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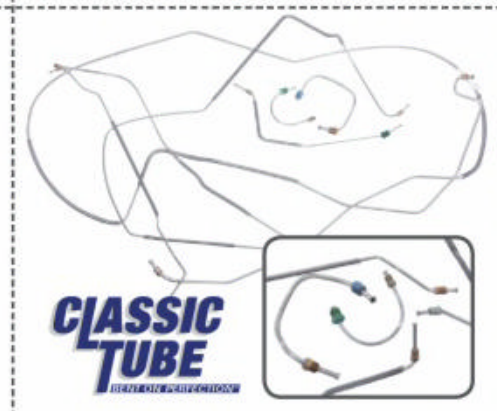

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ISSN# 1550-8730 • www.hemmings.com
Published monthly by **Hemmings Motor News**
222 Main St., Bennington, VT 05201

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Disc Brakes: Which Car Had Them First?

Some experts say that highly significant claim goes to the little manufacturer of little cars, Crosley.

Cadillac introduced many significant engineering innovations through the years, but when it came to disc brakes, it wasn't until the release of the 1967 Eldorado that they were first made available, and then, only as an option. It wasn't until the 1969 model year when all Cadillacs were equipped with front disc brakes as standard equipment.

So, which manufacturer was the first to outfit its cars with disc brakes? Some experts say that highly significant claim goes to the little manufacturer of little cars, Crosley. The Indiana-built 1949 Crosley was fitted with Goodyear/Hawley disc brakes on all four wheels. Unfortunately, the calipers, initially designed for airplanes, couldn't stand up to the repeated use demanded by the automobile and thus proved quite troublesome. A little more than six months after they were introduced, Crosley went back to using the tried-and-true drum brake system instead. So, Crosley was the first. Or was it?

Back in England in 1902, Lanchester built a car with disc brakes that looked similar in design to our current disc-brake system. The main difference was that the disc was nearly paper thin and, I believe, made of copper, which made it quite troublesome. Although the brake pad was activated by a cable instead of hydraulic fluid, it was nonetheless still a disc-brake design.

Also, in 1949 Chrysler introduced an optional "disc brake" system on its Imperial, which was retained through the 1953 model. But the reason I placed the words disc brake in quotes is because these brakes did not incorporate a caliper clamping down on a disc, instead it relied on the engagement of a pair of discs rubbing against the inside surface of a cast-iron drum. I'd call that a true disc-drum setup but not a disc brake.

For years it's been widely acknowledged that Jensen was the first manufacturer to adapt four-wheel disc brakes to its 1956 model 541 Deluxe—and it did, but it wasn't until October that year. It was Austin-Healey, one year before, that fitted its 100S with the same Dunlop disc brakes on all four wheels. But the 100S was a limited-production competition-based model, and the Jensen was a true road car. And yet, if production versus competition doesn't matter, then Jaguar had them both beat with its beautiful C-type race car built for Le Mans 1953 (which it won).

As to the 1955 Citroën DS (unlike the model 541 Deluxe, of which Jensen only built 53 examples), the DS was truly a mass-produced car. But wait. When did Citroën introduce its 1955 DS? That was at the Paris Salon on October 5, 1955. Only seven DS models were built that month, followed by just one in November, then 61 in December. With several changes still being made during those waning days of 1955, many historians consider these early cars to be somewhat pre-production models; just those 69 were built that first year but production really didn't get going until January 1956. Production for the 1956 model year totaled 9,868, jumping to 28,593 units for 1957.

Then there was Triumph. It introduced its new 1956 TR3 with disc brakes in October 1955 at the London Motor Show. Several months prior, at Le Mans in June, Triumph fielded three factory-built competition TR2s. One car had drums all around, another had Girling disc brakes up front, and a third TR2 was fitted with Dunlop discs on all four wheels. Triumph did this to evaluate the effectiveness and durability of each brake setup before releasing a disc-brake system to the public. It wasn't until September 1956 that the first production TR3 rolled off the assembly line fitted with Girling front disc brakes as standard equipment.

Although Triumph wasn't the first to equip its race cars with disc brakes, it was only two years behind Jaguar and just a few months after Austin-Healey. It was far ahead of all the exotic car manufacturers including Ferrari and Maserati, as well as Alfa Romeo, Porsche, and even Mercedes-Benz.

So, who had disc brakes first? Well, it's clear to see that the Citroën DS was the first volume-production car so equipped, while Triumph's TR3 was the first volume-production sports car, and Jaguar the first race car. Crosley is unquestionably the first American manufacturer, but there's little doubt that Lanchester deservedly gets to be crowned overall king.

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

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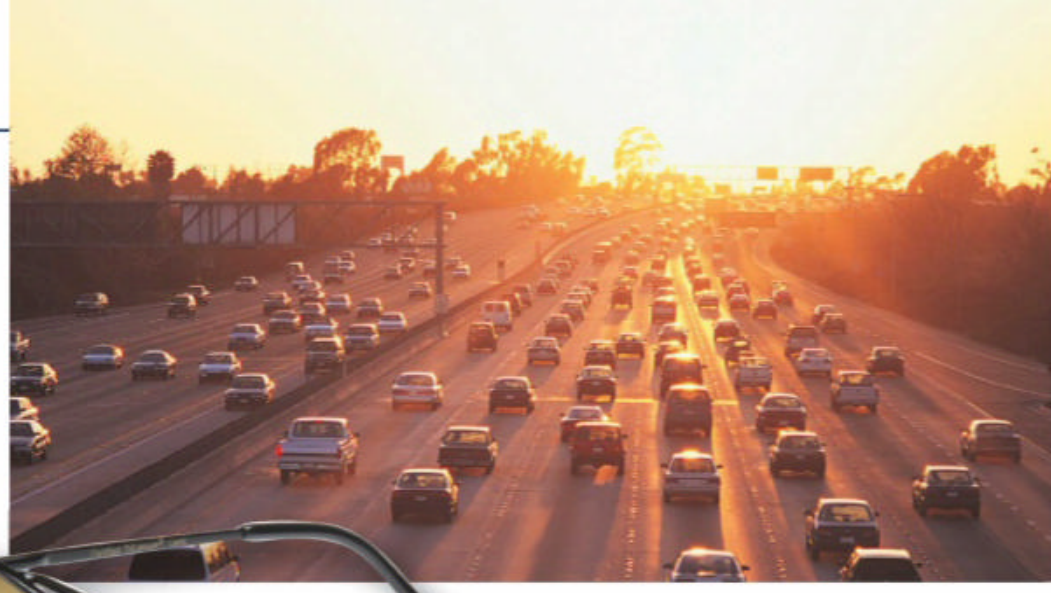

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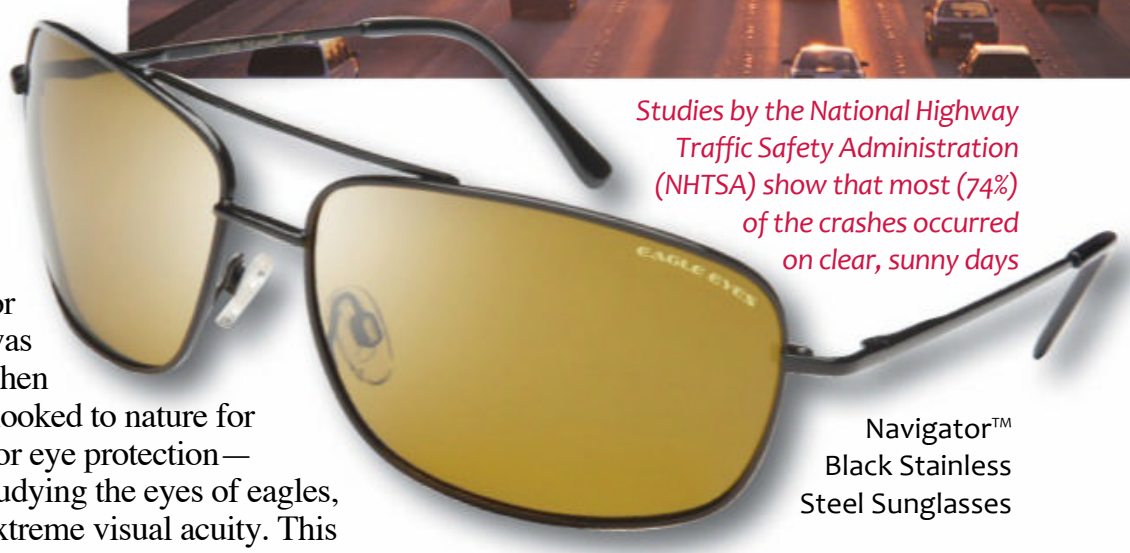

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NEWSREPORTS

BY TOM COMERRO

South Bend Shindig

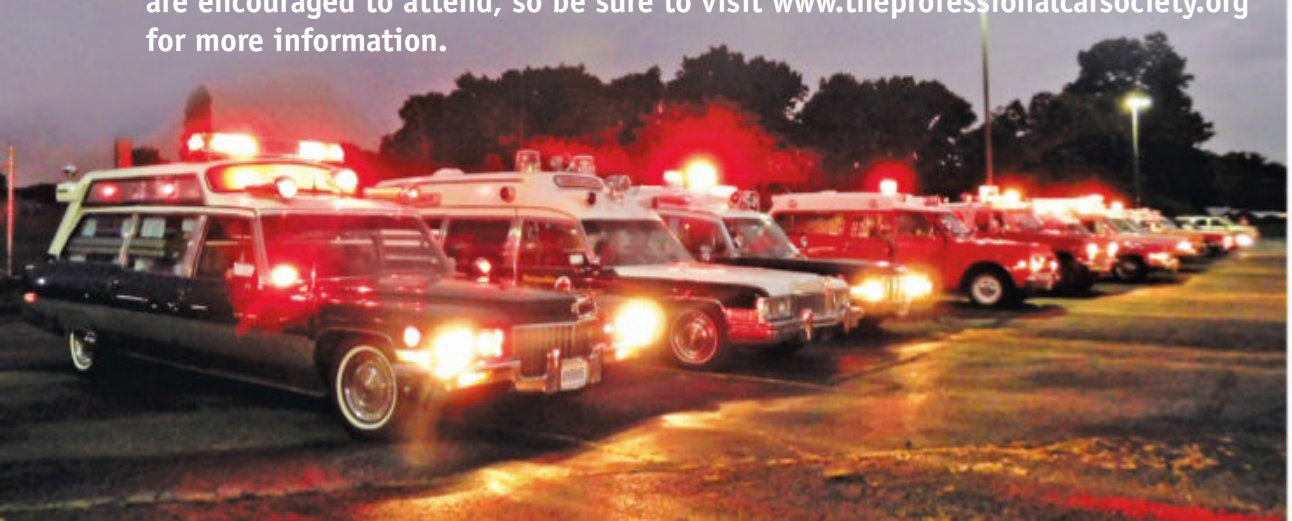
THE STUDEBAKER NATIONAL MUSEUM ANNOUNCED THE CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE at Copshaholm, to take place July 13 in South Bend, Indiana. The event is an exclusive gathering celebrating automotive design, engineering, and culture. This year's featured marque is Lincoln with other classes highlighting Chrysler 300 "letter cars," Italian sports cars, Studebaker Presidents, Fords, and Euro-American hybrids. The event will take place from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and judging for the show will be French Traditional. For more information, please visit www.concoursatcopshaholm.org.

AMC Designer, Dies at 86

BOB NIXON STARTED OUT AT CHRYSLER AS a technical illustrator in the Dodge styling studio and eventually made the move to American Motors. Dick Teague put him on the Rambler American, and ultimately chose Nixon's front-end design for the 1964 restyle. With a boost in sales, Nixon was eventually put in charge of AMC's small-car studio and is credited with the designs of the Marlin, Matador coupe, and Pacer, and played a vital role in developing the Gremlin. His design studio is also where the AMX and Javelin originated, though he was not as involved. Arguably, the most successful designs from the teams he led were the Jeep Cherokee XJ and the Grand Cherokee ZJ, two of the most successful Jeep models. Nixon would stay on at AMC until the Chrysler purchase in 1987, and then another five years at Chrysler, where his design career began. Nixon passed away February 5 at the age of 86.

Professional Car Gathering

THE PROFESSIONAL CAR SOCIETY WILL STORM the Black Hills this summer as the 43rd Annual International Meet will take place in Rapid City, South Dakota, June 24-28. Scheduled events include Tuesday and Wednesday bus tours of the Badlands, the Minute Man Missile Park, the Mammoth Site of Hot Springs, the Crazy Horse Memorial, and Mount Rushmore. Thursday's main event will be a professional car concours with Friday allowing for a driving tour around Sturgis, Wild West town of Deadwood, or The Mitchell Corn Palace. All professional cars including ambulances, hearses, limousines, flower cars, and more are encouraged to attend, so be sure to visit www.theprofessionalcarsociety.org for more information.



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BY DANIEL STROHL

Bouffort's Citroën

FREQUENT *HEMMINGS DAILY* CONTRIBUTOR GREG STEINMAYER, FAMILIAR WITH OUR penchant for oddballs and three-wheelers, sent over this photo of an allegedly abandoned oddity. We've yet to discover the circumstances of the photo, but some digging did turn up some info on the vehicle.

It seems to be the vision of Victor-Albert Bouffort, whom Rétromobile featured back in 2017. Influenced by aircraft design, Bouffort started out designing three-wheelers instead of four-wheeled vehicles, but also came up against a scarcity of tires in postwar France. In 1947, he introduced his first design, a streamlined tadpole design powered by a Citroën Traction Avant 11 CV drivetrain and built by Jamin Meaux.

Reportedly, Bouffort built just three before moving on to smaller vehicles, including the Citroën-based Lohr Fardier and the Minima city car.

RE: Cosworth Monza

AS IT TURNS OUT, WE ALREADY KNEW THE IDENTITY OF THAT GOLD MONZA hatchback we ran pictures of a couple issues back (see *HCC* #175), and it should have been evident to us who snapped a photo of the Monza Super Spyder II at the GM Heritage Center way back in 2008 (see *HCC* #43).

Indeed, as we more recently wrote, Bill Mitchell had a hand in the Super Spyder II, as did Chuck Jordan and Jerry Palmer. According to a 1977 *Motor Trend* article on the car, it was ostensibly supposed to preview the size and shape of the next-generation Corvette, but in all reality it served as a regional show car with a few neat features like the concealed fluorescent headlamps and the hood-mounted digital speedometer.

Many thanks to Clark Kirby, Gary Gerstner, Thomas Ruck, and Peter Paciorek for correctly identifying the car and to everyone for putting up with this author's not-yet-a-senior moments.

Fiber Gremlin

WHILE RESEARCHING THE CAREER OF THE RECENTLY departed Bob Nixon, specifically his involvement with what would eventually become the AMX/3, we came across an interesting little mystery Gremlin (another one of Nixon's accomplishments) in the background of an American Motors photo.

The photo, from Chris Zinn's AMX book, appears to date to the late Sixties, when clays on the AMX/K were being constructed. And what we see in the background is a Gremlin body built from fiberglass and incorporating massive fender flares.

We don't recall ever seeing a flared fiberglass Gremlin show car, so we'd have to assume that this was intended for racing of some sort, likely road racing, but we've only ever seen Gremlins modified for drag racing. Did AMC ever provide factory support to a road-racing Gremlin? If not, why? Because that would have been awesome.

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 blog.hemmings.com/index.php/category/lost-and-found.

