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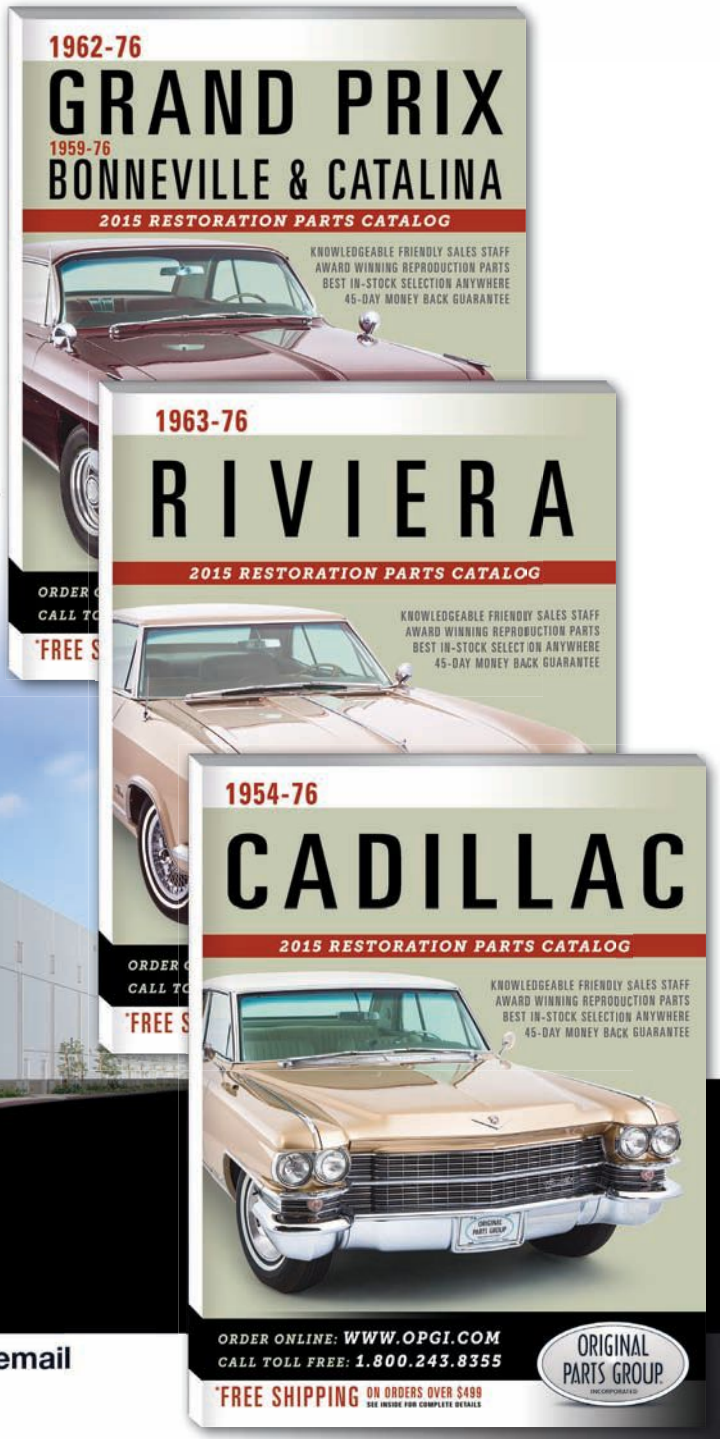

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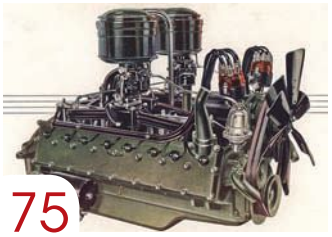

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HEMMINGS CLASSIC CAR
is published monthly by Hemmings Motor News
ISSN# 1550-8730
www.hemmings.com • 222 Main St., Bennington, Vermont 05201

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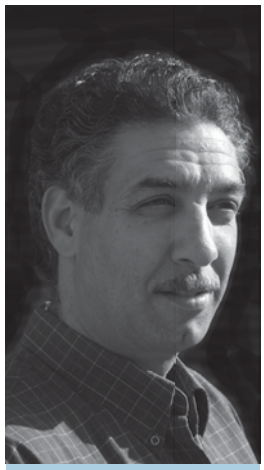

Old Movies, Old Cars

Living in South Florida means that during football season I'm not able to watch my beloved New York Jets play. So instead of wasting time watching our arch rivals, the Miami Dolphins, I sometimes relax the afternoon away by indulging in one of my favorite pastimes—watching old movies. I especially enjoy black-and-white movies from the 1940s and early '50s, when men dressed like men and women looked like the classy dames they were.

The way old movies were filmed and the way the actors acted always makes for a captivating experience that I find mesmerizing at times, yet the best part is always spotting the cars. Seeing period street scenes and the used-car lots makes me come alive with excitement as I try to name all the models I spot.

> "Seeing period street scenes and the used-car lots makes me come alive with excitement as I try to name all the models I spot."

On the NFL's opening day, I watched *Niagara*, starring Marilyn Monroe. Newlyweds Jean Peters and Max Showalter drive up in a 1950 Ford convertible, while Marilyn's boyfriend, Joseph Cotton, is shown in his room building a model of a Maxwell. From the window of the police station there's a 1951 Buick Super parked out front and a Hillman Minx and a Thirties-era Ford Transit bus drive by; a Morris Minor is seen driving past the courthouse. A 1951 Lincoln Sport Sedan pulls into the motel parking lot, while the car with the blaring horn down by the river was a 1930 Buick.

In *North by Northwest*, while catching a cab in New York City, leading man Cary Grant hails a 1958 Ford Custom 300. While in the cab, through the back window, you can see a Fifties-era Skoda following them. In the parking lot in front of Mt. Rushmore, Eva Marie Saint is getting into a 1958 Lincoln Continental that's parked alongside a customized '49 Mercury. And the scene in the woods stars a 1956 Chevrolet One-Fifty Handyman station wagon.

Another great classic is *Sunset Boulevard* from 1950, staring Gloria Swanson. The leading male is William Holden, who drives a 1946 Plymouth convertible while being chased. But the real car star of that flick was the sensational 1929 Isotta Fraschini that was stored in the garage—at first view, it made my heart rate double. One background beauty was a 1948 Buick Roadmaster sedanette parked on a street and a 1940 Buick woodie wagon that drives by.

My favorite movie of all time, one that is loaded with all sorts of fascinating cars, is *It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*, which was released back in 1963.

It opens with Jimmy Durante driving off a cliff in a 1957 Ford Fairlane. Sid Caesar drives a 1962 Plymouth station wagon, while Milton Berle is behind the wheel of a 1962 Imperial Crown convertible. And funnyman Jonathan Winters pilots a mid-'50s Ford COE moving van.

One classic scene shows Phil Silvers attempting to cross a river in a 1948 Ford convertible, then trying to hitch a ride from a passing Corvair Rampside but getting picked up by Don Knotts in a 1956 Ford Sunliner; they soon are passed by a 1959 El Camino.

Later on, Englishman Terry Thomas is driving a 1961 Impala bubbletop, while being chased by Dick Shawn in a red 1962 Dart convertible; a 1961 Chevy station wagon runs onto the shoulder to avoid being hit. Earlier, Terry-Thomas was driving a green Willys wagon, while being driven crazy by loudmouth Ethel Merman in the backseat. During Jerry Lewis's cameo role, he drives a gold 1962 Chrysler 300, but through his windshield you see a red 1955 Mercury Montclair parked along the curb. Other background cars include a mid-'50s Triumph TR2, a Triumph TR10 wagon parked on a street in front of a 1946 Buick sedan, '55 Thunderbird and a Nash Metropolitan. Another street scene shows a red 1960 Ford station wagon.

When Spencer Tracy gets into his black 1962 Dart, in the background stopped at a traffic light is a 1959 Studebaker Lark wagon, a '61 Cadillac convertible and a '61 Thunderbird. And towards the end of the movie, the scene with the two yellow 1959 Plymouth taxis in the warehouse alleyway shows a Fiat 600 and '56 Dodge in the background and some kind of little British sedan such as a Sunbeam or a Vauxhall that I can't identify. And let's not forget Mickey Rooney and Buddy Hackett driving a red VW Beetle convertible, and lovable Jack Benny in his yellow 1932 La Salle convertible coupe.

That's the best part of watching old movies—the cars. So which old movie is your favorite when it comes to spotting cars?

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BY TOM COMERRO

Petersen Museum

THE PETERSEN MUSEUM HAS BEEN SHUT DOWN FOR REMODELING BUT IS SET TO reopen this December. Renovations began in October of 2014, and since then only vault tours have been given. The four-story building will feature a contemporary art gallery with exhibits dedicated to automotive design; a floor that will encompass the history of racing, modified cars and alternative fuel technologies; and a floor that focuses on the history of the automobile in both Southern California and the world. A newly designed fourth floor will be used as a Penthouse/Terrace and Founder's Lounge. The Petersen Museum is located at 6060 Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles and is slated to reopen on December 1. Visit www.petersen.org for the most up-to-date information about the museum, its events and exhibits.

Turlock Trading

MODEL A ENTHUSIASTS IN THE NORTHERN California region will want to mark their calendar for January 30-31 as the Modesto Area A's chapter of the Model A Ford Club will be hosting their annual Turlock Swap Meet in Turlock, California. Cars and parts that are not Model A specific are also allowed; classic cars, vintage automotive items and antiques are preferred; newer cars will be accepted for the car corral but will pay higher prices for spaces. For more information about Turlock, visit the swap meet website at www.turlockswapmeet.com.

2016 Calendar

January 24 • Arizona Concours d'Elegance
Phoenix, Arizona • 602-625-9594
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February 26-28 • Big Three Parts Exchange
San Diego, California • 619-599-0709
www.big3partsexchange.com
March 17-18 • Chickasha Pre-War Swap Meet
Chickasha, Oklahoma • 405-224-9090
www.pwsm.com
April 7-10 • Charlotte AutoFair
Concord, North Carolina • 704-841-1990
www.charlotte-autofair.com
April 20-24 • Spring Carlisle
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May-August every other Thursday
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June 3-5 • Concours d'Elegance of Chicago
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July 27-30 • Buick Club of America 50th Anniversary • Allentown, Pennsylvania
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August 16-21 • Monterey/Pebble Beach Week
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September 28-October 2 • Fall Carlisle
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AACA Announcement

THE ANTIQUE AUTOMOBILE CLUB OF AMERICA HAS RELEASED ITS 2016 schedule, and meets and tours are set to take place all over the country. AACA's events draw huge crowds from everywhere and include flea markets, car corrals and, of course, the car shows. Make your plans for next year, and visit a show or tour in your area. For more information, visit www.aaca.org.

February 11-13
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Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
March 16-19
Winter Meet
Naples, Florida
April 7-10
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May 5-7
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June 3-4
Annual Grand National
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June 12-17
Sentimental Tour
Salisbury, North Carolina
July 14-16
Central Division Meet
North Mankato, Minnesota
July 17-21
Founders Tour
Huntington, Pennsylvania
August 11-13
Southeastern Fall Meet
New Bern, North Carolina
September 1-3
Western Fall Meet
Cheyenne, Wyoming
September 11-16
Revival AAA Glidden Tour (VMCCA)
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October 20-22
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BY DANIEL STROHL

Mutant Libre

NOW THAT THE UNITED STATES IS NORMALIZING RELATIONS WITH CUBA, we could probably fill the Lost & Found column every month with oddities that our readers spot on their travels down there and puzzle over the adaptations and modifications that Cubans have made to their cars to keep them on the road for decades.

And we'll be more than happy to oblige. So let's start with a couple photos of a Buick that reader Gary Bertrand spotted recently. "This car was being used as a taxi and had stopped to lend assistance to the taxi/truck behind (where I was a passenger), which had a disconnected tranny linkage," Gary wrote. Alas, he didn't ask the Buick's driver for details on the car.

Judging from the front, it dates to 1939, and we're inclined to peg it as an eight-passenger Limited series car, either the limousine or Touring Sedan—in either case a rare car to begin with. The rear fenders, of course, look nothing like a Buick, maybe something Russian, and we can only speculate what might have happened to the chassis over the last 75 years or what powers it now.

Who else has seen something wondrous plying the roads of Cuba that they'd like to share?

RE: Mid-Fifties Mix-up

FINALLY, REGARDING THE TWO-DOOR NON-NOMAD 1956 Chevrolet station wagon that Alexander Adames sent us photos of a couple months ago (see *HCC* #133), Maurice Curnier of County Antrim, Northern Ireland, wrote in to confirm that our export-version theory holds water.

"These wagons were sold in Morocco in the '50s alongside the saloons, but the Nomads never were, nor were the Pontiac equivalents," he wrote. "So there should have been many sold in South America, South Africa, etc... You were privileged in the U.S. to get the designer's more fetching original!"

Mostly Somewhat

ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE, BRIAN RESER INCLUDED A photo of a rusted hubcap with a mystery logo—one of a set he recently bought—and wondered what it might have originally been used on.

Our only clue, it appears, is the logo, which includes the initials "M.S." We tried to think of what those initials could stand for—Mister Smooth, Mystery Science, More Sloths, Many Spoons, Missing Syllables—but came up with nothing related to old autos or trucks. Could be from a vintage camper we're not familiar with, maybe a boat trailer, or perhaps they're just accessory/aftermarket hubcaps.

If you recognize the logo and initials, though, let us know so we can pass it on to Brian.

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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BY TOM COMERRO

Owls Head Museum

THE 38TH ANNUAL NEW ENGLAND AUTO AUCTION TOOK PLACE THIS past August, and it was a record-setting day at the Owls Head Transportation Museum in Owls Head, Maine. Of the 187 vehicles to cross the block, 80 percent were sold, with total sales reaching over $2.8 million. There were many different cars for all kinds of budgets, with one of the top sales being a 1933 Pierce-Arrow 1242 seven-passenger sedan—one of two in the Pierce-Arrow registry—selling for $115,500. At the other end of the spectrum there were several nice bargains and affordable projects that sold below $10,000, ranging from Model Ts to postwar classics including a 1949 Studebaker Champion sedan, a 1954 Monterey sedan and a 1958 Biscayne sedan, each selling for $8,250. For a full rundown of the auction results, visit www.owlshead.org.

Feel the (Au)burn

THIS PAST LABOR DAY WEEKEND SAW ANOTHER AUBURN CORD Duesenberg Festival with Auctions America enjoying another successful sale at Auburn Auction Park. Roughly 870 vehicles were up for sale, and the top one was, appropriately, a 1929 Duesenberg Model J Convertible coupe by Murphy that crossed the block for $1,275,000. It had a rich and pampered lineage and was at one time owned by William Veeck Jr., baseball hall of famer, who would go on to own the Cleveland Indians, St. Louis Browns and Chicago White Sox. He would begin his journey as one of baseball's most prominent owners by selling the car for a share in the Milwaukee Brewers in 1941. The car received a concours-quality restoration by Al Prueitt and Sons. For a complete look at the weekend's results, visit www.auctionsamerica.com.

AUCTION PROFILE

THE LINCOLN-CONTINENTAL MARK II WAS unveiled at the Paris Auto Show in October 1955, and 60 years later, it is still regarded by many as one of the most beautiful cars ever made. A standard in luxury at the time, the Mark II was available for $10,000, and only 2,550 were produced.

Adding to what is already a rare and prestigious car, this particular example is one of the original hand-built introductory units known to still exist. It started its life at a Palo Alto, California, Lincoln dealer and was used as a promotional vehicle for various events in Northern California before its official introduction in Paris. The car has been in a private collection for the last 20 years and underwent a rigorous and detailed restoration. Only 42,000 miles are on the car, and it still has the original engine, drivetrain and Scottish leather interior.

CAR:	1956 Continental Mark II	**CONDITION:**	#2+
AUCTIONEER:	Russo & Steele	**RESERVE:**	None
LOCATION:	Monterey, California	**AVERAGE SELLING PRICE:**	$70,000
DATE:	August 15, 2015	**SELLING PRICE:**	$75,900
LOT NUMBER:	4085		

DECEMBER Calendar

4-5 • Raleigh Classic
Raleigh, North Carolina • 919-269-5271
www.raleighclassic.com

5-6 • Zemil
Sarasota, Florida • 941-952-8226
www.myactionauction.com

11-12 • Mecum
Austin, Texas • 262-275-5050
www.mecum.com

Great Scottsdale

SCOTTSDALE IS THE CENTER OF THE CAR auction universe in January, and it's never too early to be prepared. There are six major auctions that will be occurring in the Phoenix/Scottsdale region, with the key dates ranging from January 23-31. The range of cars will cover the full spectrum from Full Classic concours cars, to daily drivers and projects. For in-depth coverage and previews of what to expect from each event, stay tuned in the coming months to blog.hemmings.com.

View and search through thousands of upcoming auction vehicles in one place at the Hemmings Auction Showroom, www.hemmings.com/auctions/.

BY MARK J. McCOURT

Corvette Glow

THE FIFTH-GENERATION CORVETTE IS ALREADY considered an accessible modern classic, and its fan base is undeniably enthusiastic. Here's something for them, and for all lovers of America's most iconic sports car: the Corvette C5 Tabletop Neon Sign. It's 11-inches wide and 9-inches tall, and is powered by a solid-state transformer that uses 110-volt household current to create a warm red glow in the hand-bent glass neon tubing. It looks equally good on a shelf or hanging on the wall. Cost: $64.99.

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1934 Buick Convertible Coupe

IF THERE WAS AN UNATTRACTIVE CAR BUILT IN 1934, WE CAN'T THINK OF IT, AND IT certainly didn't come from Buick. Their handsome Convertible Coupe was available in $1,495 Series 60 form (Model 66C, to be precise), and that's the car that Brooklin Models has commemorated in its "B.C. 1934 to 1939" collection. Finished in the gorgeous color of Freedom Blue, this handmade white-metal model features twin side-mount spares, ample brightwork and perfect paint. In typical style, this 2-4 passenger convertible is surprisingly hefty for its 1:43 scale. Cost: $129.95.

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Bespoke Mascots: Automotive Jewelry, Volume Two

AS LIMITED-PRODUCTION AND ONE-OF-A-KIND HOOD ORNAMENTS FROM THE golden age before WWII, these are some of the rarest, the most exquisite, mascots ever created. In this book are horses, bulldogs, frogs, gods and goddesses, as well as witches, cricket wickets, ocean surfers, Mickey Mouse, movie cameras and grenade-throwing doughboys. Many were crafted by the legendary Lalique and Cartier in crystal and bronze, while others were made by lesser-known design houses and even veterans of WWI who used melted-down war matériel. As custom items, all of them—in ways that marque mascots cannot—give us a rare insight into the personalities of those who purchased them. Photographed by Michael Furman, this 279-page masterpiece of masterpieces benefits from occasional commentary by Nicholas Dawes, noted decorative arts scholar. Don't miss the descriptions of each mascot at the end. Cost: $100. *—J. Daniel Beaudry*

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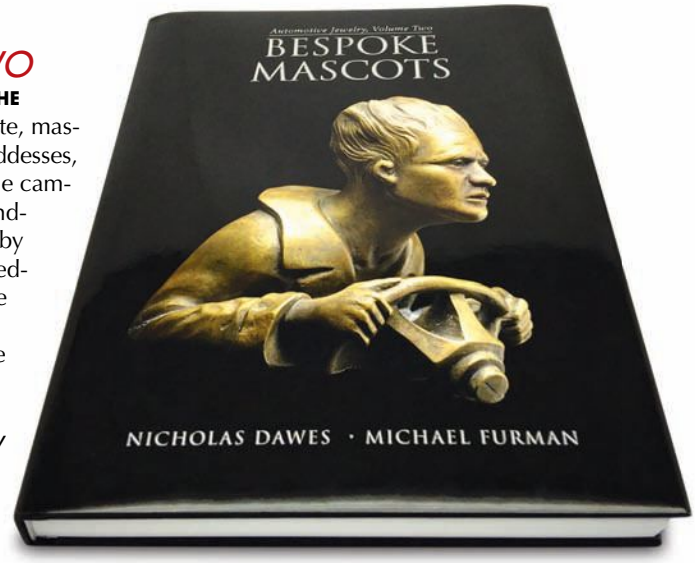

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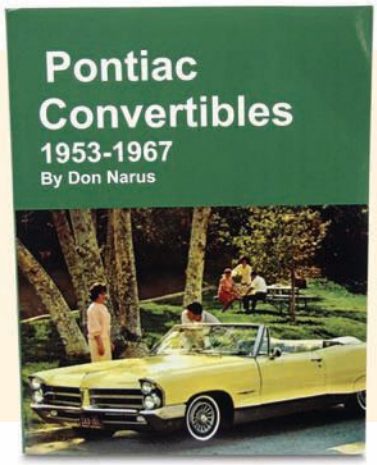

Pontiac Convertibles 1953-1967

PROLIFIC AUTHOR AND AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIAN DON NARUS HAS RECENTLY ADDED another title to his Convertibles Series; this 94-page, black-and-white softcover focuses on every series of Pontiac soft top built in the postwar boom years, beginning with the restyled 1953 models and ending with the introduction of the Firebird. Image quality varies, but the book excels as a quick reference guide, including overall and detail images as well as mechanical, pricing and production statistics where available. Cost: $18.95, plus $3.99 for U.S. shipping.

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Henry II's Honored in HO

WHETHER YOU ARE A MODEL RAILROAD AFICIONADO or simply appreciate life-like details in tiny form, you'll want to investigate the "Mini Metals" line of vehicles offered by Classic Metal Works (www.classicmetalworks.com). These HO 1/87-scale cars and trucks represent Ford's finest of the day, and they're done with accurate proportions and use authentic colors like Goldenrod Yellow, Banner Blue and Monte Carlo Red. Our samples included the 1955 Ford Fairlane Town Sedan, 1960 Ford ½-ton Styleside pickup truck and the 1960 Ford F-600 Delivery, Flat Bed and Stake Bed trucks, and each could shame larger models with its lifelike quality. Cost: $17-19.75.

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Black Marque

LESS REALLY CAN BE MORE, WHEN YOU TAKE IN THE automotive art of John Tiley. This British native has been creating unique interpretations of collector cars under the name, Black Marque, and his pieces use darkness to highlight the design aspects of each model. He explains, "Like most artists, I needed to find a style of my own, not something that was a perfect reproduction of the subject—because the camera does a much better, quicker, more efficient job—more so to create images where the viewer is drawn in, and their brain unconsciously 'fills in' the bits that aren't there."

His Black Marque portraits are created on the computer using a Wacom digital pen, and can be purchased in numerous forms, from hand-stretched Canvas Gallery Wraps and prints to decorative T-shirts, throw cushions, greeting cards, tote bags, phone covers and more. Cost: Starting at $4.55.

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BY TOM COMERRO

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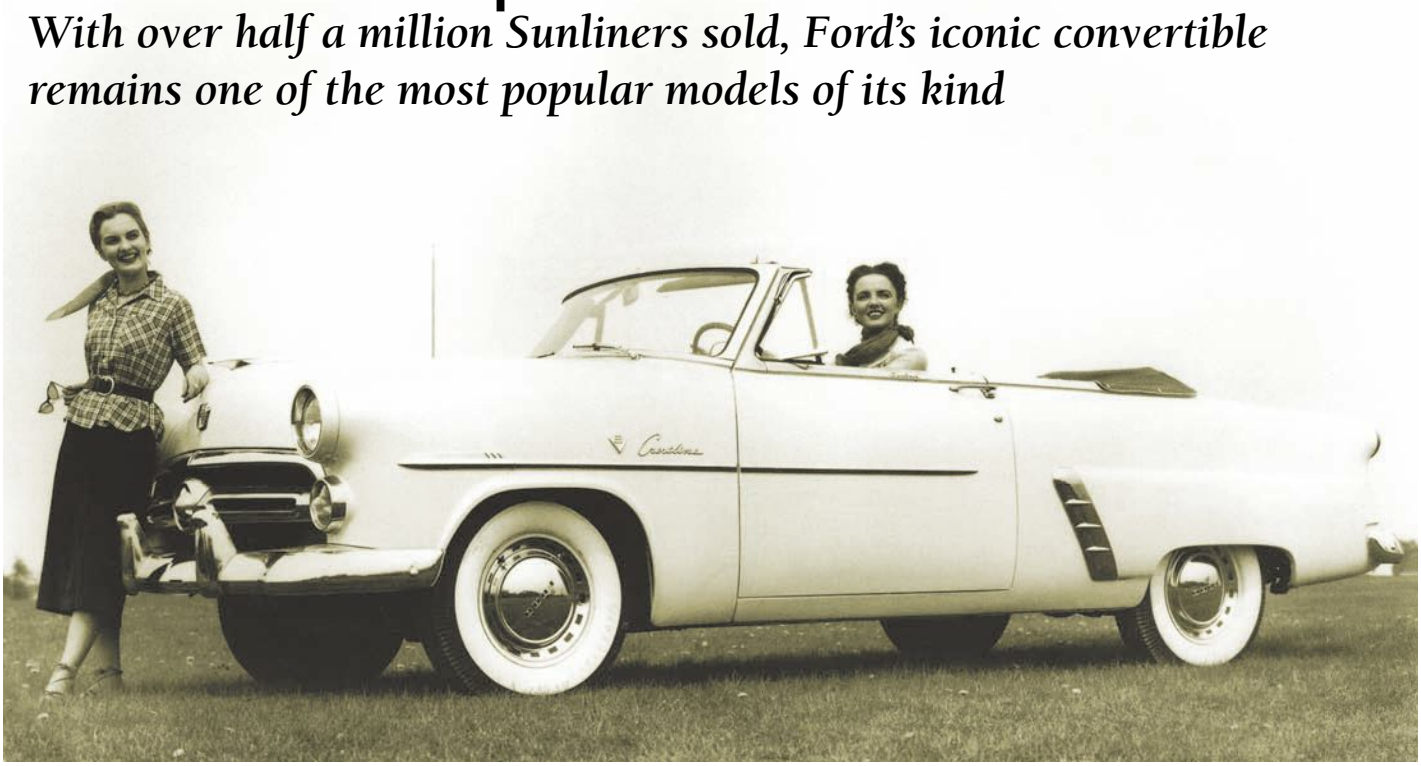
Sunliner Splendor

With over half a million Sunliners sold, Ford's iconic convertible remains one of the most popular models of its kind



BY DAVID CONWILL • PHOTOGRAPHY BY FORD MOTOR COMPANY OR AS CREDITED

The postwar period of 1952 to 1962 was arguably the heyday of the full-size convertible, and during that period the name Sunliner was synonymous with Ford's affordable offering.

The Sunliner was a handsomely styled six-passenger convertible that featured a pushbutton electric convertible top for ease of operation. It was always an affordable convertible, yet it was built to a high standard, with rugged mechanicals and powerful engines that helped make it one of the most popular convertible model lines of all time. Even today, it remains a sought-after collectible that lovers of convertibles can enjoy without breaking their bank accounts. Best of all, many body and trim parts for Sunliners have been reproduced, which now makes restoring one easier than it used to be. But which model year Sunliner suits you best?

1952 When Ford replaced the successful 1949-vintage "shoebox" design with an even more modern looking shape for its 1952 models, it decided that its top-of-the-line convertible deserved a more contemporary, streamlined name than "Convertible Club Coupe." What appellation could be better, then, to evoke soaking up some rays behind the wheel than "Sunliner"? Likewise, the old "Custom Deluxe" trim level was replaced with "Crestline" to evoke Ford's sporty 1950-'51 Crestliner body style. Rounding out the exclusive Crestline series were the luxurious Victoria hardtop and wood-trimmed Country Squire station wagon.

Fabled road tester Tom McCahill called the 1952s "the best looking Fords ever built." Indeed they were the most radically modern of the low-priced three that year. In contrast with the 1949-'51 design, they featured a one-piece windshield, front fenders nearly even with the hoodline, and a fuel filler relocated behind the license plate. A simple bright-metal strip from the front fender extended into the door, and a faux chrome scoop on the bulge defining the rear quarter panel was reminiscent of the F-80 Shooting Star jet fighter. Further echoing the Jet Age were a swept-wing hood ornament and triple "bullets" in the grille, the outer of which served as parking lamps. In the rear, afterburner-esque taillamps introduced a styling theme that would rapidly become a trademark of mid-century Fords.

The 1952 chassis was largely identical to that introduced in 1949, albeit with a one-inch-longer wheelbase. New were suspended brake and clutch pedals, which departed from the tradition of mounting pedals to the frame and routing them up through the floor. The new arrangement was preferred because it better kept dust and drafts out of the passenger compartment and made for easier access to the now-firewall-hung master cylinder.

