevada. Equally as fortunate, the original Stickney portrait of the car exists as well. It proudly hangs above my desk. 🐾



“ At this time,

Lincoln adapted

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down through

the ages'...”



Treasures on the Coast

Outstanding cars and bright Florida sunshine were the hallmarks of the AACA's Southeastern Winter Meet in Port St. Lucie

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD LENTINELLO

The first show of the 2014 season for the Antique Automobile Club of America was a huge success for both the host club as well as those car owners who trekked down to Florida's east coast for a little sun, fun and old-car excitement. Thanks to the hard work performed by the members of the Treasure Coast Vintage Car Club, there were about 300 terrific collector cars on display.

The show was held at the Port St. Lucie Civic Center, February 20-22, with the cars displayed on the huge lawn in front. Although a few rain showers early on dampened the ground, the rest of the afternoon was glorious with warm sunshine. And with the Elliott Museum in nearby Stuart, with its sensational collection of some of the rarest Model A cars and trucks ever built, this was an ideal location to host a major AACA meet.

If you couldn't make it to Port St. Lucie, there are plenty

of other AACA meets and tours coming your way. To discover one of the many AACA national and regional meets scheduled for 2014, as well those already set for 2015 and 2016, visit the organization's website: www.aaca.org.





Everyone was interested in viewing this rarely seen 1948 Playboy convertible with its folding hardtop. Owned by Michael Cohen of Plantation, Florida, it was entered in the *HPOF* class for unrestored cars.



Going for his First Junior award was Robert Hudson from Jupiter, Florida, with his sleek-looking 1949 Pontiac "Silver Streak" eight-cylinder sedan.



One of the most sensational-looking cars was this exceptional 1950 Mercury two-door station wagon owned by Chris Koch from Palm Coast, Florida.



In the *Repeat Driver Participation Class* was this beautiful 1938 Buick coupe owned by Dr. Ronald Vellekoop of Palm Bay, Florida.



John Baron of Stuart, brought his distinguished 1927 Packard six-cylinder roadster. Its restoration and color scheme are exceptional.



The exhilarating shape of this 1959 Oldsmobile Ninety-Eight Holiday SportSedan caught everyone's attention. It was shown in the *Repeat Preservation Class* by owner Martin Roca of Miami.



Yorktown, Virginia, resident James Elliott entered his sleek 1966 Corvair convertible with its correct wire wheel covers in the *Repeat Preservation Class*.



Sporting blue coachwork with matching blue upholstery, this striking example of a 1927 Chrysler sedan, owned by local Port St. Lucie resident Pedro Aguilera, has to be one of the finest.



The red pinstripes highlight the flowing lines of this 1939 Chevrolet Opera Coupe owned by Kenneth Symonds of Jensen Beach.



There were plenty of '57 Chevs on hand, including this finely restored convertible owned by James Serra from nearby Palm City.



Green coachwork with a tan convertible top made a pleasing combination for Bea and Bill Pappas' 1941 Cadillac sedan.



Another sharp-looking station wagon was this beautifully restored 1949 Plymouth owned by George Balaschak from West Palm Beach.



It was a treat to view this first-year Charger. This unrestored 1966 is owned by Joseph Seybert of Bridgeport, West Virginia.



Seeking a First Junior award for his handsome 1971 Oldsmobile Cutlass convertible was Mark Heifferman from Royal Palm Beach, Florida.



This magnificent 1985 Seville with its period-correct sim-com "convertible" top was a welcome sight. Owner George Nolan drove it down from Titusville.



This 1941 Packard sedan looked sharp with its two-tone gray color scheme and, being in the *Driver Participation Class*, is driven regularly by owner Joe Hilton of Stuart.



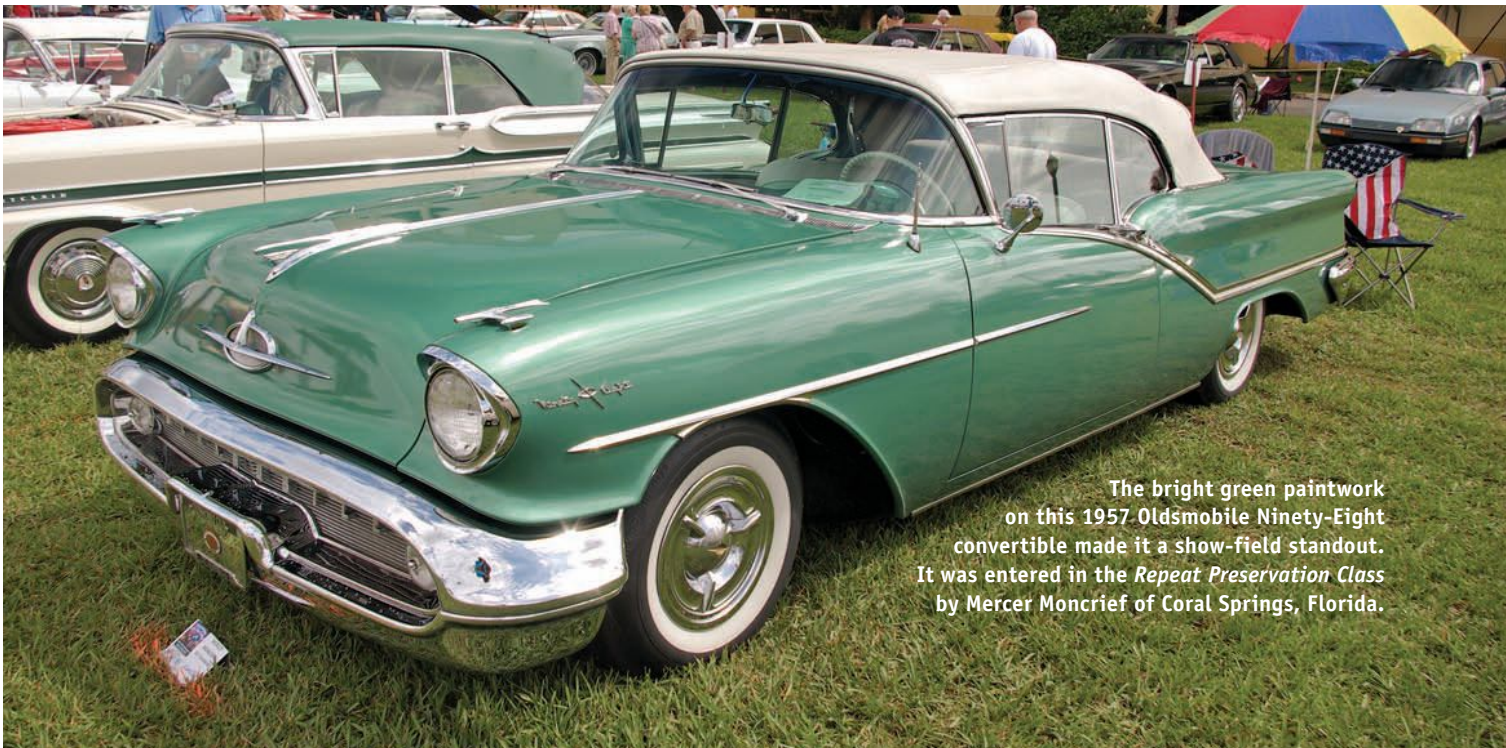
Vero Beach resident Edna Caskey Wieler brought down her 1902 Knox. Its thin, red, radial-spoke wire wheels add to its many charming characteristics.



Looking oh-so elegant in two-tone gray coachwork was this 1933 Cadillac V-12 sedan owned by noted Cadillac collector Daniel Gernatt from Collins, New York.



It's always a treat to see a Kaiser, especially a finely restored, two-tone example such as this 1952 coupe owned by Eugene Roy of Winter Springs, Florida.



The bright green paintwork on this 1957 Oldsmobile Ninety-Eight convertible made it a show-field standout. It was entered in the *Repeat Preservation Class* by Mercer Moncrief of Coral Springs, Florida.

Designer Lincoln

State of the art 1986 Continental was a Contemporary Classic, courtesy of fashion designer Givenchy

BY MIKE BUMBECK • PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF KOCH



Full-size American personal luxury cars were in flux moving into the Eighties as the sun was setting on the market for Seventies-style land yachts. Lincoln put the badge-engineered Versailles behind it, with two new models built atop the Ford Fox-body platform—the Lincoln Continental sedan and the Mark VII, coupe. The Town Car also carried on and retained much of its slab-sided styling, which like the Continental and the Mark VII retained a traditional front V-8 engine with rear-wheel drive combination.



GIVENCHY

Designer edition Lincolns held the top spots in the lineup. The Cartier moniker adorned the Town Car. Bill Blass added his touch to the Mark VII. The Continental was infused with haute couture from the French house of Givenchy. The Continental Givenchy was the halo level for the model debuted in 1982, with 1986 the seventh year designer Hubert de Givenchy lent his name to the car. The Continental exterior underwent a restyle in 1984 that brought the sedan closer to the aerodynamic lines of the Mark IV coupe, but further away from the sharp-edged Town Car.

It was the Continental's traditional yet contemporary mix of styling which first caught Robert Supalla's eye back in the early Eighties, when a neighbor came home in one of the newly released Continentals. The classic upright grille and bustle-back rear, combined with contemporary sensibility, appealed to Robert then and still does today. "That was the first year of that design. Ever since then, I've thought, 'What a great looking car!' That's how I got involved with it," recalls Robert.

Robert owned his first 1985 Continental in 1988, and lasting seller's regret set in soon after he sold it, so he feels fortunate to have found this low-mileage and well-maintained 1986 Lincoln Continental Givenchy in 2010 after a long and patient search. Robert is the third owner of the car, which he purchased from a collector. The car had spent its pampered life in the Pacific Northwest before being relocated to Southern California. The Continental has just barely 50,000 miles on the light-emitting-diode digital odometer display, and is original right down the mint-condition floor mats.

When originally offered, every available option was included free of extra charge on these special Continentals, but there was a group of features that set them apart as Givenchys. The exterior carried a two-tone paint treatment, punctuated with model-specific body and decklid striping. Lincoln described the exterior color combination as Midnight Black over a "hauntingly dark" Red Velvet Glamour Clearcoat, and it was unique to the Givenchy

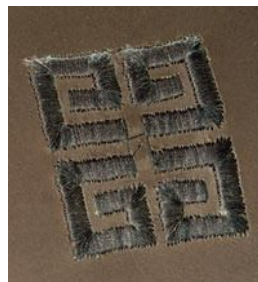


Traditional leather seating and interior are joined by the apex of Eighties luxury technology. Digital display reveals push-button computational power, with cabin climate, 12-speaker sound, windows, lighting and seat position all a button or dial away from perfection. An embroidered Givenchy logo adds style to the seats.

models. The two-tone split starts just below the door handle with an accent stripe separating the two colors. The overall effect is subtle. "At night it looks like a black car," says Robert. "Givenchy" logos and gold window scripts further differentiate these models from other Continentals.

The interior sports supple perforated leather in a taupe color, but a rich hi-tech fabric could have been had in place of the leather at no extra charge. The leather on our featured example is supple in the classic sense and contributes to the luxury of its ride. Robert tells us, "Once you get in you don't want to get out." Finally, logo floormats added another Givenchy touch, and the trunk was finished in carpet color-keyed to the interior.

This car is also equipped with a sunroof and 12-speaker JBL AM/FM cassette sound system with Dolby noise reduction, which Robert tells us sounds surprisingly good considering that high-end audio in car entertainment systems was not as common as it is today. The sunroof is an integral part of the



exterior and interior.

The Continental goes out for regular use at least once a month, and Robert always drives the car to events, including trips as far as Santa Rosa, California. When it comes to vehicle dynamics, the Continental is as modern as a car could get in 1986, and still holds its own in everyday driving. Robert explains, "I think of it more as a modern car than an old car,

because it has all the features that everyone wants and appreciates, even in the new cars."

The 5.0L V-8 engine features sequential electronic fuel injection, roller tappets that follow the camshaft lobes, low-tension piston rings, and fast-burn combustion chambers. These all work together to produce a predictable, smooth running, trouble-free engine, delivering all 150 horsepower at a mild 3,200 RPM, with the full measure of 270-lb. ft. of torque arriving at an almost imperceptible and barely off-idle 2,000 RPM.

The mid-size Eighties luxury matches modern car velocity over the miles of multiple-lane California highways without exertion, despite its more than 20 years since leaving the assembly line. He reports 23-24 MPG out on the highway, with upper teens in city driving. But, while the four-speed Ford AOD automatic transmission shifts smoothly, fourth gear engagement yields a noticeable overdrive transition with a 0.67:1 ratio. Robert says that if there were any fault with the car, it's that the fourth shift is perceptible enough to notice a disturbance in the force, which can interrupt an otherwise perfect driving experience.

With the low mileage and ongoing maintenance, the suspension is as it should be on this level of automobile. Seamlessly smooth and neutral to the point that Robert says he just doesn't think about it. The four-wheel disc, anti-lock brake system (ABS) was standard on the Continental, and Robert reports that it still works perfectly today.





“The benefit of driving the Lincoln is really like that of driving a modern car. Driving the 1956 Cadillac—which I’ve owned since 1987 and which is all-original with factory air-conditioning—I’ve driven that one for about 30,000 miles. The interesting part is that it’s a lot of work to drive that Cadillac. The Lincoln, you just get in and set the cruise control and get to your destination relaxed. It’s a pleasure to drive.”

To help preserve the excellent mechanical condition of his Continental, Robert changes the oil and filter twice a year regardless of mileage. Original maintenance records indicated the original owner went with Pennzoil from the beginning, so Pennz oil goes in the crankcase in modern times. Robert keeps the car covered and garaged when not in use, but does get the car out and driving to prevent atrophy from creating maintenance issues. An air conditioning refrigerant recharge has been the only unscheduled maintenance item under Robert’s careful stewardship. Mother’s and Meguiar’s products work together for exterior and interior car care, with Griot’s Garage leather care keeping the perforated leather clean and supple.

The design of the car appeals to Robert today, just as it did when he first laid eyes upon his neighbor’s Continental just off the dealer’s lot. Robert finds others are first struck by the condition of the car, then surprised to find out not only how old it is, but that it packs an impressive compliment of modern features. ABS brakes, gas charged shock absorbers, and digital displays are just part of its modern automotive feature set.

While contemporary compacts may pack some of the Continental’s technology, they don’t have its style, a look appreciated every time Robert drives his not often seen era of Continental. “Now you rarely see them on the road,” Robert said. “The interesting part is, what surprises me, is that when I do drive the

The 5.0-liter (302-cu.in.) V-8 engine was refined in 1986 with electronic sequential multiport fuel injection for 10 more horsepower and 20 additional lb.ft. of torque over the previous throttle-body injected version.

car is how many thumbs up I get or people slowing up to look at the car. It’s surprising because to me it’s still a new car. With my 1956 Cadillac, you kind of expect that from people, but with the Lincoln it still sort of looks like a modern car, so you think it would go a little more unnoticed. It’s surprising how many people stop and comment, or if I’m in the parking lot people stop and ask about the car”.

Robert plans on holding onto the Lincoln in the same way he’s held onto his Cadillac. He was patient looking for both his collector cars, and is happy to have found them in such incredible condition. Enjoying and preserving the Continental as best he can is the roadmap for the future. “I try to use it. That’s the fun of owning the car. I want to get around and enjoy it: still use it but preserve it at the same time. I think it’s probably one of those cars that’s undervalued and underappreciated by a lot of owners because the Eighties had such a bad reputation for quality. With this car, there is no lack of quality at all. It’s really a finely built car”.