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***June 26, 2019 - Preview Day**

BY TOM COMERRO

GOODING & COMPANY

Gooding Results

THE FINAL NUMBERS FROM GOODING & COMPANY ARE IN FROM ITS SCOTTSDALE AUCTION that took place in January. Total sales eclipsed the $48.2-million mark with 10 percent of those cars fitting the American non-muscle and classic-car mold. Among those that sold were this rare two-cylinder 1902 Yale Rear-Entrance Tonneau, which was made during the first year of the former Toledo, Ohio, car manufacturer. Despite the limited numbers, this Yale managed to survive all this time and the well-documented tonneau saw a final sale of $105,280. Also sold was a nice Willys workhorse, a model 6-73 station wagon finding a new home for $33,600. A 1956 Continental Mark II also turned some heads reaching a final sale of $100,800, while a pair of nice Cadillacs in a 1963 Series 75 sedan and a 1941 Series 62 Convertible Sedan hammered home at $24,640 and $85,120, respectively. All results for this sale are now available at www.goodingco.com; and look for its next show at Pebble Beach this August 16-17.

Barrett-Jackson Returns to the Northeast

BARRETT-JACKSON WILL BE AT MOHEGAN SUN in Uncasville, Connecticut, June 26-29, with an auction that is estimated to have well over 500 cars. Last year's show saw 662 vehicles cross the block with a sell-through rate at 99 percent. Final sales totaled more than $24.9 million with a healthy showing of Independents. Among them were this 1956 Studebaker Power Hawk, nicely finished with fresh white paint plus black-and-white interior. When the bidding finished, the V-8 Stude made a respectable $26,950. Also sold, for $13,970, was a beautiful-condition 1928 Willys Whippet Model 98 powered by a 145.7-cu.in. four-cylinder. If you have never seen a Barrett-Jackson show and are in the Northeast, this is one event you may want to check out. Full results from 2018 are available at www.barrett-jackson.com, and consignments are now being accepted for the June auction.

BARRETT-JACKSON

AUCTION PROFILE

CAR:	1941 Cadillac Series 62 Convertible Coupe
AUCTIONEER:	RM Sotheby's
LOCATION:	Phoenix, Arizona
DATE:	January 17, 2019
LOT NUMBER:	275
CONDITION:	#3
AVERAGE SELLING PRICE:	$50,000
SELLING PRICE:	$58,800

RM SOTHEBY'S

THE CHANGES FOR THE 1941 CADILLAC included the shifting of the headlamps into the bodies of the fenders and the addition of a horizontal grille that stretched from side to side. This was also the first year that the rear taillamp fuel filler was put in the marque, a feature that would be used for a long time during the era of the fabulous fins.

This convertible coupe had a lot to offer including pushbutton radio, heater, and electric clock. The pleated red upholstery was in good condition and the black canvas top showed little wear and tear. The low-mileage Cadillac only showed 78,000 on the odometer, and mechanicals were very clean from the engine bay to the conventional three-speed selective synchro manual transmission. The car had been stored for a while and not driven much over the last 20 years, but it was clearly a nice and well-maintained example of the functionality and simplicity of Cadillac prewar design.

JUNE

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www.rmsothebys.com

2 • Bonhams
Greenwich, Connecticut • 415-391-4000
www.bonhams.com/auctions/25220/

6-9 • Leake
Tulsa, Oklahoma • 918-254-7077
www.leakecar.com

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Coeur d'Alene, Idaho • 800-255-4485
www.silverauctions.com

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www.mecum.com

21-22 • Raleigh Classic
Raleigh, North Carolina
919-269-5271 • www.raleighclassic.com

26-29 • Barrett-Jackson
Uncasville, Connecticut • 480-421-6694
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Vicari Returns to Atlanta

VICARI AUCTIONS WILL COME BACK TO Atlanta June 28-29 after a brief hiatus. The show, taking place at the Georgia International Convention Center, is expecting around 500 cars for the two-day event. This will be the third-to-last show this year for the well-known southern auction company. Consignments are now being accepted: Visit its website for information about fees and registration, and more, at www.vicariauction.com.

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BY TOM COMERRO

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This new low-profile 180-degree "halo" hands-free device weighs only 5.8 ounces yet brings great comfort and lighting performance, which gives you an even beam of light. The FLEXIT Headlamp 2.5 is designed in a way to minimize unintended motion of the headlamp during strenuous activities, and the halo-style lighting eliminates tunnel vision that can be a problem with similar hands-free units. A center-mounted CREE wide-angle spotlight projects 250 lumens into the darkness from its center perch and the direction of the center lamp is adjustable, allowing you to aim the light toward your desired focal point. Five lighting modes are available including a hazard feature that enables the rear-facing red light and side-mounted floodlight to blink so you'll be seen at all angles, while the focal lamp remains on high power.

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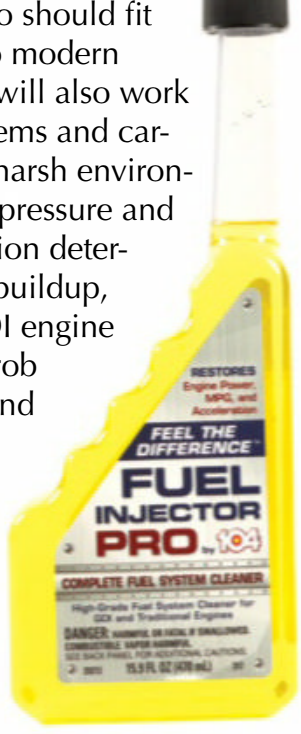

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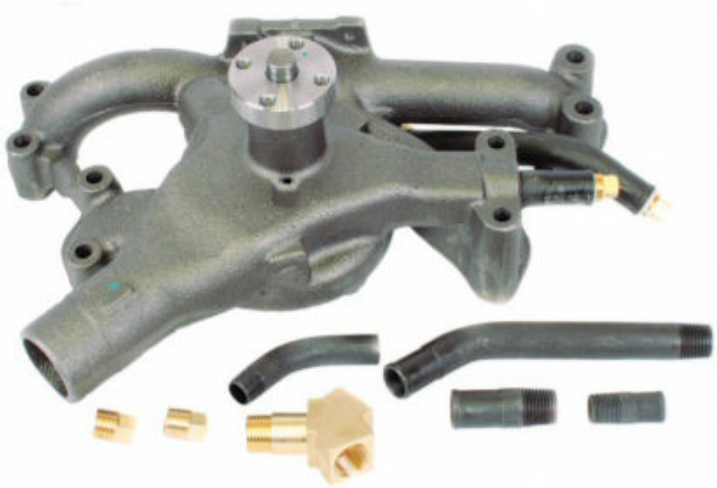

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BY DAVID CONWILL
PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF MOTOROLA

Paul Galvin


Paul (left) and Joseph Galvin

HARD TO BELIEVE THAT THERE WAS a time when, unless your significant other was playing the banjo beside you, there was no way to listen to music while you cruised the countryside. Buried deep within today's "infotainment" system is the device that started it all: the car radio. We owe the humble car radio as we know it largely to Paul Galvin, founder of Motorola.

Galvin was born in Harvard, Illinois, seven miles south of the Wisconsin state line, on June 27, 1895. After high school, he spent two years at the University of Illinois before concluding that the education was not worth his time and money. Instead, he returned to Harvard to work as a clerk for Chicago and North Western Railway.

On the eve of the First World War, Galvin was involved in the preparedness movement, receiving military training as a civilian. That led to a commission as an artillery officer in 1917. Galvin's military service impressed on him the need for organization as a foundation for success.

After mustering out in 1919, Galvin partnered with Edward Stewart, also from Harvard, in the D&G Storage Battery Company. Boosters from Marshfield, Wisconsin, over 200 miles north of Harvard, had enticed the men to locate D&G there, between Minneapolis, Minnesota, and Green Bay, Wisconsin. The resulting distance from transportation meant that the shipping costs ate the company alive, and it was unable to survive the postwar recession.

In 1923, Galvin packed his wife and 10-month-old son into the car and returned to Chicago with only $1.50 in his pocket. He spent the next three years working as personal secretary to Emil Brach of the Brach's Candy Company. In 1926, he and Stewart tried again, reforming as the Stewart Battery Company.

Stewart Battery had the advantage of inexpensive shipping from Chicago but came up short in the product area. The necessary revisions were too long in coming, and once again the men found themselves in liquidation—in 1928. This time, though, Galvin was a bidder, having raised $1,000 to come claim some of his work back from the company.

At the time Stewart Battery started to come apart financially, Galvin, Stewart, and a hired engineer had worked on a battery eliminator project. Up to the time, radios typically ran on dry cell batteries, not household current. That situation was changing, and battery eliminators were a high-tech solution for converting existing radios to plug into the wall or even for integration into new sets being manufactured.

After a $750 bid, Galvin was owner of the design and the machines on which to build it. He found a sympathetic landlord who would waive the requirement of a first month's rent and set up Galvin Manufacturing Corporation along with his brother, Joseph, who would remain an integral part of the company, overseeing production and labor relations until his death in 1944.

The most important component to Galvin Manufacturing's success, though, was a purchase commitment from Chicago-based mail-order powerhouse Sears Roebuck & Company. It was on that solid foundation that Paul Galvin began, at the age of 33, to move forward at last.

The market for battery eliminators matured quickly, and by 1929 Paul Galvin was looking for the next technology to support the company. He was aware of experiments by other radio inventors, including a one-time competitor in the battery eliminator business, the 28-year-old, self-educated genius Bill Lear. Portable radios that could be hauled via car had existed as early as 1926, but they had the major disadvantage that they could not be used when the car was running due to interference from the ignition. They also suffered from extremely limited range.

Lear's research partner, 22-year-old Elmer Wavering (see *HCC* #39), had also been brought into the fold at this point. Paul Galvin, Lear, and Wavering worked tirelessly to develop the first practicable car radio and install it in Galvin's 1930 Studebaker sedan in time for Galvin and Lear to drive from the Chicago factory to "Convention City," Atlantic City, New Jersey, which was hosting the 1930 Radio Manufacturers' Association Convention (modern readers may wish to think of the Consumer Electronics Show held every year in Las Vegas).

This prototype, dubbed the Galvin 5T71, was wired to a loudspeaker under the hood of the Studebaker. Not having reserved a booth inside, they paraded the Studebaker around outside and collected sufficient orders to justify a 200-unit production run.

On the return trip to Chicago, Galvin and Lear bandied about ideas for a brand name. Previous Galvin products had been "private label" generic affairs that would be re-branded by retailers for sale as house brands. They set upon a portmanteau of "Motor" from "motorcar" and the popular suffix "-ola," notably shared with "Victrola."

The Motorola car radio steadily gained in the market, allowing Galvin Manufacturing to weather the worst years of the Great Depression and become a giant of the car-radio market, both in aftermarket installations (the norm at first) and later as a supplier to the carmakers. The company also diversified into transceiver equipment (notably the WWII "Handie Talkie" and "Walkie Talkie" portable two-way radios).

By the time Paul Galvin died in 1959, Motorola, as Galvin Manufacturing had re-branded itself in the 1940s, was heavily diversified and bringing in more than $200 million in sales annually. It would go on to even greater heights under Paul Galvin's son, Robert, the 10-month-old who left Marshfield, Wisconsin, with his broke dad back in 1923. Motorola remains a major player in the electronics market today.

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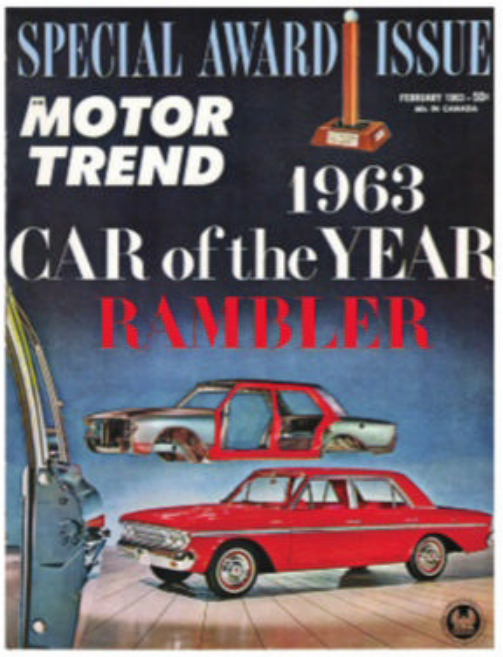
The COTY Mistake

For 1963, *Motor Trend* magazine named Rambler its "Car of the Year" (COTY). The award was supposedly for the entire line of Ramblers, but really, it was the two all-new ones—the Classic and Ambassador—that hooked the prize. Truth is, I've always admired the 1963 senior Ramblers. Recently, however, I had a revelation I need to share; I wish they hadn't been built.

I don't mean I wish there hadn't been any Rambler for 1963—heaven forbid! But I do think that the product philosophy behind their size and shape was wrong, and a different direction should have been taken. This is very difficult for me to say, because, whether it was the fault of management—namely company president George Romney or the head of Styling, Ed Anderson—or not, the fact is these men were good friends of mine who I admire, and I hate to say anything against them.



However, if you look at the marketing history of the senior Rambler, aka the 108-inch wheelbase Rambler Six/V-8 or Classic, from 1956 to 1962, it was pitched as a competitor to the standard American cars—the big Chevrolets, Fords, and Plymouths. The 1957 brochure even states that Rambler has all the room of a big car, but with compact outside dimensions. The Rambler philosophy was to offer buyers a more sensible family car, one that was easier to park, easier in traffic, and easier on gas. That's why it was so successful—it competed in the biggest segment of the market—fullsize cars, where it appealed to buyers put off by what they viewed as over-bloated land yachts. The big Rambler wasn't pitched as a small car—that job was left to the 100-inch-wheelbase Rambler American. The marketing approach worked well; as American Motors' volume-selling "bread-and-butter car," the senior Rambler's sales climbed steadily from 1956 to 1962.

However, when it came time to redesign the Rambler Classic, management approved a design that, while roomier inside, and riding a longer wheelbase, was actually more compact outside, in both width and length. When it debuted for 1963 it was a rousing success, winning *Motor Trend's* Car of the Year award and helping AMC sell more than half-a-million cars to its dealers during the fiscal year. But that marked the high-point for AMC passenger-car sales.

In the years following 1963, sales dropped badly, in large part because people perceived Classic as a midsized car, not a compact fullsize car. As such, it was forced to battle with the all-new Chevelle and Malibu, along with Ford's Fairlane, in price as well as styling and product features. It no longer could compete with the Big Three standard cars.

Why did that happen? Mainly because the Big Three's big cars got bigger just as the Rambler got smaller. From 1957 to 1963, the big Chevrolet grew 4 inches in wheelbase, but a full 10 inches in overall length. The senior Ford grew about 3 inches in wheelbase and 7.4 inches in length. In that same period, the senior Rambler grew 4 inches in wheelbase, but shrank 2 inches in overall length! The 1963 Ford was 209-inches long; the Chevrolet, 210 inches; and the Rambler a mere 189.3 inches; that's actually 3.5-inches less than a 1964 Chevelle.

When the handsome new Chevelle debuted, it simply ate Rambler's lunch, as AMC suddenly found its senior car trying to compete with a well-priced midsize car backed by the largest dealer network in the world. The outcome of that battle was easy to predict.

My own reading of all this is that Romney probably got carried away with the success of his "compact car" idea and decided that if compact was good, more compact was better. He may have forgotten that Americans don't like to go too small in their family cars. Having a car slightly more compact than your neighbor's gas-guzzling dinosaur is one thing, but when a car looks midsize, the public is going to treat it like a midsize car, no matter how roomy it is inside.