Notably absent from the Crestline series were workaday sedans and six-cylinder engines. The venerable 110hp, 239 cubic-inch flathead V-8, billed as the "Strato-Star" in this, its penultimate year of domestic production, was the sole engine available. It could be had with standard column-shifted three-speed, overdrive, or Ford-O-Matic automatic transmissions.

The six-passenger Sunliner had a list price of $2,027, of which 22,534 were produced.

1953 For the 1953 model year, Ford celebrated its 50th anniversary with a special medallion in the center of the steering wheel. To honor the anniversary, a Sunliner was chosen as the pace car for the Indianapolis 500. Ford even took the then-unprecedented step of producing and distributing a limited number of official replicas of the pace car.

Styling changes were minimal for 1953: The somewhat plain sides of the 1952 body gained an additional bright-metal strip on the quarter panel. Meanwhile, the grille was simplified to a single chrome bullet in the center flanked with ribs, and the parking lamps, now rectangular, were moved inside the grille opening.

A few weeks after Ford's anniversary commemoration at Indy, Master Guide power steering joined the Ford-O-Matic automatic transmission in the growing list of power convenience options available on the Sunliner, which also included power brakes. The 110hp, 239-cu.in. Strato-Star V-8 remained the only engine option, and was still available with a three-speed, overdrive or Ford-O-Matic drive.

Evidently these new changes were well received by the public as sales increased to 40,861 units, even though the list price also went up to $2,230.

1954 The exclusive Crestline series expanded for the 1954 model year with the addition of a four-door sedan and the sensational Skyliner hardtop, which added a fixed, transparent panel over the front seat. The Skyliner was the first attempt since the introduction of the 1951 Victoria hardtop to offer all-weather comfort with convertible style and visibility, and the badge would continue to nip at Sunliner's heels for the next five years.

Although 1954 brought only minor styling changes, they added to the car's already distinctive style. Gone was the affected scoop on the quarter panels, and side trim was one continuous piece running down the entire length of the body, with a fillet at the rear where the scoop was located on the 1952-'53 models; directly below the fillet was a modest gravel shield. Up front, the triple spinner grille theme reappeared, although significantly more streamlined than in 1952. There was also a new hood ornament, still jet themed, but sporting state-of-the-art delta wings reminiscent of the interceptors just being developed for the Air Force.

The list of power assists available to Sunliner owners expanded further when a power seat and power windows joined the options list. Also significant was the introduction of ball-joint front suspension, previously available only in "Road Race" Lincolns, which simultaneously improved handling and reduced maintenance.

Bigger news was the availability of Ford's first overhead-valve V-8 engine. Called the Y-block, it produced 20 more horsepower from the same 239-cu.in. displacement as the previous flathead—now 130hp. For those buyers who sought economy with their open-air motoring, the 1954 Sunliner was available with a straight-six engine—the 115hp, 223-cu. in. I-block Mileage Maker Six. Transmission choices remained identical to 1952-'53: column-shifted three-speed, overdrive, or Ford-O-Matic drive.

Be it a six-cylinder Sunliner for $2,164 or a V-8-powered Sunliner for $2,241, Ford produced a total of 33,685 examples.

1955 The sensational new Thunderbird inspired the first major change in the Sunliner's appearance, as its styling gave way to a longer, lower and wider body for the 1955 model year. However, the Crestline nameplate was replaced by a new series called "Fairlane" after company patriarch Henry Ford's Dearborn mansion.

Hooded headlamps, a concave mesh grille and large, round parking lamps echoed the design found on the Thunderbird. Vestigial sculpturing over the rear wheel openings served to tie the new body with the more-prominent bulges of the preceding three years, while simultaneously suggesting speedy forward motion. Similar embossing was found around the front wheel openings. The new Fairlane Sunliner sported dramatic dipped side trim, which allowed for striking two-tone paint

Cosmetic changes from 1952 (above) to 1953 were minimal. For 1953, to commemorate Ford's 50th anniversary, the company was invited to furnish a Sunliner to pace the Indianapolis 500 race.

HEMMINGS STAFF

The 1955 Sunliner (left) was styled to resemble the new Thunderbird roadster, while the 1956 cars were slightly revised.

schemes. While styling was quite different, the 1955 chassis was substantially the same as the 1954-updated 1949 design, although wheelbase grew by half an inch.

The Y-block was still the only V-8 option, though displacement and horsepower grew: The 239 increased to 272 cubic inches and now produced 162 horsepower. For those who liked the Thunderbird but wanted more seating, or were on a budget, the Thunderbird V-8 was available in the Sunliner, and produced 193hp from 292 cubic inches. The straight-six also remained available and was now up to 120hp. As in previous years, buyers could opt for a manual three-speed, overdrive, or Ford-O-Matic transmission.

America's love for the V-8 was clearly evident in the sales figures of the $2,295 six-cylinder-powered Sunliner, of which only 188 were produced. Yet 50,582 V-8 Sunliners, at a higher cost of $2,395, were built.

1956 For the 1956 model year, in addition to performance, Ford attempted to emphasize safety to consumers by offering a dished steering wheel, optional padded instrument panel and sunvisors, and optional seat belts.

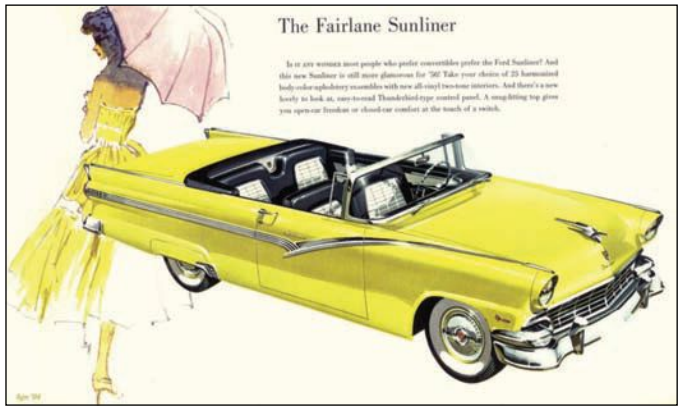
Styling changed only subtly. The dipped Fairlane side trim was reworked with ribs, and the parking lamps were now more modest ovals instead of the big, round units used in 1955. The grille mesh was elongated into rectangles. Ford styling began to transition from the Jet Age to the Space Age as the hood ornament was shorn of its wings to become a rocket.

The 1951-vintage Ford-O-Matic transmission design was tweaked for "Speed Trigger" acceleration, allowing the transmission to start in low gear when the gas pedal was floored. Ford tackled the increasing compression ratio of its high-output engines by changing to a 12-volt, negative-ground electrical system.

The previous year's engines were joined by a new 312-cu.in. Thunderbird Special V-8 producing 215hp (225hp with Ford-O-Matic). The 223-cu.in. straight-six generated 137hp, the 272 V-8 was up to 173hp with standard shift and 176hp with the Ford-O-Matic; the 292 Thunderbird V-8 produced 200hp, or 202hp with the Ford-O-Matic.

Again, the V-8-powered Sunliner was the king of sales, with 57,872 examples of the $2,502 convertible sold, versus just 275 units of the Sunliner six, which cost just $100 less.

1957 Sporting Ford's new look, the restyled Sunliner was a smash hit with the public.



One of three convertible Fords available for the 1957 model year, the Skyliner transitioned from its glass-topped origins to a retractable hardtop. Yet it was the Sunliner that was the bargain of the group: The cloth-topped, six-passenger convertible outsold both the Skyliner and Thunderbird by nearly four-to-one. It is well known that Ford sales outstripped archrival Chevrolet in 1957, but perhaps more impressive is that more Sunliners alone were sold than all Chevrolet, Plymouth and Buick convertibles combined.

The styling of the 1957 Fords is often claimed to be the most changed since 1949. Gone was the Thunderbird-inspired styling of 1955-'56, and in its place was a heavily sculpted body reminiscent of the 1956 Mystere dream car. The grille and taillamps were essentially the same, yet the dipped Fairlane Sweep side trim now sported a gold-anodized insert. The new body was also four inches lower and nine inches longer, and rode on a 2.5-inch longer wheelbase.

The 1957 Sunliner chassis was still an evolution of the chassis from 1954 and with similar mechanical features to 1956. The real changes came under the new rear-opening hood. The Y-block V-8, in its swan song as a performance engine, gained the options of dual four-barrel carburetors or a supercharger. Eight-venturi induction yielded the 312-cu.in. Thunderbird Special V-8 with 270hp, while the supercharger made for the 312-cu.in. Thunderbird Special Supercharged V-8 with 300hp. Both engines were also available in higher output racing trim. Those not wishing to drive such a high performance automobile on a daily basis could opt for the 245hp 312-cu.in. Thunderbird Special V-8,

WORLDWIDE AUCTIONEERS

the 292-cu.in. Thunderbird V-8 with 212hp, the 190hp 272-cu. in. V-8, or the Mileage Maker straight-six that produced 144hp. Transmission options remained a choice between the basic three-speed manual, overdrive and Ford-O-Matic.

Again, $100 separated the cost of the six-cylinder Sunliner with the V-8 version; however, the $2,675 V-8 Sunliner was a runaway success with 76,896 cars produced versus just 832 for the six.

1958 After the blockbuster year of 1957, it would have been difficult for 1958 to be better. Factor in the recession, corporate focus on the new Edsel division, and the rise of the four-seat Thunderbird, and things were considerably tougher for the Sunliner. The Sunliner sold fewer than half the units it did during the 1957 model year, and was actually outsold by the restyled 1958 Chevrolet convertible.

The 1957 (top) took inspiration from the 1956 Mystere dream car. In 1957 over 77,000 were sold—the nameplate's best-selling year. The heavily sculptured 1958 redesign (above) coincided with the Sunliner's promotion to the Fairlane 500 line, and the award-winning 1959 cars would become Galaxie models at mid-year.

SIMON CLAY/BONHAMS

For 1958, Ford stylists managed to heavily revise the appearance of the Sunliner, while maintaining the same basic body shell as before. Additional sculpturing helped reinforce the body panels, the hood gained a Thunderbird-styled Power-Flow dummy scoop and the rear temporarily lost Ford's classic round taillamps in favor of an arrangement using four oval lenses—echoing the newly 50-state-legal Safety-Twin quad headlamps in the front. The Sunliner was no longer merely a Fairlane, but moved up (along with its Skyliner sibling) into the new "Fairlane 500" niche, sporting more luxurious side trim than a standard Fairlane.

As one would expect, the 1958 chassis was virtually identical to the 1957 model's chassis, although the venerable Ford-O-Matic received modifications to become the Cruise-O-Matic, allowing the driver to select a range that utilized low gear without having to rely on the Speed Trigger starting method introduced in 1956. Buyers could still choose from three-speed manual, overdrive and the original Ford-O-Matic transmission. A less successful innovation for 1958 was Ford's first entry into the air-suspension field: Ford-Aire, which was discontinued after only a miniscule run.

The new FE-series big-block V-8 replaced the Y-block as the high-output engine in the lineup. As it came on the scene, the FE was more of a workhorse than a thoroughbred, having swapped cubic inches for RPM. Cars were getting heavier, and Ford was officially out of racing following a 1957 resolution of the Automobile Manufacturers Association, so it made sense that new big-block V-8s would favor torque. A buyer seeking 300 horsepower in a Sunliner would get the Interceptor 352 Special instead of the previous year's supercharged 312. Further down the scale were a 265hp 332-cu.in. Interceptor Special V-8; 240hp 332-cu.in. Interceptor V-8; and the old standby 292-cu. in. V-8, now producing 205 horsepower. The Mileage Maker Six was still 223 cubic inches and was now rated at 145 horsepower.

Production of the $2,721 six-cylinder Fairlane 500 Sun-

liner topped out at just 581 cars, while the $2,845 Sunliner V-8 reached 34,448 units.

1959 Ford billed its 1959s as "the world's most beautifully proportioned cars." At mid-year the Sunliner received yet another promotion, this time to the new Galaxie series—though for the convertible this required only a change of badges, as the primary difference from the Fairlane 500 constituted use of the Thunderbird's squared-off roofline.

The 1959 bodies were still based on 1957's basic shell, although more completely restyled in a thoroughly conservative direction, which stood out distinctly from the flamboyant designs of GM and Chrysler. Back for now were round taillamps. The Fairlane sweep side trim was in its final year and was a shadow of its former self.

Also in its final year was the 1954-style chassis, which was largely unchanged since 1957. One new feature was the availability of Ford's answer to Chevrolet's Positraction limited-slip differential; any buyer could order the Equa-Lock differential for $38.60.

For the first time since its introduction, the Sunliner could not be had with the most powerful engine in the Ford lineup; the top offering was once again the 300hp 352-cu.in. V-8, now advertised as the Thunderbird 352 Special. The 332 V-8 came only as the 225hp Thunderbird 332 Special, and the 292 was still the base V-8, although now advertised only with 200hp. The 223 straight-six still produced 145hp.

Irrespective of a sizeable price increase to $2,914, the six-cylinder Sunliner saw an increase in production to 1,385 units. The V-8 Sunliner cost $3,032, and 44,483 were built.

1960 Despite critical acclaim lavished on the 1959 design, Ford completely overhauled its full-size offerings for the 1960 model year. Dimensions tell much of the tale: wider track, longer wheelbase, 5.7-inches-longer length, and five inches wider overall. The restyled bodies were not only larger, but distinctively different in overall appearance.

The new long, low and wide Sunliner—now sporting just a Sunliner badge on the trunk in lieu of "Galaxie" identification—had once again turned its back on round taillamps, this time in favor of half-round shaped taillamps that sat below broad horizontal fins. Only ribbed stainless steel trim on lower quarter panels tied the styling back to the 1959 models.

Like the body, the Ford chassis was also new, the first clean-sheet design since 1949. Wheelbase was set at 119 inches, and although the design was thoroughly conventional, it would be the most enduring of the changes for the 1960 model year.

With so many alterations to body and chassis, Ford elected to leave engine and transmission options largely alone, with the exception of the R-code 360hp, 352-cu.in. Super Interceptor V-8, a harbinger of a new direction for Ford this decade. Still on the options list were the 300hp 352-cu.in. Interceptor Special V-8 and 352-cu.in. Interceptor V-8, now up to 235hp. The base 292-cu.in. V-8 was now down to 185hp, and the 223-cu.in. Mileage Maker Six stood pat at 145hp. Buyers ordering the Super Interceptor could opt only for the three-speed manual or overdrive. All other engines could also be equipped with Ford-O-Matic or Cruise-O-Matic.

Although full-size Ford sales were down overall, the Sunliner's new look must have connected well with buyers, because 2,689 six-cylinder models of the $2,935 car were built, along with 42,073 of the $3,048 V-8 version.

HEMMINGS ARCHIVES

Model year 1960 (above) marked the pinnacle of the Sunliner badge's prominence, where it replaced Galaxie badging on open cars, but public preference ran to the downsized 1961 redesign.

1961 The updated 1960 model didn't sell like the 1959s. Somewhat reminiscent of the 1959-'60 Chevrolet and often criticized for its excessive width, the Sunliner, unsurprisingly, was redesigned yet again for the 1961 model year. Equipped with the same chassis as before, the 1961 models were narrower by two inches and shorter by four.

Radically different from the beltline down, the 1961 Sunliner returned to the trademark round-taillamp style used from 1952 to '57 and again in 1959. A full-width concave grille divided by a horizontal center bar replaced the flat, recessed unit of 1960, tailfins returned to the canted position of 1957-'59 and, once again, the ribbed stainless steel quarter panel trim was one of the few hints that the 1959, '60 and '61 bodies were all produced by the same company.

This year, Ford announced it would no longer abide by the AMA's 1957 prohibition on factory support of racing activities. For the first time since 1958, Ford increased displacement of its V-8 engines, enlarging the 352 to 390-cu.in. for the 300hp Thunderbird V-8 and 375hp Thunderbird Special V-8. The latter could be equipped with a triple-carburetor setup by the dealer for a whopping 401hp—good for NASCAR teams, Super Stock drag

The 1962 cars (left) were the last Ford convertibles to wear Sunliner badging. Convertibles for 1963 were advertised only as the Galaxie 500 and performance-theme Galaxie 500/XL with buckets, console, and floor shift.

racers and Sunliner buyers who wanted the wind in their hair at maximum velocity. The 352 returned in 220hp tune as the Interceptor V-8 engine, alongside the 175hp 292 V-8 and 135hp 223 six-cylinder. Once again, the buyer opting for the Thunderbird Special or Thunderbird Special ("6V") V-8 engines had to choose manual shift, with or without overdrive, whereas buyers of all other engines could choose from those transmissions, Ford-O-Matic or Cruise-O-Matic.

Once again sales increased for the $2,922 six-cylinder Sunliner to 2,764 cars, while the $3,083 Sunliner V-8 had sales of 41,810 units.

1962 Further building its sporting image, in 1962 Ford spread the Sunliner model between two different series: Galaxie 500 and Galaxie 500/XL. The 500/XL offered all the trim of a 500, plus bucket seats, an engine-turned insert in the instrument panel, a console, and a floor-shift transmission. If the buyer specified a high-output big-block V-8, that floor shifter could be attached to a newly optional four-speed manual transmission.

This year, Ford began to deemphasize the Sunliner name—possibly as its cruising connotations came in conflict with the company's burgeoning effort to build a reputation for performance; it also didn't help that Chevrolet convertibles had outsold Sunliner every year since 1958. While conventional Galaxie 500 Sunliners still had their flanks adorned with Sunliner scripts, in a reversal of 1960's prominent use of the Sunliner model name in place of Galaxie identification, the 500/XL convertibles advertised the new series instead.

The 1962 body clearly echoed 1961, but it was restyled to be cleaner, slab-sided and fin-shorn. Up front was a flush grille, and along the sides was a modest molding at the beltline. The chassis was unchanged, and good news for Sunliner owners in northern climates who wished to stretch the cruising season or drive their cars year round was that heaters and defrosters became standard in all Fords for the 1962 model year.

The 1962 Sunliner also lent itself to Ford's attempted end run around NASCAR rules with the Starlift lift-off hardtop designed to convert the Sunliner convertible into a body style aerodynamically comparable to the slippery 1961 Galaxie Starliner, which had not translated into the 1962 lineup due to slow sales.

Although the Starliner was nixed, good news for NASCAR teams, Super Stock drag racers and Sunliner buyers who enjoyed spirited performance to go along with the sporty looks, was the new 405hp 406-cu.in. Thunderbird Special 406 V-8—a bored-out version of the previous year's 390. For those buyers who wanted single-carburetor reliability, the same engine produced 385hp with a Holley four-barrel, in which instance it was called just "Thunderbird 406 V-8." Also available was a 6V 390-cu.in. V-8 billed as the "Thunderbird 390" and producing 340hp; the

300hp Interceptor 390 V-8; 220hp 352-cu.in. Interceptor V-8; and 138hp 223-cu.in. straight-six. In its last year was the old, reliable 292-cu.in. Y-block V-8, now down to 170hp.

A total of 2,616 Galaxie 500 Sunliner sixes were built with a base price of $2,924, while the $3,033 V-8 model had a production run of 40,030 examples. The better trimmed Galaxie 500/XL Sunliner V-8 found 13,183 buyers, even though its base price was $3,306. Most significantly, this was the last year of the Sunliner nameplate.

Perhaps not surprisingly, given the unsentimental nature of the new-car game, the Sunliner name went out with a whimper, rather than a bang. The new muscular attitude at Ford truly came into the fore with 1963's "Total Performance" marketing campaign, in which the slogan and TV show *The Lively Ones* played a large part. While some references still call the 1963 Galaxie convertible "Sunliner," both in-period brochures and magazine advertisements use only the designation "Galaxie 500 convertible" or "Galaxie 500/XL convertible."

Also significant, the Sunliner, which had outlasted the Skyliner and was no longer facing internal competition from the near-Lincoln-priced Thunderbird, gained a new stablemate in the form of the 1963 Falcon Futura convertible. The Falcon convertible's 4,602 sales were paltry in comparison with the 55,427 Galaxie convertibles sold that year, but were a harbinger of the transition of the open-car market away from big, luxurious cars to small, sporty ones—especially as full-size cars were increasingly ordered with air conditioning.

The demise of the Sunliner badge came just as full-size convertible sales began a slow, inexorable slide. From a peak of over 77,000 units in 1957, full-size Ford convertible production declined continually until 1972, when only 4,234 LTD convertibles were sold. Less than a decade following the disappearance of the Sunliner name, Ford pulled the plug on big convertibles for good.

The fun lives on, however, for enthusiasts who seek out, restore and enjoy Ford convertibles from the heyday of cruising. The 1952 to 1962 Sunliners will always equate with fresh air, good views and the warmth of ol' Sol.

Fifty-Six Sensation

With its appealing '50s styling, it's no wonder the 1956 Sunliner was the second best-selling full-size Ford convertible of the era

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD LENTINELLO

Sunliner. The name alone conjures up cheerful visions of outdoor enjoyment in the warm, bright sunshine. A name that through the years has become synonymous with exhilarating motoring for Ford owners everywhere, especially when the power top is lowered. When it comes to convertibles wearing a Ford emblem, the Sunliner is at the top of the must-have list for many enthusiasts.

During the Sunliner's 11-year-long production run, the 1956 model was, and remains, one of the all-time favorites. After the magnificent 1957 Sunliner, with its dramatic, new-for-'57 body style that helped it become the most popular Sunliner model of all with a production run of 77,728 examples, the 1956 Sunliner was the second-most popular version, with 58,147 units built. Of this number, 57,872 were the more expensive V-8 models.

Although the 1956 Sunliner's main body shell is essentially identical to the '55 model, it was tastefully upgraded with a bit more decorative trim, which combined to give it a look that so

many collectors and enthusiasts find incredibly appealing. And we wholeheartedly agree. The 1956 Sunliner is truly a great looking automobile, with a clean design and well-proportioned lines that aren't too overpowering or dramatic. It's the kind of style that continues to grow on you; in fact, the more you admire its form, the more you are attracted to it. And when its convertible top is lowered, its shape becomes even more likeable.

This is especially true of the rear view. The way the top of the quarter panels transform ever so delicately into a fin—whose shape is then defined by a thick chrome bezel that helps it to be more prominent as a standalone design element—is simple yet dramatic. This matchless rear end styling, with its large, single, round taillamps, is what lends both the 1955 and '56 Sunliners their highly distinctive appearance.

Then there's the striking form of that stainless steel trim running down the side of the body adding greatly to this Sunliner's glamour. Similar to the side trim on the 1955 model, the reshaped trim for 1956 features a fluted design element that gives the car a more dazzling attitude. This trim piece runs down the entire length of the body, which not only helps the car appear longer than it actually is, but lower, too, due to the available two-tone paint scheme that tricks the eye. And on the rearmost section of the quarter panel, where the trim meets the taillamp bezel, there's a fake, yet restrained, looking "exhaust outlet" of 21 little rectangles, each

The cheerful interior is bright and colorful with its luscious Mandarin Orange-painted dash, steering wheel and matching door panels and seat upholstery.

Easy-to-read instruments are framed with chrome bezels, and rear ashtrays are fitted on both sides.

painted flat black. It's all very tastefully crafted—just another charming design element that makes the 1956 Sunliner so distinctive.

This was the year that Ford was touting its "exclusive new Lifeguard Design." The dealer literature stated: "More than two years of intensive safety research and testing by Ford engineers in co-operation with universities, medical authorities and other safety experts have disclosed some interesting new data on accident injuries—and what can be done to reduce them." The changes that Ford made, which were introduced on its 1956 models, were to set the center hub of the steering wheel more than three inches below the plane of the rim and to utilize new double-grip door latches to reduce the chance of the doors opening on impact. Optional were the addition of thick padding atop the dashboard and longer and stronger seat belts.

Like many cars of the era, the 1956 Sunliner's instrument panel is made of sturdy metal and painted the same two colors as the exterior. It has a very clean, basic look about it with a rounded form that is visually soothing. The hood over the 120MPH speedometer is framed with stainless steel trim, and the speedometer itself features easy-to-read white numbers on a black background. It's flanked by a fuel gauge on the left with a dual oil/generator gauge below, and a water temperature gauge on the right with a clock below it.

The style of the fluted exterior side trim carries over into the interior with the use of two separate fluted stainless steel plates in the center of the dash to house the climate controls and the AM radio. Above resides a drop-down ashtray, and there's a lockable glovebox on the far right. A single speaker for the radio is integrated into the top of the dash. And the same two-tone color scheme makes up the vinyl upholstery, for a truly eye-catching interior.

Ford's Thunderbird Special V-8 displaces 312-cubic-inches while making 225 horsepower and a mean 324-ft.lb. of torque at just 2,600 RPM. Oil Bath air cleaner sits atop a Holley 4000 four-barrel carburetor.

Under the hood of our feature car sits the Thunderbird Special V-8. Displacing 312-cubic inches, this is the 225 horsepower version due to its use with the three-speed Ford-O-Matic automatic transmission; manual transmissions were coupled with the 215hp version. According to factory Ford literature, "The beauty of these new Ford Y-8s lies not alone in their quick, sure responsiveness, their greater passing ability. It lies in their deep-block, low-friction design which gives you

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> *Ford was proud of the Sunliner that its stylists and engineers created, and rightly so. It was, and still is, a superb automobile…*

Sunliner's interior is quite spacious and offers plenty of legroom for rear seat passengers. Below: Note the fake "exhaust vents" at the end of the beltline trim.

smooth, quiet power, longer engine life. The engines feature a Double Twin-Jet carburetor with integrated automatic choke, dual exhaust, turbo-wedge combustion chambers, Automatic Power Pilot, and use regular gas."

This was also the first year of employing the more modern 12-volt electric system. Ford stated that the "New 12-volt electrical system gives you the extra voltage and capacity to handle all the accessories you want. Also gives you quicker, surer cold-weather starts." And in the brochures at the dealer, Ford also touted the use of new spark plugs, saying "Anti-fouling 18mm spark plugs help maintain new-car performance longer. They resist fouling up to three times longer than conventional plugs."

All of these upgrades helped make the 1956 Sunliner an exceptional and exciting car to drive. Ford's PR agency said it best when it wrote: "You'll almost believe the world is flat when you sample the sizzle that made Ford the world's best selling V-8. In fact, this zip which paid off in the grand-prize win in the stock car racing championships at Daytona—pays off in all of your driving. You'll leave traffic lights behind like lightning…pass in a split jiffy."

One person who likes to pass other cars in a jiffy whenever he can is long-time Ford enthusiast and collector, Robert Carnevale, the owner of this gorgeous, well-restored Sunliner. Hailing from Philadelphia, Robert keeps his Sunliner, along with his 1960 Thunderbird, at his garage in Vero Beach, Florida. It's along A1A that hugs the Atlantic Ocean where Robert enjoys cruising top down with his wife, and where he regularly samples the power and torque of the Thunderbird Special.

Ford was proud of the Sunliner that its stylists and engineers created, and rightly so. It was, and still is, a superb automobile that has that special look that everyone appreciates. Ford's brochure didn't hold back when it stated: "The Sunliner, far and away America's favorite convertible, is more spacious—more beautiful than ever before, inside and out—with its new Thunderbird-inspired styling." And they were right.