“ I think of it more as a modern car, because it has all the features that everyone wants and appreciates, even in the new cars.”



Trusty Tudor

*After 64 years of ownership,
a well-maintained 1950 Ford and its
original owner age gracefully together*

BY THOMAS A. DeMAURO • PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM DONNELLY



In 1950, gas was 25 cents per gallon, the median yearly household income was about \$3,300 and on October 2, Clifton Wright, a 23-year-old auto mechanic, took delivery of his new Ford V-8 Deluxe Tudor. Little did he know then, that the sedan would serve as his daily driver for the next 39 years, and he would still revel in driving it in 2014.

While plying his trade at Bemis Motors in his hometown of Brattleboro, Vermont, for five years, he

would hear Elmer Bemis grumble, “When you are ready to buy a new car, come and see me,” each time he approached him to buy a used model. Finally, in the summer of 1950, Clifton was ready.

A V-8 was a must, but to keep costs low, Clifton wanted to forego options like a radio and an oil-bath air cleaner because he could simply take them from his 1939 Ford. Thus, the black 1950 sedan would feature an optional recirculating hot water heater and a suggested retail price of \$1,631.

Clifton told Elmer his 1939 Ford trade-in was worth \$350. Elmer cut it by 5% to \$332.50, but also discounted the new Tudor 5% to \$1,549.45. Six weeks elapsed from the order date to its build date of September 28, 1950, at Ford’s Somerville, Massachusetts, assembly plant.

Despite Elmer’s prodding, Clifton felt he had



good reason to wait until 1950 to buy new. As a Ford mechanic, he was privy to the teething problems suffered by the redesigned 1949 models. "The engine had piston slap, the valves and cooling fan were noisy, the front end promoted premature tire wear, dust and water leaked into the bodies and the doors were miserable to adjust," he recalls. "Those were just the main complaints."

But for 1950, Ford boasted "50 Ways New, 50 Ways Finer." Part of the improvement plan included camshaft, piston, timing gear, and oil pump revisions to reduce operating noise, and upgraded lubrication and a redesigned accessory drive layout for the 6.8:1 compression, 239-cu.in., 100-hp, flathead V-8.

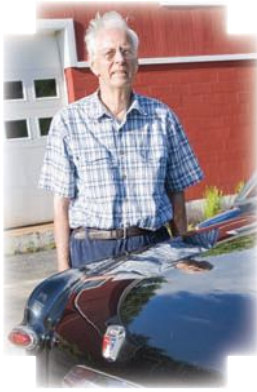
These modifications complemented prior years' advancements of a "deep breath" intake manifold, "power dome" combustion chambers, "Equa-Flo"

cooling, and "Loadomatic" ignition.

Thanks to meticulous maintenance by Clifton, the dates, mileage and accounts of which he kept in a notebook in the car, and the highlights of which we will present here, the V-8 in his Tudor didn't need a basic overhaul until 216,500 miles, in February 1968.

In February 1974 at 244,700 miles, the cast-iron block was hot-tanked, and the 3.75-inch stroke-cast crankshaft was exchanged for one cut .020-inch on the rods and mains. New bearings, including cam bearings, were installed, the cylinder walls were deglazed, and the valves were refaced.

By March 1983, 308,000 miles had accumulated, and the block was bored .020-over to 3.2075-inch, and new pistons, rings, bearings and intake valve guides were installed. After 30,000



“It just grew on me. It wasn’t a conscious decision, it just happened, and we grew old together.”

more miles, in April 1995, the engine was pulled to inspect its internals because it had previously overheated. The bearings were replaced, the cylinders were lightly honed and the pistons were cleaned before reassembly.

The 9.5-inch clutch had been changed on multiple occasions over the years, and in February 1959 at 141,000 miles, the three-speed’s input shaft bushing and seal were replaced. In response to high fuel prices resulting from the OPEC oil embargo, in February 1974 at 244,700 miles, Clifton installed a used overdrive assembly. After chipping a tooth off the cluster gear, in July 1987 at 324,000 miles, he swapped in repair parts from a 1952 transmission and fixed the worn shift linkage.

Having its own issues was the 3.73-geared Hotchkiss-style rear end. Clifton laments, “The pinion seal would leak, I wouldn’t notice, and the rear would run dry and spall the gears.” The first occurrence was in March 1957 at just over 100,000 miles. Donor parts from a used differential were installed in December 1960 at 159,800 miles. In July 1978 at 279,500 miles, a used rear end was bolted in.

The Ford’s “Hydra-Coil” sprung independent front suspension and “Para Flex” semi-elliptic-leaf-sprung rear, hydraulic shocks (now Monroe) and “Magic Action” 10-inch drum brakes were serviced and rebuilt as needed. An extra leaf was added to the rear springs in 1954 to firm up the ride, and the .75-inch front anti-roll bar was replaced in 1957 when it broke.

Alas, though, the venerable engine had been installed in a vulnerable body. Named “Lifeguard” for its sturdy “all-steel, welded, full-arch bridge construction,” its sheetmetal was, however, susceptible to rust—no doubt hastened by the fact that the Tudor did not enjoy garage storage until the 1990s. By 1955, both rocker panels had to be replaced,

marking the opening salvo on a war on rust that would be waged often. Further repair was required throughout the years.

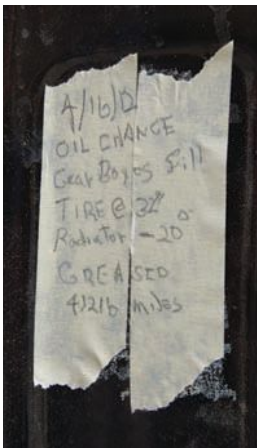
In that time, the front fenders were swapped for good quality used fenders, the rear quarters were fixed twice and the lowers replaced once; the lower doors, rocker panels and floor pan were replaced twice; the left door pillar was fixed three times and the right once; the trunk floor and body braces were replaced, as were the inner rockers; the inner fenders and wheel houses were rebuilt; a new under-deck-lid panel was fabricated; the parking lamp wings, both inner fender shields and the gravel shield were replaced; and the front body supports and the package tray were also repaired. The frame was swapped for a good used one in 1967, which required welding in 1980.

Though Clifton had diligently kept up with the Tudor’s rust issues, by 1994, it had amassed more than 338,000 miles and was once again, rusty. This time, the passenger-side front fender, lower door, a body mount, rear wheel house and quarter-panel were repaired, and part of the floor and the rocker panel were replaced.

On the driver’s side, a body mount and the trunk eyebrow were fixed, as was the spare tire well and under-deck-lid panel. The front gravel deflector, window reveals and dash panel were sandblasted and painted, and the front sheetmetal was reassembled.

After the sheetmetal repairs, the existing paint was sanded smooth. Areas stripped to receive bodywork were given a skim-coat of filler and block-sanded with 80-grade paper. The body was primed with DuPont products and block-sanded with 220-grade on the first two coats and then 320-grade on the last. It was painted with three coats of DuPont acrylic enamel, and then wet-sanded with 600-grade, compounded and polished.

The flathead V-8 and its bay were last detailed in the 1990s, so that’s now on Clifton’s “to do” list. Speaking of lists, here’s one way he keeps track of the work that he does on the Ford. Another is the notebook he’d used since the 1950s.





The engine and accessories were detailed, the stock 16 x 4.5-inch wheels were sandblasted and repainted, and 6.00 x 16 reproduction tires were installed, a new firewall pad and floor mats were fabricated, and all the trim was polished. A 1951 rear bumper and brackets replaced the rusted stock one and the hood ornament is from an earlier-built 1950 Ford—different than the later-built cars.

Over the years, Clifton became well versed in the evolution of auto body repair. “The 1957 body repairs were done with metal screws,” he recalls. “I borrowed a torch in 1961 in addition to using pop rivets. I eventually had my own torch and could weld or braze any seams. Years later, I got a MIG welder [after this car’s body was finished], which made it much easier to reduce distortion in flat panel seams when welding.”

Like the body, interior rejuvenation was also periodically performed, and Clifton made an interesting discovery in 2010. “When I talked with someone at LeBaron Bonney I was told the existing material on my seats was for a Custom Deluxe model—not a Deluxe like mine. The rest of the interior was correct,

so I just bought what matched my car. When I cut apart the old backseat cushions, I found a scrawled chalk mark of “200,” but my car was “209” when it went down the assembly line.” It appears that Clifton’s Deluxe got the Custom Deluxe seats meant for car “200.” Regardless, with a new headliner, seat upholstery, and door panels, the Tudor was back on the road and looking factory-new again.

Today, gasoline costs about \$3.65 per gallon, the median yearly household income is nearly \$51,000, and Clifton Wright, now 87 years old and living in New Hampshire, still has his 1950 Tudor. It was with him in 1952 when he went to work for a sand and gravel company, driving big Ford dump trucks, and later doing winter maintenance on them; when he was married in 1959; when he and his wife, Shirley, raised five children and when he retired from the same company in 1988.

Having accrued over 340,000 miles in 64 years, Clifton now enjoys driving his trusty Tudor only when the weather allows. Why did he keep this Ford? “It just grew on me,” he admits. “It wasn’t a conscious decision, it just happened, and we grew old together.” 🐾

The in-dash radio block-off plate remains, and the aftermarket under-dash radio Clifton had swapped in from his 1939 Ford was removed. An upgraded Magic Aire heater was added in the 1970s. The replacement seat covers and door panels have held up well.





Go Western GM, Go Western!

Buick's Late-1950s Western-Themed Cars

BY DAVID W. TEMPLE • PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY GM MEDIA ARCHIVE UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

During the 1950s, the Buick Division of General Motors was represented on the auto show circuit with several Western-themed show cars, starting as early as 1952 with the *Ranger* convertible, a Canadian show car. However, very few of these are well known, even to Buick enthusiasts. Our story details three of them from the late 1950s—two from 1958, the *Wells Fargo* convertible and the *Round Up* station wagon—and one from 1959, the *Texan* station wagon.

Of the three, the most remembered is

the 1958 *Wells Fargo*, built from a Limited convertible given to actor Dale Robertson, the star of the Buick-sponsored television show, *Tales of Wells Fargo*. This car was on the show circuit before being presented to Mr. Robertson.

Among the custom features added to the car were special bucket seats and door panels upholstered in Danish calfskin with Western-motif leather inserts, Jersey hide carpeting for the floors and lower door panels, a console between the seats, which served as a gun rack containing two exposed chrome-plated Winchester rifles,

a leather holster fitted to each door panel holding a set of pearl-handled .38 caliber Colt revolvers, a longhorn steer's head overlaying the stock V-8 hood emblem, wheel covers modified with a three-bar "flipper," and inside the rocket-shaped quarter panel moldings (which were normally fitted with three sets of four clustered angled chrome bars and model name script) were simulated woodgrain inserts overlaid with "Wells Fargo" in chrome-plated block letters.

In 1995, noted dream car collector Joe Bortz purchased the *Wells Fargo* from

Dale Robertson with his 1958 Buick *Wells Fargo*. At the time, GM was a sponsor of the television show, *Tales of Wells Fargo*, in which Robertson starred.



Woodgrain inserts with the name “Wells Fargo,” were among the alterations made to the Limited convertible used to create the one-off car.



This stylist rendering reveals the proposed interior modifications to be made to the Limited convertible. Another similar image shows the name “Westerner” on the quarter panel. Perhaps the car simply began as a show car, and the tie-in to Dale Robertson’s TV show was considered later.

the large collection of the late Wally Rank, owner of Rank & Son Buick in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Rank had owned it since 1984.

At the time, according to Bortz, he considered the *Wells Fargo* as “a concept car,” but later realized the term really did not fit. Instead, he saw it as a factory custom. Bortz had the car repainted—it really needed nothing else done to it—and, in time, drove it for a total of somewhere between 2,000 and 3,000 miles.

As time went by, he felt the car did not fit in well with his collection of true concept cars such as the 1953 Buick

Wildcat and 1954 Bonneville Special.

Joe decided to sell the *Wells Fargo* at the August 1996 Kruse Auction in Auburn, Indiana, and drove the *Wells Fargo* there from his home near Chicago. Upon arriving at his assigned space, he found a gentleman standing there in the way. When the man turned around, Bortz did not know quite what to think. “Are my eyes deceiving me? He looks like Dale Robertson,” he thought, and in fact, it was! Robertson had learned his old car was going to be on the auction block and evidently wanted to see it again. The two

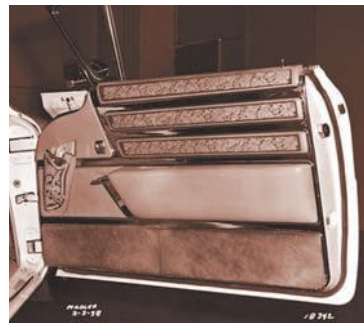
sat in the car and chatted; not surprisingly, Robertson told Bortz stories of driving the *Wells Fargo*.

The bidding for the *Wells Fargo* stalled at one point, so the auctioneer, knowing Robertson was in the audience, asked him to come to the stage and talk about the car. Soon afterwards, the bids picked up in pace. Ultimately, the winning bidder sold it two years later at the Kruse-Scottsdale auction, but at a substantial loss. At last report, the *Wells Fargo* was in a private collection in California.

Another Western-themed car from the



Among the custom features chosen for the *Wells Fargo* were special bucket seats and door panels upholstered in Danish calfskin with Western-motif leather inserts, Jersey hide carpeting for the floors and lower door panels, a console between the seats which served as a gun rack containing two exposed chrome-plated Winchester rifles, and a leather holster fitted to each door panel holding a set of pearl-handled .38 caliber Colt revolvers.



The door panels of the *Wells Fargo* were upholstered in Danish calfskin with Western-motif leather inserts, and a leather holster was fitted to each door panel to hold a set of pearl-handled .38 caliber Colt revolvers. This Limited-based car was also fitted with power windows.



Inserts like those of the door panels were sewn into the upright portions of the seats. Note the fiberglass boot covering the convertible top well.

same year, the *Round Up*, was a modified Caballero, a six-passenger station wagon in the Century series. It was reportedly built for Bill Mitchell, the man who succeeded the first head of GM Styling, Harley Earl. Based on the date of the photos in the digital files of the GM Media Archive, the *Round Up* was completed in June of 1958. There is no evidence that the *Round Up* served as a show car; there are no photos in the digital archives of GM Media Archive of the car at an auto show, nor is there even any information about it. There-

fore, for the time being at least, its history is unknown beyond those modifications that are plainly visible in the few factory photographs of the car.

These alterations were similar to those performed on the *Wells Fargo*, including bucket seats, an identical console fitted with a pair of rifles (though not chrome-plated this time), woodgrain inserts on the quarter panels and rear doors, and probably the same type of carpeting.

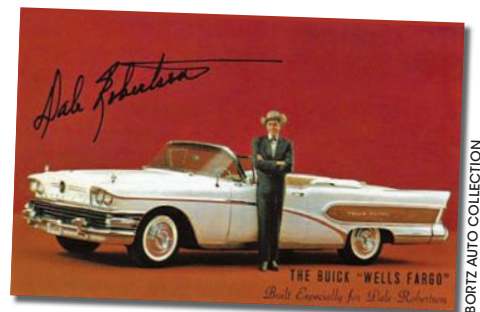
Bucket seats, incidentally, became an \$84 option for the 1958 Pontiacs, but were

not shaped the same as those used on the *Wells Fargo* and the *Round Up*. However, the custom seats installed on these two one-off specials were similar, if not identical, to those available on most GM passenger car lines between the 1959 model year and into the early 1960s.