AMC should have made its 1963 model look more like the bigger-bodied 1965 Rambler and continued to market it as a fullsize substitute. In size and style, it was much closer to the Big Three cars while still offering Rambler's traditional compact and sensible outside dimensions. They might have done better over the long haul.

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Multi purpose Motoring

The practical and versatile 1956 Willys Jeep 4x4 utility wagon

BY THOMAS A. DeMAURO
PHOTOGRAPHY BY TERRY SHEA

Though its styling resembled the woodies of the era, when the Willys-Overland Jeep station wagon was introduced in July of 1946 it featured a durable, easy-to-maintain, all-steel body. The two-wheel-drive offering was joined by a four-wheel-drive version in 1949. Though modestly updated visually and mechanically over the years, the basic design remained in production well into the 1960s in the U.S. and even longer in South America.

It was marketed as a dual-purpose vehicle that was indispensable on the worksite but just as comfortable scaling hills in four-wheel drive on weekend fishing or hunting trips or negotiating Main Street in two-wheel-drive mode while ferrying the kids to and from school during the week. There was seating for six, hauling capacity was a ½-ton, and cargo space could be expanded by removing the rear seat. The fully washable interior made for easy cleanup after any activity.

By 1956, Willys was referring to this 4x4 Jeep as a "utility wagon" and it could be equipped with a 134.2-cu.in. F-head four-cylinder or 226.2-cu.in. L-head six-cylinder engine. A Borg-Warner T90 three-speed manual transmission, a Dana 18 two-speed transfer case, and Dana 25 front and Dana 44 rear differentials (4.88 gears with the six-cylinder engine and 5.38 gears with the four-cylinder engine) were employed. The two-wheel-drive wagon was also still available, and overdrive was optional with it but not the 4x4 at the time.

The "Super-Hurricane" L-head six-cylinder engine produced 105 hp and 190 lb-ft of torque with a 3 5/16-inch bore and 4 3/8-inch stroke and a compression ratio of 6.86:1.

Attached to a 104½-inch-wheelbase frame with channel-steel siderails and multiple crossmembers were semi-elliptic multileaf springs, shocks, and 11 x 2-inch drum brakes at the four corners of 4x4 wagons, and a cam-and-lever steering system was used. So equipped, the Jeep proved quite capable in handling various on-road and off-road conditions.

That skillset was a foremost consideration of Margaret O'Neil's dad, Tom, when he bought this Super Hurricane-powered 4x4 utility wagon from a neighbor for $500 in 1969.

The interior metal surfaces are painted to match, with the seats covered in hard-wearing gray and red vinyl. Four shifters control the three-speed transmission, overdrive, 2WD-4WD, and transfer case.

About 100 cubic feet of load space is available with the rear seats removed, and with the tailgate extended the cargo area could sleep two adults according to Willys. The spare tire is stored where it's accessible, but its intrusion into the storage area is minimal.

Margaret's family owned a vacation home in Grand Lake, Colorado, and Tom wanted a rugged and reliable 4x4 that could go just about anywhere.

Recalling adventures that could have been depicted in some of Norman Rockwell's most endearing paintings, her extended family enjoyed the vehicle often. "We'd pack into the Jeep and go cut down a Christmas tree to bring back to the house," she recollects. Tom used it to go fly-fishing, and there were family picnics and jaunts to nearby Rocky Mountain National Park to view the elk and deer at sunset.

For younger generations of the family, driving the wagon, which had previously served the U.S. Forest Service but had been later repainted turquoise with small images of animals decorating it, also became a rite of passage in learning how to operate a stick-shift vehicle. Margaret recalls, "If you could drive that Jeep, you could drive anything on earth."

Her lesson came when "My cousin Curt and I went out snowshoeing one afternoon and, when we got to a parking lot pretty far from the house, he announced, 'We aren't going back until you learn how to drive the Jeep,' so I did."

When Margaret's oldest son, Teddy, came of age, he too had to conquer the Jeep, which had seen better days by then. Margaret says, "I remember that my dad and Teddy took it to the post office one day and it stalled in the lot, and a person walking by jokingly said, 'I hate it when that happens.' Our Jeep had become such a familiar sight around town, since we'd had it for so long and people felt like they knew it."

It was still being driven in the early 2000s when the vacation house was purchased by other family members, and a portion of its contents were dispersed among the cousins. One of the items

The Jeep's practical tailgate design allows the rear window to flip up for easy access to the cargo area and packages, in instances when lowering the bottom section of the tailgate isn't necessary. Wood skid strips ease loading of larger items and protect the floor.

Featuring a Carter YF one-barrel carb and four main bearings, the 226.2-cu.in. "Super Hurricane" L-head straight-six engine produces 105 hp and 190 lb-ft of torque.

Margaret received was the Jeep. Though her dad had performed routine maintenance on it over the previous decades, she explains, "It was pretty tired by the time I got it."

Deciding to have it restored some years later, Margaret and her husband searched the internet and found Willys America of Cazadero, California, which has been a parts supplier and Willys Jeep-exclusive restoration facility since 1977. After consulting with shop owner Paul Barry, they shipped the wagon to the Golden State in 2011 for a complete restoration.

The wagon was disassembled, and the body was removed from the chassis and stripped of its paint. Rust areas and dings were repaired, PCL two-part epoxy primer was used on the panels, which were block sanded smooth, and a sealer was applied. Three coats of PPG basecoat in Steel Glow Gray Metallic and Glacier White, which are correct for the year and were chosen from a 1956 Willys color chart, were followed by three coats of clear. Then the trim was straightened and polished, and the original bumpers were re-chromed.

The frame and suspension components were media blasted and powder-coated semi-gloss black, wear items were replaced, the braking system was rebuilt, and a set of 215/85R16 LT M&S Michelin tires were mounted on the powder-coated steel wheels.

Willys America also balanced and blueprinted the engine; rebuilt the transmission, transfer case, and differentials; updated the electrical system to 12 volt and replaced the wiring; installed a new clutch; and reassembled the vehicle. A reproduction of the 29-tooth all-range Warn overdrive unit offered in the 1960s, was added for lower-rpm interstate cruising.

The presence of locking hubs and the prominent "Jeep 4 Wheel Drive" lettering leave little doubt as to this utility wagon's intentions. Its smooth Steel Glow Gray Metallic and Glacier White paint were factory-offered colors for 1956.

"When we got it back in 2013, it looked great, like a different Jeep," Margaret says. "It did have its familiar scent inside though, which is a good thing, and it sounded similar, but it drives more easily now."

Having added about 300 miles per year to the odometer, she reports, "Despite the fact that it was marketed as a combination family/utility vehicle that wives could use, the controls are very heavy and imprecise. Shifting is very notchy and not easy to find gears, and it can be confusing with four levers. The brakes were somewhat heavy, but after the rebuild they are now smooth and well balanced, and the steering is more precise. Thanks to the overdrive, the Jeep is more useable at highway speeds."

HCC associate editor Terry Shea drove the wagon and concurs with Margaret's findings: "It might be the great-grandfather of the modern, ubiquitous SUV that drives just like a car, but make no mistake about it, the Willys wagon is utilitarian transportation that drives far more like a truck. Nevertheless, getting behind the wheel offers its own unique set of charms, as driving any classic should.

"Its high-quality restoration aside, the Willys interior is rudimentary, with a flat, 60/40 split bench seat, and a single round panel housing a speedometer, engine temperature, and fuel level readings. The two-spoke steering wheel has a narrow rim, but a wide diameter, helping overcome its lack of power assist. Fortunately, once moving, the Willys steering lightens up considerably, though it could hardly be called 'accurate,' with a rather wide-feeling vagueness on center. Acceleration is leisurely, making it the perfect around-town vehicle. With first gear running out quickly, third gear is engaged by 30 to 35 mph.

"The suspension is stiff but forgiving enough. Coming to stoplights, downshifting to first is a clunky affair at first, but the slightest blip of the throttle smooths out the gear change. The Willys is a friendly classic, an honest machine that makes no bones about what it's for."

In its 50th year as a member of Margaret's family, though now in Southern, Arizona, the Jeep's unique appearance continues to draw considerable attention on the road and delivers an eclectic driving experience. With a new lease on life provided by a meticulous restoration and enthusiastic owners, this Jeep will serve as a pristine and operational example of Willys' dual-purpose utility wagon for years to come.

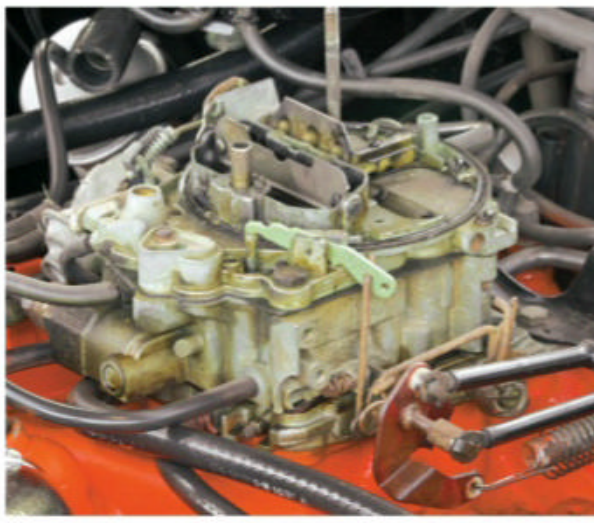
Counterintuitive Caprice

In an era of earth tones and OPEC, this 1975 Chevrolet Caprice Classic Convertible was an unexpected extrovert

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF KOCH

It's been 35 years since convertibles have been back on America's streets and in our new-car dealer lots after taking a half-dozen-year hiatus that barely registers as a blip on the old-car radar these days. Remember when convertibles seemed to go gentle into that good night? Detroit killed them because it got scared: In the '70s, there had been some talk that the NHTSA would mandate a rollover-protection standard that

The 400 cubic-inch V-8 was Chevrolet's middle engine option for the fullsize cars in 1975; a two-barrel 350 was standard, and a four-barrel 454 was also available.



would legislate convertibles clean out of existence. While that particular bit of draconian motoring code never entered the books, Detroit was so gun-shy that it freaked itself out and quit before Washington forced its hand (as it did with bumpers and unleaded gas); no point in spending resources on a new generation of droptop if the government says you can't. And with Detroit's planning cycles what they were, the effects of something that never even came to pass lasted more than a decade. Mopar stopped soft-tops in 1971 with the E-bodies; Ford quit in 1973 with the end of the Larry Shinoda-styled Mustangs. In the end, there were only GM's big B-bodies through model year 1975, the '76 Cadillac Eldorado, and then they were no more. Instead of convertibles, those who demanded fresh air had sunroofs (or moonroofs, depending) and T-tops, both half measures that brought in bucks for Detroit but ultimately satisfied few.

Even beyond carmakers being unwilling to court the prospect of government intervention, the death of the American convertible seemed inevitable: There wasn't a lot of sunny optimism going on during the Nixon/Ford/Carter years. In the fuel-crisis world of 1975, 20-foot-long American convertibles were 180 degrees out of phase with the national mood. Between the twin hangovers of Vietnam and Watergate, monstrous inflation, and the ends of various cultural revolutions playing out, it's no wonder the convertible—the showy extrovert letting the outside in (and vice-versa)—was a goner while personal-luxury sensory-deprivation tanks were all the rage. Paint them like this one, race-me red in a world full of subdued earth tones, and it's a real standout. But who wanted to expose themselves to the world at large when it was all so awful? In that time, who would want a car like this?

Funny you ask. Turns out, rather a lot of people did. At 8,349 sold, the 1975 sales numbers were the best of any fullsize Chevrolet convertible of this generation. For 1974, Chevrolet only built 4,670 fullsize convertibles—just 7/10ths of a percent of total fullsize Chevrolet production, a percentage of total production that held over from 1973. But for 1975, convertibles were nearly 2 percent of all big-Chevrolet production—which amounted to an 80 percent year-to-year sales increase. Chevrolet sold 8,349 of these models in 1975, despite the base price jumping $600. For buyers who couldn't afford an Eldorado, a big Chevrolet was going to be the most cost-effective way to get into a big new convertible before GM finally pulled the plug.

The convertible's increased presence was aided by the fullsize Chevrolet line shedding sales. The 1972 model year was the last time overall big Chevrolet sales topped a million. By 1975, it sold around 422,000 for the year. A 60 percent sales drop in two years is a shocker, and you can thank the first OPEC debacle for that. The idea of a 5,000-pound family sedan struggling to get double-digit fuel mileage around town suddenly made little sense when the price of gas tripled seemingly overnight.

So, who wanted a car like this? Bob McDonald did. Bob owned McDonald Chevrolet-Oldsmobile dealership in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Bob was trying to move cars; why on earth wouldn't he drive a top-of-the-line example of what he's selling, painted a color that screams "look at me"? So Bob, who surely knew that the convertible's goose was cooked well before the general public was informed, ordered himself a new Caprice Classic convertible. With its July 1, 1975, build date, it was one of the last B-body convertibles to roll off the St. Louis assembly line. It was generously optioned: power windows and locks, tilt wheel, cruise control, AM/FM stereo, and a 175 hp, four-barrel 400-cu.in. V-8. Hilariously, it also came with the $38 Econominder gauge package. (Because what says "economy" like a four-barrel carburetor atop 400 cubic inches?) There were also the "Mandatory Canadian Base Equipment Modifications," which as far as anyone can tell was a bilingual "Unleaded Fuel Only" sticker behind the license plate.

One popular item that this particular Caprice Classic did not include from new: air conditioning. An air-conditioned convertible sounds like an extravagance, but in those days

any convertible was an extravagance, and the ubiquity of air conditioning meant that plenty of remaining ragtops were equipped with it. But in Halifax, where it averaged 80 degrees in the summer, it simply wasn't necessary. Also, he took the liberty of having it Ziebarted, which undoubtedly helped it survive a cold Nova Scotia winter or two. Need cool air? Put the top down.

For 23 years and roughly 14,000 miles, Bob owned this very Caprice Classic. When he stopped driving it, the Caprice took up residence in the McDonald showroom. It was a fixture for decades. It traded hands three more times between 1998 and 2006, adding just another 3,000 miles to the odometer during those years. The first of these owners, in the late 1990s, took the liberty of repainting it the factory color, a shade that was evocatively named Medium Red. The original paint had checked beyond repair and needed stripping and refinishing to look as good as its mileage suggested it should.

It was 2006 when Joe Luber first heard about his Caprice Classic's availability. Joe, formerly of Maryland but now of Paradise Valley, Arizona, is the webmaster and newsletter editor for the Sonoran Region of the Cadillac LaSalle Club. That said, he cut his teeth on driving big Chevrolet convertibles, having owned new 1961 and '65 Impala convertibles, and a navy blue '75 Caprice Classic purchased in 1988. He enjoyed the last of the big Chevrolet convertibles, but living on the Mid-Atlantic coast meant that salt air inevitably got into it and did its filthy work: "Cars of the '70s rusted from the inside!" Joe tells us.

And then fate intervened. Joe went on a Caribbean cruise, and befriended a couple from Halifax. Half a year later, when Joe visited them at their home, he learned of Joe McDonald's old Caprice Classic; it was for sale in St. John, New Brunswick. "We got talking about cars, I mentioned my Caprice Classic, which had rusted out, and my friend told me about this one. I initially passed, because I didn't want another rusty car. And he said to me, 'go buy this car right now and ship it home. If you find any rust on, in, or under this car, I'll buy it for you as a gift.' We rented a car, took a trip to St. John where it was for sale, saw that it was clean, saw that it was Ziebarted, and bought it on the spot."