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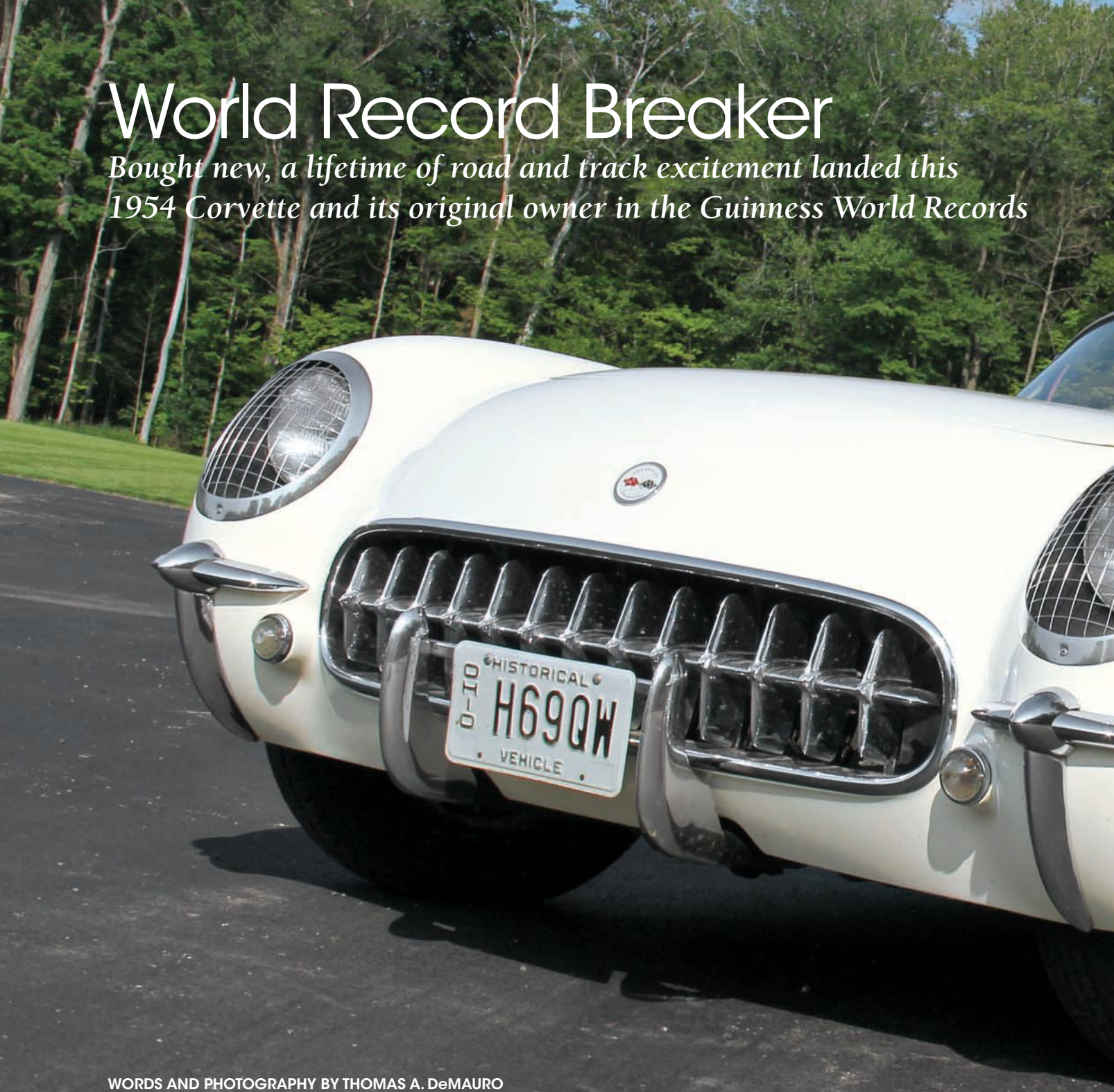


WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY THOMAS A. DeMAURO

Inspired by the rousing reception received for the Harley Earl-envisioned Corvette at GM's Motorama in New York's Waldorf Astoria hotel in January of 1953, Chevrolet decided to produce the two-seat sports car later that year instead of waiting for 1954.

The road-going result retained the glass-reinforced plastic ("GRP," aka fiberglass) body material, overall styling except for some detail differences inside and out, Polo White/Sportsman Red color scheme and mechanical features of the show car. A manually operated black fabric top with plastic rear window and removable plastic side windows provided weather protection.

The Corvette's drivetrain consisted of a modified passenger car 235.5-cu.in. Blue-Flame straight-six engine with a higher-lift solid-lifter camshaft, increased compression ratio, an

aluminum intake with three Carter side-draft carbs and a split exhaust manifold with dual outlets to feed into a dual exhaust system. Horsepower increased to 150 from 115. A two-speed Powerglide transmission and a 3.55 rear gear were also specified.

The boxed side-rail steel girder frame with X-member was shorter and narrower than that of a typical sedan. It also moved the engine seven inches back and three inches lower to improve front/rear weight distribution and lower the center of gravity to enhance handling and work with a lower hood line. An unequal-length A-arm suspension, with coil springs, shocks and an anti-roll bar, was employed in front, and a leaf-sprung solid axle with shocks was in the rear.

Chevrolet's new sports car weighed just under 2,900 pounds at the curb, with about 53 percent of it over the front tires. Its center of gravity was 18 inches above the ground.

Acceptance of its inaugural run of 300 examples, of which the first car was completed on June 30, 1953, at its GM facility in Flint, Michigan, was more austere than auspicious, however. Chevrolet made the Corvette available to celebrities and dignitaries before the general public, hoping that their testimonials would convince the masses to buy them. This alienated

A 140MPH speedometer and a full complement of instruments were standard. These gauges are original, as is the signal-seeking AM radio.

"regular" people who already wanted one and prompted erroneous rumors that the full production run was already sold. Its high $3,498 buy-in price, lack of a manual transmission, arguably tepid performance and build quality issues also conspired to leave many Corvettes languishing unsold into the 1954 model year.

Undaunted, in December of 1953, production of the 1954 Corvette ensued at a renovated St. Louis plant that had the capacity to build 10,000 units annually.

"The Truly American Sports Car" retained its styling and drivetrain of 1953, but the exterior color pallet was expanded during the model year to include Pennant Blue, Sportsman Red and Black. Beige interior was added for Pennant Blue Corvettes.

A mid-year camshaft change increased horsepower to 155, and build quality was steadily improved. By model year end, 3,640 Corvettes were produced, and again, a considerable number remained unsold entering 1955.

Faced with possible extinction after just two model years, and with stiff competition on the horizon from the impending debut of the two-seat personal/luxury Thunderbird, the Corvette needed an advocate to dial in its direction and solidify its sports car image. It found one in engineer Zora Arkus-Duntov, who applied for a position at GM after being impressed by the outward appearance of the 1953 Corvette he saw at the Waldorf Astoria. He would ascend to director of performance for Chevrolet in 1957 and chief engineer for the Corvette in 1968. The first adrenaline shot came with the availability of the new 195hp 265-cu.in. small-block V-8 in 1955, and later, a three-speed manual for V-8 Corvettes.

> *"I like it, it's very inconvenient, but it's fun. It's plastic, so it never rusted and it's been a great car."*

Though 1955 sales amounted to a paltry 700 units, the restyled 1956 delivered more power for the V-8 at 210, 225 and 240hp, and racing success at Daytona and elsewhere advanced the previously lacking performance image on the streets and racetracks. Sales rebounded to 3,467.

Hot rodding cars and drag racing since 1950, future Corvette owner Gene Stenger of Cleveland, Ohio, had channeled a 1940 Chevrolet convertible and bolted in a GMC six-cylinder from a WWII army truck to race at the Akron Airport blimp hangar. Running dual carbs and one of the first Chet Herbert roller cams, he even raced against an early *Green Monster* of Art and Walt Arfons. Gene later built a 1931 Chevy with an aluminum body and another GMC engine that was even quicker than his first racer.

He was just 21 years old when he attended the GM Parade of Progress in Cleveland at Edgewater Park in late September 1953, where he saw a Corvette in person for the first time. And like Duntov had been, Gene was awestruck. "The Corvette was sitting on a rotating platform," he reminiscences. "It was nighttime, and the lights were on it. I'll never forget it, a beautiful

The body-colored "waterfall" element between the seats unified the exterior and interior design themes of the Corvette.

white sports car with red interior. In fact, that's all I remember about the event—seeing that car."

Learning that it had a fiberglass body sealed the deal for Gene, who had already watched a few of his own cars succumb to rust due to the harsh Midwest winters. He ordered his 1954 Corvette from Kinsman Square Chevrolet in Cleveland, a few blocks from where he lived. "I put down $100 in October and then I waited six months to get the car," he laments, finally taking delivery on April 5, 1954.

How could Gene afford a new Corvette at 21 years old? "I was working as a laborer installing tile and marble, and I had saved my money as far back as when I was a paper boy at 10 years old," he says. "When I bought it, I paid cash." The Corvette would be a daily driver in all types of weather, including Cleveland winters, for the next seven years.

When Gene married Norma in November of 1955, they chose a cruise for their honeymoon. The ship left from New York, so they drove the Corvette out 10 days early to take in the sights. Less than enthused with the Big Apple, they drove down to Daytona for a few days and then back to NYC to catch the ship. Upon their return, the newlyweds headed for home, but in heavy traffic on the George Washington Bridge, the engine stalled and would not restart.

Gene coasted the final few hundred yards and pulled the Corvette over down beneath the bridge to diagnose its issue. The coil had overheated under its radio interference-suppressing metal shroud. After the engine cooled, he got it restarted, left the top off the shroud so heat could escape, and he and Norma drove the rest of the way home without an issue. He later relocated the coil outside the shroud, and it never gave him a problem again.

Later that year, when attempting to leave for work one morning, the Corvette would not back up. After diagnosing the problem, Gene subsequently rebuilt the Powerglide transmission himself. With the mechanical maladies sorted, Gene was anxious to see what his Corvette was capable of. "First I raced it stock and found out it was not good," he says. "Then I put a [different] cam in it and milled the cylinder head. I also swapped in a stick-shift three-speed Packard transmission. Around 1956, I installed a Chevy 261-cu.in. straight-six. I raced the Corvette with that drivetrain combination for several years."

After 1956, drag racing turned to road racing at Nelson Ledges. "It was mostly qualifying style—cars making timed runs." Gene raced there until the mid-1970s. "Around 1971, I put in a Saginaw three-speed manual transmission with overdrive. That worked out really well for the track and the street."

Though Gene made many mechanical mods, the Corvette's body issues didn't go unnoticed. "It was rough when I bought it," he says. "The passenger door never fit correctly. It was like it was twisted, no matter how much I adjusted it at its hinges, the rear of it would stick out at the top or bottom. Periodically, the passenger door would fly open going around a corner. I had to shim it to fix it."

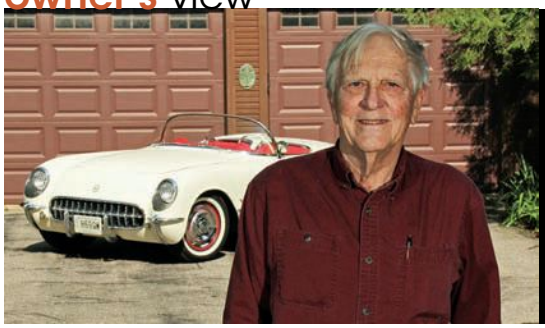
In 1956 or so, Gene added an outside driver-side door handle when he realized that one from a 1956 Buick Century would fit the contours of the Corvette the best. "It worked out great—prior to that, I had to reach in through the vent window to open the door." And he purchased a hardtop in 1958 to better weather-proof the Corvette. "It leaked water really badly with the soft top. I didn't have a garage at the time, so the car was always outside."

By 1988, after 35 years of street and track use, the Corvette was tired. "It had lots of stress cracks in the fiberglass, especially around the wheel openings, and the paint was bad," Gene recalls. Consequently, over the course of a year, he rebuilt the front suspension, reinstalled the original engine and transmission, repaired the stress cracks and repainted the body.

Back on the road through the 1990s, in 2000 Gene and his Corvette earned a Guinness World Record for the longest continuously owned automobile from new at that time. It has since been broken. A few years later, it appeared on *Antiques Roadshow* and was then featured in a Super Bowl ad.

Wondering just what this Corvette had that could make a man want to drive it for 62 years, *HCC* was permitted to take it for a ride. Sinking into the driver's seat, its comfort and good thigh support become apparent. At 17.25-inches in diameter, the two-spoke steering wheel is large enough to nearly contact

The original engine was removed and set aside during the Corvette's racing days, but was reinstalled during the 1988 restoration.



One day about 15 years ago, I got a call from an Englishman at Guinness World Records. He said, "Mr. Eugene Stenger?" I said, "Yes." "I understand you own a 1954 Corvette you bought new. We think that you have the longest continuously owned vehicle from new." I thought it was a joke. I was already told that by some guys who approached me at a show, but I didn't believe them. It turned out to be true. He said, "If you want to be in the record book, we'll send you the proper forms." They did. I completed the forms and sent them back and six-months later, I got a certificate from Guinness.

your thighs, yet it's very thin gripped. Placement is just 13-degrees from vertical. Visibility of the 140MPH speedometer is unencumbered, but the driver's-education-recommended 10 and 2 o'clock hand positions obscure some smaller instrument faces to the right.

Following sports car tradition, fuel, oil pressure, coolant temperature, battery and even a clock are included. The centrally placed tach, however, would require much less eye movement if it were closer to the speedometer. Radio controls are easy to reach.

The Blue-Flame Six starts easily and idles with a low burble from the tailpipes. Easing the dogleg-angled floor-shifter from Park to Drive got us underway. Some prodding of the throttle on the backroads results in adequate acceleration paired with a pleasantly firm 1-2 shift. Gene explains that he had modified the Powerglide years before to firm up the shift. The brakes have a soft pedal and long travel, but the four-wheel drums still stop the car effectively.

With no power steering, the wheel needs to be large, though with the gear ratio chosen, in this case a fairly quick 16:1, the effort is manageable, even in parking situations. The payoff is better road feel than any power system made in the 1950s or 1960s provided.

The Corvette rides firmly for its era and features front coil springs with a 330-lb.in. rate and rear leaf springs with a 115-lb.in. rate. Body lean in turns is minimal, thanks in part to those firmer springs and a front anti-roll bar, and the ride is controlled. Despite having a frame that sounds very heavy duty, like most convertibles, this Corvette does exhibit cowl shake through the steering column over bumps.

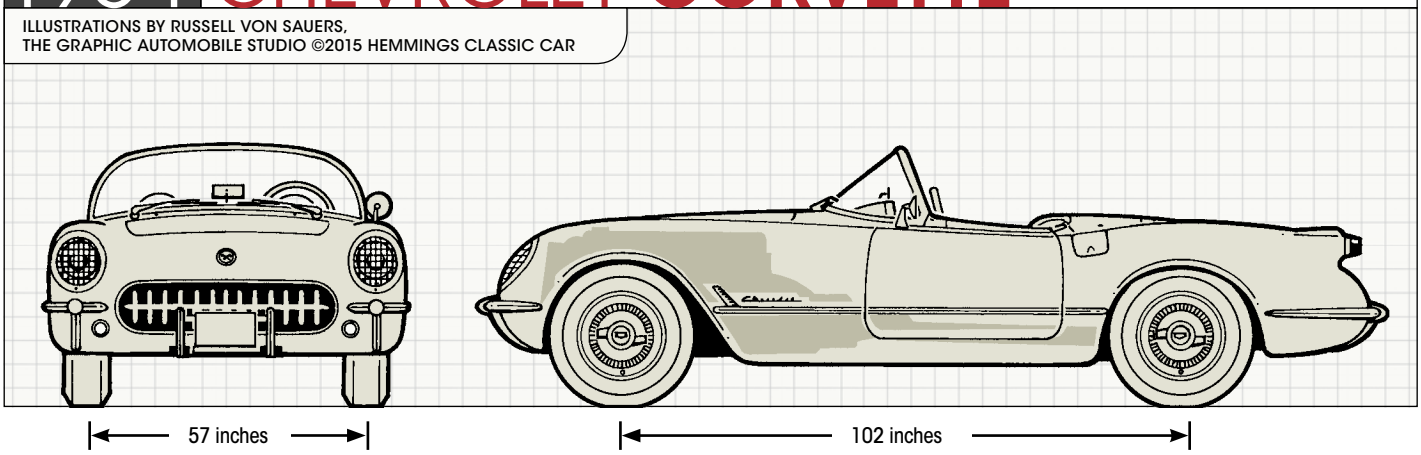
Visibility is good all around, as I drove it with the hardtop off and the soft top lowered and stowed. The fender ends are easily seen from the driver's seat to aid in parking. Idiosyncrasies of the Corvette include the little round interior door handles, a lack of exterior door handles (Gene's car aside) and roll-down side windows, and the need to ensure that your knees don't hit the support area for the curved windshield upon ingress. This said, the 1954 Corvette is quite comfortable and exhilarating to drive.

Now six decades into ownership, Gene has enjoyed nearly as many years of marriage to Norma, raised five boys, retired from a 52-year career in the ceramic tile and marble business and kept his 1954 Corvette. Why? "I like it," he understates. "It's very inconvenient, but it's fun. It's plastic, so it never rusted and it's been a great car."

Having driven it regularly since new, Gene, at 83-years old, still takes his Corvette for a spin at least twice per week in good weather, for a total of about 2,000 miles per year. When asked if he could do it all over again, would he do it differently, he quipped, "Yes, I would buy two of them." Touché, Gene.

1954 CHEVROLET CORVETTE

ILLUSTRATIONS BY RUSSELL VON SAUERS,
THE GRAPHIC AUTOMOBILE STUDIO ©2015 HEMMINGS CLASSIC CAR



SPECIFICATIONS

PRICE

BASE PRICE	$3,577.85
PRICE AS OPTIONED	$3,977.16
OPTIONS ON CAR PROFILED	Permanent antifreeze, $7.50; heater and defroster, $91.40; radio, $145.15

ENGINE

TYPE	OHV six-cylinder, cast-iron block and cylinder head
DISPLACEMENT	235.5 cubic inches
BORE X STROKE	3.56 x 3.93 inches
COMPRESSION RATIO	8:1
HORSEPOWER @ RPM	150 @ 4,200 (later 155)
TORQUE @ RPM	223-lb.ft. @ 2,400
VALVETRAIN	Mechanical valve lifters
MAIN BEARINGS	Four
FUEL SYSTEM	Three Carter side-draft carburetors, mechanical pump
LUBRICATION SYSTEM	Pressure, gear-type pump
ELECTRICAL SYSTEM	6-volt
EXHAUST SYSTEM	Dual 1.75-inch pipes, 1.69-inch tailpipes, stainless steel extensions

TRANSMISSION

TYPE	Powerglide two-speed automatic, floor shift
RATIOS	1st 1.82:1 2nd 1.00:1 Reverse 1.82:1

DIFFERENTIAL

TYPE	Hotchkiss-type, hypoid drive gears, open
GEAR RATIO	3.55:1

STEERING

TYPE	Worm and ball-bearing roller sector
GEAR RATIO	16:1
TURNING CIRCLE	37 feet

BRAKES

TYPE	Hydraulic, four-wheel drum
FRONT	11 x 2.00-inch drum
REAR	11 x 1.75-inch drum

CHASSIS & BODY

CONSTRUCTION	Reinforced fiberglass body, separate steel perimeter frame
FRAME	Steel boxed girder with flanged box-section side rails, crossmembers and center X-member
BODY STYLE	Two-door convertible
LAYOUT	Front engine, rear-wheel drive

SUSPENSION

FRONT	Independent; unequal-length A-arms, coil springs, double-acting hydraulic shocks, anti-roll bar
REAR	Solid axle; semi-elliptical four-leaf springs, double-acting hydraulic shocks

WHEELS & TIRES

WHEELS	Steel with wheel covers
FRONT/REAR	15 x 5 inches
TIRES	Firestone 721 radials (originally 6.70-15 bias-ply wide whitewalls)
FRONT/REAR	205/75R15

WEIGHTS & MEASURES

WHEELBASE	102-inches
OVERALL LENGTH	167-inches
OVERALL WIDTH	72.24-inches
OVERALL HEIGHT	51.3-inches
FRONT TRACK	57-inches
REAR TRACK	59-inches
SHIPPING WEIGHT	2,744-pounds

CAPACITIES

CRANKCASE	5-quarts
COOLING SYSTEM	17.75-quarts
FUEL TANK	17.25-gallons

CALCULATED DATA

BHP PER CU.IN.	.638
WEIGHT PER BHP	18.29 pounds
WEIGHT PER CU.IN.	11.67-pounds

PRODUCTION

ROADSTER	3,640

PROS & CONS

+ Two-seat convertible
+ Classic '50s sports car styling
+ Limited production

– Not overly powerful
– No roll-up side windows
– Body panel fitment issues from new

WHAT TO PAY

LOW
$40,000 – $50,000

AVERAGE
$60,000 – $80,000

HIGH
$110,000 – $125,000

CLUB CORNER

NATIONAL CORVETTE OWNERS ASSOCIATION
900 S. Washington Street
#G-13
Falls Church, Virginia 22046
www.nationalcorvetteowners.com
Membership: 10,000
Dues: $45

RICHARD NAILED IT GOOD, NOTING all the advantages of four-door cars. As I see it, the styling problem with four-door cars is that fat, ugly B-pillar that seems to cut the car in half, be it roof color or body color. The lines of the car no longer flow. One day when I had both my four-door 1956 De Soto and modern four-door car out in the driveway, I noticed that the B-pillar in the modern car was painted black, and from a slight distance the pillar seemed to almost disappear. So, with a rattle-can of black paint and some masking tape, I gave the De Soto a B-pillar makeover, even covering part of the door frames, which makes the windows look larger. It was a simple trick to fool the eye that the makers of modern cars and SUVs had discovered.
Jim Anderson
St. Paul, Minnesota

THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH, Richard, for your fantastic columns, especially the latest about four-door cars. As an owner of several, I wholeheartedly agree, and offer another advantage to more-doors: After discovering I could not sit up straight in the back seat of my 1958 Plymouth coupe without hitting my head on the roof (I'm 6'-2") I lost my interest in those coupes and started collecting sedans and haven't looked back. My family appreciates having their own doors as well!

Congratulations to you and the staff of the finest auto magazine on the planet. Ever. The broad, unbiased spectrum of information you bring to the table is much appreciated. Keep up the stellar work, please!
Jeff Rallison
Rimbey, Alberta, Canada

THE ARTICLES ON CHRYSLER'S Chrysler in *HCC* #132 were just about the best articles I have read in all my years following exotic cars, beginning with *Special Interest Autos,* years ago. The story of finding it and its previous history were stunning to me. The car itself and its modifications for Mrs. Chrysler could almost transport you back to the late 1930s when I was born. Richard, all of you have to be congratulated for such a fine piece of reporting, especially Walt Gosden. This car has to be shown at every major car event.
Robert Fretwell
Sun Lakes, Arizona

GREAT ARTICLE IN *HCC* #131 BY Walt Gosden about the early coachbuilders. One coachbuilder in particular caught my eye: the Charles Schutte Body Company of Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The name is familiar to me, although I had never heard of this company before. In the early 1950s, a Charles Eric Schutte was the resident engineer at Murray Corporation of Detroit. He worked with Willys-Overland's chief of body engineering, Edgar DeSmet to get the new Willys Aero ready for production. Murray held the contract to build the Aero bodies for W-O. I have no further information about Mr. Schutte, but thought he may be the same man that Walt mentioned.
Rick Kamen
Decatur, Georgia

NICE ARTICLE ON THE 1962 OLDS 98 in *HCC* #131. The photos really capture the styling details of the car that make it one of my favorites. I had a 1962 Starfire coupe in high school and can vouch for the comments on how the car drives.

But I want to clarify the description of the headliner material. It is not velour as stated in the article, but is polyurethane foam painted white. The material is made with ridges that look like a series of "U's" in cross-section (UUUUUU). No part is more than 1/16-inch thick, so it is very fragile. The foam is glued to heavy cardboard panels, as can be seen in the photos. When the foam ages and dries out, it comes loose from the panels, then tears under its own weight. I couldn't find the material, either, so I replaced it with white corduroy. I'd be interested to know how many other cars used that material, as the only other car I have seen with it was a 1962 Buick Wildcat coupe.
Jeff Hinman
Cameron Park, California

I ENJOYED THE REPRINTED ARTICLE on George Romney in *HCC* #133. It certainly shed a lot of light on why there was not a merger of all the independents during the 1950s, a merger that might have resulted in a fourth major automobile manufacturer that could have helped stave off the invasion of car manufacturers from Germany and Japan.

I have always thought that one of the greatest impediments to such a merger was that Nash and Hudson used unitized body-and-frame construction, while Studebaker, Packard and the other manufacturers all used the more traditional separate body-and-frame approach.

In the interview with Romney, he doesn't even mention this issue and, from that, I take it that what Romney meant by a "merger" with Packard was really a takeover of Packard by Nash. He doesn't seem to have had any interest in Studebaker at all.

If such a merger with Packard had taken place, production of Packards would have been shifted to Kenosha, Wisconsin. The 1955, '56 and '57 Packard Clippers would just have been Nash Ambassadors (and Hudson Hornets) with different grilles and taillamps, and, in some cases, larger V-8s. I have no idea what would have happened to the "senior" Packards. That would have been tragic, because the 1955-'56 Packards were some of the most attractive-looking cars built in the 20th century, never mind all the interesting innovations not found on a Nash or Hudson.

All Romney seemed to want from Packard was its customer base and its dealers so that he could sell more Ramblers. I can only imagine the reaction of the longstanding owners of Packard cars when the "Packard Rambler" and the "Packard Metropolitan" started showing up at their local dealers.

As Arch Brown says at the end of the interview, "perhaps 1954 would have been too late anyway for a successful merger of Packard and Studebaker with Hudson and Nash." I would suggest that such a merger (also involving Kaiser-Frazer and Willys) should have taken place five or 10 years earlier if it was to stand any chance of success. That it did not happen has meant that we have lots and lots of BMWs, VWs, Toyotas and Hondas running around North America, but very few of the great independent brands.
James McAllister
Ajax, Ontario, Canada

York Studebaker Meet

It has been in existence for 43 years and active at its present location for about 33. Its sole purpose has always been to serve the worldwide Studebaker community. It's also one of the largest Studebaker swap meets in the world. The Studebaker York Swap Meet (SYSM) is one of the best-run swap meets in the hobby. Under the stewardship of the Keystone Region of the Studebaker Driver's Club, the Meet's stated purpose is "To provide a service to the Studebaker community and to publicly promote Studebaker culture." It has done that, admirably, for over four decades.

But it hasn't always been easy. Most automotive swap meets gain popularity slowly, grow over time, reach an exciting peak and then, just when things are going great, begin to decline. The causes are generally numerous, but can include rising fees for vendor spaces driving vendors away, and "meet stagnation" that leads to boredom and a loss of interest in attending. There's also been an overall decline in attendance due to the aging of the hobby. That's what happened to the SYSM. It was on the verge of having to close one of its two large vendor buildings due to a lack of interest.

However, unlike other swap meets that dwindled away, the SYSM is back to growing again and getting healthier, reversing the downward path it was headed on. How? We decided to investigate in hopes the information might help other troubled swap meets and car shows.

The most important thing the club did was to take action rather than wait for the end to come. About six years ago, the Keystone Region SDC formed a special committee to look into the problems facing the SYSM and try to formulate a solution. Committee members found the familiar pattern: Vendor attendance was down, and because of that, so was visitor attendance. Which came first is impossible to say. The fall-off in visitor attendance had become so steep that many vendors weren't staying for the final day of the meet, or would pack up and leave around noon on the last day, effectively ending the meet early. Many people stopped coming on the last day because vendors cleared out too early. That pattern can become a death spiral unless drastic action is taken. The meet had become a money-loser, a burden on club finances.

In response to these problems, the team developed a comprehensive multi-year plan to revive the show. They set goals that were realistic and attainable.

Halt the Exodus of Vendors

There are now greeters at show entrances, and better signage. The club also made arrangements with a modern host hotel to replace the older facility they'd been using. To tackle the problem of vendors leaving early, the club added a free drawing in which a vendor can win free lodging. They also established a $200 raffle drawing for sellers only; it's drawn at the end of the last day, and you have to still be set up and selling to qualify for it.

Grow Attendance Numbers

Having a more modern host hotel helped grow attendance. In addition, the club added a 50/50 raffle drawing; the holder of the winning raffle ticket keeps half the money raised, the rest goes to help offset expenses. The show also partners with a local Flower and Garden Show to boost attendance, and added a Community Craft Show to attract spouses as well as local and regional visitors. Also added were new features such as free Wi-Fi, an indoor corral, Studebaker-only parking, and announcements in both buildings promoting the show and the vendors. The team also redefined the "Studebaker community" to include stock, custom and modified vehicles, making it much more inclusive.

Become at Least Revenue-Neutral While Continuing to Provide a Valuable Service to the Hobby

Admission remains free, but by growing general attendance while also halting the decline in vendor attendance, revenues have grown. Establishing a consistent brand name–SYSM–helped; so has adding Keystone club consignment tables for Studebaker parts.

The results are encouraging. The York Meet is on the road to recovery and is almost revenue neutral. The decline in vendor count has been stabilized and attendance is up. The Studebaker York Swap Meet is able to look to the future with confidence.

"Admission remains free, but by growing general attendance while also halting the decline in vendor attendance, revenues have grown."

The Original Road Warrior

It was hot. Blazing. Even my jeans were soaked with sweat. So it was with the rest of the editorial crew here, as we worked Musclepalooza at Lebanon Valley Dragway for *Hemmings Muscle Machines* over Labor Day weekend. Cruising back from the big blowout, I tried to suck in some lungfuls of chilled air from the dashboard vents. I got home and started seriously trying to cool off the rest of me. And that's when I learned that a longtime staple of television acting named Martin Milner had died in California. He was 83. I was very disappointed, but not totally surprised.