The name "Round Up" appeared in chrome-plated script over the woodgrain inserts on the rear doors. Woodgrain inserts were also affixed to the door panels, and woodgrained panels, or perhaps even real wood, covered the cargo floor of the *Round*



The *Wells Fargo* served as a show car for GM prior to actor Dale Robertson taking possession of it. Robertson, standing near passenger-side front fender in Western attire, posed with the car and signed autographs for fans. The venue was the 1958 Chicago Auto Show.



A promotional postcard was produced picturing actor Dale Robertson posing with his Buick *Wells Fargo*.



Cowgirls posed with the *Wells Fargo* at the auto shows where the car was on display.

Up. A luggage rack was also installed on the car's roof. What became of the *Round Up* after it was thoroughly photographed by GM Photographic is unknown.

The same pattern used for the earlier Western-themed show cars was carefully followed with the largely forgotten 1959 Buick *Texan*. This one was built from an Invicta Estate Wagon. The Invicta series—composed of two- and four-door hardtops, a four-door sedan, and a convertible, as well as the six-passenger station wagon—was a new model name for 1959 and served as a replacement for the performance-oriented Century Series 60 line.

The standard Invicta was distinguished outwardly by bright rocker moldings and “Invicta” script on the front fenders. Inside, was Balfour cloth upholstery (more intricately woven than that of the lower level Le Sabre) for the hardtops and sedan models. Saran Balfour with Cordaveen was standard on the station wagon, while all-Cordaveen was standard for the convertible.

The 1959 Buick *Texan* is known to have been exhibited at only one major auto show, the 51st annual Chicago Auto Show. Just one photo of the *Texan* was available from GM Media Archive—a color one revealing its interior. None of the people working for GM during this time who were contacted for this story even remembered the *Texan*; the late Chuck Jordan was among them. He theorized the *Texan* might have been specifically built for someone within the company or some other “VIP.”



This factory photo from GM shows a stock Buick Caballero, a six-passenger station wagon in the Century series. A modified version dubbed the *Round Up* was built for Bill Mitchell, who, months later, would take over as head of GM Design upon the departure of Harley Earl.

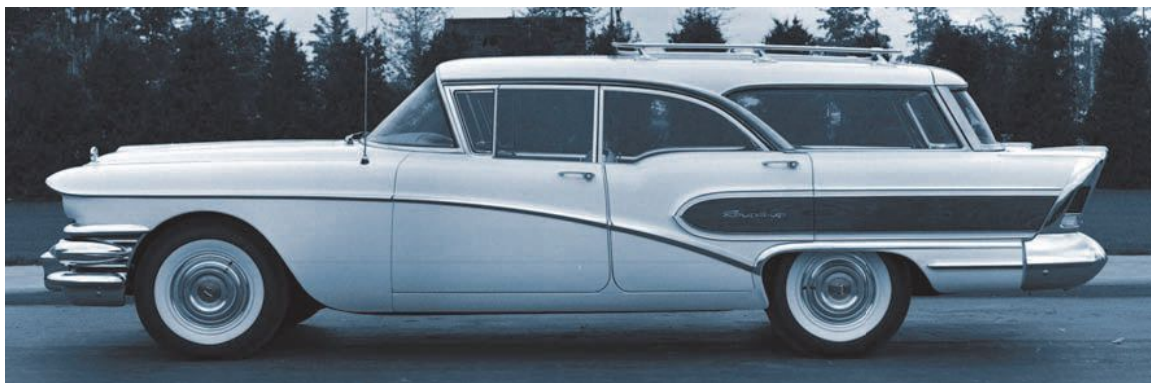
To get authorization for the construction of such a car, according to Jordan, it would often be billed as a show car. Jordan knew about that from personal experience; he had an early-1960s Cadillac built for him, which was first exhibited at the New York Auto Show before he took possession of it. This may have been the case with the *Texan*—shown once then presented to its fortunate owner.

And the apparent lack of photos from other venues does not necessarily prove that the *Texan* was not at, for example, the Detroit Auto Show and other such events. This show car may have been on tour

across the country and crushed afterwards, but there is presently no evidence of that scenario either.

Why the show car was named the “*Texan*” is open to speculation. The answer might well be another TV show tie-in. From 1958 to 1960, Buick sponsored another Western-themed show, *The Texan*, starring Rory Calhoun. Interestingly, the “*Texan*” moniker was at the time being used by Dodge for a regional car they offered from 1955 through 1959. A 1959 Buick fan and owner, the late Charles Barnette, made contact with the now-deceased TV star’s family in an attempt to

There was little outwardly different from the Caballero from which the *Round Up* was built. Note the woodgrain inserts and the “*Round Up*” name in chrome-plated script. The *Round Up* was completed in June of 1958.



The alterations made to the Caballero to create the *Round Up* were similar to those performed on the *Wells Fargo*, including bucket seats, an identical console fitted with a pair of rifles, woodgrain inserts on the quarter panels and rear doors, and possibly the same type of carpeting.

Door panels were upholstered in Danish calfskin with leather and woodgrain inserts. Unlike the *Wells Fargo*, the *Round Up* had manually operated windows.

Woodgrain inserts were placed between metal strips in the cargo compartment of the Buick *Round Up* built for legendary GM stylist Bill Mitchell.



The 1959 Buick *Texan* continued the Western-motif found on earlier Buick one-offs. This station wagon was fitted with a sliding sunroof possibly supplied by German-based company, Golde Schiebedächer. Other features included a custom console, which likely provided storage for a pair of Remington bolt-action rifles like those seen leaning against the car at the 1959 Chicago Auto Show. Note the saddlebags on the back of the front seats and the longhorn medallions on the door panels.

learn if the Buick *Texan* was given to Rory Calhoun. They did not remember such a car ever being owned by him. However, an article in a Swedish magazine, *Power*, from some years ago, featured a 1960 Buick Invicta Custom *Texan* allegedly owned by Calhoun when it was new. Another theory as to the disposition of the *Texan* was

that it could have been given to Edward Ragsdale, the general manager of Buick who retired in 1959. Currently, there is no evidence of that either.

What is known about this one-of-a-kind 1959 Buick is how it was modified. Its most obvious alteration was the installation of a sliding metal sunroof. The sunroof may

have been the type offered by the German-based company, Golde Schiebedächer, which had established a sales office in Detroit in 1957. Incidentally, Ford offered a sunroof-equipped Thunderbird for 1960, and the sunroof was sourced from Golde. Furthermore, Golde roofs were optional equipment on 1950s-1960s BMWs, Porsche 356s, the Volkswagen Sedan, Karmann Ghia, and the Kombi & Samba. Studebaker also offered a "Sky Top" from 1960 to 1963. Even so, the Golde sunroof was occasionally installed by dealers and customizers in the 1960s. Perhaps the *Texan's* sunroof did not especially impress visitors to the auto show, and GM quickly dropped the idea.

Other distinguishing features of the *Texan* included the "Texan" name on the front fenders and tailgate in chrome-plated block letters and an unusual leather interior. Pleated brown leather covered the bucket-type seats; saddlebag storage pockets were mounted on the back of the front seats; door panels were in two-toned tan and brown, with woodgrained accent panels and a longhorn logo; a tan mouton carpet covered the passenger compartment floor; a long console with a brown, pleated leather lid sat between the front seats and likely served as a storage compartment for twin Remington Model No. 725 ADL bolt action rifles like those seen leaning against the car in the photos. Since a twin gun rack was mounted between the seats of the *Wells Fargo* and the *Round Up*, the supposition of the *Texan's* long console having a set of rifles—or at least the mounting



The 1959 Chicago Auto Show; note the chrome letters spelling out "Texan" on the front fender and the rifle leaning against the rear door.

AUTHOR'S COLLECTION



hardware—inside it is a logical one. Other equipment included power windows and a radio. The bucket seats were likely electrically adjustable as well.

At the 1959 Chicago Auto Show, the *Texan* was displayed on a turntable covered with sand, and silhouettes of the state of Texas were mounted nearby. Standing alongside the show car were two models dressed in Western attire.

The *Texan* show car was the forerunner to the 1960 Buick Custom Invicta station wagon with the “*Texan*” interior. However, it differed in having a small console between the bucket seats, no

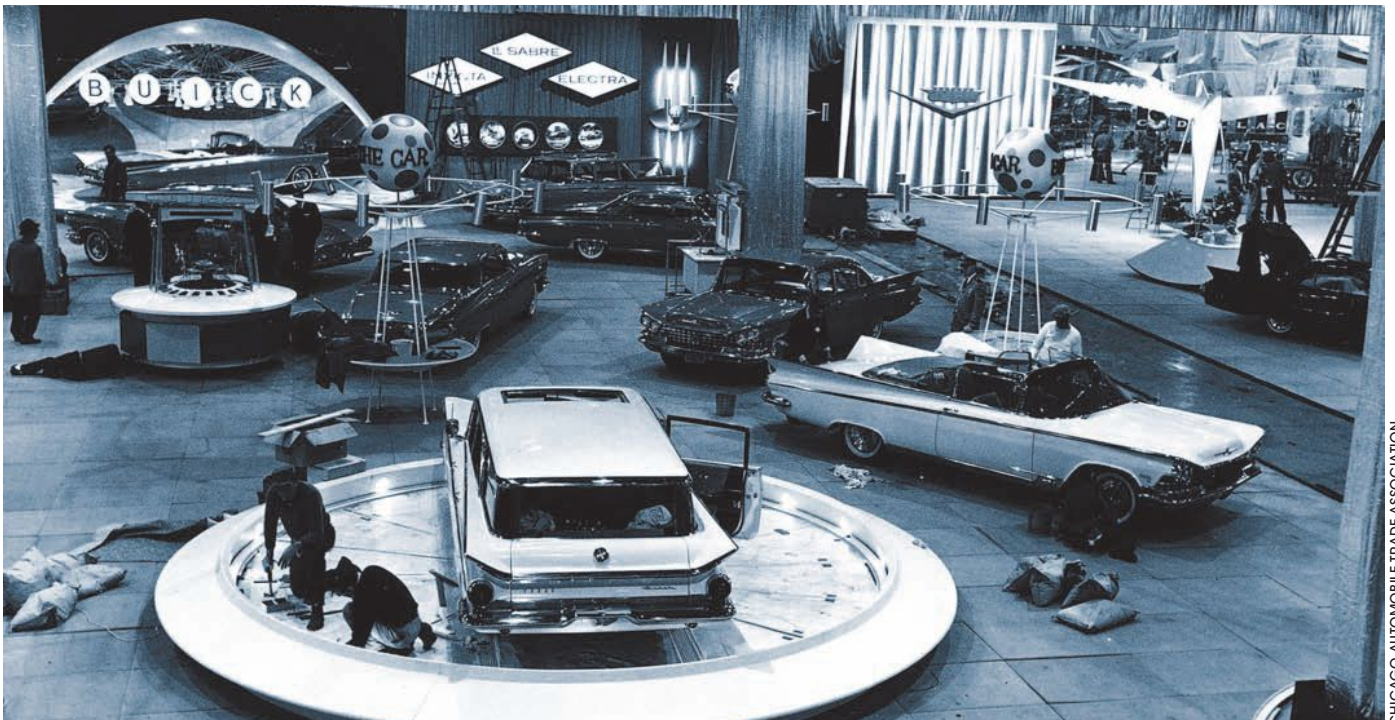
By all indications, the 1959 Buick *Texan* made only one public appearance, the venue being the 1959 Chicago Auto Show. The display included cowgirls, a platform covered with sand, and state-of-Texas silhouettes.

Mouton carpeting, no saddlebag-style storage compartments, and of course, rifles were not included. An Invicta Custom interior composed of leather-covered bucket seats and a console was an option for the Invicta two-door hardtop, convertible, and six-passenger station wagon. The *Texan* version offered only brown leather, but added a two-way power driver's seat, power windows, and a power tailgate window. Only 298 were built.

The “*Texan*” name did appear again on one 1960 Buick station wagon—a show car created by a Houston, Texas, dealership dubbed the *Go Texan*. Parker Buick authorized the modifications to one of the Le Sabre Estate station wagons. The car was built in just two weeks and cost \$10,000 to customize. It was displayed at

the Houston Rodeo Show, then stripped of its modifications and sold.

The *Go Texan* did not have a sunroof, but was similar in theme to the 1959 show car with its Western-motif appointments. These included bucket seats, unborn calfskin-covered dash and luggage areas, tan cowhide upholstery for the seating, three-gun rifle rack between the front seats along with holsters for a pair of Colt .45s, real single-action pistols for door handles, silver-buckled saddle bags, and twin spotlights adorned by gold-plated steer horns. Additionally, a pair of iceboxes was included. “*Go Texan*” script replaced the standard Buick identification on the car. Like its predecessor the *Texan*, whether or not the *Go Texan* still exists is an unanswered question. 🐾



Personnel can be seen performing the finishing touches to the display for the 1959 Buick *Texan* with its sliding sunroof.

SMS AUTO FABRICS

All American Cars 1930-2000

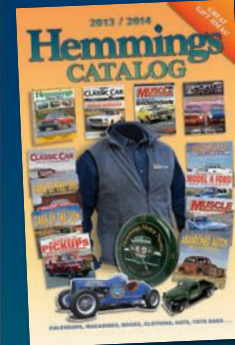
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Ralph Marano

America's award-winning collector of Packard rarities



BY JIM DONNELLY • PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM DONNELLY AND RICHARD LENTINELLO

You're paying so much attention to the thick traffic that you can pass right through without even knowing it. You come off the Garden State Parkway, a glacier of steel, well before rush hour, and then creep between traffic lights as you approach Garwood, New Jersey. Don't blink. The town is barely half a square mile in size and incorporates the state's shortest highway, Route 59, which stretches for exactly one block underneath New Jersey Transit's Raritan Valley Line. Between the congestion and its tininess, it's easy to miss Garwood completely.

Except for one spot. On South Avenue, there's a glass-fronted building that faces the street, with a pair of Packard Darrin roadsters prominently in view. One of them once belonged to Hollywood star Al Jolson. A few steps back is a Cadillac whose original owner was Clark Gable. In an adjoining room is a Stutz with LeBaron bodywork and some of the first bobbed pontoon fenders ever installed on any car by a custom coachbuilder. All of these treasures are very much out of place in this tight corner of gritty North Jersey. Except, at least, for the guy who put them there. One of Garwood's most prominent businesses is Marano and Sons Auto Sales, which specializes in late-model, low-mileage used cars of all kinds. The boss is Ralph Marano. Even on a sodden, rain-splattered

day, he drives a 1953 Packard Mayfair hardtop to work. And up and down the street are the buildings – three, to be exact – that hold his treasures.

Ralph is one of the premier living Packard collectors, not just in this country, but in the world. His collection numbers 85 classic automobiles, every single one of them 100-point concours quality. If you've been to Pebble Beach, Amelia Island, Meadow Brook or the Glenmoor Gathering in the past two decades, you've run across one of Ralph's prizes at some point, and probably more than once. The Marano collection is one of America's greatest. And unlike some collectors, Ralph doesn't try to hide what he's got. The glassed-in building in Garwood is his private museum. The cars go out to be shown and, within reason, driven. "This has never been about me. It's about the cars," Ralph says flatly. "My goal is to have people learn about them and enjoy them."