The Caprice was complete, but Joe was adamant about replacing as many wear items and other minor non-GM parts (hose clamps, spark plug wires, etc) with OEM GM parts as possible. Over the last decade and a half of his ownership, he has taken a car that was 98 percent of the way toward absolute factory correctness and brought it that last bit back toward absolute factory freshness. Helping the cause: Joe moved to Arizona in 2012, far away from the salt spray of Maryland that

The factory bench-seat interior, with white seating and door panels with red dash and carpeting, remains original and pristine. Power windows and locks were extra-cost options.

To anyone interested in a car like this one, I'd say watch out for rust. Cars of that era rusted out terribly; I bought this one because it had been Ziebarted. From what I was told, Bob McDonald Chevrolet-Oldsmobile was the first dealer in Nova Scotia to offer Ziebarting, so of course his own car had it.

I love the clean, crisp lines on this car. If I could change one thing about it, I'd probably order the rest of the options—it didn't come with air conditioning, which was because it was Canadian, but it doesn't have power seats either.

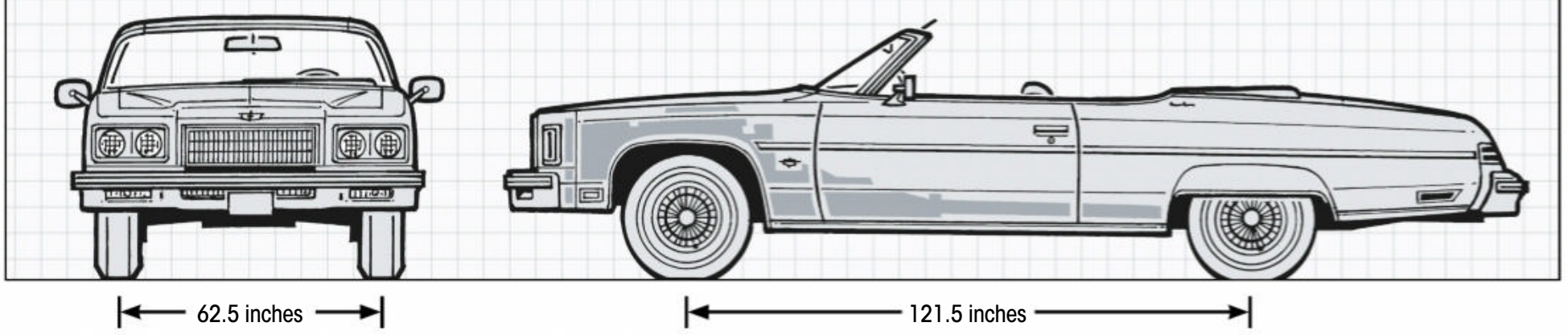
I drive this car 250 miles a year—only to shows. That's it. I'm just keeping the mileage low. I never go cruising in it. I really should, sometime.

claimed his previous Caprice Classic convertible.

Since taking ownership, Joe has had some big projects (getting the bumpers re-chromed, replacing the top with one that wasn't falling apart at the edges) and some small ones (an endless array of belts, hoses, clamps, brake lines, a vintage-style reproduction battery, and other safety, and wear items) getting his Caprice Classic up to his standard. This includes the tires: though the Caprice was born with HR78-15 white-stripe Uniroyal Tiger Paw rubber, the closest available tire today is a metric-sized radial. "After going around and around with a judge at an event, I now have a letter from the AACA that the newer tires won't cause me to lose any points." Precious few items are being reproduced for these cars, so he's been finding stocks of NOS parts online. "It's a Chevy," he said. You can almost hear him shrugging over the phone. "You can find plenty of parts out there." The only item that eludes him are some underhood cable ties designed to snap into the fenders that remain missing.

If ever a car embodied the old "don't let the bastards get you down" ethos, it's the 1975 Caprice Classic convertible. Let's ignore that this one was owned by the local car dealer and was used to attract eyeballs and make the residents of greater Halifax dream of owning a Chevrolet. As a species, the '75 Caprice Classic convertible was completely out of tune with the times. It was massive and heavy, in an era of forced economy. It was showy in a time of introversion. It was willing to let the outside in, no matter how horrible the outside was, and smiling in the face of it all. It was an AM radio blasting big-band bluster in the face of quadraphonic yacht rock. Carrying on in the face of adversity from all sides. Detroit would finally come back to the convertible—but on smaller models, like Mustangs and K-cars. The days of the factory-built fullsize rear-drive convertible had really gone forever by the fall of 1975. Hindsight lets us celebrate cars like this one as a sign that Detroit, and a handful of select buyers, would not go gentle into that good night. This Caprice Classic convertible remains all the more glorious for it.

1975 CHEVROLET CAPRICE CLASSIC



SPECIFICATIONS

PRICE

BASE PRICE	$5,113
OPTIONS (CAR PROFILED)	AM/FM stereo radio ($233); 400 4bbl V-8 ($113); power windows ($99); cruise control ($69); tinted glass ($60); wire wheel covers ($67); power locks ($56); tilt steering wheel ($49); HR78-15 whitewall radials ($38); Econominder gauge package ($32); intermittent wipers, ($26); deluxe bumpers ($27); twin remote mirrors ($55)

ENGINE

TYPE	OHV V-8, iron block
DISPLACEMENT	400-cu.in.
BORE X STROKE	4.125 x 3.75 in
COMPRESSION RATIO	8.5:1
HORSEPOWER @ RPM	175 @ 3,600
TORQUE @ RPM	305 lb-ft @ 2,000
VALVETRAIN	Hydraulic valve lifters
MAIN BEARINGS	Five
FUEL	Four-barrel Rochester Quadrajet
LUBRICATION	Pressure; gear-type pump
ELECTRICAL	12-volt
EXHAUST	Single exhaust, pellet-type catalytic converter, crossover pipe and resonators

TRANSMISSION

TYPE	GM Turbo 400 Hydra-Matic	
RATIOS	1st	2.48:1
	2nd	1.48:1
	3rd	1.00:1
	Reverse	2.08:1

DIFFERENTIAL

TYPE	GM housing with 8.5-in ring and pinion
RATIO	2.73

STEERING

TYPE	Recirculating ball, power assist
RATIO	16.2:1
TURNS, LOCK-TO-LOCK	3.06
TURNING CIRCLE	45.2 ft

BRAKES

TYPE	Hydraulic, power-assisted
FRONT	11.86-in disc
REAR	11-in drum

CHASSIS & BODY

CONSTRUCTION	Body-on-frame
FRAME	Boxed perimeter frame with open-channel kickup
BODY STYLE	Two-door convertible
LAYOUT	Front engine, rear-wheel drive

SUSPENSION

FRONT	Independent, unequal length A-arms; coil springs; telescoping shock absorbers, anti-roll bar
REAR	Upper and lower control arms; coil springs; telescoping shock absorbers

WHEELS & TIRES

WHEELS	Steel, short-spoke disc, drop center
FRONT/REAR	15 x 6
TIRES	White-stripe steel-belted radial
FRONT/REAR	HR78-15

WEIGHTS & MEASURES

WHEELBASE	121.5 in
OVERALL LENGTH	222.7 in
OVERALL WIDTH	79.5 in
OVERALL HEIGHT	53.7 in
FRONT TRACK	62.5 in
REAR TRACK	62.4 in
SHIPPING WEIGHT	4,342 lb

CAPACITIES

CRANKCASE	4 qt
COOLING SYSTEM	18 qt
FUEL TANK	26 gal

CALCULATED DATA

BHP PER CU.IN.	0.4375
WEIGHT PER BHP	24.81 lb
WEIGHT PER CU.IN.	10.855 lb

PRODUCTION

Chevrolet produced 8,349 Caprice Classic convertibles for the 1975 model year; 420 of these were shipped to Canada.

PROS & CONS

✚ Last of the big B-bodies
✚ Acres of style and room
✚ "The poor man's Cadillac"

➖ 400-cu.in., 175 hp
➖ No A/C drawback in AZ
➖ Rarely driven

WHAT TO PAY

LOW
$7,750

AVERAGE
$13,750

HIGH
$29,500

PRODUCTION

8,349

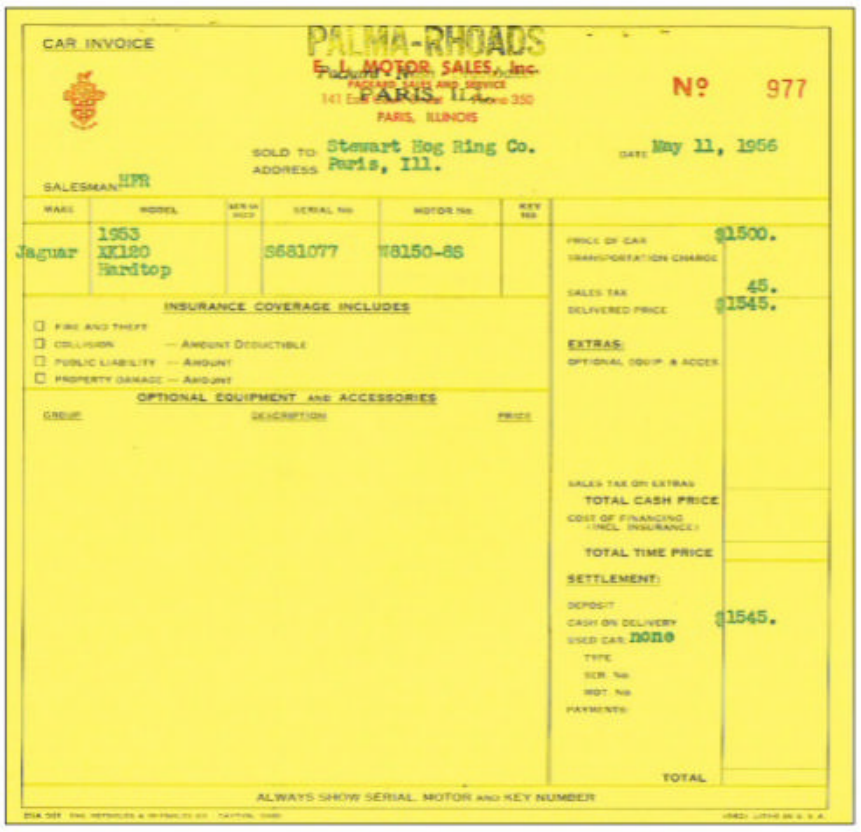
CLUB CORNER

VINTAGE CHEVROLET CLUB OF AMERICA
Peter Gariepy (Member Services)
PO Box 41238
Tucson, Arizona 85717
708-455-8222
memberservices@vcca.org
vcca.site-ym.com
Dues: starting at $25

Jaguars and Hog Rings

Why would a small dealership in the middle of Midwest farm country sell a nice 1953 Jaguar XK120 coupe at a considerable loss in 1956? The short answer is that one business partner allowed "way too much money" for the car in trade toward a new 1956 Studebaker Golden Hawk.

The dealership was Palma-Rhoads Packard-Nash-Studebaker in Paris, Illinois, in which my dad, his brother Milton, and Harry Rhoads were partners. Per this invoice, collecting $1,500 for a 1953 Jaguar XK120 from Jim "J.O." Stewart, owner of Stewart Hog Ring Company, was the final wash on a deal that ultimately cost their dealership over $1,000; about $9,200 today.



CAR INVOICE

PALMA-RHOADS

E. L. MOTOR SALES, Inc.

PARIS, ILLINOIS

No 977

SOLD TO Stewart Hog Ring Co.

ADDRESS Paris, Ill.

DATE May 11, 1956

SALESMAN HPR

MAKE	MODEL	SERIAL NO.	MOTOR NO.	KEY NO.
Jaguar	1953 XK120 Hardtop	S681077	W8150-8S	

PRICE OF CAR $1500.

TRANSPORTATION CHARGE

SALES TAX 45.

DELIVERED PRICE $1545.

INSURANCE COVERAGE INCLUDES

FIRE AND THEFT

COLLISION — AMOUNT DEDUCTIBLE

PUBLIC LIABILITY — AMOUNT

PROPERTY DAMAGE — AMOUNT

EXTRAS

OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT and ACCESSORIES

GROUP DESCRIPTION PRICE

TOTAL CASH PRICE

COST OF FINANCING (INCL. INSURANCE)

TOTAL TIME PRICE

SETTLEMENT:

DEPOSIT

CASH ON DELIVERY $1545.

USED CAR none

TYPE

SER. No.

MOT. No.

PAYMENTS

TOTAL

ALWAYS SHOW SERIAL, MOTOR and KEY NUMBER

That was an enormous hit for a small dealer to take on one transaction.

That was an enormous hit for a small dealer to take on one transaction, a dealer that sold only three new cars and 17 used cars in March of 1956—especially when it had to shuffle four cars to do so.

It all began with a Cambridge Gray 1956 Studebaker Golden Hawk, S/N 6032356. Palma-Rhoads Motors delivered it to attorney Riley McClain of Metcalf, Illinois, on March 31, 1956. That very car was on the cover of the special Studebaker edition of *HCC* #23.

Mr. McClain special ordered the car because he wanted a combination of colors and options no sane dealer would stock in 1956: monotone metallic gray with blackwall tires, stick overdrive, and no radio. He also negotiated that the dealer would pay to have the seats reupholstered in genuine red leather before taking delivery.

For all this, Mr. McClain agreed to pay $3,937, including freight and sales tax. The settlement would be $1,123 in cash, plus an allowance of $2,814 for two trade-ins: the Jaguar and a 1951 Studebaker Champion. The agreement was signed by Harry Rhoads, who handled most of the Studebaker sales.

Dad went through the roof when he saw the deal. Mr. Rhoads was a better mechanic than salesman. His limited negotiating ability, such as it was, had been no match for that of barrister McClain. But the agreement was legally binding, so they bit the bullet and submitted the order to Studebaker.

The Golden Hawk's Production Order was tagged for wholesale delivery at the factory. Studebaker referred Dad to a trim shop just over the state line in Niles, Michigan, to have the seats reupholstered in red leather after the car was built. Dad had to make arrangements for the Golden Hawk to be picked up and delivered to the trim shop in Niles.

Having paid the trim shop, they gritted their teeth, delivered the car, and took the trades. The Champion was retailed for $495… $350 cash plus a 1947 Land Cruiser. The Land Cruiser was sold for $250. The 1951 Champion thus netted only $600 of the $2,814 trade allowance, out of which they still had to pay any reconditioning expenses on two cars.

This put pressure on the Jaguar to hopefully mitigate the train wreck before it gained any more speed. Dad called specialty dealerships in Chicago and Indianapolis to shop the Jaguar in larger markets. He reported little interest over $1,000 wholesale. So, to close the books on this nightmare and tally their loss, they sold it to Mr. Stewart for $1,500.

Perhaps 1953 Jaguar #S681077 is now in the custody of a *Hemmings* reader. If so, we'd like to know about it. Maybe, as Paul Harvey would say, we are yet to hear "*the rest of the story.*"

ONLY 26 AVAILABLE!

Own the Gold of the Rockefellers, Carnegies and Tiffanys

What's the first image that comes into your mind when you think of wealth and prosperity? For many of us, it's tall, shining stacks of gold. For families like the Rockefellers, Carnegies and Tiffanys, that gold took the form of $5 U.S. Gold Liberties, struck by the U.S. Mint in 90% pure American gold.