As someone who really enjoys cars and traveling by automobile, Martin Milner was a very influential figure in my life, especially so for a guy I never met personally. It goes back to the days of when I was a kid in the East New York section of Brooklyn, living in an apartment building that still burned coal for heat. My father was away at sea. Most of my connection with the outside world came via our oak-cabinet RCA black-and-white console. I wish I still had it for nostalgia value. Anyway, this was when I was first exposed to more-or-less adult TV dramas–I really didn't care for westerns–and was introduced to a series called *Route 66*.

It was a great snapshot of the optimism that permeated the early 1960s during the Camelot years before Dallas, Vietnam and Altamont happened. It was an anthology drama about two clean-cut young guys trying to find themselves, as these journeys would come to be known, by touring America in a solid-axle Corvette. Milner was the star, and the only actor who stayed with the series for its entire duration, which ran from 1960 through 1964. The basic premise was that Milner's character, Tod Stiles, inherited a new Corvette from his shipping-magnate father who had gone bankrupt and then died. He decided to set out across the country in search of a payday and adventure. He took on one of his father's former employees, Buz Murdock, played by George Maharis (who, happily, is still with us), and they traveled the highways, interacting with local people they met along the way.

For the time, this was pretty serious and avant-garde stuff. The series borrowed its storylines fairly extensively from the Beat Generation classic *On the Road,* up to the point that its author, Jack Kerouac, threatened to sue the series' producers for plagiarism. *Route 66* was loosely spun off an earlier program, *Naked City,* and was an anthology series that used an ensemble cast other than the two stars. Despite its title, and being filmed almost entirely on location across the country, the real Route 66 was almost never featured on the program.

But that didn't matter a bit to me. At that point in my life, I hadn't spent much time outside New York City or more specifically, beyond my own neighborhood. I was a kid. I also knew what a Corvette was, and that several of them plied the local streets. I didn't know Route 66 from a root canal. But here, sprawled across that big flickering screen, was the full glory of the American landscape, urban and rural, with these two dudes tooling along in America's most-desired car. I was riveted. Tod and Buz were experiencing total freedom, the most elemental form of liberty I could ever imagine. When your usual mode of transportation is either bicycle or subway, the notion of having our whole, beautiful landscape unrolling in front of you while you roll in an open Corvette is powerful stuff indeed. It was something that I instantly wanted to do, and thought about constantly, even though I wouldn't be legal to drive for another decade.

The program fell into a fade after Maharis was forced to leave the series due to medical issues. Another actor, Glenn Corbett, was brought in, which wrote out the Buz Murdock character without explanation. It was pretty clear the audience didn't catch the chemistry, because ratings dropped and the series was canceled in 1964. After the horror of Dealey Plaza, people were ready for escapist entertainment like *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* and so forth. The innocence of the early 1960s was gone, and hasn't returned yet.

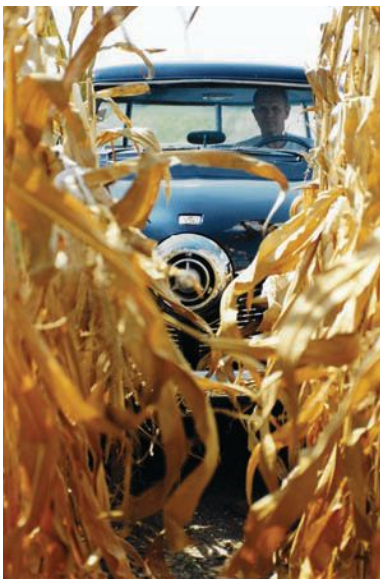
Martin Milner went on to bigger things, however. He co-starred with Kent McCord (who'd been a guest on *Route 66)* in the Jack Webb police drama, *Adam-12*. In tailored Los Angeles Police Department blue, he guided a series of black-and-whites through the cityscape of L.A., taking down malefactors virtually at will with cool efficiency. He turned a lot of young people onto cars in a very meaningful way. I'll miss him.

"It was a great snapshot of the optimism that permeated the early 1960s during the Camelot years before Dallas, Vietnam and Altamont happened."

Common Oddity, Uncommon Outcome

Were there two more outrageous '50s front ends than Studebaker's "bullet nose" and Edsel's "horse collar"? Both immediately became comedian fodder. So why did they produce opposite sales results?

Studebaker was already the butt of jokes in 1947. Although the all-new 1947 bodies did not have bullet noses, comedians suggested that the Starlight coupe's wrap-around rear window made it difficult to tell whether they were coming or going.



That would change for 1950 (and 1951, shown), when jokes turned to Studebaker's famous two-row "corn picker" up front. Raymond Loewy reportedly told his stylists to update the 1947 car to "make it look like zee aeroplane." They so completely restyled it, with the dramatic new bullet nose and new rear fenders having vertical taillamps replacing horizontal ones, that some people thought the 1950 model was a whole new car.

Many in the media had a guarded opinion of it, however, as did some dealers. One large Studebaker dealer even put planters in front of his showroom cars! The 1950 design didn't scare the public, though; they loved it once they got used to it, pushing Studebaker to a model-year sales record it would never eclipse: 343,164 cars.

Ford, on the other hand, hoped to sell 200,000 Edsels in the 1958 model year alone, but ultimately sold only 110,847 cars during the combined three years of Edsel production. Edsel had enough features to appeal to its target market, too, in addition to the dramatic front end.

So why did Studebaker's radical front end score a home run, while Edsel's struck out? The answer is that history doesn't happen in a vacuum; other factors influence it. Four played into Studebaker's hand for 1950:

1. The postwar seller's market was not yet fully satiated. Most automotive historians peg 1952 as the year in which "normal" market conditions returned.

2. World War II, fresh in the mind of every American car buyer in 1950, had glamorized fighter aircraft. Designing the front of a respected low-price car to resemble a fighter plane sans propeller was a stroke of genius.

3. The Korean War was unofficially underway by June 1950. Customers who may have already eyed Studebaker's "aeroplane" styling had just endured war years in which they could not buy a new car. The attitude, "I'm not going through another war without a new car!" helped Studebaker's monthly sales soar in the summer of 1950…as did its reputation for economy, should gas rationing return.

4. Studebaker had a fully automatic transmission available. In Studebaker's price range, neither Ford nor Plymouth offered an automatic.

Eight years later, Edsel's horse collar design hardly suggested anything as modern as an airplane; few people outside Amish communities routinely depended on horses in 1958. Grilles were trending toward horizontal designs before WWII…and the Fifties' emphasis on low, wide styling had sealed the coffin on vertical anything.

Nonetheless, Ford research validated Mercury having a stablemate. An internal August 1957 video introducing the new Edsel to Ford staffers noted that only 26 percent of Ford owners ultimately moved up to a Mercury, whereas 87 percent of Chevrolet owners moved up to a Pontiac, Oldsmobile or Buick. Ford figured it was handing B-O-P 2.4 percent of the entire market every year. Edsel was to attract those customers by featuring what was arguably the first retro styling, but it was way too early; successful mass-market retro styling (Chrysler's PT Cruiser) was 43 years away.

Conventional wisdom has it that Edsel failed because it was introduced for the recession year 1958. But Pontiac sold almost three times as many Chieftains as Edsel sold Pacers and Rangers, and Oldsmobile sold over *eight* times as many Super 88s and 98s as Edsel sold Corsairs and Citations, so the market was there. Apparently, new-car buyers who had grown up in the 1930s didn't long for good-old-days styling in 1958.

In 1950, however, they had heartily embraced what Studebaker advertised as "The Next Look," styling that reminded World War II veterans and their families of the aircraft that had helped win the war.

"Designing the front of a respected low-price car to resemble a fighter plane sans propeller was a stroke of genius."

Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance

Perhaps the most historic Pebble Beach Concours of all time, thanks to the inclusion of Ford Mustangs and Kustom Mercs on the 18th green

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF KOCH

There are concours d'elegance, and then there is *the* Concours d'Elegance—the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance. It is a car show unlike any other. The atmosphere alone is electric, and you can smell the money on the wind.

Golf courses dot our nation, but the green at Pebble Beach is historic, the rolling ocean providing a calming white-noise soundtrack to the craggy shoreline vista in the distance. Elegant string music flows through the speakers, rather than the time-worn car-show doo-wop/beach-music clichés. Hoods are occasionally displayed open, but there isn't a cloth doll taking a time-out on a tire anywhere to be found. Oh, the dress has gotten more casual over time—only judges wear blue blazers, and the period costumes that festooned Pebble Beaches of years and decades of yore have subsided—but rest assured that the quality of the cars was as elegant and perfect as it ever was.

And the automobiles! There were 224 in all, in 29 classes; 18 of which had provision for American-made cars. There is, occasionally, the notion that concours are meant largely for European cars—the coachbuilt, the high-end, the unobtanium, even in its own day. If you've never been to a concours, or to Pebble Beach in particular, rest assured that the home team is well-represented. Forty-five awards in all went to American automobiles, though a couple of these cars took home more than one award.

Special classes focusing on American cars this year included

Pope, whose bankruptcy occurred a century ago; the 50th anniversary of the Shelby G.T. 350; the 75th anniversary of the Lincoln Continental, a selection of custom Mercury coupes and convertibles; postwar Cunningham sports cars built by gentleman racer Briggs Cunningham; and a class of du Pont automobiles (in case the du Pont name didn't already signify class). With an even dozen examples, the du Pont class was the best-attended category at the event.

It's not just another concours, Pebble Beach. It is an experience like no other. It costs plenty to get in, and there are too many people in your way to appreciate the cars properly. It doesn't matter. At least once in your life, you need to go.

For the first time ever, Mercury customs gathered on the greens at Pebble Beach alongside examples of the world's most noteworthy automobiles.

Art Deco and avant-garde in equal measure is this 1938 Graham Model 97 Saoutchik convertible. One of just two supercharged "shark-nose" Grahams bodied by the French carrossier, it was first shown at the 1938 Prix d'Avant-Garde at the Foire de Lyon in France. William Harrah also owned it for a time; today it resides in the garage of Edgar Masters of Copake Falls, New York. It placed second in the American Classic Open category.

The Lincoln KB rested atop the Ford Motor Company hierarchy in 1933. Lincoln offered more than two dozen body styles by 17 different coachbuilders. This Dietrich-bodied five-passenger convertible sedan is one of just 15 made and the earliest-produced of the six extant examples. Owner John Shibles of Sea Girt, New Jersey, took home the Lincoln Trophy special award.

This year's Pope class included eight examples: two Pope-Toledos and six Pope-Hartfords. Our eye fell again and again to this 1913 Pope-Hartford 29 Roadster, the newest Pope on the field. This top-of-the-line Model 29, sporting a 60hp OHV six with an aluminum crankcase, was a well-equipped machine, with electric starter and an electric lighting system, brought by Richard King of Redding, Connecticut.

Du Pont built 516 cars between 1919 and 1931, with just a handful surviving today. This 1929 du Pont Model G Waterhouse Roadster is the only known extant example. The original owner, Charles List of Los Angeles, kept it until the 1960s, at which point William Harrah took possession. Current owner Kelly Kinzle of New Oxford, Pennsylvania, collected the third-place award in this year's du Pont class.

Class C-2 was expressly for open Packards, and nine automobiles answered the call to show. This 1934 Packard 1108 Twelve Dietrich Convertible Sedan was one of just eight built on a stretched 147-inch wheelbase. The original owner drove this car around Poland as she made a photographic study of the country at the request of the American Geographical Society. Owners Tony and Jonna Ficco, of Wheat Ridge, Colorado, took home third place in their class.

Susan and Bill Evans of San Diego brought out their 1905 Pope-Toledo Type IV Roi des Belges Tonneau, a car they've owned since 1984. The Roi des Belges style was first seen on a 1901 Panhard et Levassor, built for Leopold II of Belgium by Rothschild at the behest of his mistress. The shaping of the double-phaeton's sides was meant to suggest a tulip. Just 15 Pope-Toledos are known to exist today.

A 1928 Auburn 8-115 McFarlan Speedster identical to this one set a production-car speed record on Daytona Beach in 1928, reaching 104.347 MPH. Power was via a 115hp Lycoming straight-eight, and styling was shared by Cord L29 designer Alan Leamy and streamlining pioneer Count Alexis de Sakhnoffsky. This example, owned by Al and Barbara Mason of Purcellville, Virginia, competed in Class C-1, American Classic Open.

Of the two models Thomas offered in 1903, the Model 18 was the more expensive, and was offered exclusively with an 8hp, single-cylinder engine. This Sheldon Rear Entrance Tonneau is one of only three known to exist. Owners Ronald and Sandra Hansen, of Fillmore, California, took home third place in Class A-1 Antique for this former Harrah's-collection Thomas.

This striking 1913 Stevens-Duryea Model C-Six Five Passenger Touring Car is owned by Whitney and Diane Haist of Orinda, California. The example seen here, on the shorter 131-inch wheelbase of the two offered by the Massachusetts-based company in 1913, sports an all-aluminum body and a 480-cu.in. straight-six engine.

The Mercer Raceabout: America's first true sports car? Consider: models like this 1911 Type 35 had a strong 35hp T-head four, and frequently drove in competition. Two Mercers were among the entrants at the first Indy 500, finishing 12th and 15th despite having the smallest engines on the track. John Rich of Auburn, Pennsylvania, brought his Type 35 Raceabout strictly for display.

By 1931, La Salle differed from Cadillac only in detailing; the two marques even shared a 95hp, 90-degree V-8. But this 345-A Fleetwood Seven-Passenger Touring model is one of just 59 built that year. The current owners, Barry and Sharon Briskman of Scottsdale, Arizona, have owned it since 1956, and have recently re-restored it to its original configuration.

It takes a modest man to not name his new car after himself, but Thomas Hart of Muncie, Indiana, did just that in 1908, calling his car the Inter-State. This midline Model 31A four-passenger demi-tonneau was a four-seater, with the rear seat atop the rear axle. Priced at $1,750 new, this luxurious, four-cylinder, 40hp automobile rode a 118-inch wheelbase. Scott Henningsen of Salinas, California owns it.

Du Pont's Model G saw a total of 273 examples produced; just 18 of them were Convertible Coupes like this one. Power was provided by a Continental 125hp straight-eight, good for a top speed of 77 MPH. Two survive today—the first built and this example, which is the last one built, owned by Mark and Barb Johnson of Rice Lake, Wisconsin.

Roughly 244 Packard V-12s, in 10 body styles, were built for the 1933 model year. This 1933 Packard 1005 Twelve Convertible Victoria, with coachwork by Dietrich, is considered by many to be one of the most significant designs of the Classic era. Ray Dietrich's work for Packard was so popular that his custom-built ideas quickly became part of Packard production. This example, owned by Jean and Don Ghareeb of Birmingham, Alabama, took home second place.

This is a 1930 Packard 734 Speedster Eight Phaeton, owned by Linda and Paul Gould of Pawling, New York. The Speedster name refers to the car's high-performance capabilities via the 145hp engine, rather than to a body style. The company built 118 Speedsters in 1930, and of the 21 known to survive, three are Phaetons.

Brought out for display only was The Henry Ford's 1929 Packard 626 Speedster Eight Roadster. The company manufactured roughly 70 such Speedsters, although just three are known to survive today. The first owner was Emil Fikar Jr., said to be a Chicago-based brewer of low-alcohol beer during the Prohibition era who occasionally needed a fast car for, *ahem,* "professional" reasons.

This Hemi-powered 1953 Cunningham C-5R finished third in the 1953 24 Hours of Le Mans, recording nearly 155 MPH on the Mulsanne straight and lap averages of 104.14 MPH. Its specially made 17-inch drum brakes were meant to withstand the rigors of non-stop racing. It took home the Briggs Cunningham Trophy, and is owned by the Revs Institute for Automotive Research in Naples, Florida.

Rules at Le Mans demanded that 50 production versions of a car be built in order for a race version to qualify in the production-car class, and while Briggs Cunningham tried, he fell short—just 25 Vignale-bodied C3 coupes were built from 1952-'53. Chassis 5208 was the third C3 delivered, the only one with Borrani wire wheels, and the only C3 to have been raced by the Cunningham team. It is owned by Michael Hammer of Santa Barbara.

This 1951 Mercury coupe is, potentially, the most influential example of the breed: the *Hirohata Merc*, named for original patron Bob Hirohata. The Barris Brothers spent three months modifying the low-mileage coupe, and the result was famously documented in *Rod & Custom*. Current owners Jim and Sue McNeil of Orange, California, have owned the car since 1959. It won Class R, Mercury Customs and took home the Dean Batchelor Trophy.

To celebrate the Continental's Diamond Anniversary, Newberg, Oregon's own Ken Newberg brought his 1941 Continental Cabriolet out to be displayed. It's the 259th built out of just 400 for the year. The original V-12-powered Continental is considered by many to be one of the most beautiful prewar Classics.

At $4,250, Packard's Third Series Custom Eight was one of the most expensive new cars in America. Built on a 143-inch-wheelbase chassis and powered by Packard's 109-horsepower eight, the Coupe is one of three Dietrich-styled models for the year. Michelle and Martin Cousineau of Beverly Hills, California, brought theirs out for display.

Ever seen a Shelby G.T. 350 with a vinyl top before? Neither had we, until now. This car was the 1966 prototype, and was built from a factory-built K-code Mustang rather than the partially-built cars the Shelby usually received. As a result, it had an upgraded Pony interior and a blue vinyl top. Shelby is said to have hated the top, so it was never added to the option list. Owners Linda and Len Perham brought it from nearby Carmel Bay.

Here is the car that won Class L-1, Prewar Preservation, outright: the 1906 Pierce Great Arrow 40-45 7 Passenger Touring, owned by Leonard-Steven Schuster of New York City. This car was purchased new by railroad tycoon James Hill, and frequently traveled in its own railway carriage as he traveled about the country. Hill's son, Louis, was one of the first residents of Pebble Beach's 17 Mile Drive, and so its presence here is a sort of homecoming.

Not actually part of the Shelby class, but rather the outright winner of Class O-3, the Postwar Racing class, was CSX2602, the fifth of five Shelby Daytona Coupes built to take on Ferrari in the FIA GT wars of the mid-60s. This car competed in six races. Its owner is Kazuo Maruyama of Tokyo, Japan.

driveable**dream**

The Family's Ford

Reconnecting with an unrestored 1930 Tudor that's been in the family nearly 50 years

BY MARK J. McCOURT • PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF KOCH

Dependable, no-frills transportation: This was the design brief of the Ford Motor Company's 1928-1931 Model A, and that's what this automobile provided, both when it was new, and many decades later. A particularly trustworthy 1930 Tudor got Tom Eldhardt back and forth to college as a daily driver in the late 1960s, and the same car—now a genuine antique—is once again providing reliable low-speed fun.

Tom's father, Leo Eldhardt, was just 23 years old when he bought a Model A in 1937. Leo had learned carpentry and supported his family back home while working in the Civilian Conservation Corps camps during the Depression, and that 1929 model 55-A Tudor was his very first car. "He got rid of it when the war broke out, because they were collecting materials," the West Richland, Washington, resident explains. "I think that car went to a scrap yard."

Almost three decades would pass before Leo got another vintage Ford, and his youngest son provided the perfect excuse. "I was graduating from high school in 1967 and starting at a local two-year college, and he felt he'd have time to take on a new project," Tom recalls. "A friend told him about this car sitting in a garage in the nearby town of Kennewick. It was filled with stuff and covered with five years' worth of boxes; when we went to look at it, we had to uncover the car, just to see it. My dad bought it for $250, and then we fully dug it out and towed it home. He'd told me that if I would help him get it running, I could drive it. A day later, the car was running."

This 1930 Tudor may have appeared rough, with creased fenders and little of its factory-applied, Vermillion-striped black paint remaining, but its original beauty was intact. The longer hood, taller radiator shell and smooth cowl combined with smaller, 19-inch spoke wheels under sleeker fenders to give this Ford a newly refined look that belied its $495 cost. That price—a step above the $435 Roadster, but a far cry from the $1,200 Town Car—ensured this practical body style was the best-selling of all, accounting for 376,271 out of roughly

Little remains of the factory-installed wool cloth upholstery on the driver's seat, although its blue hairline stripe is still visible under close inspection. The rest of the interior fabrics—plus the rubber floor mat—have held up quite well for 85 years.

The 83,404 miles indicated by the odometer are genuine. This Model A averages 15 MPG.

1,055,100 A's built that calendar year.

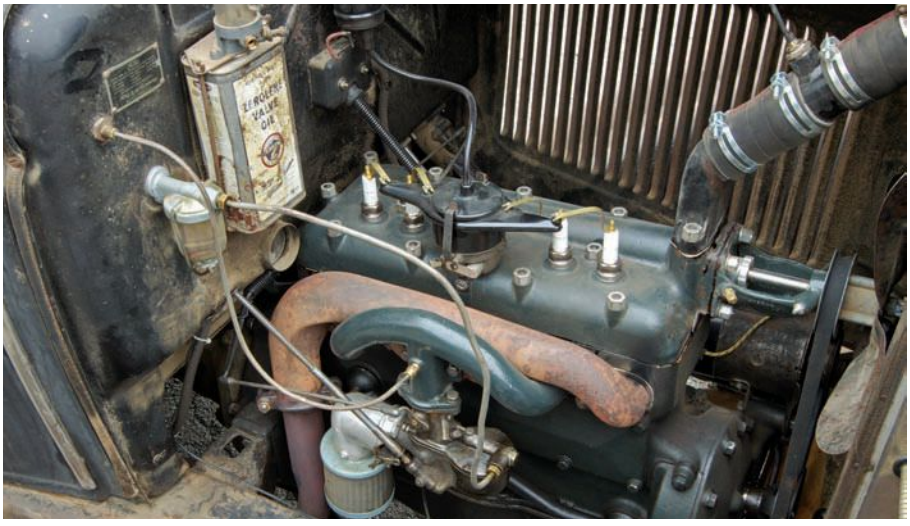
Shared with both the Roadster and Town Car was the Tudor's 200.5-cu.in. four-cylinder engine, which used a one-barrel Zenith carburetor and produced 40hp at 2,200 RPM. This engine sent its ample low-end torque—128-lb.ft. at 1,000 RPM!—to the rear wheels through a three-speed, unsynchronized manual transmission. Thanks to the snubbing action of the Houdaille lever-arm shocks on the transverse leaf spring suspension, the 2,395-pound car combined surprising rough-road compliance with reasonable ride quality.

Leo and the teenage Tom had first checked that the Ford's engine turned over freely before replacing its fluids and cleaning the carburetor. "It had some gas in it, but that was back when gas was still gas, not today's ethanol stuff that gums up. We drained that and put in fresh gas, water and oil, and turned it over by hand for what felt like a long time—maybe 10 minutes—to get the oil pumped up and circulated," Tom recalls. "Then we put a new battery in it, turned the key, and started it up."

The Model A was enjoying a renaissance of popularity as a collector car in the late 1960s, so while it made for an anachronistic daily driver, the Tudor wasn't a terribly unusual sight on the roads. The younger Eldhardt assures us he didn't abuse the car in those days, although he did have some fun that he didn't necessarily share with his father. "I knew people who had hot Chevrolets, like Impalas with the 396 V-8, and we'd sometimes pull up together at a stoplight. You might not believe it, but Model As are actually pretty quick coming off the line," Tom explains. "They were in their fancy car, making lots of noise, and would point at my car, because you know what it looked like. I'd say, 'Hey, let's go!' The light would turn green, and the Model A would take off and get across the intersection before them, which would make them very unhappy."

Tom also learned first-hand that this Tudor's skinny 19 x 4.75-inch tires cut into soft surfaces with ease. "When you're out looking for girls down in the beach areas by the river, wider tires disperse weight better than those skinny tires. I got stuck several times, and had to get somebody with a Jeep to pull me out of places other cars had driven. I never told my dad about that, either!"

It may have represented fun and freedom, but the Ford's reliability as basic transportation endeared it to Tom more than any big V-8 and four-speed



While the Zenith carburetor has been rebuilt, the repainted 40hp, 200.5-cu.in. engine has never been apart; a four-blade fan has cooled it for more than 50 years.

would have. His time behind the wheel ended when he graduated, took a job, moved into his own apartment and bought a second-hand 1967 Ford Galaxie 500 sedan to accommodate a growing family in the early 1970s. "My dad would take the Model A out at least once a week, until he moved in late 1972—then it was parked in the back of his new garage, out of the way. He eventually got into working on Model Ts, because they were everywhere when he was growing up."

Leo passed away in 1986, our feature Model A having sat 14 years at that point, and it would continue to sit idle for another 26 years. "My mom died in 2004, and I became the executor of their estate. I inherited this, and five other Fords, and moved this car from her house to my shop," Tom recalls. "In late 2009, my wife, Robin, and I joined the local Columbia Basin Model A Club in Tri-Cities, Washington. This club piqued our interest in getting our car back in running condition, and after I retired in 2011, I decided it was time to put it back on the road.

"It was 40 years since the car was parked, and I did the same thing we'd done when we first got it running. Over a three-day period, I turned it over 10, 12, 15 times to get the oil up into the valley and draining over the babbitt bearings," he says. "Something I did that we didn't do in 1967 was to drain both the transmission and rear end; the transmission was easy because you simply lift out the floor boards, but accessing the plug on the rear end was tricky because of its location. That uses 600-weight oil, which is somewhere between oil and grease.

"And after I got the engine running, I pulled the hubs off to replace the brake shoes, which have pre-drilled woven linings that are fixed to the shoes with hand rivets. Since I had those off, I installed new bearings all the way around. The six-rod mechanical brakes were adjusted, and I fitted new tires and tubes. Finally, with the car roadworthy, we took it out for a drive around the block—what a blast!"

Because the Model A spent those 40 years protected in dry storage, it looks virtually identical to how it did back in 1967-'69. It's rough, but retains most original features, including the factory-fitted artificial leather roof panel and blue hairline-stripe wool cloth upholstery. Much of the original paint is gone, but that new-for-1930 stainless steel trim has lived up to its "rustless" promise.

"It takes me back to college. Once you own a classic car, it's a part of you," Tom says with a smile. "They're a real kick to drive. If a wheel is on a loose surface or the car's weight is unsettled, you can 'burp' a tire, which sounds like you're peeling out. Back in the old days, I used to do that when leaving stoplights or stop signs, especially around other people that had faster cars—that would get their attention, because I had this beat-up-looking old car.

"You have to double-clutch between the gears to get the transmission, engine and rear end to line up—you can't speed-shift these old cars. And if you have to turn a corner, you turn the wheel while you're moving, sometimes pulling on the wheel with both hands to get it turning sharply.

"This car is most comfortable driving between 40 and 45 MPH," he continues. "I've had it up to 50, but when I do that, I notice an engine vibration. They weren't so concerned about balancing back then—the flywheel weighs 64 pounds, to help the engine stay running! If I kept driving at that speed, the engine would disassemble itself, taking out the babbitt, so I regulate myself to the more comfortable speeds.

"I always take the back roads. Often, when you're going somewhere, you find it's hard to get away from the main highways. If I want to drive to the town across the river, a quarter mile away, I have to drive 12 miles to another city and take the old roads to a 35 MPH bridge. The highway speeds in this area are 70 MPH, and I can't do that. Even on lower-speed roads, people driving modern cars will go around you and pull right back in front of you; I have mechanical brakes, and I don't need three or four car lengths to stop—I need about 10!"

> *"It was 40 years since the car was parked, and I did the same thing we'd done when we first got it running."*

Tom's joining that car club was the best thing for his Model A. "They do at least one tour locally every month, and there are longer tours and drives to the annual regional meet. I do the monthly tours, and take it out every couple of weeks, just to drive around." He maintains the health of the never-rebuilt engine with oil changes every 500 miles, but aside from the aforementioned bearings, new tubes and tires and a four-blade cooling fan that replaced the two-blade original sometime before Leo's 1967 purchase, this Ford is virtually untouched.

"I've asked some people in the club if I should restore it, and one of the judges said, 'No, because when you park this car, people will walk right past cars that have had $20-30,000 restorations to look at it.' I've seen that happen! This is what the car should look like; it's 85 years old," Tom says with a laugh. "Dad's love for Model A Fords never faded, and I guess it was passed on to me. I plan on keeping this car the way it is, and handing it down to my son, eventually—without it ever being restored."