If you're hanging out with Ralph, and you ask him to describe his cars, he simply quips that what he prefers are "cars that are one-of-one, one-of-none and one-of- I-never-heard-of-it. Ninety percent of my cars are one of one or maybe one of two prototypes." While he carries himself in an unexpectedly offhand manner for an ably successful businessman, the reverence he holds



“ This has never been about me.
It’s about the cars. My goal is to have people
learn about them and enjoy them. ”





Marano wowed the crowd at Amelia Island this year by bringing along all 10 of his postwar Packard concept cars as a single, special display. The open car, second from left, is the Henney-bodied Pan American of 1952, with its disappearing convertible top.

for terrific cars just lasers through any conversation with him. We'll get to a specific accounting of his collection, but suffice it to say right now that he absolutely loves this stuff. His first car was a 1947 Ford, bought for \$55 when he was 12, that he sat inside and pretended to drive. It's a hereditary thing that's linked to a fascination instilled by his late father, James.

"I've loved cars since I was a little kid. There wasn't anything with wheels that I didn't love," he enthuses. "My father and I both loved cars. We took our business to one level, and then when I took it over, we took it to another level. But any car my father came home with, I fell in love with it: Older Cadillacs, maybe not on the scale that we do now, but for what we had, it was phenomenal. It laid in me the groundwork for what I have today."

Chronologically speaking, the Marano collection's centerpiece is a simple black 1937 Packard 120 coupe. It was the first example of that marque that Ralph ever acquired by himself. As he recalls, "I was a hot rod and Corvette guy at the time. My father and I went to a show, and I pulled my Model A in next to this Packard and parked. I didn't know what a Packard was at the time. I was 30 years old. But this car had every accessory on it that you can buy, and I fell head over heels in love with it. My father and I toyed all

day with buying it, but the guy wanted \$12,000 for it, and in 1978, \$12,000 was like \$12 million to me and my father. We talked all day, and my father said, 'You know, if we sell this and do that, maybe we can buy the car.' So we gave the guy a deposit. I lay awake for three nights worrying about it and finally took the deposit back, thinking that we couldn't swing it financially."

"The following night—and I was working for Sears, Roebuck at the time—I got home and my wife said the alarm was going off at the dealership," Ralph continues. "I went down, nothing was wrong, and on the way home I was hit head-on by a drunk driver, over in Westfield. I was lying there in the hospital while they tried to put my face back together, and I was thinking about my family, and my father, and all of a sudden, this Packard 120 came back into my mind. I wrote my father a note telling him to go buy the car. That's how I got the Packard, and how I got hooked on them. Ever since then, if it was something strange or unusual that was a Packard, I had to go after it."

How much hardware have Ralph's cars brought back to Garwood? By his own estimate, hundreds of awards, easily, from Pebble Beach to shows at New Jersey shopping malls. At Pebble Beach, Ralph has won Most Elegant Closed Car for his custom 1949 Cadillac, plus a Lincoln award. At Amelia Island, he has captured the august award named in honor of his longtime friend and fellow Packard restorer, Robert Turnquist (*HCC* #60), the late proprietor of Hibernia Auto Restorations in New Jersey. The winners, as we've seen, are not exclusively Packards.

"I collect everything, but with Packards, to me, it's about the automobiles. They're not just rolling sculpture, they're also pieces of American history," he explains. "But they've been forgotten, and they need to be brought back. They were all so innovative. Packard was the first car with a steering wheel, the first car with a parking brake, the first car with air conditioning. Packard was a leader of the world. What that company did in the 1920s right through the 1950s is just mind boggling. If you drive a 1928 Packard, and then drive a 1932 Packard, you've only gone ahead four years, only it's like 40 years when you measure the advances that Packard made each year."

The Maranos, father and son, got into cars on a part-time basis. While still in the Army, James Marano began selling used cars at impressive profit. Mustered out, he established a used-car business while working full time for the New Jersey Turnpike Authority. Ralph had begun installing replacement engines in cars at Sears



This coachbuilt Stutz represents some of the earliest uses of bobbed fenders as a styling feature on any automobile.

and eventually worked his way up to store manager. After Ralph left Sears, the two began selling cars full time in Garwood.

Not all of them are on formal display, but the collection fills three buildings near the Marano dealership, its exhibits rotated in and out on approximately a biennial basis. What's Ralph got? Here's one example. In the postwar years, Packard president Alvan Macauley commissioned the construction of 10 concept or show cars, including several El Camino-like pickups. Ten cars. Ralph owns all of them. They constituted a specialty display at Amelia Island this year. An irreplaceable car that stands alone is the pontoon-fendered 1929 Stutz M8, its bodywork done by Hibbard and Darrin, which was built for the 1929 Paris salon. Around the corner from it is a 1938 12-cylinder Lincoln K, one of very few bodied by LeBaron, which Ralph calls the world's most radically customized Lincoln. Built for a Lincoln dealer, its interior features a bar and an icebox that fold out of the driver's seatback.

In 1940, Bohman & Schwartz built a Darrin-like Victoria body for a Cadillac, designed by Maurice Schwartz. Ralph owns that Cadillac today. Same for the 1937 Packard Darrin in matching red that Clark Gable, legend has it, bought after his dog jumped inside and refused to move from the center console. It boasts a two-carburetor Edmunds intake manifold. Next to it sits a 1939 Packard V-12 limousine, with factory bodywork, originally owned by the Tin Pan Alley icon George M. Cohan of "Yankee Doodle Dandy" fame. It's got all of 10,000 original miles. Ralph bought it from Turnquist, who in turn had purchased the Packard from Cohan's estate in 1953, when it showed only 3,000 miles on its odometer.

Another irreplaceable item is a 1939 Packard Super 8, with bodywork by Franay, which was originally delivered in Franay's native France. The car was confiscated when the Germans invaded Paris in 1940, with Reich officers using the one-of-one Packard as a staff car. So did Allied officers as the Germans were pushed out of France following D-Day. The Franay-bodied car sat ignored for years until a G.I. bought it and shipped it back to the States.

As least by placement, the Marano collection's centerpiece is a 1934 Packard 1108, one of 12 that received custom bodywork from LeBaron that year. Ralph's example is one of four dual-cowl phaetons, the rest being four each of coupes and boattail roadsters. All of these lovely cars still exist, happily. Jolson's car is a 1938 Darrin roadster; a green one next to it is a 1942 model, one of only 15 Packard Darrins produced that year before war halted the civilian industry. That was Turnquist's neighbor's car, bought new, owned and restored by Turnquist in the 1980s.

Obviously, all of this is incredible stuff. How does one amass such a gathering? Ralph said simply that it comes down to persistence and patience. "I research a lot, being so active in the hobby and in the Packard world, that sometimes they find me," he muses.



The Marano collection abounds with Darrin-bodied specials. The side strakes date the green one to 1941. The yellow one behind it was originally owned by entertainer Al Jolson.



This incredible 1938 Lincoln K features daring custom coachwork by LeBaron, one of the few prewar Lincolns to have received a body from that design house.

"Some people want a car to go to the right home, and they seek me out because they know it will have one here."

Ralph's holdings are about to get a little bigger. "We're restoring a 1935 Packard with convertible Victoria body by Graber, the Geneva show car that year, for Pebble Beach. You've never seen a car with this much chrome. Even the intake manifold is chromed. It's incredible. It's being done by Stone Barn Restorations in Vienna, New Jersey, which does most of my cars. I'll tell you, I try to take one of them home with me from here every day. Sometimes, we have to start getting them ready to leave early in the afternoon because of the way they are parked in the buildings. They deserve to be driven. After all, we're only caretakers." 🐾



The Packard in the center is the Request concept car of 1955, the last such vehicle that Packard ever designed. To its right is one of four 1954 ½ Panther design studies with a removable hardtop, an Amelia Best of Show winner. To the far left is another Panther, a convertible.



Super Sport Six

One-owner 1964 Chevy II Nova gets refurbished so it can continue making family memories for many more decades





The body was stripped of existing paint and primer using the walnut shell blasting method. All the original sheetmetal miraculously survived well, despite decades of driving, thanks to the old-car-friendly California desert climate.



A former shopping cart dent in the sheetmetal was spooned and smoothed back to factory flat before any primer or paint was applied. The repair weld below the C-pillar was made to fix a common spot for stress cracks on 1964 Chevy II Novas.



A small amount of body filler was applied and sanded flat prior to the catalyzed epoxy build primer coat; the body filler is light blue, and the build primer is light yellow. Note the extensive masking job on the steering wheel and interior.



Sanding of the body filler and light coats of primer were followed by a full wipe down with paint prep. A heavier coat of build primer was applied and allowed to cure before block sanding to bring the body panels back to factory perfect.

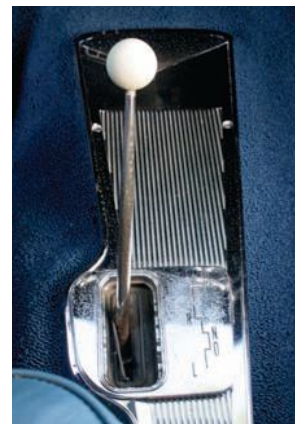
BY MIKE BUMBECK • PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF KOCH
RESTORATION PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE HAYES FAMILY

The Chevy II Nova was at the intersection of value, performance and smart style. For the 1963 model year, Chevrolet offered something in the Nova not previously available in this compact series: an optional 283-cu.in. V-8, along with four- and six-cylinder engines. Even so, the vast majority of Chevy II buyers chose the 194-cu.in. straight-six engine. This smooth-running powerplant was a near-perfect fit for the compact and lightweight offering from Chevrolet, which in two-door form weighed little more than 2,600 pounds.

Available in a variety of body styles, the Chevy II Nova could have been bought as a two- or four-door sedan; the ever-popular and practical station

wagon; or a two-door, five-passenger sports coupe—the most deluxe level of this series offered as the Super Sport Sports Coupe. The Super Sport package added the top level of style, yet remained available with the standard six-cylinder engine, which could be backed by either a manual or, as in the case of our feature car, an automatic transmission.

Paul Hayes has been the one and only owner of this restored 1964 Chevy II Nova Super Sport coupe. Paul's wife, Donnett, couldn't drive a stick and had economy in mind, while Paul liked a little "Super" with his "Sport." "I got my wishes, and she got herself a six-cylinder car with a Powerglide. We decided we wanted the shifter on the floor; that's all from the factory that way," explains Paul.





Here, the trunk deck, glovebox, fenders and doors are carefully hung inside the paint booth after getting their own bodywork, filler, sanding and epoxy-build primer coats. Paul wanted the Nova thoroughly painted inside and out.



Once the primer dried and cured, it was time for extensive block sanding using progressively finer-grade paper, until everything was ready to return to the paint booth for final finishing.



Everything worked out great in the long run.

Rumors of the new so-called "senior compact" Chevrolet Malibu were flying in 1963, but the intermediate Malibu was a little too much car for the couple who was interested in smaller cars. They had even considered an AMC product before a friend told Paul that Chevrolet would be producing a Super Sport Nova after all. Paul said he went down to the dealer early in 1964 and took delivery in March from Guaranty Chevrolet in Santa Ana, California. Total price: \$2,400, including tax and license.



The Super Sport series was a good option for those looking for the top of the Chevy II Nova's unique combination of economy and sporty style, and the car landed perfectly in the middle of the couple's needs for a new car. "The six-cylinder is economical. We were newlyweds. I wasn't making a lot of money, but I had a darn good job. And we decided we were going to have a family," remembers Paul. "The best thing that I ever did was to listen to the reasons Donnett had for wanting this particular type of car."

The Nova ran reliably as the family car for decades, and served as Paul's daily driver into the Eighties. Paul worked at North American Aviation, which had its headquarters at the south runway of Los Angeles International Airport. Parking the Nova at the end of the runway of one of the busiest airports in the world had deleterious effects on the original paint. "When that av-gas comes down and sits on your car all day... needless to say, it was not looking its best," remembers Paul.

It was after getting transferred back to the Anaheim division that Paul decided to start in on the restoration. The hood and fenders came off, and the engine and transmission were removed. Glass was carefully extracted and stored. Reference photos were taken of all original factory installation locations. These first stages of the restoration got going in the early Eighties, but then family took priority, and the project was put on hold while life took its turns around the Nova.

The Super Sport spent over 15 years in the garage underneath many boxes of other stored belongings, waiting for the day when time would allow for the restoration to restart, which it finally did in 2004.

The first task was to drop the fuel tank, drain



The lead painter is shown here finish-cutting the roof prior to the finish-buffing procedure used to bring back the luster of the Daytona Blue enamel that was lost due to years of California sun and unfriendly environmental elements.



Paul's daughter, Paula, works on one of the original hubcaps using Brasso cleaner and lots of elbow grease. Both she and her mother helped out extensively from the beginning to the home stretch of finishing the project.

the decade-old gasoline and clean the fuel lines. After a fuel pump rebuild and replacement of some other perished rubber parts, the engine finally started. Paul took the car into his longtime mechanic at Frank's Auto Services in Anaheim, California. Frank has been Paul's trusted mechanic since 1982 and is still working on the car, even recently making a house call to remove the problematic carburetor and bring it back to his shop for a full rebuild.

With the mechanicals sorted out, the Chevy II was then sent out for body repair and new paint. Acting on Frank's recommendation, the crew at Eightball Rods & Choppers were given the little

Chevy II, and they began by walnut-blasting away the original paint. It was then refinished better than new in the original Daytona Blue color.

The original upholstery and door panels were in fine shape, requiring just a thorough cleaning before being reinstalled in the Nova. Unfortunately, the headliner, package tray and carpeting didn't hold up as well and had to be replaced with new reproductions. Interior chrome trim is all-original, save for a reproduction rearview mirror and the gauge bezel. Parts specialists Modern Performance Classics supplied most, if not all, of the reproduction parts to bring the Nova back to like-new 1964-spec condition.



owner's view



It was, and still is, an economical family car. It's got a 16-gallon fuel tank. When it was new, we would drive it to Las Vegas regularly, usually to see Wayne Newton or Elvis perform. It has always been a reliable car, just a fun car to drive. Even on long trips to Northern California, it was always very comfortable. It didn't have air conditioning; our A/C was the windows!

It still gets up and scoots. Getting on the freeway with traffic moving at 65 or 70 MPH, I just push the pedal to the floor, and it quickly gets into the passing gear, scooting right in there. One thing I don't do is speed. I'll stay in the slow lane and let people honk. It's just one of those cars.



After cleaning up the body grounding points, instead of reusing the original wiring harness—which was showing signs of cracking and fatigue—Paul opted for a new reproduction harness, as well as other much-needed electrical parts. The new wiring harness works perfectly, with no trouble from the electrical system or any connected parts and accessories. A new turn signal switch prevents any unwanted blinks or mystery shorts from under the steering wheel.

Frank continues to take care of regular mechanical maintenance on the Nova. Only Valvoline oil is used in the engine, while Meguiar's is the wax and cleaning product of choice for the exterior paint, as well as the interior.

Now that the refurbishment of his Nova is completed, Paul enjoys driving his compact Chevy quite often, and drives it just like he did when he bought it new. Everything—from a trip out to dinner to a more organized event like a car show

out at NHRA Funny Car champ John Force's world headquarters—is part of the Nova's driving equation.

Paul's daughter, Paula, has great memories of the car as well. Speaking to the reasons why the restored Nova holds a special place in the family, she explains that, "When we were little, we used to take a mattress from a crib, and put that on the back seat, and we would just lie on that, and go to the drive-in movies. By the time the movie was over, we would be asleep on the mattress. That's one of my favorite stories. It was like the event of the week. That's my dad's biggest thing—the memories that we have in that car." 📺



For driving impressions of this car, visit: <http://blog.hemmings.com/index.php/2014/05/20/nova-drive/>



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1932 Studebaker



IT SHOULD COME AS NO SURPRISE that 1932 was a challenging year for automobile manufacturers. Ford and Chevrolet lost nearly half their sales from the previous year, and the entire industry was struggling significantly. Though still suffering like the other automobile manufacturers, Studebaker had a lot to be proud of in 1932. That year, the company jumped from 10th in sales ranking to sixth, had been in business as a vehicle manufacturer for 80 years and generated a decent side income from its ownership of the low-priced Rockne and luxurious Pierce-Arrow Motor Car Companies.