These coins circulated widely in the late 19th and early 20th centuries until President Franklin Roosevelt made private gold ownership illegal in 1933, resulting in the melting of millions of Gold Liberties. It's estimated that less than 10% of all vintage U.S. gold coins survive.

We recently secured a number of these beautiful vintage U.S. gold coins, and now we'd like to pass them on to you. How does that sound, Mr. Rockefeller?

Date will vary
22.5 mm diameter

***Your coin** will arrive graded by NGC or PCGS as Mint State-62 (MS62) condition, sealed in a protective display holder.*

Timeless American Treasure

Struck between 1866 and 1908, these particular vintage $5 U.S. gold coins were hand-selected just for this offer. Not only are they at least 110 years old, but each one comes professionally certified by one of the world's top third-party grading services as collector-grade Mint State-62 (MS62) condition—the same condition these were in the day they were struck.

Best of all, your coin will come sealed in a protective display holder to preserve its provenance for yet another century, creating a golden legacy for you to pass down to future generations. A coin of this quality and history is sure to be treasured for lifetimes. But only if you take advantage of this incredible offer.

The Perfect Time to Buy

Another great reason to secure these vintage U.S. gold coins, and *secure them now*, is that premiums for these coins are at a historic low over the cost of their precious metal content alone.

Add in the fact that each $5 Gold Liberty was struck more than 110 years ago and comes in certified mint state condition, and you have an added level of collector value that modern, ungraded gold coins can't reach.

These are the coins to buy, and the time to buy is now!

Don't Miss Out—Secure Your Vintage U.S. Gold Now!

In today's collector market, this same vintage gold coin —containing nearly a quarter-ounce of pure American gold, is currently selling elsewhere for $650. And that's for a lesser-grade coin. But with this special offer, you can secure these historic U.S. gold coins for **just $395** each.

But don't delay—with only 26 coins available, they're going to move fast, which is why we're limiting this offer to 3 coins per household.

Don't let this incredible offer pass you by. To learn more, **visit us today at GovMint.com/goldlib or call 1-888-201-7056 and mention the offer code below to secure your vintage U.S. gold now.**

FREE SHIPPING! Limited time only. Product total over $149 before taxes (if any). Standard domestic shipping only. Not valid on previous purchases.

Call today toll-free for fastest service

1-888-201-7056

Offer Code FGL200-01
Please mention this code when you call

Only $395 each for a 110-year-old coin with nearly a quarter-ounce of U.S. gold!

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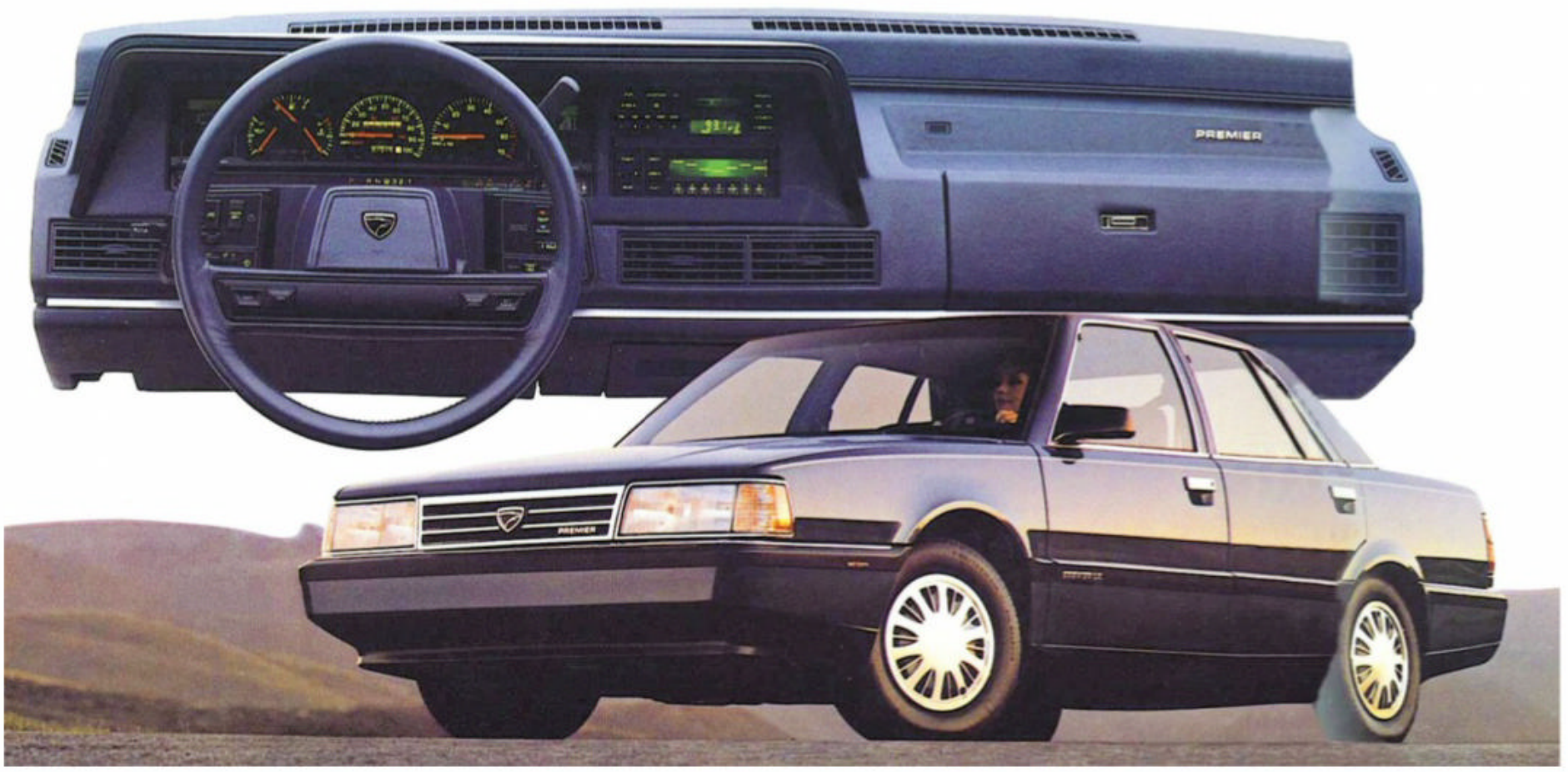
BY MILTON STERN

Eagle Premier— It's American *Pas Français*



IN 1988, I DECIDED TO TRADE IN MY Chrysler LeBaron. On the lot at Merrimack Motors in Hampton, Virginia, was a white Eagle Premier. I inquired about this very attractive car, and Richard, the owner, said to me, "It's a French car. I know nothing about them, and you don't want one." I found it strange he didn't know anything about an automobile on his lot.

I did drive home in a white Plymouth Horizon that turned out to be a great car. However, I spent the next 31 years convinced the 1987-'92 Eagle Premier (and by default, 1990-'92 Dodge Monaco) was a French-built Renault that Chrysler had to sell after its takeover of American Motors in 1987.

I am embarrassed by my ignorance. I never researched the Eagle Premier. I don't have an excuse for this lapse in American automotive history, which is compounded by the fact that I am a Renault fan as well. Add to that my past ownership of three AMCs, two Ramblers, and a Hudson. Now, I shall rectify the situation.

Let's start by clarifying one thing that was perpetuated by Richard the dealership owner (may he rest in peace) and perhaps other Chrysler dealers as well. The Eagle, though designed and engineered by Renault and AMC, was a North American car, built in Canada, and it was never sold in France. It was also sold in Japan as the Chrysler Premier ES. The plan was that the Premier would save the company at a time when it was mainly marketing small cars, the Alliance and Encore. Americans had swung back to family-size cars, indicated by the popularity of the Ford Taurus and Chevrolet Celebrity.

And so, the story goes like this.

A new plant for the Premier was built in Brampton, Ontario. Chrysler wanted this plant (it's still operational). It also wanted the Jeep Cherokee.

With a wheelbase of 106 inches, the Eagle Premier, a fullsize/executive car was to fill the slot once occupied by the long-gone Ambassador and Matador. Jointly designed by Giorgetto Giugiaro and Richard Teague, the premier was only available as a four-door sedan.

In keeping with a Renault tradition, the engine, driving the front wheels, was mounted longitudinally. Two engines were available, initially. One was the 2.5-liter AMC four-cylinder, which was derived from the automaker's tried-and-true 4.0-liter straight-six. The other engine was a 3.0-liter OHC V-6, which Chrysler agreed to purchase from Renault for five years. Transmission choices were a four-speed automatic or a four-speed manual. The Premier weighed in at a hair under 3,000 pounds. By 1990, the Premier only came equipped with the V-6 and automatic, when Chrysler electronics also replaced the Renix electronics.

The Premiere was adapted from the Renault 25 chassis, and the independent suspension featured MacPherson struts with coil springs up front and transverse torsion bars holding up the rear with stabilizer bars fore and aft.

The exterior styling was mostly the work of Giugiaro's Italdesign, and the Premier's drag coefficient was .31, which was lower than the Ford Taurus, a car famous for its aerodynamic qualities. Not since the Nash Airflytes had a product from our friends in Kenosha been so slippery. Recently, the author of one of those "cars that should never have been built" and "worst cars of all time" lists commented that the Premier was not aerodynamic at all. Yet, another reason to hate those lists.

The Premier was among the first to have "Valeo headlamps with nonparabolic, complex-surface reflectors featuring optic lenses." I have no idea what that means. I do know they were rectangular, befitting the geometric lines of the car.

The interior, an interesting affair with "fingertip reachable" controls that extended from the steering column and adjusted along with it, was penned mainly by Teague, who also designed the Alliance/Encore interior. Trunk capacity was an impressive 16.3 cubic feet. The Premier also offered more interior room—122 cubic feet—than any other car in its class.

Chrysler must have been pleased with the semi-dash-mounted automatic gearshift selector that was reminiscent of the second-year Powerflytes in 1955.

Bob Lutz, then a vice president at Chrysler, said that the Premier sedan was one of the "impressive succession of new products" that Chrysler gained from acquiring AMC.

Unfortunately, the Premier was little understood by its dealers, and Chrysler didn't market it well. Sales were disappointingly dismal, though an Eagle Premier was featured in the Patrick Swayze movie, *Roadhouse*. Although it was discontinued quickly, the Premier's engineering and underpinnings would evolve into the Chrysler's LH cars, so the Pentastar's investment wasn't for naught.

So, what's available? Very little.

I found a 1990 Eagle Premier with very low mileage, one-family owned, and in excellent shape for $1,600, making it the most under of underdogs profiled in this column. Needless to say, it was snapped up in a second. There are a few fans out there.

You should have bought one when you had the chance. I wish I had ignored Richard back in 1988 and driven home in that white Eagle Premier.

One Piece at a Time

The day before I sat down to write this, I made some major progress on a project. I handed over the cash to bring home a 1926 Ford Model T engine and transmission for the project I've been "working on" (accumulating parts for) for just over two years now. They will join a 1925 frame, a 1923 body, and sundry other parts that I've obtained previously – none of which, to my knowledge, have been previously bolted to one another.

Now, I will be the first to admit: It's silly to build a car, especially one that can be purchased whole so inexpensively. I could probably buy a complete Model T touring, ready to drive, for around $8,000. But the fact is that I don't have $8,000 to spend all at once. I can only dribble cash into this project now and then, saving up for one part and then another. Could I dribble cash into a savings account with the dedicated purpose of buying a complete car? Yes, but cash is fungible, so it tends to find other priorities. Instead I'm building rust equity.

> "...cash is fungible, so it tends to find other priorities. Instead I'm building rust equity."

CLAYTON PADDISON

Not only does this one-piece-at-a-time method allow me to make payments on my project instead of suffering the blow all at one, I also get some tangible results for my periodic payments. I really enjoy looking at my ever-growing accumulation of parts and envisioning the final result of my efforts (and, I should note, the efforts of many of my friends who have kindly and selflessly helped me out along the way). You just don't get that kind of feeling looking at an online bank statement.

Gathering these castoffs is also nice in that it frees me to do what I want in reassembly. To me, a complete car carries with it a certain set of duties. One becomes a caretaker of something that has survived so long intact, and my inner preservationist comes out and says "Stop, don't do that thing!" unless there's some evidence "that thing" already coincides with the car's history.

In this case "that thing" is building these castoffs into a Model T not as it rolled out of Highland Park back in the 1920s, but into how it might have existed in the mid-1930s, after several owners and much depreciation. E.B. White of Strunk & White and *Charlotte's Web* fame once noted that "a Model T was born naked as a baby, and a flourishing industry grew up out of correcting its rare deficiencies and combating its fascinating diseases." Fine tuning a Ford for personal use was practically a national pastime in the 1920s and '30s, though by the time White wrote those words in 1936, most Ts were on to their third, fourth, or more owners, and the level of change had gone further afield than mere accessorizing.

In some cases, that meant they had been stripped down to become snowmobiles, farm tractors, or stationary powerplants. In others, it meant they had been turned into extremely refined conveyances that were capable of taking advantage of the much-improved road infrastructure that had appeared since 1909. I'm shooting for the latter – something along the lines of the Fast Fords of Bob Estes and Robert Hodge that so impressed Clark Gable.

I view this as a restoration project like any other, with all the attendant research and craft that would be required to return a car back to factory stock. It's simply restoring the car (or, in my case, the pile of parts) into a form it could have existed in, in the mid-1930s. That means hunting parts too, in *Hemmings Motor News* and at Hershey, because you can't just visit a website and have this stuff delivered. Perhaps the great irony is that many of the parts I'm seeking *were* available that way when new (via the Sears Roebuck catalog, for example), but now they're largely orphaned and unwanted – removed in favor of factory correctness.

Finally, I take great joy in knowing that I'm hardly alone in this. Not only am I following in the footsteps of the original (and second, third, fourth…) owners of these cars, but also of the many generations who have been restoring cars since the 1950s. One only has to look at the craze for speedsters that has never really abated. Assembling a period-correct, what-if/never-was machine is a great way to build a car one piece at a time.

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EMAIL YOUR THOUGHTS AND COMMENTS TO: **rlentinello@hemmings.com**

I REALLY ENJOYED AND connected with Pat Foster's column in *HCC* #175 regarding Kaiser-Frazer. My dad was an attorney in Ypsilanti, Michigan, and one of his clients was Kaiser-Frazer. One day in 1949, when I was four years old, he brought home a beautiful 1948 Frazer he purchased from Kaiser-Frazer. It was the same color as the one in Pat's article; I believe it was called Honduras Maroon. When he went to the Willow Run factory to pick up the car, Joe Frazer came out and thanked him for his purchase of his personal company car and gave him his Kaiser-Frazer Zippo lighter, which I still have.

One day when Dad took it in for service at the local dealer, he mentioned that the cigarette lighter in the back seat did not work. The service manager said there is no lighter in the back seat, but when he saw there was, he called Kaiser-Frazer and asked about it; it had been custom installed at Joe Frazer's request. It was my mom's car until it was traded off in 1954. It sure was a beauty!

Robert Ulrich
Manitou Beach, Michigan

I ENJOYED THE ARTICLE ON THE 1939 Pontiac in *HCC* #174 as it brought back memories of the 1939 Pontiac that my dad had in 1951 when I was in high school. This photo shows the fun you can have in older cars with classmates; notice the girls inside the car, with the boys on the outside—how lucky can you get? We were on our way to our favorite hamburger place.