Born in Bennington

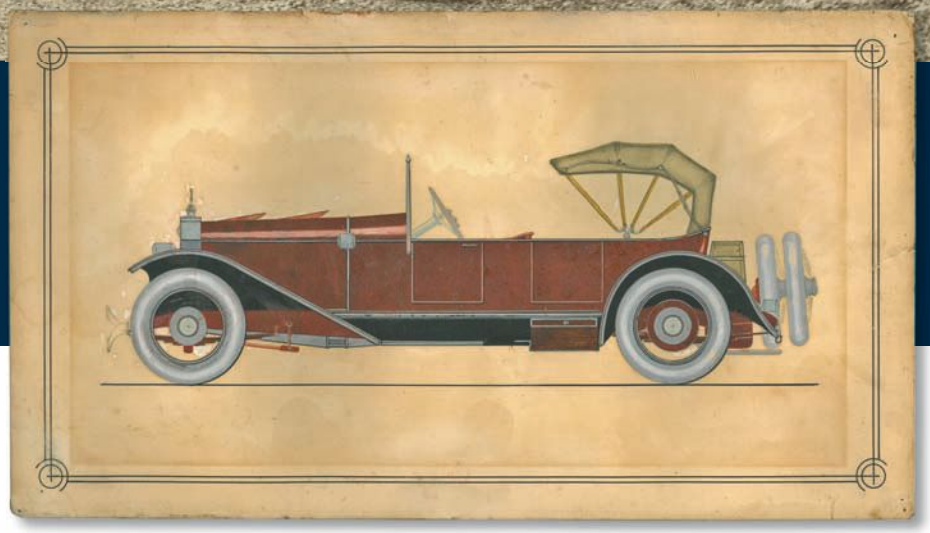
The brief but intriguing saga of the Wasp motorcar

BY JIM DONNELLY • PHOTOGRAPHY BY TERRY SHEA; ARCHIVAL IMAGES COURTESY OF THE BENNINGTON MUSEUM

In some ways, Bennington, Vermont, our home, became a car town by accident. Hemmings is located here in the southwest corner of Vermont because local resident and benefactor Terry Ehrich bought *Hemmings Motor News* from its founder, Ernest Hemmings, and relocated it from Quincy, Illinois, to his hometown. Yes, we're a prominent citizen of this town. However, decades earlier, there was an attempt to produce a premium automobile in Bennington that was spectacular but, as with so many other aspects of the Roaring Twenties, didn't last long. That car is the Wasp, of which 16 are said to have been built, and this is its story.

The Wasp would likely remain unknown, as with others among the hundreds of automotive makes that met their end anonymously during the 1920s. Only this time, there was a gentleman named Karl Hamlin Martin, the man most instrumental in bringing the Wasp buzzing to life. He hailed from Buffalo, New York, and was a pioneering U.S. Navy aviator during the First World War. Martin's father was a leading automobilist in Buffalo, having founded the city's first automobile club, and Martin's own entrée to the world of cars was repairing his father's single-cylinder Packard around 1900. In hindsight, it's clear that Martin intended to enter the automotive world in a big way. He made a substantial sum drilling for oil in northwestern Ohio before moving into coachbuilding in 1912, beginning his efforts in New York City.

Martin had upscale aspirations and conceived his coachwork accordingly. First of all, he loved European cars, and considered them technologically superior to anything made in the United States with



Karl H. Martin came out of the Midwest oil industry and decided to build a car in Vermont. The short-lived Wasp was fitted with spectacular bodywork, led by the rickshaw phaeton with its abbreviated roof.

the sole exception of the Locomobile, and decided they deserved bodywork to match. Martin would get a tip from a manufacturer's representative that a bare chassis had just been sold, and Martin would make an appointment with the buyer, bringing along sketches he made of proposed body styling. Once the selection was made, Martin would take a deposit and then contract with a local coach-building firm to actually do the work. The builders were full-on artists, many having fled the political turmoil in Russia, who could hand-beat a section of bodywork out of 16-gauge aluminum in a single day. This was Martin's period as an automotive designer, and the lessons he learned would later be applied to the Wasp in Bennington. The bodies he designed were installed on chassis that included Mors, Rolls-Royce and Bianchi. Many of his clients in New York, one of whom was Florenz Ziegfeld, of *Ziegfeld Follies* fame, were well heeled and discerning.

His subsequent adventures also involved premium motorcars. In 1915, Martin met Cloyd Kenworthy, the New York agent for the Rauch & Lang electric carriage company. Cadillac had not long ago adopted the electric starter motor, whose success Kenworthy rightly guessed would doom the electric car. He made the

The first Wasp was completed just in time to display at the prestigious New York show of 1920; here, it's on display at the posh Hotel Commodore in Manhattan.

acquaintance of a Chicago entrepreneur named Albert Barley, who wanted to build what today would be called a "near-luxury" vehicle, with a marked resemblance to Rolls-Royce, only slightly smaller. Barley longed for someone who could not only design a chassis, but also could tastefully clothe it. Kenworthy immediately recommended Martin. The car that emerged from Chicago was known as the Roamer, a Rolls-Royce-like creation that came to be powered by a Duesenberg engine. Kenworthy was named vice president of Roamer until he moved on to build his own, self-named car in Mishawaka, Indiana, which Martin also had a hand in designing.

Then, separated from the Navy in 1919, Martin decided to move to Bennington, Vermont, the home of his maternal grandparents. It seemed to be a ripe place for automotive production. Lower-priced skilled labor was easily available from the numerous little factories and machine shops that dotted the town in those years. Martin was ready. Along with Bennington residents Robert Healy and E.H. Holden, he incorporated the Martin-Wasp Corporation that same year, floating $25,000 worth of stock for start-up capital, and leasing a local machine shop and foundry as his plant. By all indications, Martin transformed himself, at age 32, into the youngest automobile manufacturer in the United States.

Construction of the first Wasp got underway immediately, and it was finished soon enough to be publicly displayed at the Hotel Commodore in Manhattan during National Automobile Show Week in January 1920. It was a sensation, despite being an "assembled" car of gathered premium components, and thanks to Martin's ministrations, had a very strong resemblance to a Springfield, Massachusetts-built Rolls-Royce. While the exact nature of how its name was chosen is lost to history, it certainly evoked drama and not a little menace, as demonstrated by Hudson's adoption of the Wasp as a model line much later on.

The first Wasp, as shown in New York, had a body design that came to be known as a "rickshaw phaeton," so named for its shortened, four-bow fabric canopy that covered the rear seat only, like a parasol. By 1920 standards, the looks were stunning. The front fenders pointed dead ahead with no curvature or droop. The multiplane radiator, which Martin designed himself, was reminiscent of Rolls-Royce but more complex in appearance. Dual spares were hung at the rear. The hood, in proper Silver Ghost fashion, was highly polished aluminum. Martin designed a medal of St. Christopher, the patron saint of travelers, which he mounted in the dashboard of every Wasp as standard equipment. The retail price was a lofty $5,500.

The initial Wasp did find an immediate buyer: The silent movie icon Douglas Fairbanks, who purchased it on the spot, allegedly as a gift for his bride, the actress Mary Pickford. It was the first event in what came to be a dichotomy of outcomes when it came to the Wasp. Onlookers loved it, respected its premium-quality execution, but were driven away by the price. This was when America was still in the grip of a post-World War I recession. Yet it's also clear that Martin refused to budge on issues of quality and materials selection in building the Wasp.

The bodywork was fully designed by Martin and hand-assembled at the Bennington factory by old-style Vermont wagon makers. It was entirely fabricated from aluminum, the panels hand-beaten, finished in a variety of colors (but no pinstriping was applied—Martin reckoned that it detracted from the Wasp's overall appearance) that included Rolls-Royce blue and ochre, and beautifully trimmed in white ash. The fenders were fabricated down the road in Troy, New York, hand-formed by a pair of Russian Jewish immigrants who were locally famed as master metalsmiths. Martin's radiator design, built by Fedders, and its shell were both formed from German silver with full nickel plating. Also, the radiator was fitted with a Volvo-reminiscent diagonal metal stripe. The various lamps came from Giles & Nielson Company in Troy, heavily nickeled, with parking lamps that were exquisitely set into the windshield glass and connected by flexible nickel cable. Inside was a beautiful engine-turned dashboard set with full Stewart-Warner gauges and a clock. A Boyce Moto-Meter topped the radiator shell, which was adorned with an emblem that suggested wasp wings, a theme that carried over to the shape of the cast-brass door handles, hood lifts and the spanner that held the spare tires in place.

The mechanicals were purchased, but again, premium. The first Wasp built rode on a chrome-nickel, heat-treated frame of extreme rigidity created by Parrish & Bingham of Reading, Pennsylvania, which measured to 136 inches of wheelbase. Semi-elliptic springs were produced for Martin-Wasp by the Perch Spring Company of Hartford, Connecticut, which also made springs for American-built Rolls-Royces. For power, it utilized a Delco-started four-cylinder Wisconsin T-head engine with a jacketed Stromberg carburetor that produced 72hp, linked to a Brown-Lipe four-speed transmission with overdrive on top gear. The axles were supplied by Timken, the steering by Gemmer. The Wasp's shipping weight was 3,600 pounds, a total

that would rise on subsequent models.

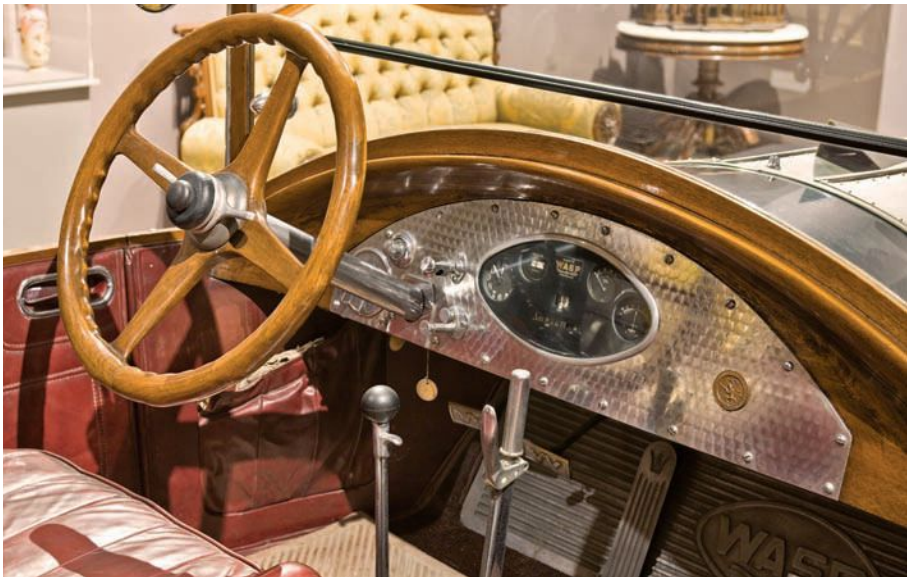
Strictly on paper, the Wasp had a decent chance of success. Its builder asserted that it provided all the cachet and comfort of a Stevens-Duryea, Locomobile or Cunningham for considerably less money, and was uniquely a car designed by one man working alone. There were some lapses on the business side of the Wasp equation. Martin refused to advertise it, insisting that the quality was so high that the Wasp would sell itself. The sole sales brochure, printed in Bennington, listed its price at $5,000, which was quickly upped. Aside from some of Martin's prototype drawings that were published in *Vanity Fair*, that was it. A slogan from the brochure boasted, "Buy a Wasp and you'll get stung," certainly not the most persuasive verbiage imaginable.

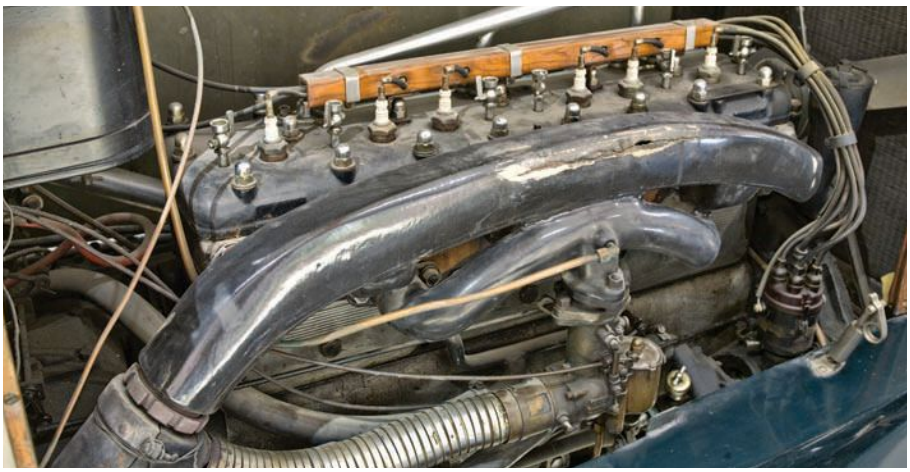
Reportedly, 16 Wasps were built between 1919 and 1924. By most accounts, two were sold in California and another went to a wealthy Atlanta resident named Joseph Whitehead. Still another was apparently sold through the Renault agency in Manhattan. Most were bodied as rickshaw phaetons, at least two of which were sold in Chicago. All used four-cylinder engines. Then, later in 1924, Martin unveiled his magnum opus, the six-cylinder Wasp Model 122, powered by a Continental T-head engine that displaced 325.1 cubic inches and produced 70hp. It was ordered by the aforementioned Mr. Whitehead, who had demolished his first Wasp in an accident. The six was supposed to be clad in a Brewster-type body designed by Martin, but Whitehead died before work was fully underway and his order was canceled. This was officially a 1925 model, although it existed only in chassis form, which Martin kept. Though the company endured until 1932, that was the last Wasp. Martin continued on as a designer, focusing instead on cabinetry and metalworking. He died in 1954.

A 1962 history of the marque written by newspaperman and automotive enthusiast Keith Marvin recalled that Whitehead's death meant that the Wasp died too. The Wasp was the first, and last, automobile built in Vermont; incidentally, none were ever sold in its home state. Marvin ended up in possession of lots of the firm's records. At the time, two Wasps were known to exist, one of them the six-cylinder chassis from 1925. The first, with four cylinders, was built up from parts by a Bennington man who gained Martin's undying scorn because he pinstriped the car.

In 1953, the last existing chassis was sold to a Vermont vacationer who lived in Ohio. An eight-year restoration saw it fitted with oak-framed aluminum bodywork representing Martin's design for the rickshaw phaeton. In June 1961, it was triumphantly driven from Ohio to its birthplace in Bennington under its own power. Finished in deep green with maroon wheels, it is now a centerpiece exhibit at the Bennington Museum, which celebrates the heritage of its hometown.

The Wasp used premium components, starting with its brawny Continental T-head straight-six. Note the engine-turned dashboard, polished aluminum radiator shell and single lug nuts that were lockable. The car exudes high luxury.





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69249/69129/69121
877 shown

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SUPER COUPON

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CHICAGO ELECTRIC WELDING

90 AMP FLUX WIRE WELDER

- No Gas Required

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68887 shown

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PITTSBURGH

LOT 61278/67971 shown

SAVE 50%

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25876270

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6" VARIABLE SPEED DUAL ACTION POLISHER

CHICAGO ELECTRIC PLATINUM

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69924 shown

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$54.99

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25856050

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SAVE $99

CENTRAL PNEUMATIC

110 LB. PRESSURIZED ABRASIVE BLASTER

LOT 69724/95014
60696 shown

$99.99

comp at $199

25820505

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WOW SUPER COUPON

PITTSBURGH AUTOMOTIVE

2 TON FOLDABLE SHOP CRANE

Customer Rating ★★★★☆

LOT 60388
69514 shown

SAVE $70

- Includes Ram, Hook and Chain

$179.99

comp at $249.99

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WOW SUPER COUPON

2.5 HP, 21 GALLON 125 PSI VERTICAL AIR COMPRESSOR

CENTRALPNEUMATIC

Customer Rating ★★★☆☆

LOT 67847 shown
61454/61693/62803

SAVE $349

$149.99

comp at $499

25015149

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WOW SUPER COUPON

RAPID PUMP® 1.5 TON ALUMINUM RACING JACK

PITTSBURGH AUTOMOTIVE

- 3-1/2 Pumps Lifts Most Vehicles
- Weighs 32 lbs.

Customer Rating ★★★★☆

SAVE $50

LOT 69252
68053/62160
62496/62516
60569 shown

$59.99

comp at $109.99

25830769

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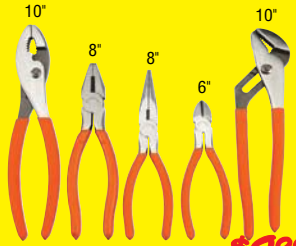
SUPER COUPON

5 PIECE PLIERS SET

LOT 69352/69351 shown
69353/62597/62598/62823

Customer Rating ★★★☆☆

PITTSBURGH



$8.99

SAVE 50%

$17.99

25842544

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SUPER COUPON

MECHANIC'S GLOVES

NEW

SAVE up to 68%

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$3.99

Item 62429 shown

SIZE	LOT	COMP AT
MED	62434/62426	$12.74
LG	62433/62428	$12.38
X-LG	62432/62429	$11.99

25851802

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SUPER COUPON

350 LB. CAPACITY SERVICE CART WITH LOCKING DRAWER

US★GENERAL

LOT 61161
90428 shown

SAVE $40

$59.99

comp at $99.99

25833363

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SUPER COUPON

MOVER'S DOLLY

HaulMaster

LOT 60497/93888 shown
61899/62399

SAVE 54%

- 1000 lb. Capacity

$8.99

comp at $19.97

25869794

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SUPER COUPON

12,000 LB. ELECTRIC WINCH WITH REMOTE CONTROL AND AUTOMATIC BRAKE

LOT 61256/60813
61889/68142 shown

SAVE $453

$299.99

comp at $752.99

BADLAND

25848389

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SUPER COUPON

1/4" AIR ANGLE DIE GRINDER

LOT 62439/69945/32046 shown

SAVE 85%

$9.99

comp at $69.98

CENTRAL PNEUMATIC

25838132

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SUPER COUPON

PITTSBURGH AUTOMOTIVE

2000 LB. CAPACITY FOLDABLE ENGINE STAND

LOT 69521/67015
69522 shown

SAVE $80

$109.99

comp at $189.99

25882334

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WOW SUPER COUPON

Customer Rating ★★★★★

1/2" INDUSTRIAL QUALITY SUPER HIGH TORQUE IMPACT WRENCH

LOT 62627
68424 shown

AWARD WINNING QUALITY

SAVE $175

CENTRAL PNEUMATIC EARTHQUAKE

- 700 ft. lbs. Max. Torque

"Top of its Class in Quality at a Really Great Price" – Hot Bike Magazine

$74.74
~~$99.99~~
comp at $249.99

25925628

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SUPER COUPON

FREE

WITH ANY PURCHASE

3-1/2" SUPER BRIGHT NINE LED ALUMINUM FLASHLIGHT

LOT 69052 shown
69111/62522
62573

$6.99 VALUE

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25938652

SUPER COUPON

2 PIECE VEHICLE WHEEL DOLLIES

PITTSBURGH AUTOMOTIVE

LOT 60343
67338 shown

SAVE $50

$49.99
comp at $99.99

- 1500 lb. Capacity

25890913

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SUPER COUPON

RETRACTABLE AIR HOSE REEL WITH 3/8" x 50 FT. HOSE

CENTRAL PNEUMATIC

LOT 93897 shown
69265/62344

SAVE $106

$59.99
comp at $166

25905709

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SUPER COUPON

Customer Rating ★★★½☆

12 TON SHOP PRESS

CENTRAL MACHINERY

LOT 33497/60604 shown

SAVE $79

$99.99
comp at $179

- Pair of Arbor Plates Included

25923725

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WOW SUPER COUPON

4-1/2" ANGLE GRINDER

drillmaster

Customer Rating ★★★½☆

LOT 60625 shown
95578/69645

SAVE 59%

$11.99
comp at $29.97

25931026

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WOW SUPER COUPON

US★GENERAL PRO 44", 13 DRAWER INDUSTRIAL QUALITY ROLLER CABINET

Customer Rating ★★★★★

LOT 62744/69387
62270/62591
68784 shown

SAVE $660

$369.99
~~$389.99~~
comp at $1029.99

- Weighs 245 lbs.

25887985

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SUPER COUPON

CENTECH

AUTOMATIC BATTERY FLOAT CHARGER

LOT 42292 shown
69594/69955

SAVE 82%

$5.99
comp at $34.99

25896713

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SUPER COUPON

CENTRAL MACHINERY

4" x 36" BELT/ 6" DISC SANDER

LOT 62502
97181 shown

SAVE $84

$59.99
~~$79.99~~
comp at $144.10

25902542

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SUPER COUPON

PITTSBURGH AUTOMOTIVE

3 TON HEAVY DUTY STEEL JACK STANDS

LOT 38846 shown
69597/61196
62392

SAVE 42%

$19.99
comp at $34.99

25907886

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SUPER COUPON

MECHANIC'S SHOP TOWELS PACK OF 50

SAVE 44%

HFT

LOT 46163 shown
69649/61878
61837

$9.99 comp at $18

25913135

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SUPER COUPON

SAVE $109

LOT 62443
68751 shown

45 WATT SOLAR PANEL KIT

THUNDERBOLT MAGNUM solar

$139.99 comp at $249

25922968

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SUPER COUPON

PREDATOR GENERATORS

8750 PEAK/ 7000 RUNNING WATTS 13 HP (420 CC) GAS GENERATORS

SUPER QUIET

- 76 dB Noise Level

LOT 68530
69671 shown

SAVE $459

LOT 68525/69677 CALIFORNIA ONLY

$539.99 comp at $999

25888662

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SUPER COUPON

6" SELF-VACUUMING AIR PALM SANDER

CENTRALPNEUMATIC

LOT 60628
98895 shown

SAVE $190

$19.99 comp at $209.99

25895057

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SUPER COUPON

1500 LB. CAPACITY MOTORCYCLE LIFT

PITTSBURGH MOTORCYCLE

LOT 69995 shown
60536/61632

SAVE $65

$69.99 comp at $135

- Lift range: 5-1/4" to 17"

25902169

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SUPER COUPON

3 PIECE TITANIUM NITRIDE COATED HIGH SPEED STEEL STEP DRILLS

WARRIOR

LOT 91616 shown
69087/60379

- Drill 28 Hole Sizes

SAVE 85%

$8.99 comp at $59.97

25939798

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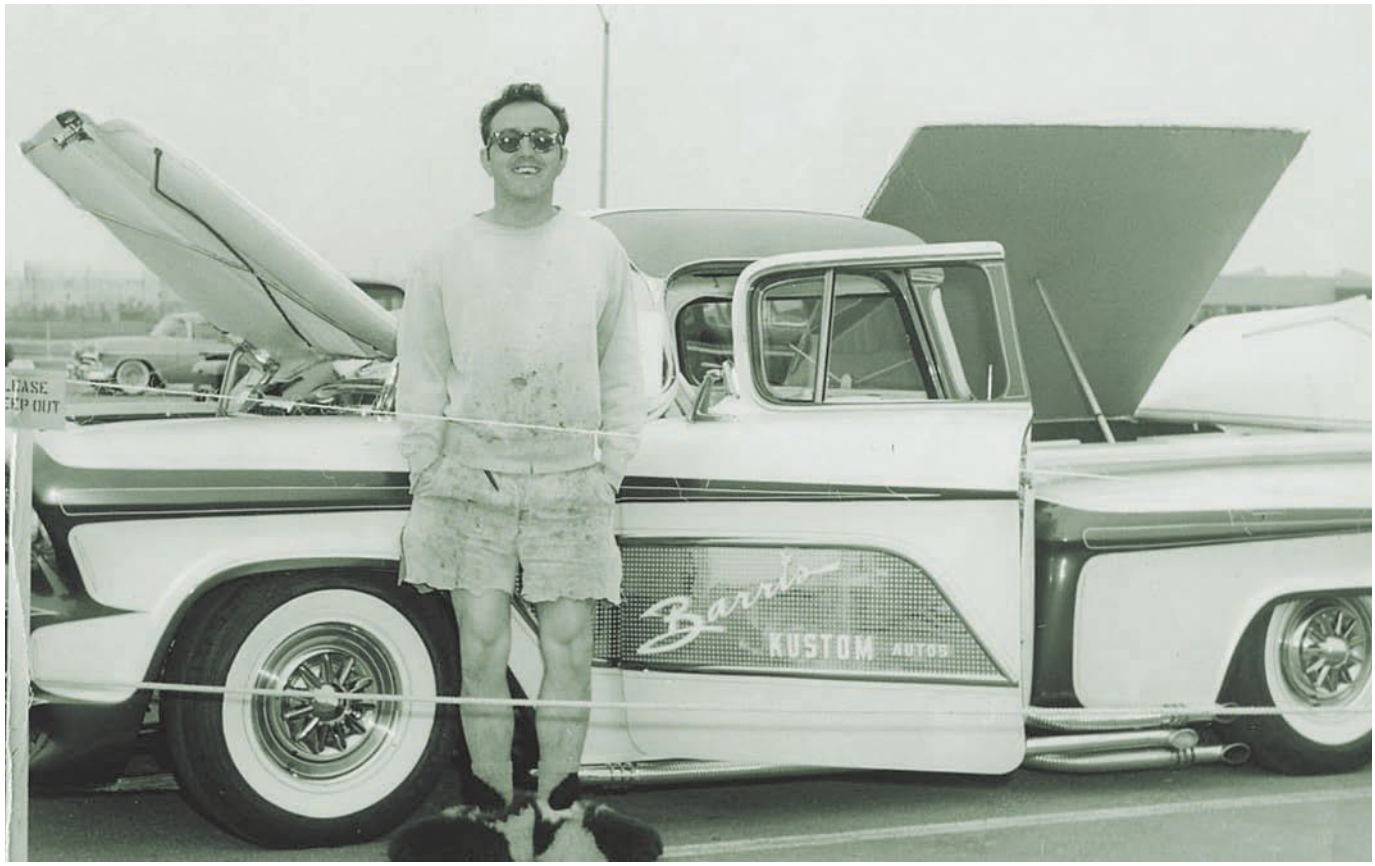
George Barris

The King of the Kustomizers, America's latter-day coachbuilding prodigy



BY JIM DONNELLY • PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY BARRIS KUSTOM INDUSTRIES

You know, you can learn a lot about where George Barris stands in this world just by visiting his website. The webpage opens up when you click it, and everything is displayed over a soundtrack of twangy surf guitar. A whole automotive culture cascades through the spillways. A torrent of memories tumble through your consciousness: early rock, TV legends, automotive history, glue globs on kit parts, the whole tapestry of California car culture at its zenith.

And yet, there's still more to it. George Barris (and his late brother, Sam) were some of the most important heirs to Southern California's heritage of custom coachbuilding. They followed coachbuilders such as Don Lee, Bohman & Schwartz and Darrin in coming up with stunning, artistic reinterpretations of automotive body shapes. What's more important was that just as the great era of Hollywood coachbuilding came to an end, they brought it firmly into the hands of ordinary people who wanted to own a hugely distinctive car. The Barris kustom—always spelled with a "K"—was the next generation of California coachbuilding, and it's still going strong today. George Barris is a lasting link to a cadre of customizers such as the Ayala brothers, Jimmy Summers and Valley Custom, all of whom transformed ordinary automobiles into breathtaking sculptures. Don't believe us? Then let us point out that customs, including several built by George, graced this year's show field at the Pebble Beach Concours, the stars of their own category. Now that's artful.

Before we talk about George's spectacular lifetime of aesthetic accomplishment, let's explain why "full customs," as they're called, have enjoyed a marked revival, a respect for the place they firmly occupy in the gestation of automotive styling. The practice started right around the same time that the Olympian coachbuilding era was coming to a close, undermined by the diminished expectations of the Depression. Initially, the custom culture was an outgrowth of Southern California hot rodding, which could trace its own origins back to the 1920s in Los Angeles. Some people were more interested in styling and profiling. They either personalized their cars themselves, or else

“I went down to the railroad track in Roseville, where a guy owned a body shop. He gave me a torch, a dolly and a hammer and he said, ‘Go ahead, kid. Go ahead and play.’ I was 13 years old.”





The Barris touch evolved over the years. Top, from left, the 1941 Ford coupe of Jesse Lopez goes back to the late 1940s, a totally traditional treatment. The yellow *Modern Grecian* is a 1948 Studebaker four-door. From the 1970s, you may recall the *Bugazzi*, a modified Lincoln Continental Mark IV.

commissioned a local body shop to do the work in the years before they were overwhelmed with more profitable insurance collision repairs. But where a traditional coachbuilt car might have been a Cadillac or a Packard, these newbies concentrated on lower-market cars such as Chevrolets, Fords and Mercurys, mostly from around 1940. Nobody knows exactly when this all started, but Carson tops for convertibles were first marketed in 1927 and real metalworking started not long after that. One of the earliest true customs was the 1940 Ford of Link Paola, built in 1939 just before the 1940 models were officially released. In what would become prototypical custom practice, it was chopped, nosed and decked. This, we submit, demonstrates that customs are a legitimate part of our world. As we interviewed him, George was about to decamp from his shops to Pebble Beach, where several of his creations graced the show field in a special class for custom Mercurys, right alongside all the beautiful Full Classics.