In 1932, Studebaker cars were offered in a single six-cylinder model with a 117-inch wheelbase and three different eight-cylinder models with varying wheelbases: Dictator—117 inches, Commander—125 inches and President—135 inches. Horsepower ranged from the 80-hp six-cylinder to the 122-hp eight-cylinder installed on the Presidents. There were a total of 50 body styles offered across all of that year's models.

Studebaker sales literature for 1932

features beautiful, full-color covers for the Dictator, President and six-cylinder offerings. A full-line catalog also exists, but it was produced in merely two-tone.

All of that year's catalogs begin with several pages praising the company. Likely an attempt to reassure a nervous public, they remind the consumer that Studebaker has been building fine transportation for "four score years" and point out that this history and experience have allowed the company to develop financial strength, allowing them to take advantage of cheap raw materials.

Shifting focus from the company and placing it on to the vehicles, the sales literature goes on to highlight new features for the model year including refined freewheeling, synchronized shifting, automatic starting, automatic spark control, all-steel bodies and safety plate glass, which came standard on every Studebaker offering. To draw attention to the car's sleek styling and new airplane-type instrument cluster, the illustration on the cover of each sales catalog includes an airplane.

The six-cylinder, Dictator Eight and President Eight sales catalogs each measure 9½ x 9¼ inches, while the full-line catalog measures 8½ X 11 inches. The artwork on each of these catalogs is beautiful, but my favorite cover is on the President Eight catalog. Here, silver ink is overlaid on a red background. The red cover is textured and feels soft like felt. Interior illustrations are colorful and vibrant, giving the automobile a regal and opulent appearance.

The Great Depression would catch up with Studebaker, but it wouldn't be enough to destroy the company. None of the catalogs mention Studebaker's interests in Rockne or Pierce-Arrow; and by 1933, the company would eliminate the Rockne line and by 1934 would relinquish control of Pierce-Arrow.

Studebaker's strong start to the decade and perhaps its beautiful sales literature, carried it through the worst financial crisis in modern times; however, the year 1967 would be Studebaker's last, ending 115 years of vehicle manufacturing. 🚗

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The Plymouth Fury started out life in the 1950s as an exciting car, but it changed sizes—and classifications—a number of times, which watered down its image. At the end of its life, the Fury was a mid-size car that found favor with police departments across the country looking for something a bit more efficient and easier to handle, with little sacrifice in interior dimensions. However, chasing bad guys doesn't make for exciting, desirable cars. If it did, car collectors would be crazy for Crown Victorias.

In 1975, the Satellite name was retired from the Plymouth mid-size fleet, and the Fury name was applied to the decklid. The full-size Plymouth was renamed Gran Fury, and due to poor sales was dropped after two more years, only to return again two years subsequent to the Fury being retired. Confused? So were most buyers.

Badge engineering, which just about every American automaker would embrace beginning in the 1970s, is the bane of car collectors, and oftentimes, it did very little to boost sales.

The new mid-size Plymouth Fury four-doors and station wagons shared

their bodies with the Dodge Coronet on a 118-inch wheelbase. Before 1975, the Satellite rode on a one-inch shorter wheelbase than its Dodge counterpart, but Chrysler needed to save money wherever possible, hence the gain of an inch.

The Plymouth Fury sedan could be ordered as a base, Custom or Salon. The wagons were called Fury Suburban or Fury Custom Suburban.

With the base, you got what you paid for. When you ordered the Salon, you were treated to velour bench seating with folding armrests, a carpeted trunk and a hood ornament. Don't you miss velour?

It being the era of the personal luxury car, the Sport Fury coupe was the obvious flagship of the new smaller Fury line and came with pinstripes, optional vinyl bucket seats (Corinthian leather from a factory just outside Newark, New Jersey, was saved for the Cordoba), an optional center console and "shag" carpeting.

I think Chrysler embraced the 1970s better than any other company, and it did so with more style. Say what you want about mid-to-late '70s Mopar quality; the company did make them pretty. Even as a little kid, I appreciated the handling of the addition of the large impact-absorbent bumpers, integrating them into the body of the car rather than just making them look like bolted-on steel girders.

Under the hood, you had your choice of the long-lived 225-cu.in. Slant Six (except in the station wagon or Sport Fury) or the 318-, 360- or 400-cubic-inch V-8s. Available transmissions included a three-speed manual and two different TorqueFlite automatics, a 904 for the Slant Six and 318, and a 727 for the 400, 440 and "high-output" 360. In the 1970s and early '80s, Clint Eastwood drove used Plymouth Fury police cars, as Jay Leno would attest to when he and Eastwood were both guests on *The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson*.

Stacked newly legal rectangular headlamps were the big news in 1977. The only other development was placing a two-barrel carburetor on the Slant Six.



The following year, the Gran Fury was gone, and the mid-size Fury became Plymouth's biggest car. Automatic transmission and power steering were now standard. The following year was the last for the Plymouth Fury, and Plymouth would end the decade with the Horizon, Volaré, a few captive imports and little else.

I knew you were going to ask, so I found someone who owns one.

Christopher Bunthoff of Roswell, Georgia, owns the above 1978 Plymouth Sport Fury coupe with a 360-cu.in. V-8 and 37,000 miles on the odometer.

He bought his Plymouth Fury in November 2013. When finally bought in September 1979, after sitting on the lot for a year, the price was \$5,800, minus a \$400 rebate. The Fury is all-original, with a "Formal Black" body and white canopy vinyl roof, but it was the black and white interior that truly sold Christopher: "A new and tempting optional interior... 'Checkmate' cloth with vinyl trim."

Other options include the 60/40 split-bench seat with a wide fold-down center armrest and a reclining passenger seat for "luxurious comfort." His friends refer to the interior as the "Bear Bryant" interior, after his trademark hat. Most people don't believe his car's interior is original and think someone played a joke on him. Christopher's Fury also has wire wheel covers, dual chrome remote sport mirrors, body side moldings, air conditioning, AM radio with rear speaker, rear defroster and intermittent wipers.

When he takes the car out, most people remark on the interior, while others mistake it for a Cordoba or Monte Carlo. Either way, owning a Plymouth Fury Sport Coupe is one beautiful way to stand out from the crowd.

Need I say more?

I know you want one. 🐾





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Valley Forge, PA

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START: Beach Street, Downtown Ogunquit, ME - 10:00 a.m.
FINISH: Middle Street, Downtown Lowell, MA - 4:45 p.m.
- Sunday, June 22, 2014**
LUNCH: Main Street, Downtown Bennington, VT - 12:05 p.m.
FINISH: Waryas Park, Downtown Poughkeepsie, NY - 5:00 p.m.
- Monday, June 23, 2014**
LUNCH: Pocono Raceway, Long Pond, PA - 11:40 a.m.
FINISH: Valley Forge Casino Resort, Valley Forge, PA - 5:15 p.m.
- Tuesday, June 24, 2014**
LUNCH: City Hall, Downtown Millsboro, DE - 11:15 a.m.
FINISH: Harbor Park, Downtown Norfolk, VA - 5:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, June 25, 2014**
LUNCH: Waterfront Park, Downtown Elizabeth City, NC - 11:30 a.m.
FINISH: Middle Street, Downtown New Bern, NC - 5:15 p.m.
- Thursday, June 26, 2014**
LUNCH: Expo Center, Downtown Clinton, NC - 12:15 p.m.
FINISH: Water Street, Downtown Wilmington, NC - 5:00 p.m.
- Friday, June 27, 2014**
LUNCH: North Kings Highway, Myrtle Beach, SC - 11:30 a.m.
FINISH: Patriots Point, Mount Pleasant, SC - 4:30 p.m.
- Saturday, June 28, 2014**
LUNCH: River Street, Downtown Savannah, GA - 11:15 a.m.
FINISH: The Landing, Downtown Jacksonville, FL - 5:25 p.m.
- Sunday, June 29, 2014**
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Auto Transport Cars

RARE IS THE COLLECTIBLE THAT combines two interests in one. For old car enthusiasts who are also into model trains, the introduction of automobile transport cars featuring popular collector automobiles makes an ideal and affordable way to satisfy both road and rail interests.

The two main companies involved in the production of collector car auto transport cars are Lionel, America's oldest toy train company, and relative newcomer MTH, formerly known as Mike's Train House. Both specialize in the popular O-27 gauge that most of us baby boomers enjoyed playing with back in the early postwar era, before we switched over to racing slot cars in the mid-'60s.

Back in the day, Lionel was blessed with having an engineering, production and marketing group that was made up of not only some of the most creative and talented folks in the fast-booming toy industry, but also some of the most totally committed to keeping their company's name at the forefront of the toy market. Each year, to maintain interest in its trains, Lionel would offer different types of operating flat cars.

The most popular ones were the flatcars with the foldable-wing airplane, a '50s-era speedboat and a helicopter. By contrast, Lionel's first flatcar/automobile combinations featured generic-looking plastic cars that hardly had any detail at all; mid-'50s Packards might be the real-world cars bearing the closest resemblance.

Lionel's twin automobile flatcar featured two cars, one red and one yellow. Then there was the ever-popular Auto-



Loader, a double-decker carrier loaded with four cars: one each in red, yellow, turquoise and white. Both of these kinds of flatcars are highly prized collectibles today.

The automobile models that are used on today's auto transport cars are so much more authentic than those of the past—just as one would expect, thanks to all of the modern advances in die-cast manufacturing. The flatcars, though, are basically identical to the original ones made in the 1950s, at least to the untrained eye.

At 1/43rd scale, the automobiles that MTH uses are sourced from well-known car-model manufacturer Ertl, while Lionel's are of its own making, and although quite hefty, are a little less authentic-looking. Perhaps this explains why the more popular flatcar offerings are MTH's Railling cars.

Since their release about 20 years ago, there have been MTH Auto Transports with 1957 Thunderbirds, '64 Mustangs, '57 Chevys, '69 Camaros, '71 'Cudas, '70 Novas, '68 GTOs, '70 4-4-2s, '65 Cobras,

'70 Torinos, '57 Corvettes, '59 Checker taxis, '40 Ford woodies, '67 Firebirds, '70 Chevelles, and '48 Tuckers. Double-decker flatcar offerings include pairs of 1951 Cadillacs and '49 Fords, '67 Camaros and Shelby Mustangs, and '57 Chryslers and Mercurys.

Lionel's auto transport line is called Route 66. The cars aren't labeled by model and year; instead, they are termed "Touring Cars" (Edsel station wagons), "Sedans" ('49 Cadillacs), "Black Touring Coupes" ('49 Buicks), etc. Some 15 years ago, Lionel also issued flatcars with a pair of New Beetle or PT Cruisers.

Prices vary, but the average cost for flatcars is right around \$35. Though some of the first Auto Transport cars have sold for as high as \$150, prices have since dropped.

The best part of collecting these appealing toy train cars is that, because they were produced relatively recently, you should be able to find every single auto transport car ever made by Lionel and MTH, with most of them being available

with their original boxes. In today's collecting world, this is a rare opportunity to actually assemble a complete set of something unusual somewhat easily.

Automobile transport cars are fun to collect, inexpensive to buy, and display well on the wall in your office or den, or as part of a wild-looking collector car consist being pulled around the Christmas tree by a Texas Special F3. That's how I enjoy mine. 🚗





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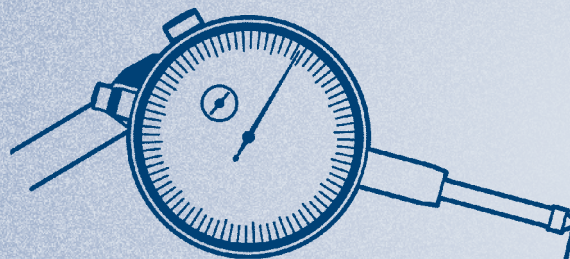


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JOB: Ensuring Quality

BY RAY T. BOHACZ

WITH THE EXCEPTION OF the aerospace industry, there is probably not another group of manufacturers more obsessed with quality than car companies. The word “quality” has been bandied around in all sorts of contexts for decades in much the same manner as the Gabor sisters would use “darling.” This has caused a problem though: What, exactly, is “quality”?

At first blush, it seems like it should be a term with a simple meaning, but that meaning becomes much more complex when used in relation to automobiles. Does quality in one aspect of a vehicle mean quality in another aspect? Is quality visual or functional? Does quality mean the same thing to a consumer as it does to an engineer?

Contrary to what some may believe, all Detroit car companies have produced quality products, but in many instances, consumers did not recognize the quality in those products. By contrast, some car brands have become synonymous with quality in consumers’ minds, but they really did nothing different than the brands

that are popularly rejected as having been poorly made. Thus, it can be said that quality is akin to beauty—it’s in the eye of the beholder, or in this case, those with the ignition keys in their hands.

As more automobile brands became available to the public, competition in the marketplace expanded. This was, of course, good for the consumer, but it also confused matters. Does a vehicle that looks better mean that it is of a higher quality than the one that looks stodgy?

THE FIRST EXAMPLE OF QUALITY

In the very early days of automobile production, each vehicle was made mostly by hand, with the parts produced on machining centers that allowed a good deal of variation. For this reason, few parts would be interchangeable between two examples of the same model built alongside one another on the same day. Pistons from one engine would not fit in the cylinder of the other, or a water pump would not fit on the engine block that was going to be built tomorrow. As the vehicle

came together, the parts needed to be altered, or in slang terms “massaged,” to fit.

The first automotive brand in the world to manufacture vehicles to such uniform standards that two cars could be disassembled and put back together with the other’s parts was Cadillac. Thus, it earned the Dewar Trophy and became known according to its slogan as the “Standard of the World.” This reputation for precisely machined parts resulted in people describing other well-made products—refrigerators, washing machines, shovels and anything else perceived to be the best in its class—as “The Cadillacs” of their kind.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF QUALITY

By the 1930s, the industry was well aware that vehicle quality in some form was responsible for generating sales and also for limiting corporate exposure to the newly required warranties on new vehicles. The warranty became a hallmark of a well-made automobile in the mind of consumers. If the company did not stand

behind its product, then it was assumed that it knew something that you did not, and many would steer clear of that brand regardless of how attractive the price may have been.

To accurately apply the term “quality” in a given context, we need to be specific about what, exactly, we are assessing. For example, the very early Cadillac enjoyed a quality in component manufacturing that no other did. But, hypothetically, another brand, such as Buick, could have possessed a more precise paint finish. Hence, we could say that the Cadillac has the best quality machining of parts, but the Buick has the best paint. It would then be up to consumers to decide if part uniformity or paint was more important to them.

With the end of WWII and the explosion of car sales in America due to a growing population, both the engineering and marketing factions of the collective Detroit auto industry got together, albeit informally, to define “quality” for themselves. It was concluded that there was a need to identify quality in a variety of separate areas: design, materials, assembly, workmanship, longevity, failure rate and, by the 1970s, perception.

If the concept of quality was going to be defined, then the terms associated with the opposite end of the spectrum also needed to be determined. Concepts such as the warranty claim, acceptable tolerance, rejects per number produced, and projected life were developed to round out the equation.