The Pontiac was dark brown and ran very well; I don't recall ever having any trouble with it. But Dad later traded it for a 1946 Hudson, which was then given to me after his death.

Robert Elium
Durham, North Carolina

AS A LONGTIME SUBSCRIBER, I HAVE appreciated the improvements in your excellent magazine. Since I am interested in both cars and history, I believe the "American Cars in Cuba" article in *HCC* #173 is the best ever! Thank you.

Saul Arsht
Farmington Hills, Michigan

REGARDING DAVID CONWILL'S Pioneers profile on Thomas Midgley Jr. in *HCC* #174, I was always under the impression that tetraethyl lead was first added to gasoline as a lubricant for the valve seats, which at the time, were made of unhardened steel. Yes, lead in solution can lubricate. Of course, it was quickly discovered that the additive had the side effect of raising the octane rating.

Steven Vella
Bellmore, New York

I HAD A 1932 FORD DEUCE ROADSTER in high school, and why I ever sold it I don't know. After WWII was over and the GIs were being discharged, a returning Navy man bought a '46 Chevrolet coupe that he loved to race. He'd seen my Ford and wanted to race me for $50; he had his girlfriend hold the money. There is a 7-mile-long highway between New Plymouth, Idaho, and Fruitland that doesn't have a bend in it. That's where all the kids in the valley use to race. We got out of town and when there was no traffic in sight, we started to race. We stayed side-by-side for about a mile, then I had to drop back twice because of oncoming traffic. Then I got beside him again. My Ford had two straight pipes and at 70 mph, he heard me shift into third gear. I pulled ahead of him and he blinked his lights and pulled over. I made a U-turn and went back to see him. He was standing in the middle of the highway and handed me the $50. He said when he heard me shift into third he knew the race was over.

Lloyd Warner
Boise, Idaho

AS FAR AS THE NEW FORMAT including foreign and some modified cars, I'm all for it. My wife has always said that if it's got wheels and an engine, I'm interested, so keep up the good work. I'd love to see something on Citroëns. My uncle once owned an early '60s Simca, and when he retired the car to his small farm, we kids used to get it started and "race" around the pastures in it. It was the only vehicle I ever drove with "four on the column." It was a hoot to drive. Because of this experience, I thoroughly enjoyed Milton Stern's editorial "A Memorable French Connection."

The Illinois Valley Antique Automobile Club is a group that was formed in 1954 in Peoria, Illinois, and is the oldest old car club in Central Illinois. I have been a proud member of that club for the past 30-plus years and have had a lot of fun with the members. One of my favorite ways to enjoy my 1956 De Soto is to participate in "All-Vintage Road Trips," more commonly referred to in our club as "Tours." Because we live in the heart of farm country, it's very easy to plot out a tour on rural roads and stay off the main highways. We have a few simple rules: (1) The tour speed will never exceed the safe speed of the slowest vehicle in the group. (2) Each driver has to keep an eye on the vehicles behind him to ensure nobody falls too far behind and to alert the others to a problem. (3) The person following has to keep an eye on the cars ahead and be sure to follow at a safe distance. (4) Leave enough room between vehicles so that if a modern vehicle wants to pass, they can do so safely. And (5) Have fun!

Most of our tours are only a day long—starting with breakfast at a local restaurant, stopping for lunch near our

ultimate destination, and arriving back home for dinner that evening. On occasion, we have "over-nighters" that take us further away from home, which allows us to see a few more sights along the way. We always stop at antique shops, car museums, or other points of interest so the wives don't get bored with the ride, and so that we can enrich our knowledge of the past. Our club attends shows and displays, but still, *my favorite* way to enjoy my collector car is on a vintage road trip. Enjoy your cars—they were meant to be driven!
Norm Waggoner
Pekin, Illinois

HCC #175 WAS QUITE MEMORABLE for me. I owned a 1965 Dodge Dart GT with the 273-cu.in. V-8 with the four-barrel option as well as a 1978 Pontiac Grand Prix, two of the cars featured in that issue. At the time, I thought they were pretty small, but they would be considered fullsize cars now.

Now to nitpick, but your "Fun With Photography" feature made mention of the classic Pontiac ads attributed to Art Fitzpatrick. Art drew the car but the background including the people were drawn by Van Kaufman whose initials as well as Art's were always on the ad. Van Kaufman was my first cousin and our family always enjoyed seeing his work.
Jody Grollman
Bainbridge, Georgia

I ENJOY READING _HCC_ VERY MUCH and look forward to your decision to include imports. The compact car I would most like to own is one I remember seeing when growing up in my little town. It was a 1962 Buick Skylark with the 215-cu.in. aluminum V-8 with a four-speed transmission. The Skylark's styling was fresh and very attractive, with the same pointed front fenders as the larger Buicks of that same year. The riding comfort was smooth for a car with such a short wheelbase, and the interior had a deep quality about it that made for a very enjoyable car, one that I would like today. My brother and I drove a Willys Jeepster in high school, but on the weekends, we could use our father's import compact—a Vauxhall Victor.
G. Stallings
Concord, North Carolina

To have your letter considered for Recaps, you must include your full name and the town/city and state you live in. Thank you.


NEA 543V
GB

The Sexy European

In Europe, the Capri copied the Mustang's playbook; in the U.S., it sold as something more exotic

BY TERRY SHEA
PHOTOGRAPHY BY MATTHEW LITWIN

Squint a bit and the original Ford Capri looks a bit like a Mustang, what with its long-hood and short-deck design, its faux louvers behind the doors, and its stylized flanks. Look under the skin and, still like the Mustang, it shared a lot of parts cribbed from other models. It's more than coincidence that the cars shared such a resemblance in appearance and engineering.

Striving to capitalize on the Mustang's incredible success in the U.S., Ford of Europe set about creating its own affordable, personal sporty car. Though instead of the compact Falcon as with the Mustang, Ford borrowed heavily from the Cortina sedan to create the Capri. American Philip T. Clark, who is credited with the Capri's design, also contributed to styling the Mustang. The Capri took its name from the fashionable Mediterranean island off the coast near Naples, Italy. There was no mistaking the sexy and sporty Capri for the largely unassuming Cortina sedan that it borrowed so many parts from.

Given the broad range of potential customers, along with the myriad of automobile tax laws based on engine displacement in many European countries, Ford made the Capri available with a wide array of engines when the car went on sale in early 1969, with a variety of V-4, inline-four, and V-6 engines across the range. The bigger-engined and higher-performance variants—of which there were several—received a domed hood.

Ford primarily manufactured the Capri at factories in Halewood, U.K., and Cologne, West Germany, along with additional assembly in Australia and South Africa. The smartly styled Capri caught on in Europe as well as elsewhere, with some 400,000 finding new homes the first two years alone, and more than one million sold before

the end of the fifth model year in 1973. And it wasn't just in the showroom where the Capri excelled, with the RS2600 variant winning the European Touring Car championship, the German Touring Car title, and even its class at the 24 Hours of Le Mans.

With such success in Europe and with the U.S. eager for performance cars of all stripes at the time, Ford introduced the car to American consumers halfway through the 1970 model year. Billing it as "The Sexy European," Ford didn't sell it in the showrooms with the big blue oval on them; rather, it sold the cars from Lincoln-Mercury dealers. Those dealerships moved more than 500,000 Sexy Europeans between 1970 and 1977, the vast majority sourced from Ford's West German plant. As with many other European cars sold in the U.S., Ford never offered the smallest, least-powerful engines in the federalized Capri, instead selling it with the 2.0-liter and 2.3-liter overhead-cam four-cylinder and the "Cologne" 2.8-liter V-6, made in West Germany.

American Capris had some other changes beyond emissions-compliant engines, including four round headlamps in lieu of the original's two rectangular ones. All cars delivered here, no matter the powerplant, had the domed hood, and from 1973 on, big, ungainly bumpers mandated by the 5-mph Nixon-era bumper standards. American Capris carried neither Ford nor Lincoln-Mercury badging though the entire production run to 1977.

In 1974 for Europe, and 1976 for the U.S., a heavily facelifted Mk. II or Capri II was introduced. Though it rode on the same wheelbase as the original, the restyled Capri was wider, taller, and a bit heavier, losing the long character line on the body sides as well as the faux vents at the front of each quarter panel. The result was a smoother, slicker-looking car for the times. A proper hatchback and fully folding rear seat also made better use of the

Far from the stock, the interior on this U.S.-spec Capri II features deeply bolstered, racing-style aftermarket bucket seats, an aftermarket steering wheel, the complete removal of the HVAC system and controls, and a couple of gauges—turbo boost and air/fuel mixture—related to the swapped mill under the hood.

fastback styling, as compared to the traditional trunk in the first-gen model. Lincoln-Mercury dealers only offered the Capri II for the ’76 and ’77 model years before the model name was briefly retired in the U.S.

After the last ’77s were sold off in 1978 , the Capri name returned to the U.S. market in 1979 as a slightly restyled version of the new Fox-body Mustang. In the early-to-mid 1990s, Mercury offered a small, Australian-made, optionally turbocharged, 2+2, front-drive roadster that also received the Capri name. But European production of the original Capri continued until very late in 1986, with all Capris sourced from the Cologne plant, including even right-hand-drive versions as the car remained popular in the U.K.

Dave Maughan spent his college years in England and while everyone else was running around in “hot hatches,” he found himself smitten with the Capri. “I was a young man in my mid-teens to early twenties, and they were everywhere,” he says. “They were the European Mustang—long hood, short rear deck, front engine. It was the closest thing you could get over there, more or less, to the muscle car.” And it wasn’t just the looks that took him in, but the front-engine/rear-drive experience and antics he could easily partake in with the car. “I was kind of a throw-back, doing slides around roundabouts,” he recalls. “And the Capri excelled at that. It was a drift car before there was drifting.”

He owned several while getting his education in the U.K. before returning to the U.S. in 1992. His desire to have a Capri was not muted by experiencing other cars, so within a few years, he found himself starting “down the Capri path again in America.” Including his time in England, Dave estimates he has owned 14 Capris—“at last count.”

Dave timed the purchase of the black car, a 1980 3.0S, with

The fully trimmed stock interior in this right-hand-drive, U.K.-market Capri III 3.0S features factory Recaro bucket seats with plaid centers, full gauges, and a center console around the four-speed shifter and emergency brake handle. Note the blue oval Ford grille badge on the exterior above, and the lack of any make badge on the yellow, North American-spec car above left.

There are variations from stock outside as well. This ’76 Capri has been lowered 2 inches and wears the factory wheels from the black car on the right. With front bumpers from a European Escort and the rear bumper turned upside down, the car looks trimmer. The turbocharged 2.3-liter Ford engine, sourced from a Merkur XR4Ti, mates directly to the factory four-speed transmission, but more than doubles power.

the federal 25-year rule for importation of noncompliant cars. “I brought it over weeks after it became eligible in 2005,” he says. A U.K.-market car with right-hand drive, the Capri 3.0S featured an Essex 3.0-liter OHV V-6, a British-made engine that was unrelated to the Cologne-made OHV V-6 engines that were optional on U.S.-market Capris.

Never offered in the U.S., a Capri Mk. III (an unofficial name) debuted for 1978 with a flatter hood, the round headlamps for all cars, and a blacked-out, horizontally slatted grille in front, along with a few other styling and trim changes. Other than special editions, the 3.0S sat at the top of the Capri performance heap in 1980, its engine rated at 136 hp at 5,000 rpm, a far cry from the 88-hp 2.3-liter four and 110-hp 2.8-liter V-6 used in the last U.S.-market Capris from 1977.

Like all European-made Capris, the standard 3.0S featured a front end with rack-and-pinion steering, disc brakes, MacPherson struts, lower lateral arms, coil springs, hydraulic shocks, and an anti-roll bar. The live rear axle with drum brakes was suspended by leaf springs, hydraulic shocks, and another anti-roll bar. But Dave’s car veers a bit from standard in the suspension department.

The final runout of Capris, the 2.8i models with a fuel-injected version of the Cologne V-6 under the hood, featured a lowered front suspension and a racing-style single rear leaf spring on each side. A previous owner in the U.K. had already performed this swap before Dave imported the car to the U.S. The wheels on the car in these photos, also from the 2.8i, measure 13 x 7 inches and were installed later by Dave. The 3.0S’s original wheels, 13 x 6 inches, are shown in these photos on the yellow car, which has its own story.

After buying the black car, Dave found an American-spec 1976 model with the 2.3-liter four, at a small dealer lot. Though he could drive it home, it was supposed to be a parts car for any needs he might have getting the black one up to snuff. Well, it turned out those needs were minimal, so Dave got to creating the yellow car (which was white when he bought it), building a no-holds-barred, high-performance example.

Metalwork included replacing the rocker sills before the yellow paint went on. The front quarter bumpers came from a contemporary Euro-market Ford Escort Mark II. The rear bumper is

U.S. 1976 CAPRI II **SPECIFICATIONS**

ENGINES	OHC, cast-iron block and head inline-four, 2,301-cc (140-cu.in.) / OHV, cast-iron block and head V-6, 2,795-cc (170.8-cu.in.)
HORSEPOWER	88 @ 5,000 rpm / 110 hp @ 4,800 rpm
TORQUE	116 lb-ft @ 2,600 rpm / 148 lb-ft @ 3,000 rpm
INDUCTION	Single two-barrel Holley-Weber downdraft / single Motorcraft 2150 two-barrel carburetor
GEARBOX	Four-speed manual / three-speed automatic
0-60 MPH	10.6-13 seconds
TOP SPEED	102-110 mph
LENGTH	174.8 in
WIDTH	66.9 in
HEIGHT	51 in
WHEELBASE	100.9 in
CURB WEIGHT	2,513-2,925 lb