George was born in November 1925 in booming Chicago. It was the wild Prohibition era, and cars choked the streets from Lake Shore Drive to Michigan Avenue. George was paying attention to them, and then some. "When I was three years old, I got into the car situation. Then I was moved to Sacramento and Roseville, California, and as soon as I got out there, I knew this was what I wanted to do," George recalled. "My first custom job was a 1932 Ford that I put cats-eye taillamps in, and I called it a kustom, with a K. I wish I would have trademarked it. I'd be rich today."

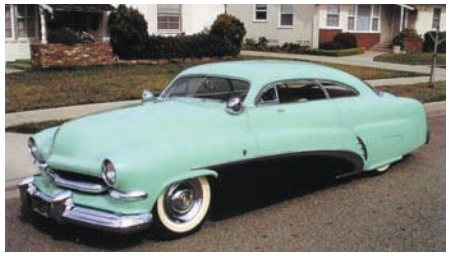
George also tried to put his early years in perspective. "It just seems that when I was in school, I was an athlete, and the teachers there wanted me to take cooking and sewing and classes like that. But I just liked cars. I loved their four wheels, and I liked the way they looked. I wanted to customize them. I went down to the railroad track in Roseville, where a guy owned a body shop. He gave me a torch, a dolly and a hammer and he said, 'Go ahead, kid. Go ahead and play.' I was 13 years old."

George and his year-older brother, Sam, moved to Los Angeles—actually to Lynwood, a suburb—in 1944. They opened a shop and started chopping tops, a basic full-custom technique that sees the roof lowered until the windshield openings are practically slits. When World War II ended, George took his own 1941 Buick convertible and turned it into what many aficionados consider the first full custom ever. George severely chopped the windshield frame, added a head-brushing Carson top and did the metalwork to create fadeaway fenders that went 4/5ths of the way down the Buick's body. It was incredible; you couldn't take your eyes off it. It was still the mid-1940s, when a lot of American servicemen were returning stateside, their pockets jammed with wartime bonuses. That resource, plus a lot of 1930s cars that were being frantically traded as the first postwar cars reached the market, were the raw materials that turned George into an automotive legend.

The Barris brothers rapidly defined their own style. Sam took the torch to his own 1940 Mercury after being mustered out of the service. It featured a chopped windshield frame, swapped grille and bumpers. The brothers began to fabricate subtle chrome trim spears and a family crest that were applied to their work. "It turned out great. In fact it's one of the cars shown at Pebble Beach," George said.

Dice up three Model T bodies, meld them together, add a Ford 289-cubic-inch V-8 and you have the *Munster Coach*, which had to accommodate the series' towering star, Fred Gwynne.

***The Emperor* captured the prized America's Most Beautiful Roadster award.**



One of the most famed customs of all time was the *Hirohata Merc* of 1951.

Bet you built a model of this car at some point. The *Ala Kart* was a 1929 Ford with a Barris body on a frame constructed by Mike Peters and Blackie Gejeian.

"I had been expanding my metalworking skills the whole time since I'd come down here from Sacramento," he told us. "I just loved taking metal and changing its contours; knowing how to weld, how to hammer weld." However, we will make the case here that George sparked a long-term transformation of American automotive styling sometime around 1950, when he created the custom hardtop for a car he customized for Nick Matranga. George eliminated the chopped 1940 Mercury coupe's B-pillar and filled the space with two curved window frames that were delicate and airy. No such thing had previously existed. Now, go take a look at, say, a 1961 Ford Starliner and examine the roof contours. Still think nobody in Detroit was paying attention to what the Barris shop was doing?

The Barris brothers then did the metalwork and assembly of a 1951 Mercury owned by Bob Hirohata. They were the first customizers to put the chop to a 1951 Mercury. George did the chopping with Sam, who died in 1967, applied Buick trim and faux side vents, adopted the window frames from the Matranga car and added luscious two-tone paint. The "Hirohata Merc," as its long been called, was completed in time for the 1952 Motorama show at the Pan-Pacific Auditorium in L.A. It is arguably the most fabled and aesthetically perfect car of the custom era, and firmly established the Barrises as America's foremost automotive artisans, premier latter-day coachbuilders. They seamlessly adopted the business of personalized bodywork that had been so prevalent before the war. Though the custom era eventually waned, George has outlasted everyone. Los Angeles is an entertainment town, and that industry discovered him. George would use those alliances to the fullest and create the second act of his life with cars.

We're talking, naturally, about his TV work. George turned out to be a masterful promoter, and linked himself both to Hollywood and the model car industry, which was growing explosively in the 1950s and 1960s. Like his soon-to-be Kustom rival, Ed "Big Daddy" Roth, George made a substantial living from cars he built that were later turned into 1/25th-scale kits. Many of them represented real cars that George was contracted to build for movies and TV series.

A partial list: The Batmobile, commissioned for the campy 1966 series; the truck the Clampetts used in *The Beverly Hillbillies*, the *Munster Koach* and *Drag-U-La*, the red-and-white Ford Torino, *Zebra Three*, that was mercilessly hammered on *Starsky & Hutch*. All were reproduced as top-selling kits. So was the *Ala Kart*, a Barris custom that was later redone and resurrected. The Barris name became a household word, at least in households where custom cars were venerated, and in those who watched these top-rated TV programs and movies. And they remembered George Barris. Today, he stands as an established icon of Kustom Kulture, automotive design, and the great California automotive adventure.

"You know how some people are singers, entertainers, cooks? I had the world of cars and four wheels," George said. "That was mine."

STEPHEN RUSSO

The *Batmobile* of 1966 is likely the most recognizable TV car of all time. It sold for $4.2 million at Barrett-Jackson.

An iconic car, the 1949-1951 Mercury, and the homegrown styling legend who made it into a palette for metalworking beauty.

A Deluxe Restoration

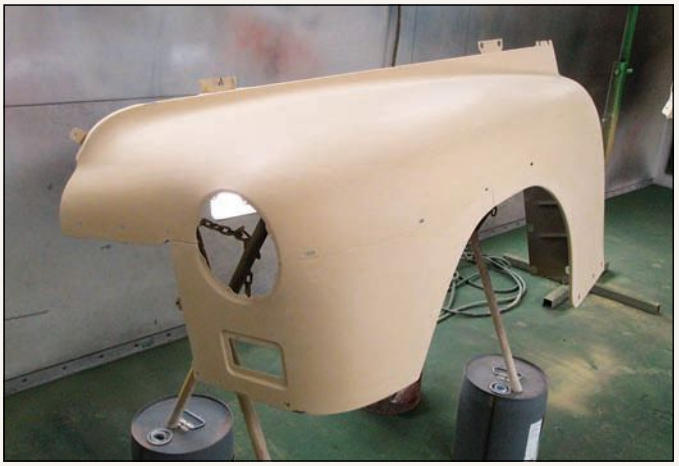
Resurrecting a 1948 Dodge Deluxe Business Coupe continues with the reunification of its body and chassis before final assembly results in a show-winning finish—Part II

BY MATTHEW LITWIN • PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF KOCH
RESTORATION PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF CHRIS EVANS

Several driveline subassemblies were addressed while the major visual work to the body continued, such as the disassembly, inspection and cleaning of a rear universal joint. No damage was found, and it was carefully refinished and later rebuilt.

After the frame was media blasted, like the body, it was sealed in epoxy primer and then finished in a layer of chassis black paint. So were several suspension parts—including the control arms and rear leaf springs—and the rear differential housing.

Now that the corrective metalwork had been completed, the crew could begin to massage the body. This was accomplished by applying a skim coat of Platinum plastic filler in select areas, which was then smoothed with 80- and 150-grade sandpaper.



Once the body shell and its removed corresponding panels were sanded to an unparalleled smoothness, every surface was given eight coats of Nason epoxy primer. After it cured, it was sanded using the step process, from 150- to 1000-grade sandpaper.

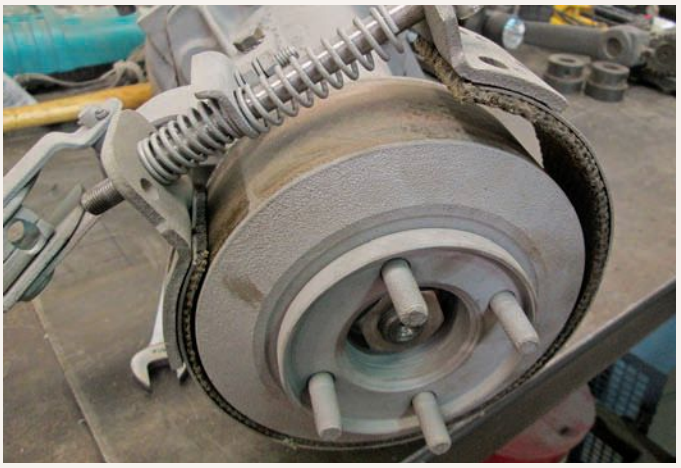
Last month we brought you part one of the restoration of Chris Evans's 1948 Dodge Deluxe Business Coupe, a car he obtained in 2007 sight-unseen from a Pennsylvania seller after spotting an ad posted on a bulletin board at a New Jersey auction. It was a fortuitous find for Chris, a native of New York currently residing in Scottsdale, Arizona. Chris had owned a non-functional copy of the Dodge—save for the radio—in his youth and, decades later, had been looking to replace what was his first car.

To quickly recap, after purchase and delivery, the Dodge was placed in storage until the spring of 2013, at which point Chris felt he was ready to tackle its restoration. He was able to disassemble most of the Dodge, a complete but rough-running Business Coupe, before he came to the conclusion that a complete restoration would be far more difficult than previously thought. Not wanting to give up on the long-awaited project, Chris employed the services of Charly Spencer of Charly's Garage in nearby Mesa. Charly and his staff evaluated the progress to that point, assessed the Coupe's immediate needs and continued with disassembly. Last month's portion of the tale culminated with the Dodge's media blasting, metal repair and body prep.

Once the chassis and body were being taken care of, Chris had outsourced several other aspects of the project, including the restoration of the 230.2-cu. in. straight-six. During its disassembly, Chris had noticed internal corrosion to the 102hp engine, at which point he hired Greg Greulich, of Greulich Engines Machining & Custom Engine, based in Phoenix.

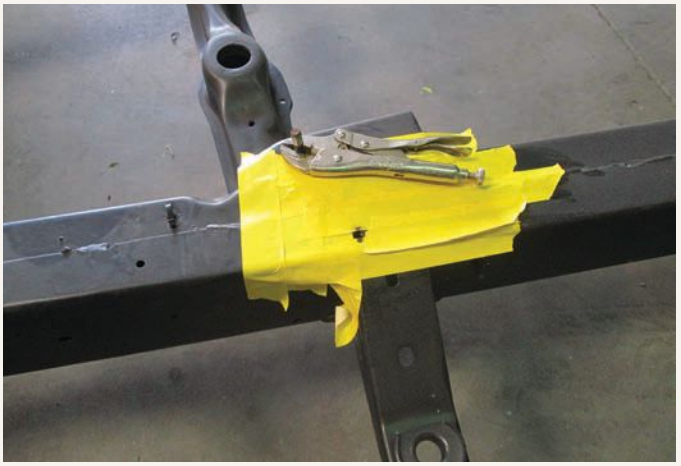
According to Chris, "Greg invested a lot of time on that engine. Within the straight-six is a water-distribution tube running the length of the block that's critical to the cooling system. Over time, the steel tube has a tendency to corrode, as one would expect. There's a well-

The Deluxe Business Coupe was originally equipped with dual heaters under the dash. Earlier, they had both been removed, disassembled and refinished. While the rest of the restoration work continued, the parts were carefully stored on a designated shelf.



After the transmission was removed from the chassis, it was delivered to a transmission specialist who was tasked with rebuilding and refinishing the three-speed unit. Here, new material has been added to the mechanical parking brake assembly on the tailshaft.

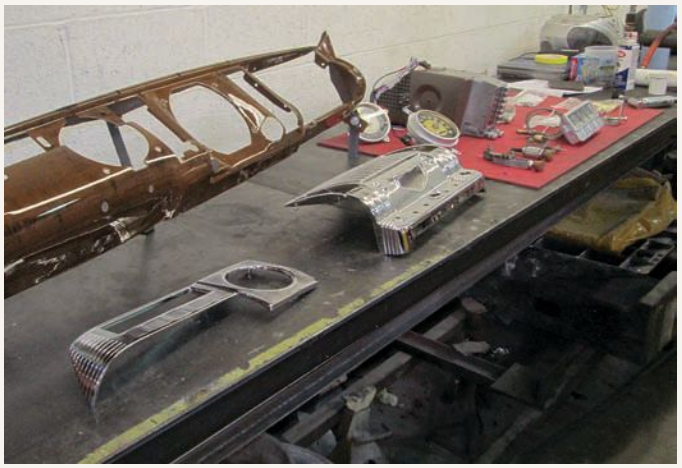
As the primer cured on the body, the team began the task of rebuilding the chassis. Here, the rear leaf sprung suspension system and hydraulic shocks have been installed, along with freshly fabricated brake lines, matching the original factory contours.



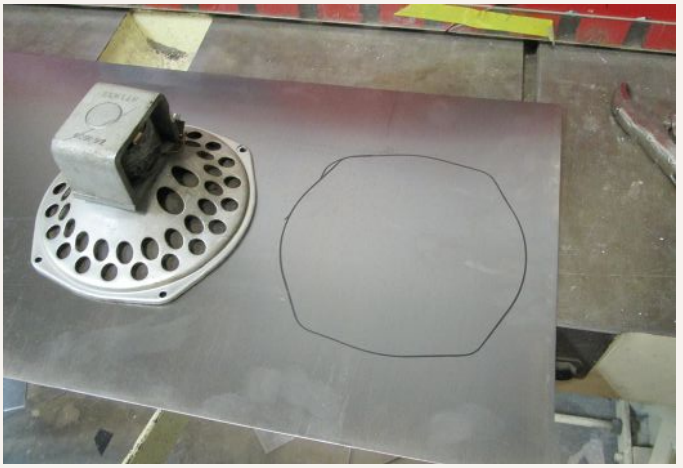
New body-mount bushings and bolts were fitted to the frame; although some bolts deemed savable were reused. To prevent the refinished frame from being marred during this process, tape covered the finish in each work area and was later removed.

documented procedure for removing it; however, this one had rusted so badly it had essentially welded itself within. Once it had been painstakingly removed and the internals were cleaned up, the cylinder bores were honed and the deck resurfaced, along with magnafluxing the block and cylinder head. They then selected internal parts that were durable, yet close to OE specs: pistons and bearings from Sealed Power; piston rings from Hastings; replacement oil pump from Melling Automotive; intake and exhaust valves, and valve guides, from E-Loy Engine Parts; and of course new seals and gaskets. Everything was then balanced and blueprinted to ensure that it was going to run as smoothly and efficiently as possible, and then carefully reassembled."

While the engine was receiving its servicing, it was recommended that Chris take the Dodge's Fluid-Drive three-speed manual transmission to local specialist Jesse McHugh for its overhaul. Operating out of his home-based shop, Jesse rebuilt the transmission using an NOS gear cluster; he similarly made sure that new brake material was secured to the



To replicate the woodgrain finish that the Dodge factory workers had applied some 67 years ago, the entire instrument panel was removed and sent out to be restored by specialists; the rebuilt and restored instruments were then carefully refitted.



A few pieces needed to be fabricated, including metal spacers for the radio speaker. Using the speaker as a template, it was traced to 18-gauge aluminum and cut. The edges were then ground smooth to prevent marring refinished surfaces elsewhere.

As with most restorations, the number of mechanical components that needed to be restored seemed endless. To prevent unnecessary delays, each was rebuilt in advance of its need during reassembly, including the engine's distributor.

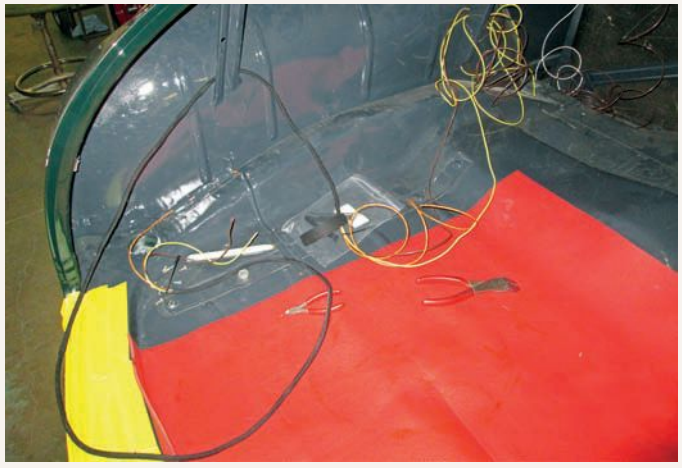
After the primer cured, preventing unwanted cracking later, three coats of DuPont paint, matched to the original Forest Green hue, were applied, followed by four layers of DuPont clearcoat. Final sanding and polishing brought forth an impeccable shine.

With the body shell's paint work finally completed, a two-post lift was employed to ease the task of carefully aligning it to the new body-mount fittings atop the 119.5-inch wheelbase chassis, complete with its fully restored suspension system.

After the body shell was secured to the chassis, it was time for the engine — and shortly thereafter, the transmission — to be installed. Earlier, the 230.2-cu.in. straight-six engine had been extensively rebuilt and balanced to ensure smooth operation.

As the body and chassis were being bolted together, several subassemblies were being restored by specialists, including the split front bench seat with new fabric over foam, complemented by vinyl bolsters, matched to the original factory pattern.

Several pieces of trim, which had already been restored, were then installed on the painted body early in the reassembly phase. To prevent marring the new paint, tape was used to protect the finish and removed once the mounting tabs had slid home.



Before reassembly could progress further, new wiring had to be installed through the cabin and the trunk. Each connection was custom-built using reproduction wires matching the original factory finish, which helped eliminate potential shorts.

As the toeboard is test-fitted for steering clearance and bolt alignment before it's painted, interior reassembly is already underway in the cabin. Here, both of the restored original factory heaters have been secured; the left unit is being rewired.

tailshaft parking brake assembly.

Chris also managed several other aspects of the restoration. This included sending the steering wheel to Koch's in Acton, California, while Old Dominion Oyster Restorations in Leesburg, Virginia, received the aged steel dash to comprehensively restore the panel with a factory-correct woodgrain finish. Meanwhile, Kerr West Plating of Phoenix was tasked with returning a mirror-like finish to the stainless and chromed trim, and Gauge Works, also in Phoenix, rebuilt the analog instruments to an as-new appearance. There were two invisible improvements made to the interior equipment: Both the original clock and radio were upgraded to quartz motorization.

As several interior subassemblies were coming together, the Business Coupe body was being readied to be reunited with the 119.5-inch wheelbase chassis. Earlier, three coats of DuPont Forest Green paint was applied to the exterior after permitting the primer to cure properly. Allowing previous layers of protective finish to cure prevents upper surfaces from cracking later. Four applications of clearcoat followed paint before the panels were wet sanded using the common step method. This process started with 1,000-grade paper and ultimately finished with 2,000-grade paper; final polishing and buffing brought forth a pristine mirror-like sheen.

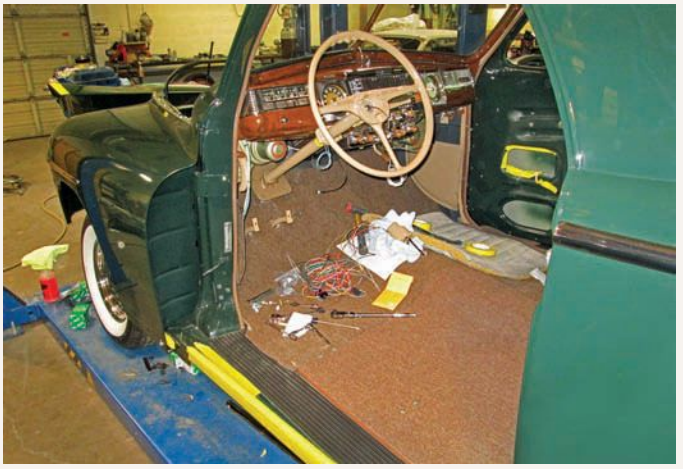
Earlier, the chassis had already been media blasted and refinished with several coats of chassis black enamel, while the suspension had been thoroughly rebuilt with new bushings and rebuilt shocks. New brake and fuel lines had been installed as well to ease that portion of reassembly. Using a two-post lift, the body was then lowered into position atop new body mounts. Next on the list was returning the six-cylinder engine and Fluid-Drive transmission to the chassis, which was then linked to a rebuilt rear differential via restored open driveshaft.

In short order, removed body panels

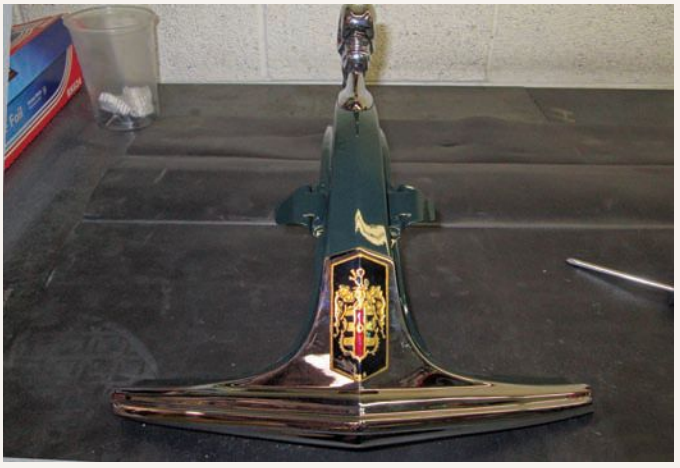
Another phase of reassembly was completed when the radiator, front pan and inner fenders were secured. The latter three panels had earlier been refinished in a correct flat hue of chassis black paint. Note the correct natural finish of the fasteners.

Any time restorers can find an opportunity to ease reassembly, they take advantage of it. One such example is the reinstallation of the instrument panel as a complete subassembly, which had been earlier finished on a protected workbench, sans glovebox.

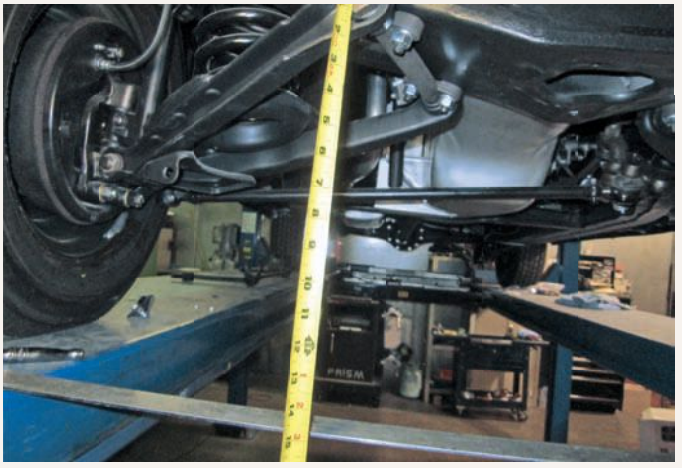
At this stage, nearly the entire front end has been reunited with the rest of the Dodge, and it's easy to see why items such as fenders and headlamps were installed as a single unit, including wiring assemblies. The hood and bumper are still to come.



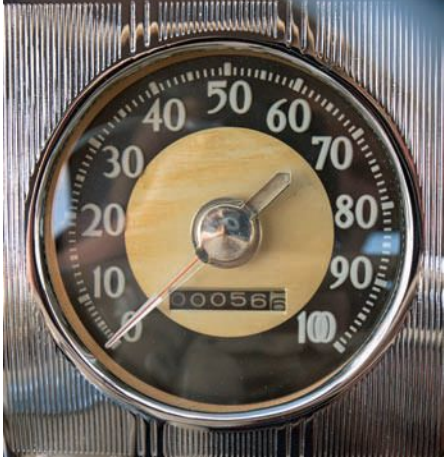
Interior reassembly has advanced beyond the dash, including a refinished steering column sleeve, new floor carpet and restored steering wheel. As the wiring is being completed, the passenger door has been installed and properly aligned.



The last piece of front end trim is finally ready for installation. This seemingly inconsequential part houses both the front emblem and decorative hood ornament while acting as a divider for the two-piece, side-opening hood.



One aspect rarely discussed is the litany of final adjustments that should be made and verified. After consulting with factory service manuals, suspension geometry—including proper ride height—is checked with the Dodge fully assembled.



and select pieces of trim and electrical equipment were returned to the Dodge, including the dash/instrument panel. This permitted the team to begin the long task of rebuilding the electrical connections throughout the cabin using reproduction wiring. With regard to the remaining trim and body panels, such as the front and rear fenders, care was taken not to mar refinished panels by protecting the mating surfaces with painter's tape.

When the bulk of the wiring was completed in the passenger compartment, interior reassembly began in earnest with the installation of new kick panels, followed by floor carpet in lieu of a rubber mat; the only visible deviation in the interior's factory-stock appearance. A new headliner, reupholstered split-bench seat and door panels complemented by woodgrained trim completed the cabin. The two-piece hood, front and rear bumpers and remaining trim were the finishing visual touches; however, the Dodge was not yet ready to be returned to Chris.

Using an alignment machine, the Dodge's suspension was set to the specs outlined in the factory manual. Ride height, camber and toe were all adjusted as required, at which point the Business Coupe was set in motion for its maiden shakedown run. In just 14 months, the Dodge had been transformed from a nearly disassembled shell to a better-than-new businessman's crown jewel.

Reflecting on the restoration of his Dodge, Chris comments, "Although I knew I was unable to tackle it myself, I

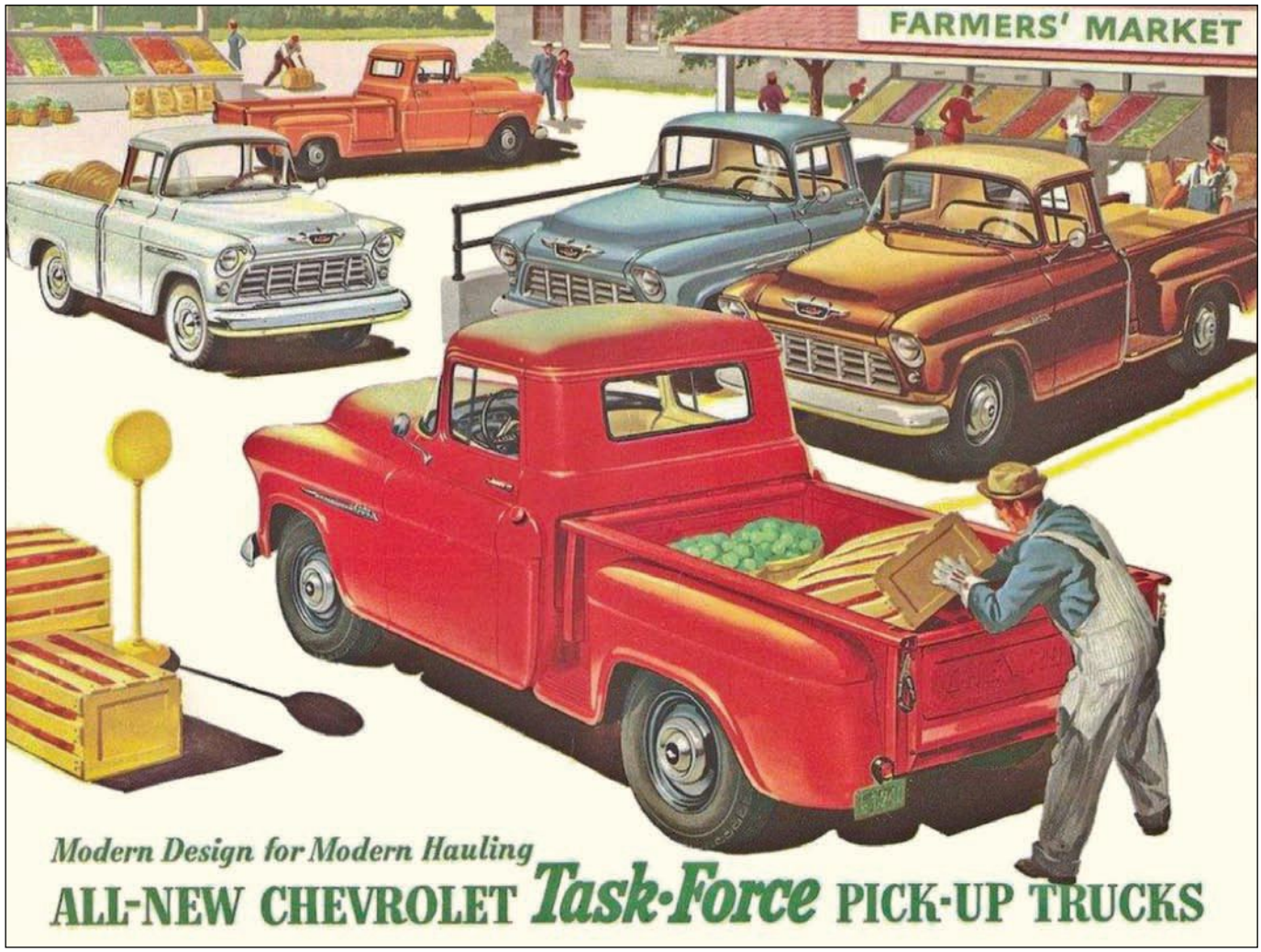
I was very lucky in that the Dodge turned out to be a fairly straightforward restoration. It was a complete car, and with the exception of the water distribution tube in the engine, we really didn't find any surprises. In fact, if there was a surprise at all it was the lack of rust, considering that the Business Coupe had been located in Pennsylvania since new. That's a critical part of any restoration, and I recommend that if you have the opportunity to do so, examine the car extensively before purchasing.