Along the way, consumers came up with a term or two of their own; most notable among them, the word “lemon.” Recognizing that car owners should be protected in cases of extraordinarily flawed vehicles, most states passed Lemon Laws. The engineering community had its own way of thinking about such vehicles. A “lemon,” in technical parlance, is a vehicle or component that had all of its tolerances go the wrong way.

In an economy of scale, the need to mass-produce parts necessitates the determination of a range of acceptable tolerance for given dimensions. The theory is that, so long as components fall within the tolerances, the combined variances will cancel each other out.

Take an engine block deck, for example. Imagine that it was cut on the high side of the specification, meaning that the compression ratio would end up being on the low end. But because the piston pin height (compression height) happened to also come out on the low side of its specified dimension (closer to the skirt), all would end up being well.

For this reason—the systemic nature

of the problem—fixing a vehicle that is a true lemon is particularly challenging; an unknown number of components have simply formed a poor mix.

EXAMINING QUALITY

Design: Quality starts with the design of a component. If the component is poorly engineered, then it will be almost impossible for it to be a quality part. The need to determine quality at this basic level prompted the industry to develop test procedures and protocols that could help to identify a weakness in particular areas.

Materials: A good design only exists on paper; the actual part is made of a material. For example, a piston may be well designed and machined, but if it is made from aluminum that is too soft or heat intolerant, it will fail prematurely. The material needs to be up to the task while remaining cost effective and relatively easy to work with. This latter factor is often referred to as “machine-ability,” and it describes a material’s acceptance of being worked into a shape.

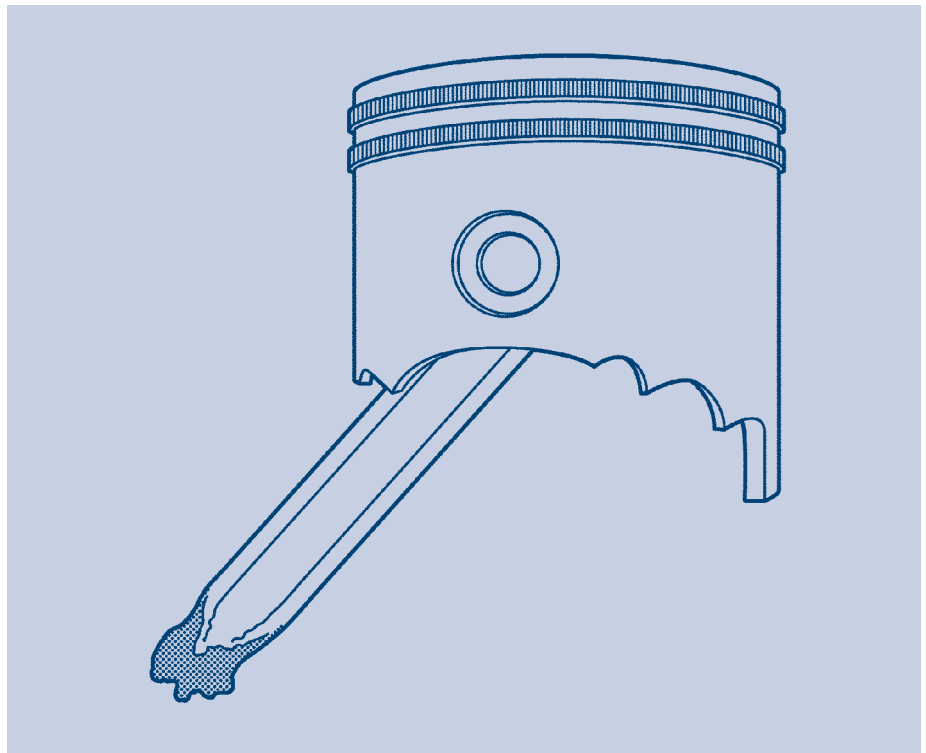
Assembly: A heater core, for instance, that is difficult to get into place on an assembly line—since it is ripe for being improperly installed or damaged during the installation process—will impact a vehicle’s quality. Many excellent designs on paper were found to be almost impossible to install

during manufacturing. Components—and whole vehicles—need to be as easy to put together as possible, or the rate of resulting problems goes up dramatically.

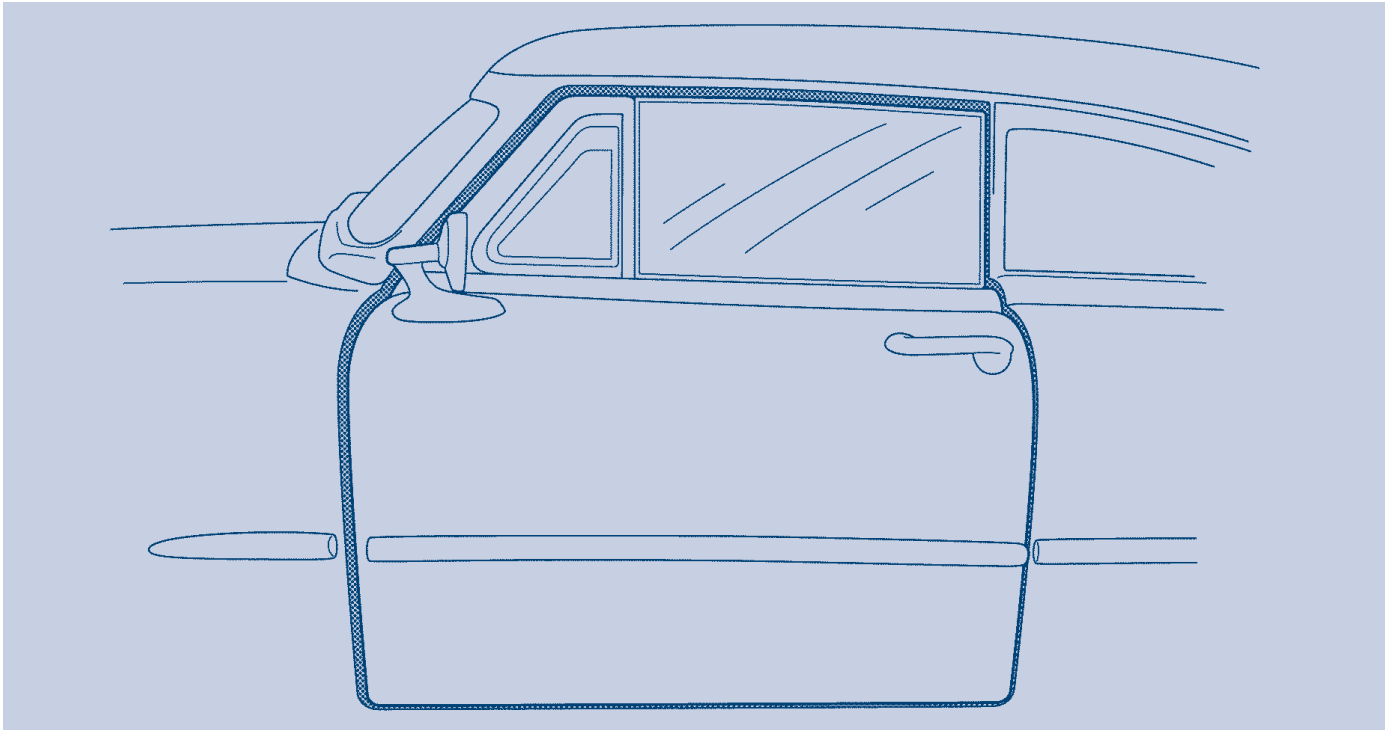
Workmanship: This is where the human element really comes into play. You can have the best design, use the finest materials and nail the procedure, but if the worker on the assembly line or manufacturing machine has a slipshod attitude or does not tighten the bolt properly, then everything is for naught. This is a problem no matter where the car is built. Because of this fact, the manufacturing process drifted toward more mechanization and less human involvement as time progressed.

Longevity: Does the vehicle, once in the hands of the public, have an acceptable life expectancy? A problem in one area can sour an owner on the entire automobile. A vehicle’s longevity is the culmination of all of the steps taken to ensure quality throughout the course of its production. So manufacturers can predict how long a vehicle or part will last, they have created equipment that can simulate a lifetime of wear in just a few months, but often owners have a way of taxing equipment that the engineers cannot simulate.

Failure Rate: This is a term used when discussing rescue and redesign activities. Is



In the high-stress environment of an automobile’s combustion chamber, many of the various aspects of quality may come into play, but because quality is a systemic function, definitively determining what led to the failure of a particular assembly can prove challenging.



Along with consumer predispositions, a vehicle's fit and finish—everything from its paint quality to the consistency of its panel gaps and the solidity of the sound of its closing doors—work to shape the perceptions that potential buyers have concerning its quality.

something failing in the field at too high of a rate? For example, if a particular model of radiator functions properly for the first six years and then 30 percent of them start to leak, manufacturers will have to decide if that is acceptable or not. Contrary to what some may believe, there is no car company in the world that builds vehicles with the second and third owner in mind. This has changed slightly as manufacturers have started certified pre-owned vehicle programs over the past few years, but no company engineers a car for the guy who purchased a 10-year-old model with 150,000 miles from a newspaper ad.

Perception: This especially intangible aspect of quality has come to light in a more powerful way over the past 20 years and concerns how customers perceive a vehicle's quality while it is in the showroom and before purchase. The perception of quality often drives modern-day consumer statistics and is skewed by mindset. Two factors contribute to perceived quality: appearance and predisposition.

For the most part, up until the past 10 years, the Japanese and Europeans did a better job of maintaining the visual quality of their vehicles than the domestic brands did. The imports usually paid more attention to body gaps, interior trim gaps and, in the case of the Germans, the substance of the paint used. This encouraged the public to

perceive that these were buttoned-down, well-made vehicles. This was especially true in, say, 1971, when visually comparing a Detroit-built small car such as a Pinto or Vega with a VW Beetle, Toyota Corolla or Datsun.

The imports were the first to make a dedicated effort in the area of perceived quality, investing a good deal of engineering and effort into the sound the doors made when they were closed. Even if a competing brand didn't rattle or have any mechanical defects, its doors nevertheless failed to make that hallmark "thud" that gave the impression of quality. This is not to say that such things are not important, but that perceived quality does not necessarily translate into the increased reliability of a vehicle.

As a personal example, when I was in college, I had a two-year-old, used, 1979 Datsun 210 that had a great door-close sound and tight body gaps, as compared with my 1968 Dodge Dart. The Dodge went 250,000 miles with no problems at all; its life was ended by a Chevy van that ran into it. The Datsun burned a valve every 50,000 miles, leaked oil like a sieve, and parts fell off that I never knew could. But those doors still sounded great! Thus, which one had quality?

A predisposition toward believing that a particular vehicle is or is not of quality is a prejudice that the consumer has created over time based on a combination of fact and myth. It is the result of the consumer's

thought processes, and these can be very difficult to turn around. The best example of the power of predisposition can be seen in the story of a modern automobile.

The Mazda Tribute, the Ford Escape and Mercury Mariner were all mechanically identical and built by the Ford Motor Company. Yet, when you would read consumer reviews of the three, the Mazda product would frequently earn substantially better ratings. Though uninformed by empirical data, the predisposition of the reviewers was that the imported brand was superior to the domestic one. I understand that there will be variations in dealer service, but the dealer did not build the car, Ford did.

THE TEST OF TIME

To be a good judge, you need to be honest with yourself. If a car is good, it is good, and if it is bad, it's bad, regardless of your predisposition concerning the manufacturer or model.

Ultimately, though, regardless of an automaker's marketing and engineering efforts, the quality of an automobile ultimately needs to be judged by you. It must stand the test of time for the use you give it, the maintenance you provide it and the results it yields to you. Perhaps that's why Packard—which was so obsessed with quality that it bankrupted the company—used to say in its advertising: "Ask the man who owns one." 🐾

George Holley

THE WORLD OF CARS, its history, is abundantly populated by people with strong engineering chops, business acumen and a clear taste for assuming risk. The normal track for the people remembered in this feature is that they went from fabricating components to bolting them together to presiding over industrial colossuses. George Holley Sr. went the other way, sort of. He built cars, at least for a while, but became a legend by improving how their engines were kept sated with fuel and air.



Holley was born in 1878 along the upper Delaware River in Port Jervis, New York. By the time he was in his early 20s, he had relocated to the then-booming burg of Bradford, Pennsylvania (today, it's the home of Zippo lighters), which had grown up around that state's 19th century oil rush, the first in American history. Since the petroleum was in the ground and being frantically distilled above it—more than half the nation's oil supply in the 1890s—it wasn't illogical that Holley began to experiment with gasoline-fueled vehicles. Holley built a three-wheeled car in 1897, somewhat predictive of the Morgan, with a single, chain-driven rear wheel.

With his brother, Earl, he formed the Holley Motor Company in Bradford. George Holley produced a better car by 1900, a single-cylinder runabout that rode on four wheels, which boasted some


distinctly French appearance cues, especially its slanted hood. Light motorcycles were also being built under the Holley name by the Olive Wheel Company in Syracuse, New York. The single act that made Holley to this day, however, came when he bought the U.S. rights to sell the French-built Longuemare carburetor. Like many early figures in the industry, Holley figured he could do better with his own development. In 1904, he stopped making automobiles—unassembled Holley car kits were built and sold under the Bradford name for several more years—and refocused his business on designing and building carburetors. One of the first places a Holley carburetor landed was atop the engine of the curved-dash Oldsmobile.

The Holley brothers didn't remain in Bradford a whole lot longer. Lore has it that the brothers started making carburetors under the urging of no less than Henry Ford. In 2003, during the Ford Motor Company's centennial celebration, George Holley was honored as one of the firm's original four outside suppliers. For years, the tens of millions of Fords to emerge from Dearborn and elsewhere used Holley carburetion almost exclusively. During World War II, Holley became a key defense contractor, supplying fuel



systems for everything from the original DC-3 to the Navy's PT boats.

Following VE and VJ days, when civilian production was restarting, Holley moved aggressively into the aftermarket. The signature moment for the firm came in 1957, when Ford selected the Model 4150 carburetor as standard equipment for the Thunderbird. It was the prototype of the now-standard modular carburetor with separate accelerator pumps. The Model 4150 was installed in various CFM capacities on countless race cars and street machines as an aftermarket part.

George Holley died in 1963 at the dawn of the muscle car era, which saw OEM manufacturers adopt the Model 4150 line in huge numbers. Holley, which today produces a plethora of performance brands, has since relocated its headquarters from Detroit to Bowling Green, Kentucky. 



I WAS THERE I WAS THERE

Michael Bradshaw
Assistant Manager
Studebaker Corporation, 1948-1954

I STARTED WORKING AT THE Studebaker Corporation in Canada in 1948 when they purchased a war surplus anti-aircraft gun plant on Mars Avenue in Hamilton, Ontario. Studebaker's old plant had been taken over by the Gotfredson Truck Company, so it was no longer available. I was employed there until 1954.

When I started working at Studebaker, a stockman in the stock department earned U.A.W. wages of 94 cents per hour, which at that time, was pretty good. The building was empty, but soon the contractors were busy putting in assembly lines, DeVilbiss was assembling the paint booths and ovens, etc.... It was a really clean start.

I started as employee #31 in that plant, and was assigned to the body trim department, which included upholstery and padding. We only made a few of the old model cars before the new Studebaker models came out; that's when things started to look up. By 1950, we were building four-doors, two-doors, hardtops and pickup trucks. And when the new "bullet nose" coupe came out, that plant was really rolling along. Although we built 80 units per day, we couldn't keep up. When these ultra-low models came out, they were an instant hit.