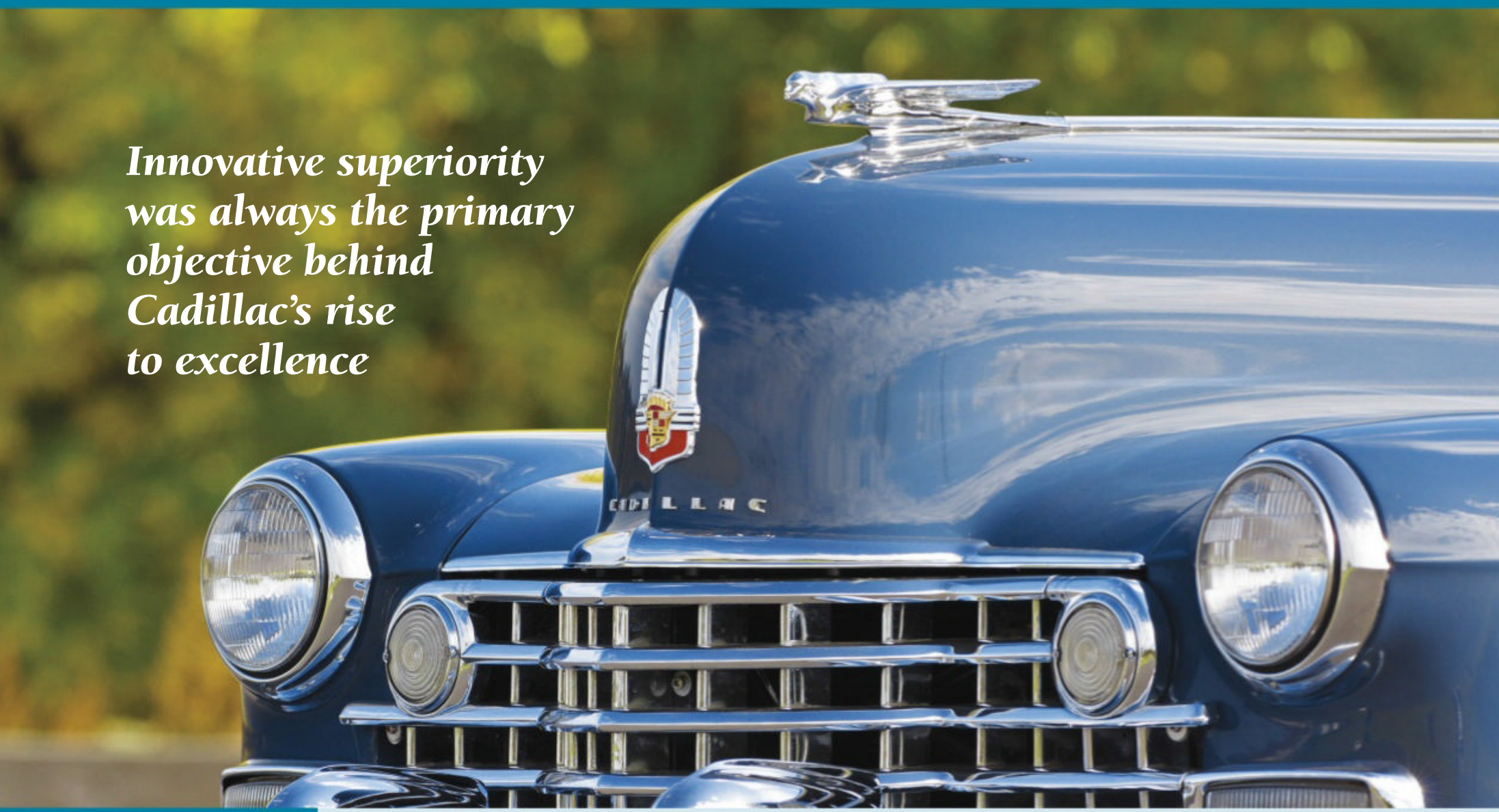
Though its suspension has been modified and lowered, too, the black 3.0S in these pictures does not sit nearly as low as the yellow '76 on the opposite page and wears slightly wider wheels from a later Capri III 2.8i, one of the final iterations of the European Capri. Under the hood sits the stock 3.0-liter Essex V-6 with dual exhausts, unmodified and rated from the factory at 136 hp.

a standard Capri II bumper turned upside down. Lowered some 2 inches from stock, the '76 cuts a pretty mean line, particularly with the 3.0S wheels. Rather than leave the stock 2.3-liter OHC engine and its 88 horsepower in place, Dave cribbed from another European Ford import, buying a donor Merkur XR4Ti and installing its Brazilian-made, 175-horsepower, turbocharged 2.3-liter engine into the Capri. Though the stock rating essentially doubled the car's horsepower, Dave also installed a manual boost control, a fat 3-inch downpipe and what amounts to an open exhaust system, only somewhat muffled by the turbo. Dave estimates the yellow '76 good for 190 horsepower.

While the car still has its rear seats, Dave bought a pair of inexpensive sport seats from a catalog, and "gutted" parts of the interior, losing the HVAC system. A boost gauge and an air-flow meter fill part of the space in the dash left by his jettisoning the duct work and vents. Though he no longer owns either car, having sold both since we snapped these photos, he concedes that the boosted Capri was "still kind of raw" and that it had a different set of charms compared to the black car.

"The yellow one was pretty light," he says, "and it was much quicker, once you got the turbo to spool up. It didn't handle as well as the black one. The black one felt more planted, probably because it was just entirely newer, and it had bigger rubber on it. The black one was much torquier. The black one felt more like a Mustang. It drove a lot like a Fox-body Mustang, more or less, whereas the yellow one, what would I liken it to? I don't really know. It had an individual flair to it. I almost want to say it was Pinto like because it was crude, and it was loud." If a Pinto made double the horsepower, sure. "It wasn't quick off the line because it didn't have a whole lot of rubber and it didn't have a whole lot of torque, but once you'd roll it in second gear and got on it, it would run with a lot of cars that were quite surprised by this noisy yellow thing beside them."

The black car, with its factory Recaro seats, and much quieter factory V-6, also stacked up better for road trips in Dave's mind. "You just put it in fourth and away you went. It would roll out on the highway at 80 mph no problem, whereas the yellow one just felt busy and buzzy." Though he's moved on from the model, Dave still has fond memories of these two takes on a single theme, still loves the shape, and still sees why he was so enamored for so many years.



Innovative superiority was always the primary objective behind Cadillac's rise to excellence

50
MILESTONES

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WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD LENTINELLO

If ever there was an automobile that inspired people to work hard and be successful in their career, it's Cadillac. It has long been the automotive brand of choice for wealthy businessmen, doctors, lawyers, movie stars, and the upper-middle class alike. In fact, years ago, it seemed as if everyone wanted to own a Cadillac; at least it was that way in my old Brooklyn neighborhood. It was the car that my father, uncles, and neighbors constantly talked about having one day. They used to say, "When you own a Cadillac, you've arrived."

Like Buick, Chrysler, Lincoln, Packard, and several other high-end brands, the cars that Cadillac built were always well appointed. The quality, design, and vast selection of their upholstery fabrics were the top of their class, as were their engineering principles. Cadillac's many innovations always held a cutting-edge advantage over its competition—from the first, the engineering of tight tolerances of machined components so everything could interchange, to the introduction of the electric starter motor and the first modern overhead-valve V-8 engine. It was because of its early benchmark machining specifications that Cadillac was referred to as "The Standard of the World," a rightfully earned tagline that has endured.

Design has always played a major role in Cadillac's history. Consider its eggcrate grilles, trend-leading tailfins, and striking stainless-steel roofs: Few car companies have been as stylish or as fashionable as Cadillac. In the following pages of this special section, you can read more about the major mechanical innovations that the automaker has introduced through the years, the many milestone models that have been thoughtfully created by its styling studio, and some of its more noteworthy powerplants.

As I have mentioned before, when it comes to Cadillac, there are so many outstanding designs that it'll be impossible to mention them all here. While the dual-cowl phaetons and V-16s were all spectacular, the 1939-'40 models appealing, and the 1941 offerings, especially the convertible coupes, incomparable, it really wasn't until the introduction of the 1949 model that Cadillac's designs became truly distinctive. The 1957 Eldorado Brougham, with its brushed stainless-steel roof, is totally spectacular, while the 1962-'66 models have their own particular, though more conservative, style.

Personally speaking, as much as I would like to own a dark blue 1949 Series 61 Coupe, a '57 Series 62 hardtop, a '76 Seville, or even a 1985 Seville, with its distinctive bustleback shape, the ultimate choice for me would be a 1933 V-16 coupe. It would have to be all black, with blackwalls of course, so nothing would distract from the car's striking design. Because there have been so many beautifully penned Cadillacs built through the years, limiting myself to just five to own would be difficult.

If you had the opportunity to add an old Cadillac to your collection, which model would you choose?

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Chassis no. S369RK

1922 Stutz Series KDH Bearcat
Chassis no. 12974

1930 Stutz Model M Two-Passenger Speedster
Coachwork by LeBaron
Chassis no. M8-24-SD220

1922 Wills Sainte Claire A-68 Roadster
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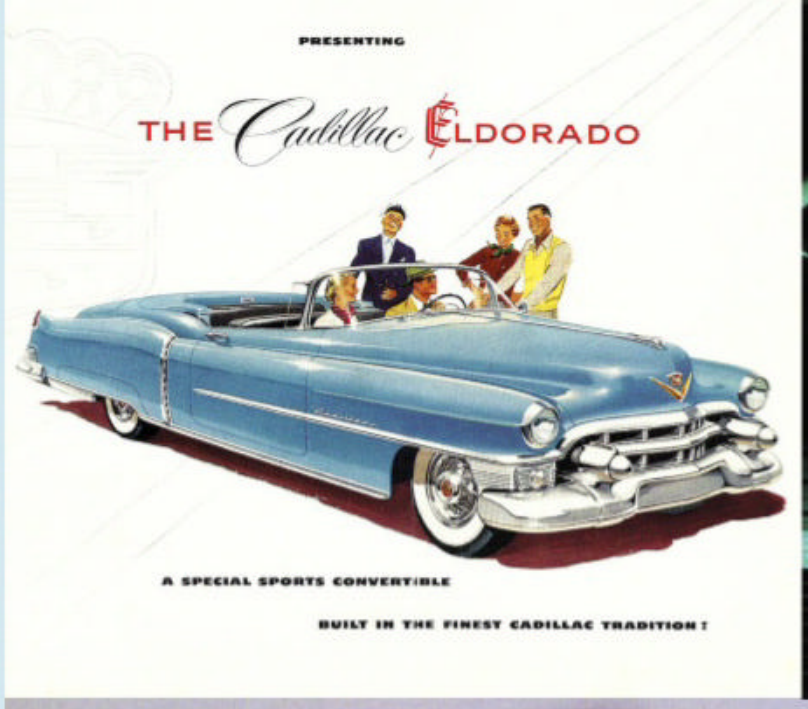
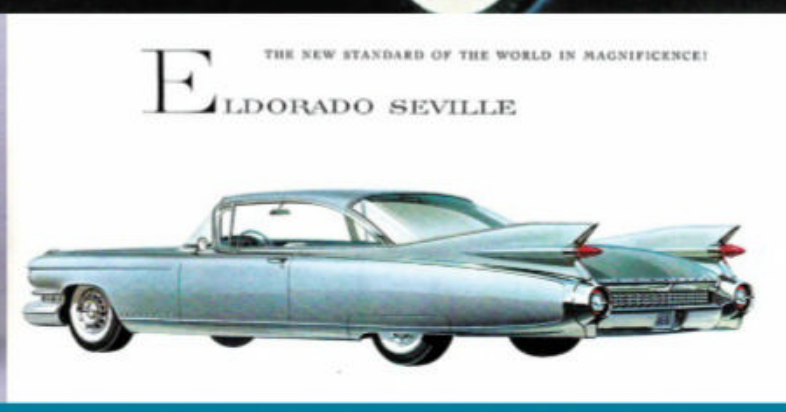




Milestones

The standards by which we judge The Standard of the World

BY DAVID CONWILL • ILLUSTRATIONS COURTESY OF CADILLAC

Cadillac started in failure, Henry Ford's failure to appease his financial backers. From that failure, however, came probably its greatest success—the one on which all its subsequent accomplishments have been built. That success was one particular version of its first car that made international headlines and announced in no uncertain terms that the American automotive industry would be a force to be reckoned with.

1907 MODEL K

Cadillac received its "Standard of the World" epithet thanks to Henry Leland. When Leland was brought in to liquidate the former Henry Ford Company in 1902, he recognized the potential of the organization, and persuaded its directors to give him a chance at bringing his experience from the Leland & Faulconer machine shop into the world of automaking.

The cornerstone of that experience was what was known as the "American system" of manufacturing, borne out of the New England firearms factories where Leland had cut his teeth. At its core, the American system was all about interchangeability. Whereas in many parts of the world machines were made one at a time in a semi-custom fashion, U.S. gunmakers had realized early on the massive benefit to their military clients if all devices built to the same design were produced with such precision that pieces could be mixed and matched at will.

While it seems obvious in retrospect that car owners would benefit from this same standardization, the fledgling automotive industry had yet to embrace it. The earliest Cadillacs were not especially noteworthy in design—being essentially the same as Ford's 1903 Model A but utilizing a Leland & Faulconer-designed single-cylinder engine—but Leland's pursuit of parts standardization paid off in 1908 when Cadillac's agent in London, England, entered several 1907 Cadillac Model Ks in competition for the Dewar Trophy.

The Dewar entries were driven to the famed Brooklands race course where they were exhibited driving, then disassembled. The parts were intermingled without any attempt to identify from which car they had come. The Model Ks were then reassembled from the mixed parts and driven yet again. For this accomplishment, Cadillac was awarded the 1908 Dewar Trophy.

1927 LA SALLE

In 1909, Cadillac was acquired by General Motors, which elevated the nameplate to the pinnacle of its hierarchy—especially after the departure of GM founder Billy Durant and the influence of Alfred Sloan and his "car for every purse and purpose" vision for the company. As was the practice in those days, many Cadillacs received bodywork by outside coachbuilders. Factory supplied bodies were designed by engineers and were not always as beautiful as consumers desired.

One such coachbuilder was the Earl Automobile Works, later the Don Lee Coach & Body Works, in Los Angeles, California. Don Lee's manager and chief designer was the son of the founder of Earl Automobile Works, one Harley Earl. Earl's success in providing custom bodies for luxury cars, including Cadillacs, caught the eye of executives at GM, who invited him to style Cadillac's new "companion make," La Salle.

The La Salle was a sort of junior-series Cadillac designed to fill the price


1948 FLEETWOOD SIXTY SPECIAL

gap between Buick and Cadillac. It was intended to carry much of the prestige of the Cadillac brand, but in a more accessible, owner-driven package. Earl's body design, the first at GM to be contributed by a stylist rather than a body engineer, fit the bill perfectly—giving coachbuilt panache to a production body. It led directly to the establishment of GM's Art & Colour Department and to Harley Earl's 30-year leadership of GM styling.

1938 SIXTY SPECIAL

While "bigger is better" has long been the mantra of American car designers, the success of the La Salle showed that there was demand for luxurious cars that didn't require the services of a chauffeur—and not just cut-rate ones to meet a price point. The first Series 60, offered as a 1936 model, was simply a smaller, less-expensive Cadillac to fill the gap that had been created when the La Salle had been itself de-valued for 1934 (by using an Oldsmobile-type straight-eight engine, for example).

Harley Earl and his protégé Bill Mitchell, however, recognized that the Series 60 had potential beyond just being a "mid-priced" Cadillac. For 1938, they debuted the Sixty Special, which was based on the Series 60, but radically different. The result was an instant classic still revered today.

The Sixty Special sat 3 inches lower than the Series 60, thanks to a double dropped frame. The front-end styling was largely taken from the Series 60, but with a modified grille. In a trendsetting move, the Sixty Special had no running boards—most makes would drop them by 1942—and instead the floors themselves were at what was running-board height on most other cars. The styling of the single body design (a four-door sedan) was taken from convertible sedans, but with a fixed steel roof. It was a forerunner of both the postwar hardtop designs and "three-box" styling.

The Series 60 would disappear after the 1938 model year, but the Sixty Special would continue on until 1976, always holding a special place in the Cadillac lineup. From 1940 on, it was always the most expensive owner-driven Cadillac available. It would even return once more for 1987 to 1993.

1941 SERIES SIXTY-ONE

As the U.S. economy improved in the early 1940s, GM product planners began to view the La Salle as increasingly redundant with the Cadillac brand—or possibly even as a leech on potential Cadillac sales. The Sixty Special had already established that a smaller Cadillac of sufficient luxury could be sold without any diminution of prestige, but there was also a market for a car of Cadillac quality and engineering but without the size and frills of the larger or more expensive Cadillacs. Further, expensive Buicks like the Series 90 Limited had eliminated the gap between Buick and Cadillac, erasing the niche the La Salle was intended to fill.

Thus, for the 1941 model year, Cadillac revived its Series Sixty-One designation, utilizing the smaller B-body platform that was shared with the Buick Special and Century, Oldsmobile Dynamic 76 and 78, and even the Pontiac Streamliner Torpedo. In this smaller car, available as a fastback sedan or coupe, buyers still got the same build quality and styling as other Cadillacs and features unavailable in lesser divisions like the 150-hp, 346-cu.in. flathead V-8 and even Hydra-Matic drive, if desired.