To say that I am pleased with the outcome is probably an understatement. There's absolutely nothing I would have done differently.

found it rewarding and enjoyable in other ways. The people I met and who became involved with it fascinated me. Everyone had a little niche, and that's what they focus on. One guy only restores tags—those on a distributor or on the firewall; another restores license plates; gauges—you name it. They all have a little anecdote about part of the past and immerse themselves in the history of their expertise to make your car as correct as possible. That was at least half the fun."

For the time being, Chris is bringing the completed Dodge to a variety of shows in the Scottsdale region, which in turn has made him reflect on his youth while observing event spectators. "What I think is really unique about the car is its trunk. When I bought my first one in my youth, my friends teased the heck out of me. It is probably the biggest trunk in the world and, at the time, almost made the car a little ugly in a way," Chris says. "When I bring this one to a show, I leave the decklid half open and spectators can't peer inside without smiling. You can hear the remarks; they all have some sort of story to tell. One man told me that he ran a bicycle repair shop, and he could fit more bikes in the trunk of a Dodge Business Coupe than he could in a station wagon. I tell everyone this is the car that helped establish middle class America after the war; it's what the salesmen and small business owners were using as their everyday workhorse. In another year, I know I will be driving and enjoying my Dodge, using it the way it was intended."

1956 Chevrolet Task Force Trucks



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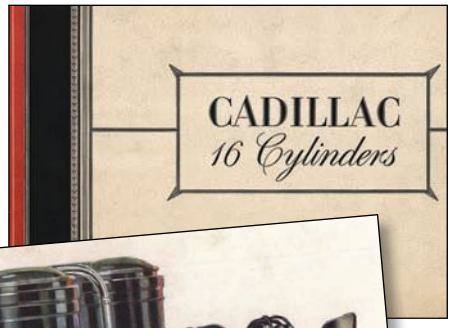
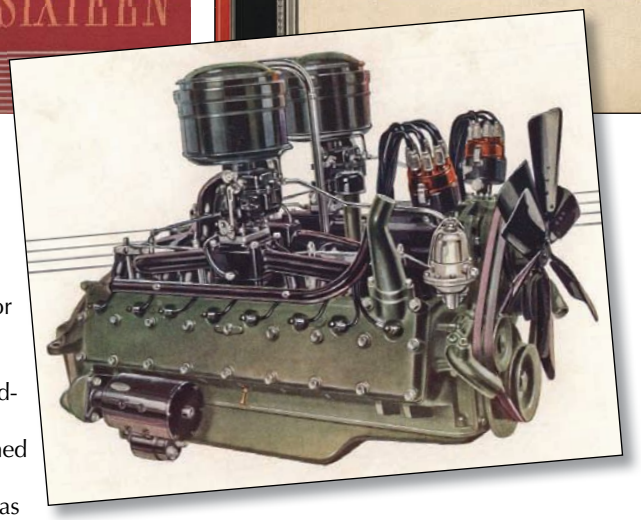
BY CHRIS RITTER
ILLUSTRATIONS COURTESY OF THE AACA LIBRARY

Sweet 16, Part 1: Cadillac





BY THE LATE 1920s, THE CAR-BUYING public could have just about anything it wanted, from value cars to custom-bodied sculptures. While automotive options were plentiful, the one thing that eluded buyers was a really big engine. As the 1920s came to an end four- and six-cylinder engines were ubiquitous, and the eight-cylinder was rather common, too.

In January 1930, the ultra-high-end luxury segment would get what it wanted when Cadillac introduced its incredible V-16 powertrain. In 1931, Marmon would also join the ranks of American manufacturers offering a V-16, but the timing for both of these companies couldn't have been worse. During the production run of the 16-cylinder masterpieces, these two manufacturers produced wonderful sales literature to advertise their cars. Here are three of our favorite V-16 Cadillac pieces.

The first catalog was issued in 1931 and simply titled *Cadillac 16 Cylinders*. It measures 14⅛ x 10 inches, and the cover is trimmed in red and black ink. As the cover opens, we are greeted with a beautiful illustration of the engine, along with a description of it as being "smooth, uncommonly capable, quiet and powerful." The text goes on to match the quality of the new engine to Cadillac's "unmatched record," proudly stating the new V-16 is "the ultimate triumph" of "Cadillac's famous V-type principle." Moving away from the engine, the catalog's only other text page describes the coachwork and features of V-16 bodies. Potential buyers are encouraged to leaf through the remaining 11 pages of black-and-white illustrations and 31 half-sheets of body styles drawn on tracing paper. They are then instructed: "Select a body type, and pencil on the drawing the modifications you would like in it. Indicate the colorings as you prefer them. Select the upholstery materials. Then ask your dealer for an estimate of the time required and the price for a car so built."

In 1938, a 12 x 8⅝-inch Cadillac Sixteen folder begins with a description of the line's redesigned engine. From 1930-'37 Cadillac's V-16 engine was a 452 cubic-inch behemoth, but for the 1938 model year, Cadillac refined the V-16 into a 431-cu.in. flathead that "reveals a smoothness, acceleration, and speed that literally have no counterpart in any car on earth." That year, the car's wheelbase was reduced to 141 inches, and the folder reports that balance and handling were also improved: "Gone are the traditional parking difficulties. Frail feminine hands are easily its master in the most complicated traffic." With difficult economic conditions fresh in everyone's mind, Cadillac branded the 1938-spec V-16 as "the most practical luxury car ever built," pointing out that the car "provides plenty of room and comfort without excessive size." The $5,140 entry price into the V-16 line placed the car "well within the range of the 12-cylinder cars."

The third piece is a beautiful portfolio for the 1938 V-16. The outer cover is red, accented with silver lines. The title, *The New Cadillac Sixteen*, is embossed on the cover and features orange script. When the reader opens the portfolio, he is greeted with a single page of text. Here the text states that it was Cadillac's intention to redesign the V-16 "to create a car so obviously superior that it would be accepted without question as the new standard of the world in luxury, comfort, safety and mechanical convenience." This car would be appreciated by "those who unerringly gather among their possessions the finest things that life affords." After the introduction, the portfolio opens to release 10 individual plates measuring 13¼ x 11 inches, illustrating the engine and each body style offered. On the opposite side of these plates are illustrations of the car's interior and a brief description of features and accoutrements. The illustrations are all in full color and serve as a truly impressive presentation of the V-16 Cadillac.

The Cadillac V-16 had a production run from 1930 to 1940. During those 10 years, just 4,076 V-16 automobiles were built. Nobody can predict how many V-16s would have been manufactured if the Great Depression had never happened. The cars were big, beautiful, graceful and powerful. At the top of the food chain in the high-end luxury market, the V-16 Cadillac had only one other American rival, the Marmon Sixteen. The 16-cylinder battle between Cadillac and Marmon only overlapped for three years, but their legacies continue to live on today. Next month we will take a look at the literature for the Marmon Sixteen.

BY JIM DONNELLY
PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF FORD DESIGN CENTER

Holden Koto

HIS NAME IS A LITTLE OBSCURE today except among serious aficionados of automotive styling and design. But Holden "Bob" Koto was a gifted thinker who had a hand in one of the most important postwar cars that any manufacturer unleashed on a car-crazed public.

Koto was born in 1910 in Beloit, Wisconsin, where his father was the part-owner of a hosiery mill. He enrolled in Cornell University of Ithaca, New York, where he studied both mechanical engineering and architecture. After three years of collegiate work, he joined Briggs Manufacturing in Detroit as a designer of automotive bodies. Briggs counted the Ford Motor Company among its major clients, supplying more than 60 percent of the manufacturer's bodies at the time. Koto was responsible for the handsome faces of the 1936 Fords, and the two Bobs—Koto and E.T. Gregorie—shared the work on crafting the looks of the Briggs Prototype, the study that eventually became the Lincoln Zephyr.

He left Briggs in 1939 to take a design position with Hudson, but the coming of World War II caused Hudson's work on new civilian designs to shrivel to nothing, and Koto was laid off. He and Ted Pietsch, another design casualty of the Hudson layoffs, teamed up in 1943 on an effort to win a design contract from Nash-Kelvinator on a new line of cars, which in their vision had a body design that resembled an upside-down bathtub. Nash didn't bite, but in later years, Koto discovered that the company's postwar line of automobiles bore a striking resemblance to the drawings he and Pietsch had unsuccessfully pitched.

But just that quickly, Koto was approached by the great Raymond Loewy and went to work for Studebaker, whose styling department was under Loewy's tutelage. Here's where the story gets really interesting. Koto was paired up with another designer, Bob Bourke, who would go on to become a legend of Studebaker styling. It was increasingly obvious that the Axis powers would go down to eventual defeat, and the auto industry was already hard at work sketching and modeling concepts for new cars, anticipating an explosion in demand once civilian production resumed. The situation was particularly critical at Ford, whose founder was in his dotage as the company hemorrhaged cash. The new postwar car would make or break the firm.

What happened next remains the topic of intense debate among Ford and Studebaker historians to this day. Ford had two parallel design campaigns going on for what eventually became its 1949 model line. One was headed by George Walker, an independent consultant, with Gregorie in charge of the other team. Dimensionally, at least, the design target was very close to the 1947 Studebaker Champion. Walker approached a laid-off Studebaker designer named Richard Caleal and offered him a job at Ford if he could design a car in three weeks. Caleal enlisted Koto and Bourke to do the actual drafting. It's likely that a lot of the slab-sided design that emerged was Koto's own work. In the end, his proposal—or if you prefer, Walker's proposal—was chosen over Gregorie's in-house project. There's still disagreement over whether the landmark 1949 Ford was borrowed from Studebaker design proposals, although it's never been conclusively proven.

In the 1950s, Koto and other Loewy staffers traveled to England where they worked on a contract to redesign cars for the Rootes Group, including Hillman, Humber and Sunbeam. He left Loewy in 1955 and joined Ford's styling team, where his first assignment was the Edsel. Among his later works for Ford were the Mercury Comet, mid-1960s Lincoln and the 1967 full-size Mercury. Koto retired from Ford in 1968 and passed away 20 years later.

BY MILTON STERN

The Last Ambassadors

NOT ALL AMBASSADORS ARE UNDER-dogs. Nash Ambassadors, Rambler Ambassadors and most AMC Ambassadors are not; the underdogs are the 1969–'73 models.

At the end of its days, the Ambassador had the longest-running American automotive name at that time—47 years. When it was introduced in 1927, the Ambassador was a specially trimmed, four-door, five-passenger club sedan version of the Nash Advanced Six, and it was Kenosha's most expensive car at $2,090 (about $27,520 in 2015 dollars).

In mid-1932, Nash introduced the Ambassador Eight as a stand-alone model for the first time. The "Kenosha Duesenbergs," as they were called, earned a reputation for quality, durability, styling and speed.

According to urban legend, the American Motors board of directors (after the demise of Hudson and Nash at the end of 1957) complained that their counterparts drove Cadillacs, Imperials and Lincolns, and they weren't about to be seen in Rambler Sixes. Thus, the once-planned 1958 Hudson-Nash prototypes were melded together to create the 1958 Ambassador by Rambler. Whatever the true reason, the 1958 Ambassador outsold the combined sales of the final 1957 Nash and Hudson full-size cars. Ambassadors would remain a longer, fancier version of the standard Rambler through 1961, then ride the same wheelbase through 1964, and return to their own wheelbase and distinct styling in 1965.

The 1968 Ambassador was the first car under $10,000 to be equipped with standard air conditioning. For 1969, the Ambassador wheelbase was stretched to 122 inches—the longest in AMC history, and the Ambassador grille took on a more formal look that would evolve through 1973.

In a 1972 *Popular Mechanics* survey, Ambassador owners, after driving a total of 1,000,000 miles, were pleased with their cars, describing them as "very comfortable to drive and ride in" with handling listed as a top "specific like" by half of the drivers; 92 percent would buy one again. Although the Buyer Protection Plan was listed by only 8.5 percent as a reason to purchase an Ambassador, owners valued the smaller AMC dealers that "had more time to be courteous and to pay personal attention to customers." The biggest complaint was gas mileage.

The Ambassador for the 1974 model year was offered in two models, four-door sedan and station wagon. Front end styling was drastically changed, and the new grille earned the nickname, "Coffin Nose." How ironic, considering the Ambassador would be laid to rest at the end of the model year after sales of little more than 24,000 units. The "Coffin Noses" are among the most popular Ambassadors and can sell for almost twice as much as any comparable 1969–'73 Ambassador, leaving them off my underdog list.

Beginning in 1975, the Matador took over as AMC's flagship. I think the automaker should have kept the Matador as the coupe and "downsized" the Ambassador for the sedans and station wagons, but no one asked my opinion.

Why should you consider a 1969–'73 Ambassador? If you are looking for full-size comfort with that floating boulevard ride and power steering that only requires a pinky to park, here is a decent car you can have for less than $4,000. Your Ambassador will most likely have air conditioning, automatic transmission, power brakes and a V-8 (the last two were newly standard in 1972–'73).

Since AMC standardized most components in its parts bin, mechanicals are relatively easy until you go to fix the air conditioning. I know because I own a 1972 Ambassador Brougham, and the only headache was getting the A/C back in working order. Chrysler TorqueFlites replaced Borg-Warner automatics beginning in 1972. You do need to be sure all the trim and body panels are in good condition and, more important, complete, since the production numbers were so low.

I've driven all the big barges from this era, and I think the Ambassadors handle better than comparable GMs or Fords and as well as the Chryslers. The ride is smooth, but I can tell it's a lighter car.

Here is the odd part: 1970s Ambassadors are invisible. While most other vintage cars get a thumbs up, the Ambassador gets no reaction, except at the grocery store. When I open the trunk, someone always asks, "How many bodies can you fit in there?"

Is there a serial killer living in all of us?

IMAGE COURTESY FORD MOTOR COMPANY

Laurence Thompson

Junior Accountant

Ford Motor Company 1955-1957

FOLLOWING COLLEGE GRADUA-tion, I really didn't have any experience on how to get a job. The annual introduction of next year's cars was always a big event in my growing-up years, so working for one of the Big Three sounded great. I showed up one morning at the Rotunda building asking how to get a job at the Ford Motor Company. By that evening I was hired!

From April 1955 through August 1957, I worked as a junior accountant in the accounting department of the Manufacturing Services Division located just off Schaefer Road in the Rouge in Dearborn, Michigan. I was just out of Michigan State University, and this was my first real accounting job. I wasn't in any formal company training program, but they treated me as a trainee by moving me every three months from one accounting job to another within the department. Positions included jobs in cost accounting, accounts receivable, accounts payable, payroll and computer services. Computer services in those days were done on an IBM 406, which was basically a punch card adding and subtracting machine.

The Manufacturing Services Division provided services that were billed on a monthly basis to all the other Ford divisions within the Rouge and greater Detroit area. They ran the Rouge power plant; had a fleet of over 400 trucks (would you believe all Fords); managed the fleet of ships (that included first-class accommodations for VIPs) that brought iron ore down from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan to the Rouge steel mill; managed the railroad within the Rouge area, managed the restaurants, barbershops and automotive repair services that served the senior executives; and handled all freight claims for damaged goods that were received within the Rouge area.

My first job was coding, for the computer department, the time sheets that were submitted by each of the truck drivers for the previous day's deliveries. The rule was that the receiving division paid the bill for the delivery. The divisions were each assigned a four-digit number for computer identification purposes. The stack of trip sheets that were placed on my desk every morning could be two to three feet tall, with from 10 to 20 deliveries per sheet. For each delivery, I had to enter the code for the division receiving the delivery. Sixty years later, I still remember the codes for some of the divisions. The assembly plant was 5300, the steel mill was 6800, the engine plant was 6600. I hated this job, so I memorized the plant codes and raced through the pile by noon, which left my afternoons open for other more interesting tasks. It turned out, the person I replaced had taken all day to do it, so I guess I started off on the right foot in their eyes.

Old Henry Ford loved fiddle music. He hired the fiddler from a place he owned out on Woodward Avenue and Eight Mile Road and put him in charge of the power plant, which didn't need much in the way of management talent. The fiddler had plenty of time on his hands, so when any member of the Ford family needed something that the Company could provide, they would call the fiddler and he would see that it was done. Following World War II, the IRS came in and taxed these services that had been provided free to the Ford family and senior executives. Following this action, a new system was established whereby the Ford family member would call a lawyer in Ford's building in downtown Detroit who would in turn call the fiddler to provide the service requested.

When I was there, once a month invoices were sent from the Manufacturing Services Division to the lawyer for each of the family members for whom services had been provided. I prepared these invoices and therefore was privy to the kind of lifestyle they lived. What a view for a kid making $350 per month from a small town of 1,500 people. Services provided included having a pickup truck, with his golf cart on it, available for Clay Ford; paying the import duties on gifts that the Ford family received from all over the world (including French underwear); and an order for fireplace logs that had to be exactly 39 inches long.

The accounts receivable department was also responsible for billing the senior managers for their meals and haircuts on a monthly basis. Sometimes we would get a call in the middle of the month requesting how much an executive owed at that time. A day or two later, we would read in the newspaper that the executive had been fired. Didn't take me too long to figure what would happen after those calls.

Poor Mrs. Edsel Ford on a trip to New York bought six silver antique soup tureens, but when she got back to Grosse Pointe only five were delivered. I processed a freight claim for the sixth one for $2,500! Big bucks in those days.

My time at Ford provided me with excellent training in all the basic accounting functions, but for personal reasons I decided to go to work for Bill Lear, one of aviation's pioneers, in Grand Rapids, which provided a whole new set of eye openers.

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.

TECH TALK

BY MIKE McNESSOR

TEVES TESTING TIPS

Q: I have a 1985 Lincoln Continental with 26,000 miles. The ABS braking system works intermittently. When it is not working, I have brakes but they are not power brakes. I am told that because the car sat so long, the pump motor for the ABS system has built up a film. I have been unable to find a unit for the ABS system. Do you have any suggestions in solving this problem?

Jim Titus

Sioux City, Iowa

A: Your Lincoln uses the Teves Mark 2 brake system, which was employed on many Ford and GM cars from 1985 through the early 1990s. The ABS system is integrated into the power brake system, rather than having a more conventional master cylinder and booster with an ABS control unit added on. One of the common problems is the one you're having —a hard pedal with no power brakes. The system requires brake fluid stored under high pressure in an accumulator (it's the black ball-shaped thing off to the side of the reservoir). The fluid is pressurized by an electric pump that runs intermittently to keep the pressure in the accumulator high enough. The interaction between the accumulator is controlled by a pressure warning switch that monitors the pressure and activates the pump as needed. The system draws quite a lot of juice, so power is routed through a relay.

When a Teves Mark 2 system loses power brakes, it's basically one of two things: The accumulator is bad and not holding pressure, or the pressurizing isn't taking place as necessary due to a faulty relay, a faulty pressure switch, a faulty pump motor or some other electrical problem preventing the pump from running. I wouldn't immediately blame the pump motor before thoroughly checking all of the other possibilities. It's very possible that either a bad electrical connection or a bad relay is the cause, neither of which would be very expensive to repair. The shop manual for your car describes in detail how to test the system. However, if you can get to an Internet connection and search "troubleshooting teves 2" you will find much of the same information posted by various sources. If you're not comfortable with a multi-meter, it can be a little daunting, so perhaps armed with the troubleshooting information from the manual you can find a mechanic willing to check out the wiring, then test out the relay, switch, motor and accumulator before changing components. For parts for the system, check with SIA Electric www.siaelec.com or 800-737-0915.

ROPE OR RUBBER?

Q: I have a 40-foot powerboat with twin 1972 Chrysler 440-cu.in. V-8s. One engine turns opposite of the other engine. Recently I had them rebuilt by a local rebuilder. When I installed the engines, the reverse-rotation engine lost about one quart of oil per hour of running time. The oil appears to be lost through the rear engine seal. Upon pulling the engine, I discovered the rebuilder had installed a rope seal instead of the proper two-part lip seal.

I checked the crankshaft journal surface, and it appeared to be in perfect condition. I installed the proper seal and reduced the oil loss to approximately one quart every four hours of running time. The lost oil ends up in the bilge and of course results in a terrible mess. I have about 190 hours of total running time since the rebuild and about 170 hours of running time on the reverse-rotation engine since installation of the proper seal. The loss continues to be at the same rate of one quart every four hours of running. The other engine did not at first suffer any unusual loss of oil into the bilge. But now it has a loss rate about the same as the other engine.

The lost oil is collected in a plastic container under the flywheel housing (the bellhousing front plate is missing on both engines), so the area from which the oil is leaking is fairly obvious. My only other idea as to the source is an incorrectly sized or improperly installed plug at the rear of the camshaft. However, given the oil seal history, I doubt that is an issue. Is there any historical information about the two-piece rear oil seal on the Chrysler 440 engine being a problem? Can you provide any observations regarding the rear seal and its installation?

Bob Kelley

Kirkland, Washington

A: First, I'm not sure that the rubber seal is more proper than the rope seal. Here's why: Your engines' crankshafts should have knurled marks on the rear journals that look like slashes. Those are there to pump oil into the original rope-type seal to keep it swollen and lubricated. (The marks on the reverse rotation engine's crank should be slanted in the opposite direction of the marks on the other engine's crank.) With a rubber seal, you don't need or want the marks because the rubber seal won't absorb the oil being fed to it, causing it to leak. So, generally when a rubber seal is used, the marks are polished off. Which seal you use is a matter of choice but, a crankshaft without the knurled marks using a rope seal will likely leak, as will a crankshaft with the marks using a rubber seal. If you decide to go with rubber seals, and your engines' crankshafts have the knurled slashes, talk to a machinist about the best way to polish off the marks. It might also help to install the seal shifted slightly so that the seams between the two halves don't line up with the seams between the retainer cap and the block (a common practice on any engine).

The other issue that causes leaks are the side gaskets that seal the sides of the seal cap. The original types must be soaked in mineral spirits or diesel fuel and then installed immediately. If this isn't done correctly, then a leak will develop. Many builders opt to skip the side gaskets and apply a bead of RTV in their places. There are also silicone end-seals available, if the idea of using a gasket maker doesn't appeal to you. Don't rule out just basic installation problems affecting the seal, as well. The cap is a relatively sloppy fit and it's possible to install it ever so slightly off, which results in part of the seal not entirely contacting the crankshaft. The old rope seals probably swelled enough to compensate for this, but a rubber seal won't. Some builders, when using a rubber seal, recommend machining a hair's width of material —.010-inch or less—off the mating surface of the cap (where it meets the block) to ensure a more positive fit. There are also aftermarket billet aluminum caps available that are made slightly wider, making them less susceptible to these installation variances. The 440 V-8 was widely used as a boat engine, so there must be marine mechanics in your area with experience replacing rear main seals in reverse-rotation engines. Someone who has done the job numerous times might see something that you're missing.

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*.

REARVIEW MIRROR 1938

BY TOM COMERRO

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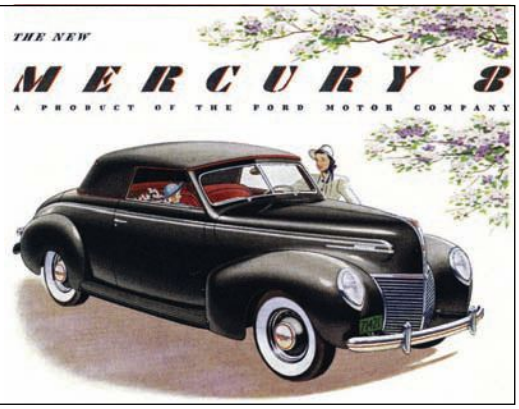
CHEVROLET'S MASTER AND MASTER Deluxe return with a dozen body styles to meet the needs of all motorists. The new grille, composed of horizontal chromium bars and full-width bumper, brings a new look to the Chevrolet. Pricing begins as low as $648.

THE ROYAL RETURNS IN ITS SECOND year as Chrysler's six-cylinder offering. A redesigned grille, headlamps and hood trim showcase the exterior design changes while retaining the important safety measures of all-steel construction, hydraulic brakes and the finest safety glass available. The Royal comes in standard and long wheelbase versions with several different body styles at a starting price tag of $918.

EDSEL FORD ANNOUNCES THE launching of the new Mercury division designed to bridge the gap between Ford and Lincoln's luxury cars. Mercury production will begin at the end of the year with the new 1939 Mercury Eight featuring a 95-horsepower engine and expansive interior. Available in sedan, coupe or convertible, the Mercury will start at $916.



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Hemmings Motor News

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LARRY JETT
NEWARK, CALIFORNIA

Midsummer Flight's Scream

IN THE SPRING OF 1964, I OWNED A Shell station near the San Francisco airport, had two classes to complete for a college degree and was engaged to be married in five months. With plenty of things to do, I did not need the additional aggravation of replacing my much-loved 1955 Chrysler Windsor coupe, but an argument over intersection dominance with a truck required it.

In 1964, Chrysler 300s were just another large American car to most people and rarely seen in the San Francisco Bay Area. When I found one for sale in nearby Marin County, I was not sure what a 300F was, but went to investigate because it was a four-year-old Chrysler and was within the budget range. Being 24, I'd acquired little cash and no credit rating, but the local banker that bought Super Shell from me agreed to finance any amount up to $1,500, so I went shopping.

It was an A/C car, and nobody I knew had A/C in 1964, but that wonderful option paled compared to the standard Ram-Induction carburetor setup on 300Fs: two four-barrel Carter carbs east/west on a north/south 413-cu.in. V-8, plus power everything and four leather buckets. A more impressive used car, I had never seen. I can't recall the price paid, but on purchase night, I felt nervous knowing I was in debt and completely cash poor, with nothing left to start married life. This new chapter of life's book was still to be written, but at that moment, I had 375 horses, 495-lb.ft. of torque and the world's coolest new/used car. Good thing I didn't ask my fiancée's opinion beforehand, as she was aghast when shown my choice of transportation for our adventure ahead.

Just weeks prior to the wedding, I was required to attend Army Reserve summer camp near Salt Lake City, and three other citizen-soldiers and I drove the 300 miles to Utah during July. The temperature gauge tended to read higher than seemed proper, but I had no money for correction so I relied on optimism. We did stop at a Chrysler dealer east of Reno to have the thermostat removed and he was apologetic at the flat rate to be charged for the two-hour procedure—$3.50 per hour!

The two weeks in Utah proved undamaging to the cooling system, so we tested the upper limits of the 150 MPH speedometer past the Bonneville Salt Flats on the way home. My pals balked at any run higher than 130, so we settled for 100-110. Somewhere between Elko and Wells, the heat gauge became firmly pegged to the max and although no visible evidence of escaping steam was evident, the "banker's hot rod" slowed to a halt in the deserted highway miles from anywhere. After a cooling period, a restart was unsuccessful as the engine was solidly locked tight. Eventually a farmer in an early '50s pickup provided a push to 45 MPH whereupon I punched the 2nd gear button; only the torque converter rotated but no engine parts.

The tow-truck driver left the car at a service station in Wells and took us to a Greyhound terminal for a bus to San Francisco. The Wells mechanic called days later saying the engine could not be rotated and that any internal repair would be too exotic for his skillset. He did volunteer to tow it behind his 1960 Pontiac to my Shell station for $150.