A sample Commander hardtop model was sent from South Bend to CEO Gus Gaskin to use as a company car. One day,



he and his wife and two other guests drove to the Royal Connaught Hotel for a lunch engagement. It was raining like mad, and when the guests got into the back seat, they found the entire floor awash in about three to four inches of water. As a result, the company immediately set up a water-testing bay where all the new cars were tested. Some of the cars leaked badly.

It's funny to look back at some of the suppliers that Studebaker used. For instance, Summer-ville Games, the toy people, made the sun visors, cowl kick panels and the back seat shelf. Ontario Steel Products did the die-casting and plating of the grilles and taillamp assemblies. Essex Wire made the wiring harnesses and Stelco supplied all the nuts, bolts, washers, etc. by the case.

I don't know what the problems were with the company, because we were still running at capacity; however, we were building all the wrong cars. We had orders and orders from customers waiting for the coupe and

hardtop models, yet we continued rolling out two-door and four-door sedans. At that time, I had managed to work up to assistant manager, and that's when my buddy in the production control department started hinting at trouble. One day, the CEO resigned and went to Diamond Reo; then the works manager left and went to Chrysler. Shortly thereafter, in 1954, half of the staff was laid off: approximately 200 of the 400 people who worked there.

I believe Studebaker's biggest problem was not listening to their customers, producing cars that they didn't need, and taking orders that they could not fill. I am sure there was enough blame to go around.

Now with 45 years in Florida, working at auto centers in the customer relations department, it all appears a little clearer. ☹️



1948 Studebaker Champion Regal De Luxe 4-door Sedan for six passengers

1948 Studebaker Champion

Every hour spent in this lowest priced of Studebaker's dream cars is a vacation. Every mile you drive it is a new-found joy. Every trip, 'cross town or 'cross country, is something to look forward to.

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I Was There relates your stories from working for the carmakers, whether it was at the drawing board, on the assembly line or anywhere in between. To submit your stories, email us at editorial@hemmings.com or write to us at I Was There, c/o Hemmings Classic Car, 222 Main Street, Bennington, Vermont 05201.

8th Annual

Hemmings Motor News Sept. 26, 27, 28, 2014

CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE

Friday, September 26th REGISTRATION & RALLY

- 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. registration at the Saratoga Automobile Museum, 110 Avenue of the Pines, Saratoga Springs, New York.
- 12:00 noon – Join in a Rally through the beautiful Adirondack region
- 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Cruise scenic Lake George, Queen of the Lakes, aboard the Adirondack Shoreline cruise. (boarding promptly at 2:00 p.m.)

Saturday, September 27th CRUISE-IN SPECTACULAR

10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. An all-makes car show that's open to cars, trucks and motorcycles. Including: muscle cars, street rods, sports, exotics and classics.
Awards at 3:00 p.m. Cocktail reception with cash bar at 6:00 p.m. and dinner available at 7:00 p.m. at the Gideon Putnam Resort.
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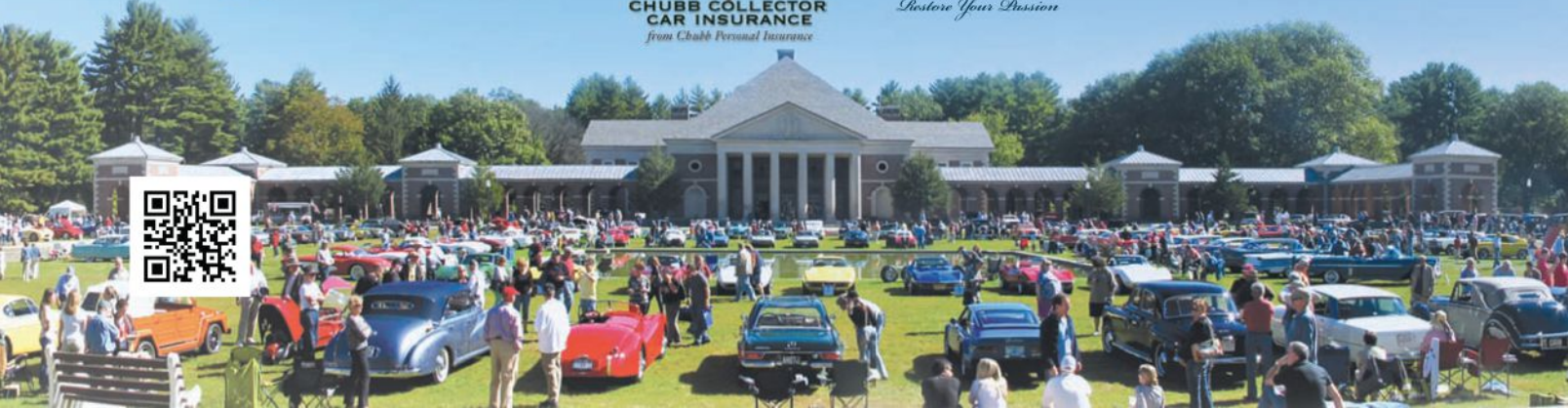


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BALANCING ACT

Q: What are the signs to look for when trying to decide if a harmonic balancer is bad outside—obvious wobble or deteriorated rubber? Can a balancer be tested in some manner when it is off the crankshaft?

Dale Komives
Lecanto, Florida

A: Most often when a balancer fails, it's because the rubber has deteriorated and the outer ring of the balancer moves independently of the hub. If the outer ring has slipped, your timing marks will be off. As you mentioned, sometimes a bad balancer will wobble because the outer ring is walking forward off the rubber. This is obviously a bad situation.

Sometimes, by removing and looking at the balancer from the rear, you can see a clear separation between the iron and the rubber or you can see that the rubber is in bad shape. There's no way to repair a balancer that's coming apart, so when in doubt, replace.

NO AIR FOR A BEL AIR

Q: I'm told by several aftermarket air-conditioning suppliers that there is no way I can install air conditioning in my 1954 Bel Air with factory power steering. None of the aftermarket companies make kits for this model, the power steering being the problem. Any suggestions, maybe from your readers, what I can do to solve this?

Ken Menard
Jacksonville, Florida

A: It appears there's a dearth of accessory mounting bosses on the passenger side of your engine, and because there's already a power steering pump and generator hanging off the driver's side, mounting an air compressor would take some creative fabricating. So that's why there isn't a bolt-on setup as there is for newer Chevrolet sixes that accommodates bracketry on the passenger side.

If anyone reading has photos of a 1954 Chevrolet Bel Air with the original powerplant, equipped with power steering as well as A/C, and cares to send them in, I'd be glad to pass them along.

TURNING BACK TIME

Q: I have a 1972 Cougar with a 351-cu.in. Cleveland V-8 two-barrel that was rebuilt about 500 miles ago, and I was hoping that my problem would go away as the engine "broke in," but it hasn't.

When the engine is cold, it cranks and fires up just fine. However, after letting it warm up to operating temperature and shutting it off and then trying to restart it in 10 minutes or so, the engine cranks very slowly. It runs fine while driving it. I'm running a Malory distributor with electronic ignition, which I've had since before the rebuild.

To try and solve the problem, I replaced the battery, spark plugs and wires, distributor cap and rotor. I've replaced the starter with one that has higher torque, replaced the coil with an MSD Blaster 2 coil, and replaced the positive and negative battery cables. I also replaced the voltage regulator and starter solenoid and rechecked the ground connections to make sure they were clean and tight. After all this, I still have the same problem. The ignition timing appears to be fine, unless when the engine was rebuilt the distributor wasn't installed correctly. I'm at wits' end trying to solve this problem.

If you have any suggestions, I'm willing to give it one more try.

Phil Kos
Livonia, Michigan

A: It sounds like your initial timing is too far advanced. I'd be curious to know if, when the engine is hot and turning over slowly, you've tried disconnecting the coil (so there is no spark) and cranking the engine. If it turns over easily, it's a timing issue. Try retarding the static timing in small increments to the point that the engine cranks easily (when the engine is warm), but the car idles and accelerates normally, and then leave it there. If it cranks hard with the ignition not firing, then you have a problem in the starter circuit. It's likely temperature-related: starter, cables, solenoid, etc.

MODULE MADNESS

Q: I have 1989 GMC Jimmy, with a 5.7 V-8 and a 700R-4 transmission. The truck has 100,000 miles on it.

It runs very well and is outstanding off-road here in northern Nevada. When I bought it about five years ago, I tuned it up: plugs, wires and a new distributor. It ran perfectly for about six to eight months.

One day, it just would not start. I checked everything and found that the module in the distributor was bad. I installed a new module, and about six months later, the module went bad again. Thinking there might be something wrong with the distributor, I got a new one from the local auto parts store. It ran great for about six months, and then the module went bad. I called the manufacturer's tech line, and they said the only thing it could be is a bad ground to the distributor. So I cleaned the ground from the distributor to the engine, ran a wire from the spot on the engine where the distributor is grounded to the negative side of the battery. I also ran a ground from the frame of the truck to the water inlet of the engine. I put a new module in and put the distributor back in. Six months later, the module isn't working again. (I used the supplied grease each time I changed the module.)

As you can guess, I'm about ready to put a round through the engine and walk away. I love my truck, but if you can't rely on it, it's not worth having.

Bill Harding
Minden, Nevada

A: Repeated HEI module failures can be caused by an internal short in the coil, bad spark plug wires, a faulty cap or rotor as well as improperly gapped spark plugs. Though it's kind of a long shot, a problem in the charging system—for instance, if the battery isn't charging adequately—could lead to overly long coil charge times, which can damage the module and, ultimately, the coil.

Replace your coil, be absolutely sure that there isn't a crossfire among your wires or inside the distributor cap, double check that your spark plug gaps aren't excessively large, and check your alternator output.



Send questions to: Tech Talk, c/o Hemmings Classic Car, P.O. Box 196, Bennington, Vermont 05201; or email your question to: mmcnessor@hemmings.com.

My Old Buick Beauty



I STARTED SAVING FOR MY FIRST

car early in my “career” as a paperboy, at the age of 11. By the time I was 16 years old, I had saved enough money to buy a car—\$200. This was back in 1949 when my dad had just bought a new Buick four-door sedan. It was just beautiful, and today is a real classic.

I then convinced him to help me look around for a cheap car, maybe in the \$200 range, which was my savings of five years of hard work. Well, a Buick was *the* car. I was pretty much Buick-sold.

Dad found a classified ad for a 1940 Buick four-door sedan in the local newspaper, but it was “way out” in Forest Lake, about 20 miles from our house. It was advertised for \$250. I figured that something must have been wrong at that price, because the car was only nine years old and had very few miles on it—as I recall, maybe 35,000 miles at most.

But what a discovery! That Buick sedan had been used as a chicken coop for


several years. There was chicken poop all over the body; it was everywhere. Typical of the era, it was a black car that was nearly all white from all the droppings that covered it. The owner said, “It will run, I’m sure,” so he went inside the garage to get a battery, and once the wires were all connected, he pumped the accelerator a few times and the engine started right up! Wow! I couldn’t believe it.

My dad then pulled out \$200 to offer the mini-farmer for the car, and he took it. Shortly thereafter, I was driving it home, amid the dreaded smell of chicken poop everywhere, thinking “Will I ever get it clean?” Well, it cleaned up very well after about four long days of elbow grease. What a car for \$200 and a super cleaning. I then added the white wheel covers and voilà—my first car. What a dream.

After nearly four years of service, I was forced to sell it because in March of

1953, I was drafted into the army for the Korean War. I never did see any action except in New Jersey where I met a wonderful girl in Hoboken. We hit it off right away, and now I needed my old Buick back. When I went back home, I offered to buy it back from the guy who bought it from me, but he said “no dice.” So I wound up buying a 1941 Buick two-door Sedanette instead.

To this day, I still really regret selling my first car; that 1940 Buick was a real beauty. 🍷

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CHEVROLET CHEVELLE'S LUXURIOUS CONCOURS Estate Wagon is available in two- and three-seat models. The new styling includes Hide-A-Way windshield wipers, walnut-look exterior paneling and bright chrome trim around the wheel openings. Inside, an all-vinyl interior, lighted locking glove box, extra-thick foam cushioned seats, new cluster-styled instrument panel, smart oval steering wheel and horn tabs will provide a beautiful setting for the enlarged 94 cubic feet of total cargo space.

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- Ticket to the movies – \$1.31
- Phonograph/stereo – \$189
- Bicycle – \$47



NEW FEDERAL regulations now take effect for automobiles, including shoulder belts for front seats, side marker lamps and collapsible steering columns.



FORD INTRODUCES THE NEW FAIRLANE TORINO as the top trim level for this year's intermediates. With either a six-cylinder or V-8, the Fairlane Torino comes in sedan, hardtop or squire station wagon. Also available as a fastback, hardtop or convertible is the sportier Fairlane Torino GT, which is equipped with a 302-cu.in. 210-hp V-8, bucket seats and console. The Fairlane Torino starts at a factory price of \$2,688.



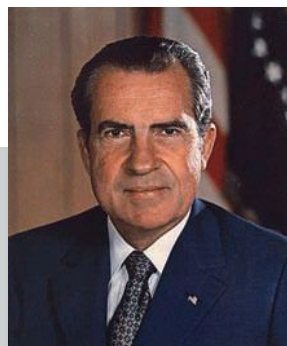
CHRYSLER'S 300 UNDERGOES some stealthy changes with new concealed headlamps and the addition of small side safety lamps. Available as a two- or four-door hardtop and convertible, the 300 comes standard with a 440-cu.in. four-barrel V-8 and automatic transmission. A more powerful 440 "TNT" engine is also optional.



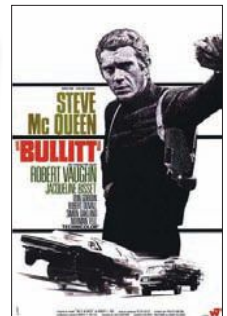
VINCE LOMBARDI ANNOUNCES his retirement as coach of the Green Bay Packers, after their 33-14 victory over the Oakland Raiders in Super Bowl II.



THE BEATLES RELEASE their self-titled album commonly known as "The White Album" in November.



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CLASSIC TRUCKS

Outside the Box

Early Divco trucks let operators stand and deliver



BY MIKE McNESSOR • PHOTOGRAPHY BY TERRY SHEA



Pity the guy or gal who brings you the irresistible stuff that you ordered from the Internet or the toll-free order line of some Sunday morning infomercial, with its operators standing by. People who drive step vans delivering packages climb an Empire State Building’s-worth of stairs every day, dashing in and out of their work trucks. All of that legwork is laborious and time-consuming, but until Amazon’s drone armada rules the skies over America, there isn’t really an alternative.



Divco's Model A body was fabricated out of wood perched on a steel frame. Nothing fancy, just a tall box with side and rear openings so goods could be loaded, stacked high and delivered.

Not so, said the newly formed Detroit Industrial Vehicle Company, way back in the drone-free 1920s. A good way to save time, as well as wear and tear on delivery drivers, would be to mount a set of redundant controls outside the vehicle so the driver could operate his truck or van while standing on the running board. Divco's clever "Three-Point control" was the company's hook, promising savings in time, money and driver effort:

"There is nothing the least bit complicated about it; it is simple and easy to operate and positive in action," boasts early sales literature for the Divco Model A. "No matter where it is most convenient for the driver to jump on his vehicle—right there he has a complete set of driving controls; so that almost the same instant he reaches his Divco, he's on his way, accelerating from 3 to 18 miles per hour in 9 seconds."