So, what to do? I had a four-figure loan on a three-figure non-op car and a honeymoon imminent. Multiple batteries in parallel would not rotate the crankshaft, but a yard-long pinch bar on a flywheel tooth did. With 40 percent STP in the oil supply, I was able to make the engine run again but only for a few minutes before it started generating some noises that no gearhead wants to hear. Just a few miles, mostly downhill, was a dealership that had a 1962 Dodge Polara 500 on the front row before I left for Utah. When I returned, it had been pushed back to the third row, unwashed, probably ready for wholesaling. Why? Because that model Dodge is just hard to look at. Sensing wounded prey, I coasted the Chrysler down the hill after closing hours and parked it in front of the dealership.

Returning in the cool of the morning, I showed interest in the Dodge and the salesman got an eager look on his face that proved my game plan had possibilities. Someone drove the Chrysler once around the block in a real hurry to get back to probably the only retail prospect they had seen in six weeks. Two hours later, I owned a 24,000-mile Dodge, A/C, all power, 305hp, plus a new loan, and they had a Chrysler 300F.

After the honeymoon, one evening my wife and I drove past the dealership at about 10 p.m. There on the front row was our old 300F. I just had to stop and chat with the unknown salesman locking the cars for the night. Asking about the Chrysler, he went on and on about what a terrific and exceptional car it was. To prove his point, he proffered that the used car manager almost lost his job over the trade-in sheet, but the car now had a major overhaul and showed me the invoice from a dealer in South San Francisco totaling $560.

Suffering seller's remorse, I bought an identical 300F 24 years later, and it was our first choice for shows and touring for the next 23 years. My wife of 50 years concurs.

Hemmings Motor News

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A Life of Service

Many International M-3-4 Navy Crash Trucks found a second career in civilian firefighting

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY MIKE McNESSOR

If any company hammered plowshares into swords to help stock the Arsenal of Democracy in World War II, it was International Harvester. America's storied maker of farming equipment and heavy trucks not only converted its tractor and truck manufacturing plants to build military vehicles—like this month's ex-U.S. Navy, 1944 International M-3-4 feature truck—but the company built ammunition, bomb casings and more.

When the Army called for large quantities of 75mm artillery shells, workers at IH's Milwaukee Works, scoured the plant's decommissioned machine tools for equipment that could be used to finish-machine the shell casings. They also built an intricate roller conveyor track to easily move the shell casings from the forges through machining to final inspection. Milwaukee also manufactured tracked crawlers and stationary engines used to power a variety of battlefield equipment.

At the West Pullman Works in Chicago, machinists refitted lathes, used for turning down piston wrist pins, with six-spindle automatic screw machines to allow batch machining of shell cases for 37mm cannons. A forging upsetter machine was rigged to make the circular Bellville spring washers used to absorb the violent recoil in howitzers. International Harvester even cleaned out its massive St. Paul, Minnesota, warehouse, where it stored newly manufactured farm equipment, and rolled in the tooling necessary to build intermediate caliber artillery guns.

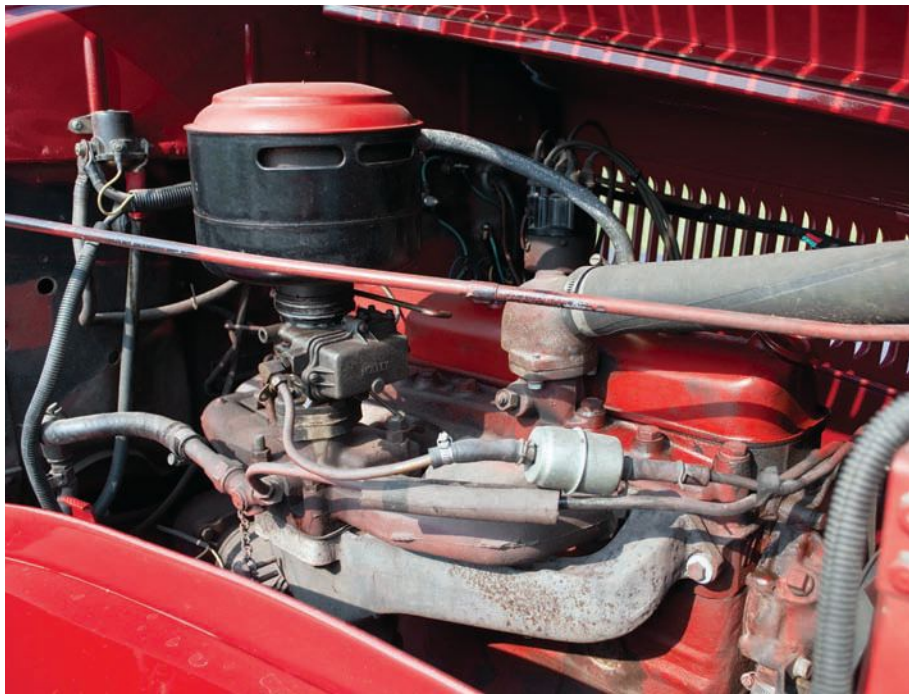
Meanwhile, the IH Springfield, Ohio, plant churned out rubber-tired trucks as well as half-track M5 personnel carriers and M9 half-track cars. The M5 and M9

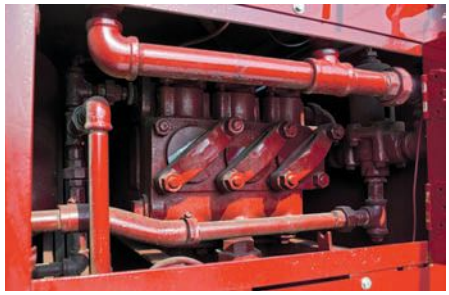
were manufactured differently than half-tracks produced by Autocar, Diamond T and White, so a large number became part of the Lend-Lease program that supplied food, oil and war matériel to the Allies. Most of the IH half-track trucks were sent off to mobilize troops in Great Britain, Canada and the Soviet Union.

In Bettendorf, Iowa, IH's tractor plant built tracked vehicles, crawlers and tanks, while Fort Wayne, Indiana, and Chatham, Ontario, produced trucks.

International's work on military trucks began years before the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. The U.S. military knew that trucks with drive axles in the front as well as in the rear were going to be crucial to battlefield mobility, but none of the major truck makers had done much work with 4x4 or heavy 6x6 trucks.

By 1941, with the government calling for all-terrain capability, International was producing three 4x4 trucks and one 6x6. The M-1-4 was a half-ton on a 115-inch wheelbase, with single rear wheels. The M-2-4 was a one-ton on a 125-inch wheelbase with heavier springs than the half-ton, and six-lug wheels. The M-3-4 was the biggest of the light 4x4s. It was 1½ ton-rated, offered with a closed cab from IH's commercial K-series trucks, outfitted with rear dual wheels and riding on either a 139-inch wheelbase (designated "M-3 L-4") or a 150-inch wheelbase ("M-3 H-4"). An 88hp overhead valve, six-cylinder gas engine displacing 259 cubic-inches powered early versions of the M-3-4, while later rigs rolled out with a 269-cu.in. version of that engine. The





Original International six-cylinders used an updraft carburetor, so a later-model engine with a downdraft carb setup was installed by the Wilton Fire Department in the 1960s. John Bean high-pressure three-piston "fog" pump (above left) can generate 850 psi. Beefy Rzeppa-style CV joints (right) allow front drive axle to steer.

The spartan interior includes basic gauges, plus an added tachometer and controls for the PTO and transfer case. Greer pressure gauge, outside, monitors pump output.

transmission used across the board was a five-speed with a two-speed transfer case. These heavy-duty light trucks were good candidates for a wide variety of military tasks, so they were outfitted with crash bodies, dump bodies, cargo beds, wrecker bodies and tanks for hauling fuel. Many International M-3-4s were drafted into the Navy and the Marine Corps, and total production totaled between 6,000-7,000 by the time war matériel production ended.

International M-3-4 crash trucks outfitted with American La France or John Bean fire fighting apparatus were a mainstay on Navy bases where they were referred to by the military designation "FFN-3". The crash truck name was a reference to their primary task: fighting fire in the event of a plane crash.

With many of these firefighting trucks serving out of the direct line of fire during WWII, there were hundreds left after the war, so they were offered to fire companies across the country at deeply discounted surplus prices.

The Wilton Fire District in upstate New York has been the owner of this truck since the end of WWII and used it regularly until just a few years ago fighting brush fires—once a common occurrence in this rural town. "At least 10 times a year you'd see a coal-fired train go by, then you'd see a puff of smoke and you knew somebody was going to call in a brush fire," said former Department Chief William Morgan Sr., a 60-year veteran and still-active member of the department. "We might get two brush fire calls a year these days, as more and more land in the town gets developed."

Accessory lamp and siren (top) is a period piece donated to the department in 2011. Brass pump-up carbon tetrachloride fire extinguishers (pictured right in above photo) were once commonly used, but the chemical was later deemed too toxic.

The International truck was olive drab when it arrived in Wilton, but soon received a coat of more appropriate red. In 2009, it was sent to Wilde Fire Equipment in Mayfield where it was treated to a body-on restoration. Department Engineer Stephen Kloss Sr., one of the truck's longtime caretakers, and a veteran of the department says he was sorry to see the International decommissioned and retired to show-and-parade service after the restoration. "It was a dependable truck and would go anywhere," he said.

The International's original engine was swapped for a newer 269-cu.in. International six-cylinder in the 1960s, because the later-model engine used a more effective downdraft carburetor. The original transmission, too, was changed for a non-overdrive unit.

The truck's firefighting capability comes from its John Bean volume pump and high-pressure "fog" pump which can spray water at a maximum of 850 psi. A tank change in the mid 1960s brought the International's water carrying capacity up to 500 gallons.

Last year, this International truck won first place in the Postwar Fire Apparatus class at the Hemmings Motor News Concours d'Elegance in Saratoga Springs, New York. Today the truck, which earned the nickname "The Bear" for its woods conquering fire-fighting ability, sits inside a pop-up style vehicle shelter inside the firehouse.

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Across the Generations

The postwar evolution of GMC highway trucks

BY JIM DONNELLY • PHOTOGRAPHY FROM THE ARCHIVES OF DONALD E. MEYER

General Motors did not invent the practice of creative automotive styling, but the firm certainly took it to a level it hadn't previously reached. Harley Earl and Bill Mitchell are firmly ensconced in the pantheon of great car designers, with boundless justification. You can go down the list of aesthetic greatness: the 1941 Cadillac, 1963 Corvette and 1966 Oldsmobile Toronado, just for openers.

Heck, GM invented the annual model changeover. So, styling sold there. And don't think it didn't apply to trucks.

To provide some examples, we chose photography from the archives of Donald Meyer, a noted historian on GMC trucks and a veteran of the GM Truck & Coach Division. The selections spotlight some of the changes to GMC truck styling over the years, several of them clearly in synch with what was going on at GM on the automotive side. We figure we could take them in chronological order, but first, let's talk about GMC styling as a whole, its history.

It started out on the rough side. The oldest ancestor of GMC was the Rapid Motor Truck, first built in Detroit by the Grabowsky brothers in 1902. Rapid built a big plant in Pontiac, Michigan, and started manufacturing its trucks there four years later. Meanwhile, a second Detroit-based firm, Reliance, began producing trucks around the same time. Long story short, both Rapid and Reliance were bundled into William Crapo Durant's acquisition binge that culminated with the founding of General Motors. The first trucks fitted with the GMC logo arrived in 1912. From the start, these trucks resembled flatbed wagons, with exposed wheels and usually open cabs. GM consolidated engineering of its trucks under its own roof through the next decade. Then, in 1927, two things happened: Earl was tapped to lead GM's Art and Colour section, whose first product was that year's inaugural La Salle. And GMC launched a new T-Series of trucks, with markedly better styling.

That trend accelerated during the 1930s. The "General Motors Truck," as its hood sides proclaimed, was becom-

ing positively rakish. Take a classic T23 from around 1934. It had a bold, upright radiator with a polished shell and a cab whose roofline looked almost chopped in hot rod fashion. The decade unfolded, and GMC firmly embraced radical streamlining throughout its model range, including heavy trucks. These were some of the finest-looking commercial vehicles of their era. Following World War II, GM took another major swing at restyling its trucks. In 1947, virtually every GMC hauler was heavily restyled, the pickups embracing what became the timeless "Advance Design" look.

Which brings us to the photo above. It's a new 1951 GMC HDCR750 tractor pulling a semitrailer for Saginaw Transfer, snapped that same year in Lansing, Michigan, and likely powered by one of the new 71-Series diesel engines. If you look at a GMC pickup from the same period and compare it to the tractor's cab lines, the familial connection is obvious. It's a handsome truck. That continued through the 1950s, when GMCs imitated current GM styling practice with a bold wraparound windshield, sculpted sheetmetal and the like.

We then direct you to the lead photo, which Donald captured on a trip out West in 1978. The cabover rig is a 1976 GMC Astro 95, a dramatic model that replaced the "crackerbox" in 1969. This was when federal length laws still favored cab-over-engine configurations, and the Astro embraced the semi-squarish styling themes that would highlight GM cars well into the 1980s. The other truck in the photo is perhaps the bigger news: It's an engineering prototype of the GMC General, a new line of conventionals that debuted in 1977. The same appearance cues, clean and basic, are obvious. GM built well-designed and lovely cars in those years. Trucks, too.

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 jdonnelly@hemmings.com.

Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation, as required by Act of August 12, 1970; Section 4675, Title 39, US Code. Date of filing: September 30, 2015. Title of publication: **Hemmings Classic Car.** Published monthly with business offices on 222 Main Street, Bennington, Vermont (Mailing address: PO Box 196, Bennington, VT 05201). Publisher: James Menneto, (same address). Editor: Richard Lentinello, (same address). Managing Editor: J. Daniel Beaudry, (same address). Owner: Hemmings Motor News, Inc., P.O. Box 256, 222 Main Street, Bennington, Vermont 05201, Directly or Indirectly through Intermediate Corporations to the Ultimate Corporate Parent, Advance Publishing, Inc. Sole Voting Stockholder: The Advance Voting Trust, 950 Fingerboard Road, Staten Island, NY 10305. Known bondholders, mortgagees or other security holders: none.

Circulation	Average no. copies each issue for preceding 12 mos.	Actual no. copies of issue nearest to filing date
A. Total no. copies printed	177,798	186,564
B. Paid/requested circulation		
1. Paid/requested outside county mail subscriptions	144,688	146,972
2. Paid in-county subscriptions	0	0
3. Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales	8,026	9,638
4. Other classes mailed/USPS	0	0
C. Total paid/requested circulation	152,714	156,610
D. Nonrequested distribution by mail		
1. Outside County	22	43
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3. Other classes mailed/USPS	201	54
4. Outside the mail	636	359
E. Total nonrequested distribution	859	456
F. Total distribution	153,573	157,066
G. Copies not distributed	24,225	29,498
H. Total	177,798	186,564
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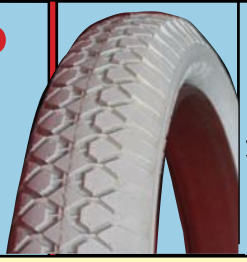

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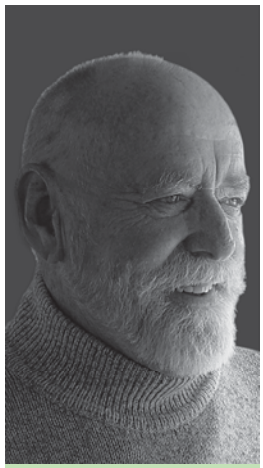

Overnight Success?

In the recent October *Hemmings,* Editor Richard Lentinello points out that the current television offerings on car restoration create a false impression of what it takes to restore a classic, and I concur completely. You see, I once did the restoration how-to segments on *My Classic Car TV,* and I can tell you first hand that what you see is a magic show. I know because I was the illusionist.

My segment of the show was five minutes long, during which I rebuilt Rochester four-barrels, took dents out of stainless trim and polished it to perfection, and even installed a complete wire harnesses. I made it look easy. Of course, I doubt anybody thought you could do such things in five minutes, but on the other hand, there was no way I could show them how long they could actually take.

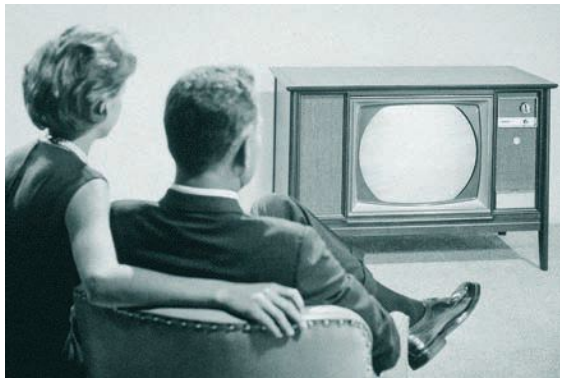

IMAGE COURTESY WWW.WIRED.COM

I didn't tell folks that, as an amateur restorer—which is all I ever was—it would take me a minimum of two years, and as long as eight to restore a car working evenings and weekends; and even when I finished them, I was not done. I am still looking for a few parts for a Packard that I restored back in 1983.

My problem with the current crop of automotive "How-to" shows is that they are more situation comedies about the interaction of fat, bearded guys quarreling as they frantically try to finish some hot rod by some absurd deadline. They don't actually show you how to do anything. All they do besides argue is pimp parts and products, and treat you to a string of product placement commercials in which some fellow is tightening a bellhousing bolt and saying things like: "That was easy. . . we just put in the RP70X seven-speed transmission that we got from Dufus Brothers Transmissions, and now let's light off that 800 cubic-inch 5,000hp Firewood V-8 from Jake's Engines."

Meanwhile another hairy dude is shooting paint all over everywhere wearing no protective gear but a face mask, and supposedly doing a show-winning paint finish that will be ready tomorrow morning. That demonstrates some dangerous ignorance. For one thing, to shoot the paints in use today, you need a full body suit with head and facemask and an outside air source because the stuff contains isocyanates (e.g. cyanide). That's what they used in the gas chamber at San Quintin!

A show-quality paint finish takes weeks of sanding, spraying, sanding, drying, respraying, color sanding and polishing. People who say they can paint your car in a day, for $200 are not painters at all. They are vandals who will ruin a car overnight. Even well-trained professionals can't do such things, because, as Richard said, the paint needs to off-gas for at least a day or two between coats if you want it to last.

Even rebuilding a four-barrel carburetor takes time. To begin with, you have to take it apart in such a way that you don't lose those little screws and springs. After it soaks in carb cleaner, preferably overnight, you then have to carefully reassemble it using new parts. When we did it on TV, we had one filthy used carb, one that was cleaned and apart, and one that was finished. I demonstrated the critical assembly details, but even the fastest pro can't do the job in five minutes.

However, if you like car-oriented situation comedy, there is plenty of it on television these days. You get to see interesting cars, big hairy guys, and you are treated to contrived quarreling. Open a beer and park yourself in your lounger and have a few laughs. But don't assume you will be learning anything about auto restoration.

On the other hand, if you have a well-worn old car that you love dearly and would like to have it made new again, you don't have much choice but to pay pros for thousands of hours of their time, or do some or all of it yourself. Personally, doing it myself has been a great adventure. It has been just the opposite of working to some stressful deadline with people I don't like. I go to my garage, put on some good music and go to work.

I only think about the task I am doing at the time, not life's problems, or what it will take to finish the car. Each component is a learning experience and an accomplishment when it is finished. After doing this for months or even years, I end up with an impeccable new 1936 or '38 Packard, '55 Chevrolet or a '67 Pontiac that will turn heads at shows, and drive like it did when it was new. It is all worth it in the end, but it can't happen overnight.

"I only think about the task I am doing at the time, not life's problems, or what it will take to finish the car. Each component is a learning experience and an accomplishment when it is finished."

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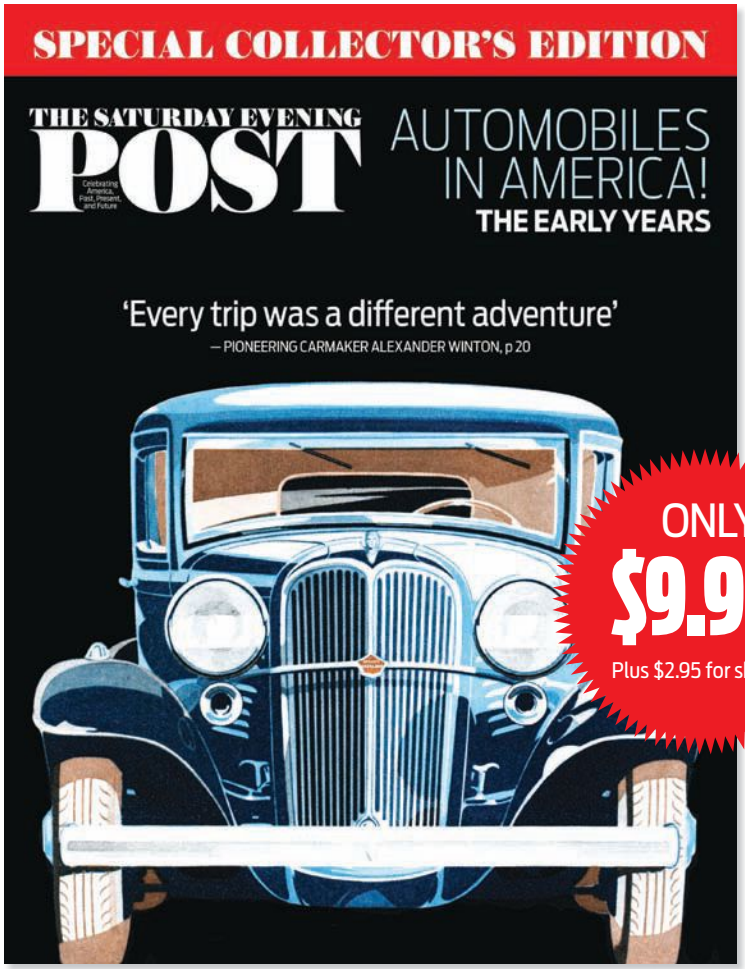

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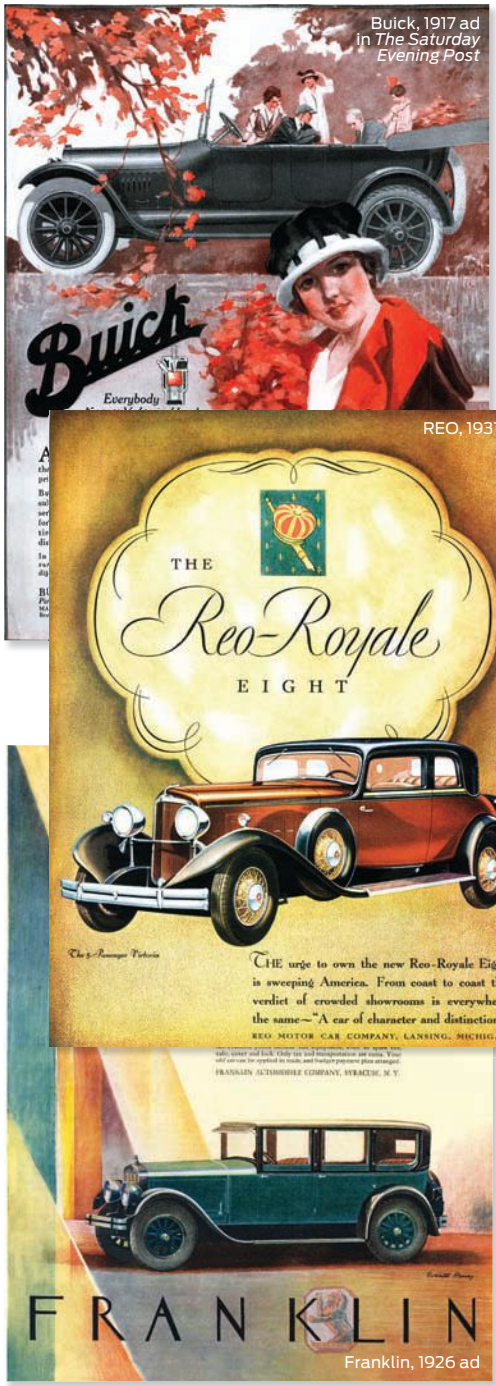

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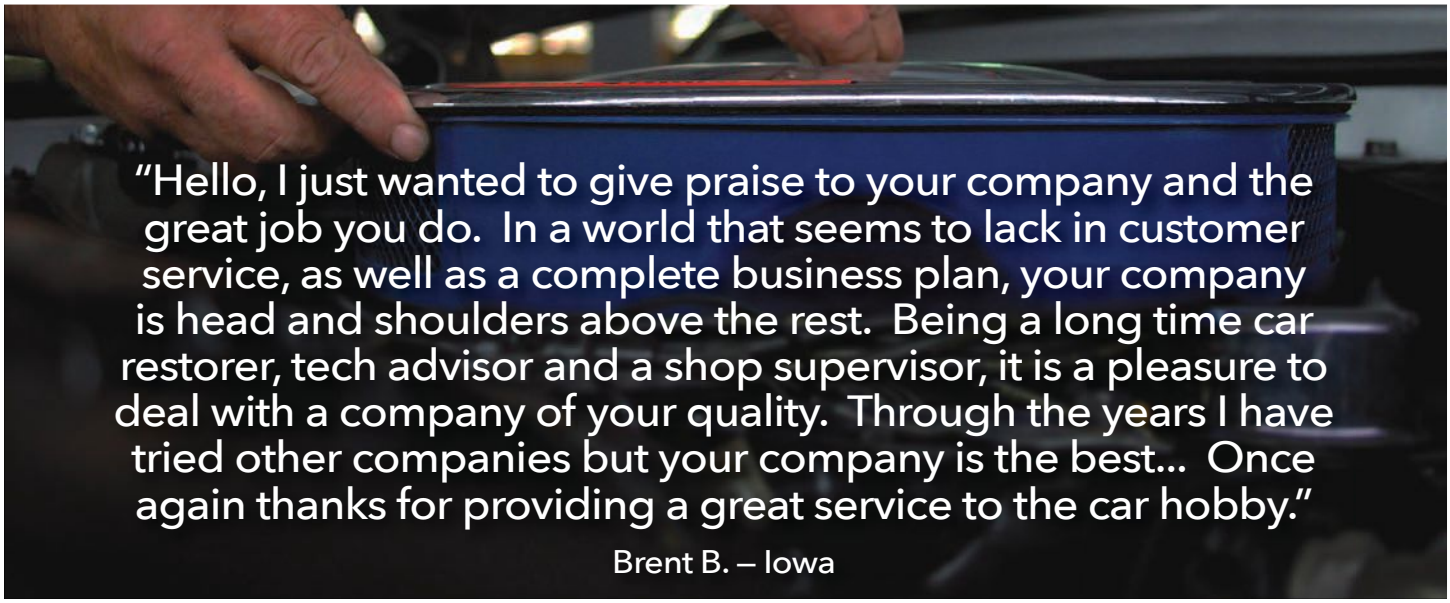

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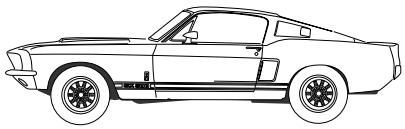

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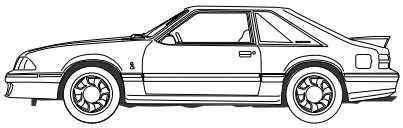

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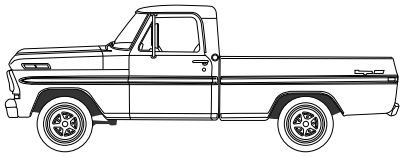

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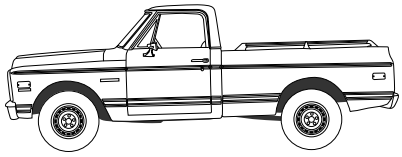

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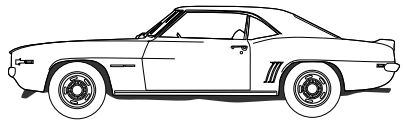

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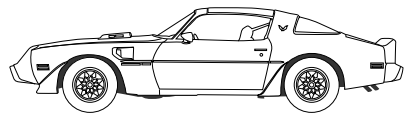

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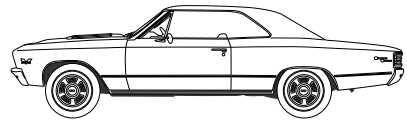

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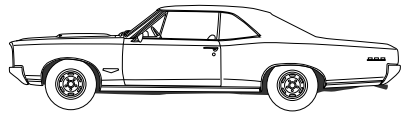

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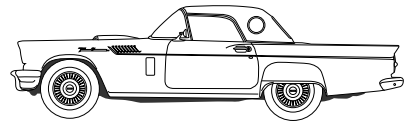

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