Advertising copywriters made it sound as easy as downing a slice of home-delivered pie, but it took the dexterity of a concert pianist to work the

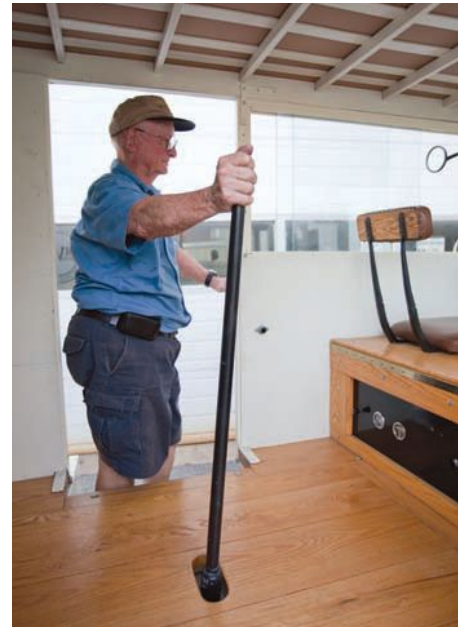
Divco Model A's outboard-mounted clutch, brake, throttle and gearshift while steering via the long lever mounted inside the truck.

"From the front, it's not difficult to drive because you have a conventional clutch, brake, throttle and gearshift," says Jay Crist, owner of the 1926 Divco Model A featured here. "When you operate it from the side, you have to be very coordinated. You have to lean back against the doorframe and stand on one foot most of the time. But compared to having to get in and out of the driver's seat while servicing houses that might've been about 100 feet apart, it was very convenient."

Jay, now retired from the family business, Rutter's Dairy, knows a little something about the ins and outs of home milk delivery. His family has been in the dairy business since 1921, and still owns a large-scale dairy operation as well as a chain of convenience stores in Pennsylvania. Jay rode along with his dad delivering milk starting at age eight, then delivered milk house to house him-

The Model A's biggest selling point? Redundant controls that allowed the driver to stand on the running board and operate the truck from the outside—a time and energy saver during house-to-house deliveries. Clutch, brake, gearshift and throttle were outside the truck, while a steering tiller was mounted inside.





“From the front it’s not difficult to drive because you have a conventional clutch, brake, throttle and gearshift. When you operate it from the side, you have to be very coordinated.”

self. Later, he worked in the garage servicing the company’s trucks and went on to manage the fleet, which at times grew to 100 vehicles.

Today, he collects and restores home delivery trucks, all of which can be driven standing up—his favorite type. Many, of course, are Divcos. “The Divco name was synonymous with home delivery, like Kleenex is with facial tissues,” Jay says. “Divco was the only truck built for home delivery, and they had some features that were quite unique.”

The Divco factory ceased production in 1986 but, from its inception, it sought to distinguish itself from other manufacturers with built-in convenience accessories and commerce boosters.

For instance, in addition to the 1926 Model A’s exterior controls, Divco designers made the truck’s cargo hold easily accessible from the side and rear, offered removable racks that could be rolled on and off the truck for easy loading, and surrounded the cockpit with safety glass so that products could be displayed store-window style to encourage impulse buys.

This Model A is believed to be the oldest Divco in existence: Number 10 of 25 trucks built to serve as test mules to determine if these gas-powered haulers could withstand the rigors of daily deliveries.

Power came from a dirt-reliable and fuel-stingy Continental L-head four-cylinder engine mated to a Warner three-speed transmission. A steel frame with leaf springs and solid axles fore and aft served as the foundation for a body made largely of wood, sheathed in metal and topped with a fabric roof.

It’s remarkable that an experimental delivery truck made of biodegradable materials has managed to survive for 88 years. But its longevity is as much a testament to its caretakers’ enthusiasm for the Divco brand as it is to the durability of the machine itself.

Its current owner is one of the most enthusiastic keepers of home delivery trucks you’re likely to find anywhere—he owns 16 stand-to-drive rigs

total, five of which are Divcos. Jay rescued and restored a number of them to AACA award-winning standards, but purchased this Divco as-is in September 2012 from Carl Abel, owner of America’s Ice Cream and Dairy Museum at Elm Farm in Ohio.

Prior to its time in the museum, it was owned by a New Hampshire dairy operator and Divco enthusiast who restored it in the 1990s. When he purchased it in 1976, it had been owned by a Massachusetts Divco dealer and involved in a garage fire. Remarkably, however, Jay says it’s believed that the truck was in regular use as a delivery vehicle for about 27 years before it ended up in a storage yard outside the Divco factory in Detroit.

Jay says he began collecting and restoring old trucks for fun when it dawned on him that a once-common early morning ritual—the dropping off of fresh milk on American doorsteps—would soon be forgotten unless there were some eye-catching visual aids to attract the attention of younger generations of people.

“When I retired, I thought, I’m going to get a Divco and fix it up and keep it as a fun thing,” he says. “But the more I got involved, the more I realized how difficult it had become to find Divcos because home milk delivery wasn’t being used anywhere anymore. I thought: Gee whiz, if somebody doesn’t do something, my life’s work is going to go down the historical drain. So I tried to find as many different stand-to-drive trucks to fix up and take to shows as I could.”

As for this truck, perhaps one of the most historically significant Divcos in existence—an artifact of the company’s very roots—Jay says he’ll turn it over to a museum once he’s through showing it off. “I bought it in an effort to preserve it for future generations to see, and I will be showing it at car and truck events as long as I can,” he says. When I can no longer travel, the truck will be given to the National Auto and Truck Museum of the United States in Auburn, Indiana, for people to see for many generations to come.”

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Hello Muddah, Hello Fadduh

Summer hijinks involving Army-surplus hardware



BY JIM DONNELLY

If you were lucky—or hideously unlucky, depending on how well you enjoyed the experience—maybe your parents sent



you to camp in the summertime. You know, songs around the fire, roasting marshmallows, diving into a lake somewhere, sleeping in a bunkroom, all the fun stuff that Allan Sherman satirized in his Emmy-winning novelty song referenced in our headline. Camp also means field trips, to the mountains or a historical site, perhaps. Today, kids at camp go on those trips in school buses. But at a couple of Connecticut camps, beginning in the late 1940s, the camp kids traveled in sort-of Army trucks.

Let's start with the camps. The first location is known as Camp Awosting, which is on Bantam Lake outside Morris, Connecticut, in the northwestern part of the state, a little south of Litchfield. Right nearby is a similar site for girls, Camp Chinqueka. Founded by Dr. Walter Truslow in 1900, Camp Awosting is the oldest private boys' camp in the United States, as its website proclaims. It takes its name from a lake in adjoining New York where the camp was originally located. In 1905, new owners instituted what's called a "tribal system," based on one founded at the prestigious St. Paul's School in Concord, New Hampshire. Since 1948, the camp has been under the ownership of the Ebner family, whose patriarch, Oscar Ebner Sr., had worked as an Awosting counselor since the late 1930s.

Oscar Sr. is the focal personality in this little saga. He was a hardcore Chrysler guy, and one of his first acts was to buy a couple of vehicles for the campers. One was a huge 1948 De Soto Suburban sedan, with three rows of seats, which was used to ferry attendees in from as far as New York City, in some cases. Oscar also went out and bought himself a Dodge truck, a two-ton chassis and cab combination. There was no rear bodywork, at least not at first. But Oscar was a thrifty guy, and one time, made it over to the docks in Newark, New Jersey, to remedy that.

We learned what happened next from his son, Oscar Jr., who now runs the camps and goes by the nickname of Buzz. As Buzz told it, his dad deliberately ordered a short-wheelbase chassis under the Dodge so that a deuce-and-a-half body would drop right into place. What's that mean? Simple: It's a reference to the Army's built-by-the-millions, or so you might think, 2½-ton cargo truck used during and after World War II. Aside from the original Jeep, these rigs are the U.S. military's most iconic vehicles. The re-mechanization of the Army that commenced in the 1930s saw a variety of manufacturers submit truck designs to the Quartermaster Corps, which had its construction and proving grounds at Fort Holabird, Maryland, where the earliest original rigs were built by the corps using Hercules gasoline engines.

These trucks were called the Standard Fleet, and later evolutions were built by Marmon-Herrington and GMC, both with six-wheel drive. Lots of manufacturers made trucks for the Army during the war, from Chevrolet to Mack and Studebaker, but it was GMC's version, the first of which appeared in 1939, that gained enduring fame. More than 562,000 examples of the GMC CCKW, as the Army called it, were built. That meant a lot of surplus parts were lying around, including the familiar 2½-ton cargo and troop body. At Newark, so the story goes, Oscar Sr. found a stash of excess cargo




bodies, with LEND LEASE stamped into the sheetmetal for the program that sent U.S. war materiel overseas to desperate allies.

Oscar Sr. bought several of them and applied gray paint over the mil-spec olive drab. One body dropped neatly atop the new Dodge chassis. A canvas top went across the bows. Under the laws of the day, kids could crowd onto the side-facing troop benches as the Dodge trundled them on field trips going as distant as Cape Cod and Vermont. Buzz was one of the camp counselors in the back.

"All that was there for safety was the military safety strap across the back of the truck to hold the last troop person in place on the bench," Buzz recalled. "In the case of the camp transport, it was the two senior staff persons that got that seat, never a camper. But children from age six or seven on up to 16 were transported back and forth to campsites in this mode of transport for almost 25 years. As a child riding in one of these vehicles, it was quite a thrill. Here you were, like riding in a convertible, with the wind blowing through your hair and looking out over all the scenery passing by and being able to see over most other vehicles as well."

The Army bodies later went from the Dodge onto several 1963 Chevrolet C60 chassis/cab units, all powered by the 230-cu.in. straight-six. One of those trucks is long retired, but still sits around Awosting, and Buzz said the Ebner family hopes to do a full restoration on it before very long. 🐞



 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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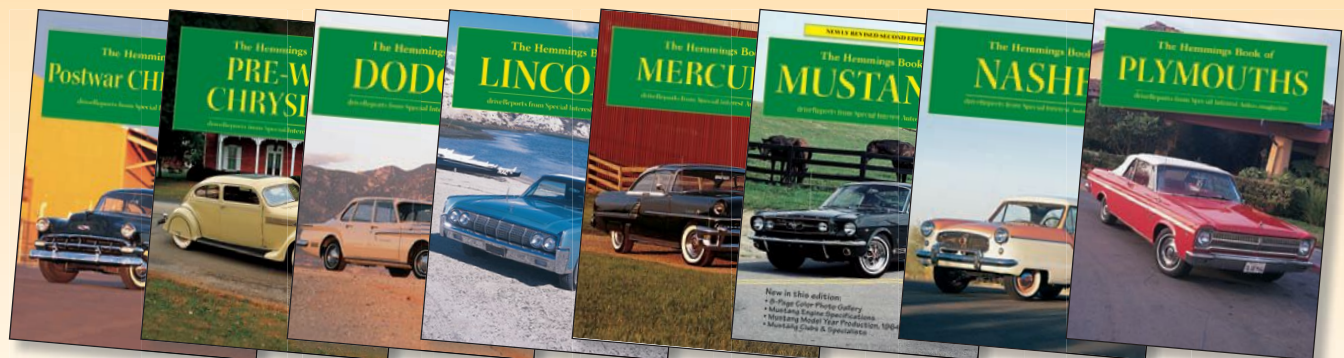
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Checker Cab Company
 1930
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I say buck the trend. Expose your engine in public. Be proud of it. It is one of humankind's greatest creations.

jimrichardson

Hidden Pleasures

I finally did it. I bought a car made in this century. I got myself a new Hyundai Azera. Why? Because its interior fit me like a glove, and it has a big comfortable back seat for friends, family—and myself at times. You see, my wife wants to drive whenever we go places together because she says I drive too fast. Never mind that she has had an accident in the last few years and I haven't. But her screams are nerve rattling, and feeling her nails biting into my arm is distracting.

Now you may ask, why did you buy a *foreign* car? And I would reply that I checked, and the car was assembled in Alabama, and 72 component manufacturers in the United States contributed parts. So it is *sort of* an American car. And as I said before, it fits me. There is just one problem with it. When I open the hood, I see a big plastic decorative shield hiding the engine as if it were somehow unclean. But I happen to like engines. Always have.

When I was about six years old, we went to a county fair. We toured an agricultural machinery exhibit and stood along the road as early tractors rolled by. And then came an enormous contraption that was all gigantic pulleys and whirling flat belts a foot wide slapping around, and monstrous connecting rods pumping away. Steam belched from valves, and a centrifugal governor that had little weights whizzing around topped it off. The thing was terrifying and fascinating as it lumbered and chuffed along at movie-monster walking speed.

I think it was then that I fell in love with engines. Later, I began to notice antique farm engines, aircraft engines and classic car engines, and they all enthralled me. At first, it was just the beauty of a device that created its own movement. But as I got to understand them more, I fell more deeply in love.

And then I saw a Model SJ Duesenberg at the Museum of Science and Industry with its hood open. Wow! There was that monumental, twin cam, inline-eight, all polished to perfection. It looked like jewelry. It was better than any sculpture I had ever seen. It was fundamental, pragmatic truth frozen into metal. Years later, I got to hear one run. It sounded like a fire engine. One that could do 135 miles per hour.

However, I am not impressed with electric motors at all. They are too quiet, and they harness the dark powers of the universe, if you ask me.

I don't care for jets either. Airplanes powered by super-sized vacuum cleaners just don't have the magic and drama of live steam, or engines that run on explosions.

Later, in my teens, hot rod engines blew me over. Once again, they were detailed beautifully much of the time, and they made menacing sounds. After that, my passions tended toward aircraft engines.

There is nothing like the sound of a trumbling radial on a P-47 Thunderbolt at full chat. And if you have ever heard a Rolls-Royce Merlin strutting its stuff in a P-51 Mustang from World War II, you will never forget

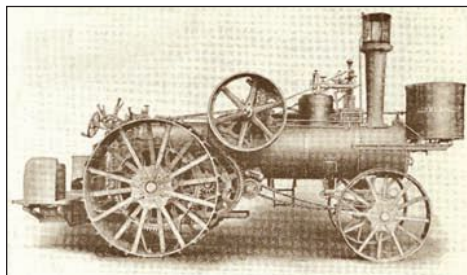
it. I even like the looks and sounds of turn-of-the (19th) century farm engines. And I love to watch them run. Their big flywheels, long connecting rods and monstrous pistons going around and around and back-and-forth, their intermittent ignition firing now and then, fascinate me.

I would love to have a couple of them in my back garden just to enjoy the way some people enjoy fountains and birdbaths. In fact, I would really like to own a huge Pratt & Whitney double-row with a 12-foot four-bladed propeller to fire up once in a while; but my neighbor, who is an artist and a Buddhist who likes to meditate and do that slow motion exercise thing in his garden, would probably take exception.

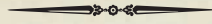
Actually, I would love to have my own engine collection. Flatheads, overhead valves, twin cams, straight-eights, V-12s and 16s, and even little Model A and T engines, along with Hudson and Chrysler powerplants, would be included. They are all beautiful in their own way; even though Detroit stopped detailing engines in the Depression era, they still state their plain truths.

I don't know if I should remove the plastic cover on my Hyundai's engine or not. It probably says somewhere on it that you must have an authorized Hyundai technician take it off or risk voiding your warranty. Perhaps there is a law these days against going around with a naked engine. Those people who want to eliminate cars from the planet are most likely behind this trend. Them and the manufacturers of cars who want to keep you totally dependent on them for even the most basic services.

I say buck the trend. Expose your engine in public. Be proud of it. It is one of humankind's greatest creations. 🐣



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