The Series Sixty-One lasted through the 1951 model year, though it joined the Series 62 on a C-body platform starting in 1948. Perhaps its most memorable moment came when the La Salle-replacement was selected by Briggs Cunningham as the basis for his All American assault on the 1950 24 Hours of Le Mans—the Series Sixty-One being the lightest vehicle available with Cadillac's 331-cu.in. OHV V-8 that year.

1941 SERIES SIXTY-ONE

1948 MODEL LINE

While the OHV V-8 that came out for 1949 was big news, bigger news to the general public was introduced the year before in the otherwise-identical-but-flathead-powered 1948 Cadillac—the tailfin. Much has been written about Harley Earl and his designers' trip to Selfridge Field, an airbase outside Detroit, just before World War II to see early model Lockheed P-38 Lightning interceptors and how the twin-tail design of the Lightning influenced the tailfin, but often overlooked is the importance of the tailfin to Cadillac design.

Pontiac had its Silver Streaks and Packard had its tombstone-shaped radiator, but Cadillac didn't have a design hallmark that permitted one to see the car at a distance and instantly recognize it as The Standard of the World. With the tailfin, initially just a modest bump to house the taillamp, Earl and company sought to provide Cadillac with an instant identifier.

Instead, they ignited a fad that would burn so brightly in the 1950s that subsequent generations would reject it as pure excess. In fairness, Pontiac would drop its "chrome suspenders" after 1956, and Packard steadily de-emphasized the tombstone shape after 1950, so it's doubtful that Cadillac really needed such a feature anyway. It sure was fun while it lasted, though.

1953 ELDORADO

For many Americans, the 1950s decade was one of intense optimism and unparalleled wealth. To channel that into new-car sales, automakers released a steady stream of dream cars to tantalize the public with what might come next in automotive innovations. Some of those dream cars even became a reality—such as the Cadillac Eldorado.

For the 1952 autoshow circuit, Cadillac customized a Series 62 convertible with, among other things, a wraparound windshield and dual exhausts exiting through pods in the rear bumper. Public response must have been good, because late in the 1953 model year, Cadillac announced that the Eldorado, "a special


1958 ELDORADO BROUGHAM

sports convertible built in the finest Cadillac tradition," would be available for purchase.

The Eldorado featured not only the wraparound windshield (a characteristic, like the Sixty Special's lack of running boards, that would soon become an industry standard) but a dipped beltline reminiscent of Howard "Dutch" Darrin's prewar coachwork, chrome wire wheels, a steel top boot, and a 3-inch lowering. At $7,750, Cadillac sold 532 Eldorados (compared with 8,367 Series 62 convertibles, which retailed for $4,144) and established "the golden one" as a Cadillac nameplate that would endure into the 21st century.

1957 ELDORADO BROUGHAM

With Eldorado established as the glamour car of the Cadillac lineup, it was only a natural the division would dream of even greater heights for the model. In 1955, it showed off a dream model at GM's Motorama show called the Eldorado Brougham. The dream car featured an airbag suspension and an overall height a full seven inches lower than production Cadillacs. It might have remained a mere styling exercise, too, if not for Ford Motor Company reviving the Continental nameplate with the 1956 Continental Mark II.

In the postwar years, Cadillac had found itself lacking for competition in the upper end of the market. Lincoln and Chrysler largely competed with Buick, and the Chrysler Imperial was never a huge challenge to Cadillac's dominance. Even Packard failed to make significant inroads against its traditional rival. The expensive, prestigious, conservatively styled Continental threatened that position, however.

Cadillac's response was expensive, prestigious, and anything but conservatively styled. Instead, it was the 1955 Motorama dream car updated and brought to life as the 1957 Cadillac Eldorado Brougham, a $13,074 four-door hardtop with suicide-hinged rear doors. The Eldorado Brougham's most eye-catching feature was its brushed-stainless-steel roof, and it too rode on air suspension. Only 400 were built and all were loaded, including dual-carburetor, 325-hp, 365-cu.in. V-8 power; trendsetting narrow-whitewall tires; automatic trunk lid; power seat with memory function; cruise control; air conditioning; cigarette and tissue dispensers; and even a set of magnetized tumblers for the glovebox. Another 304 were built for the 1958 model year.

1959 MODEL LINE

No visual representation of "The Fifties" is complete without at least a part of the 1959 Cadillac represented. Now in its 12th model year, the tailfin had reached its pinnacle on the brand that had spawned it. The 1959 model year was a clean break with 1958 styling—likely a response to the retirement of Harley Earl and the shock that was Chrysler's 1957 Forward Look.

The tailfins, with their striking bullet taillamps on non-Eldorado Broughams, weren't the only thing bigger for 1959, either. The formerly 365-cu.in. V-8 had now been stroked to a 390-cu.in. displacement (for 325 hp with a single four-barrel or 345 hp with Eldorado's triple-carburetor setup) and the 130-inch wheelbase and 225-inch overall length meant that 1959 Cadillacs were so large they weren't permitted into some parking garages.

Four-door Cadillacs received three different rooflines for 1959, depending on the variety specified. The Eldorado Brougham had dropped the wraparound windshield and had its own, formal roofline—now painted instead of brushed stainless. Six-window cars received a sloping roofline with fixed rear quarter windows, and four-window cars got the distinctive "flattop" roof with wraparound rear window. Although the '60 models looked similar, there is no mistaking the flamboyant 1959 Cadillacs.

1967 ELDORADO

As with the Hydra-Matic, Cadillac let Oldsmobile field-test front-wheel-drive technology for a year before adopting the design itself for 1967. Fittingly, this distinctive new Cadillac was given the Eldorado name, which would become synonymous with front-wheel drive until that became virtually the industry standard in the 1990s.

Although the Eldorado was smaller than all other Cadillacs at the time, front-wheel drive allowed for a flat floor, giving as many as six adults a comfortable ride in the new model. Power was not lacking, either, as the Cadillac 340-hp, 429-cu.in. V-8 was adapted to the Eldorado drivetrain. Eldorados were also available with front disc brakes, an exclusive to the model for 1967.

Styling of the Eldorado was in the "personal luxury" vein like the Buick Riviera. It featured one-piece front windows, thanks to improved ventilation that eliminated the need for ventipanes, and hidden headlamps, both of which contributed to a smooth, modern demeanor. It was a sales hit, with 17,930 sold in its first year.

1976 SEVILLE

Like most of the U.S. auto industry, Cadillac was taken by surprise by the foreign competition. Cadillac's earliest overseas competitors were not from Japan, however, but Germany. Brands like Mercedes-Benz had figured out how to appeal to American consumers, and the smaller stature of its cars was not proving to be a liability like Detroit had assumed—especially in the wake of the 1973 oil crisis.

Perhaps taking note of the Sixty Special (Bill Mitchell was, after all, still at GM at this time), Cadillac recognized that a smaller, but still luxurious, vehicle could be worthy of the Cadillac name. As with the Series Sixty-One, the division started with a platform shared with other GM divisions. In this case, it was the X-body, shared with the Chevrolet Nova, Oldsmobile Omega, Pontiac Ventura, and Buick Apollo.

Cadillac did not merely build a nicer Nova, however. It completely re-engineered the X platform into the new


1967 ELDORADO

K platform. Four-wheel disc brakes were made standard after the first year, and the K platform heavily emphasized ride quality and noise reduction in order to impart the performance and occupant experience expected of a Cadillac.

Despite a higher price tag than some larger models, the Seville sold well. Ironically, however, many sales went to seniors looking for an easier-to-drive car than to the intended young-and-wealthy demographic who were buying BMWs and Mercedes-Benzes. One unfortunate side effect of the Seville program, however, would be Cadillac's decision to later attempt a similar makeover to GM's J-body compact. The resulting Cimarron was considered to be little more than a Chevrolet Cavalier with Cadillac badges.

1976 ELDORADO CONVERTIBLE

"The Last American Convertible" is how the 1976 Cadillac Eldorado Convertible was promoted, and many of the 14,000 produced were purchased as investments by folks who believed the claim. In fact, it did look like the era of the convertible was over. Since air conditioning and interstate highways had become the norm, the appeal of open motoring had been steadily diminishing, and along with them convertible sales. The perceived threat of federal rollover standards never materialized, but nevertheless the automakers gradually dropped open cars one by one.

The 1976 Eldorado was a gargantuan car in the best Cadillac tradition. Still a front-wheel driver, as had been the norm since the 1967 model, it was powered by a 500-cu.in. V-8 rated at 195 net horsepower. It rode a 126.3-inch wheelbase, was 225-inches long overall, and weighed in excess of 5,000 pounds. The last 200 produced were finished in a special Bicentennial Edition scheme—painted white with red-and-blue striping.

Luckily for the motoring public, GM reconsidered the worth of the convertible, and the Eldorado line would regain an open car for the 1984 model year—much to the chagrin of some who had invested in one of the "last convertibles" back in 1976. It's worth noting that some aftermarket companies continued to build Cadillac convertibles in the meantime for those of sufficient means who desired them.

1987 ALLANTÉ

The 1980s were something of a renaissance in Detroit, and Cadillac was no exception. In addition to reintroducing the Eldorado convertible, the division also renewed its acquaintance with Italian coachbuilder Pininfarina, which had built the bodies of the 1959 Eldorado Brougham and several dream cars for Cadillac. This newest collaboration would have a chassis by Cadillac and a body by Pininfarina. The name of this project would be Allanté.

The Allanté was a two-seat roadster aimed at the Mercedes-Benz SL and Jaguar XJ-S. As was modern at the time, it utilized front-wheel drive. Unusually for a Cadillac, it rode a short, 99.4-inch wheelbase. Underhood was the 4.1-liter "High Technology" V-8, which was rated at 170 hp. For 1989, the engine was bored out to 4.5 liters and rated at 200 hp. In the final model year, 1993, the Allanté received the excellent 32-valve DOHC Northstar V-8, displacing 4.6 liters and making 295 horsepower.

Altogether, Cadillac built 21,430 Allantés. The handsome, distinctive design went a long way to renewing Cadillac's reputation as a desirable brand. It also paved the way to the XLR roadster of 2004 and the luxury-performance image the brand cultivates today.


1976 SEVILLE

Innovations

Cadillac's history of pioneering automotive ideas

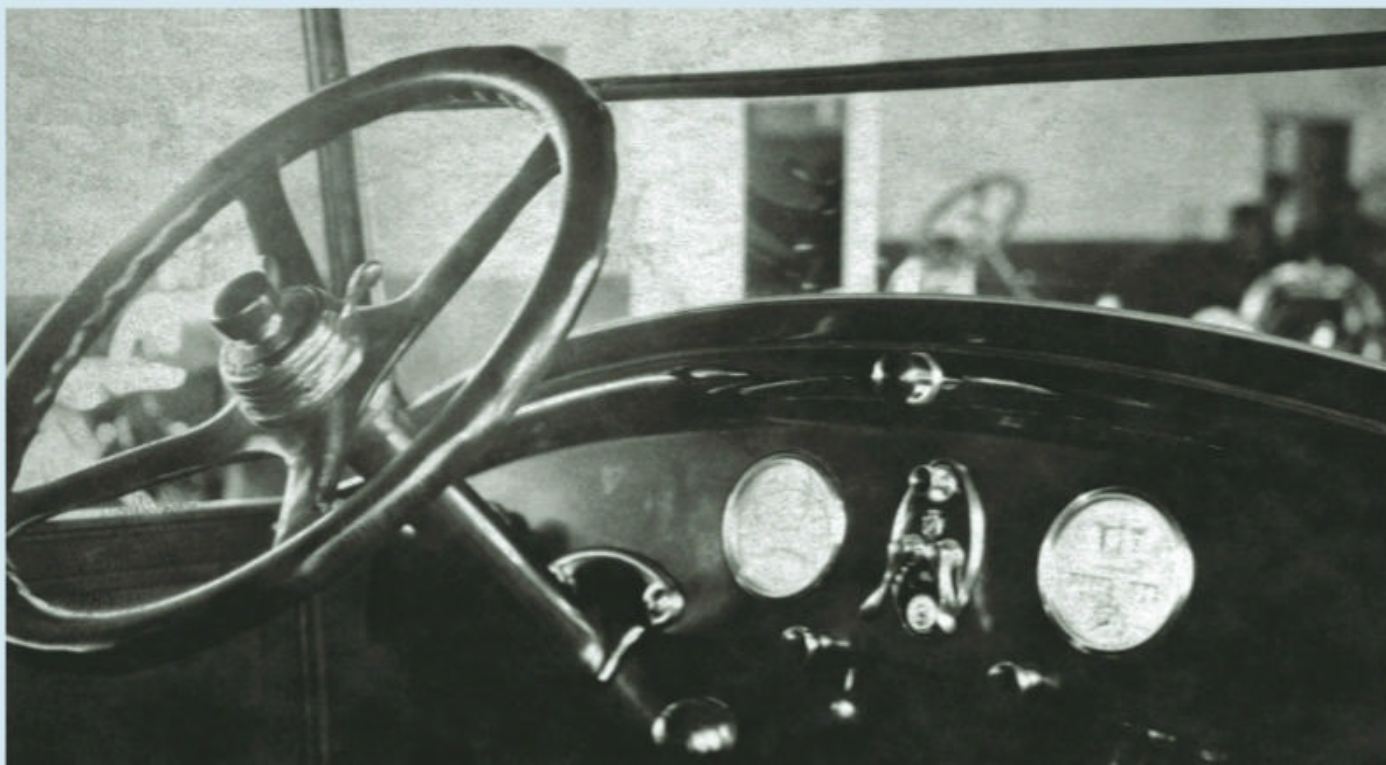
BY JEFF KOCH • IMAGES COURTESY GM MEDIA ARCHIVES AND HEMMINGS STAFF

Since 1902, the Cadillac brand has eschewed the "good enough" tag and forged a path of technical innovation in all departments—body, chassis, engine, and, of course, comfort and convenience. The company was founded on precision principles, and thus became known as "The Standard of the World."

The list presented here includes just the highlights of Cadillac's myriad technical advancements — most of which set the standard for cars that we enjoy today, new or old. We are ignoring those game changers, like knee-action independent front suspension, full-steel turret-top bodies, and the Autronic Eye, that were shared among GM divisions simultaneously. Cadillac's engine innovations were so numerous that we've dedicated an entire story to it within this special section.

1902 Precision was an early Cadillac attribute; company founder Henry Leland had been an apprentice of Samuel Colt, he of the eponymous pistol, and used tools that could measure down to a hundred thousandths of an inch. Leland's use of gauge blocks (also called Johansson Blocks), then a relatively new technology, ensured that Cadillacs were produced to tight tolerances from the get-go. In 1908, the Royal Automobile Club of England disassembled three single-cylinder Cadillac models selected randomly, and each was stripped down to its 721 component parts. The bits were then mixed up among them, and the cars were reassembled—with no modifications to parts allowed—and driven around the Brooklands race circuit for 500 miles. No repairs were needed beyond the attention given to a single flat tire. The RAC awarded its Dewar Trophy to Cadillac, and the automaker adopted its "Standard of the World" slogan as a result.

1910 While coachbuilt bodies were previously available with enclosed cabins, Cadillac was the first to offer such protection from the elements in its standard line. The Model 30 Coupe, a late spring addition, wasn't inexpensive at $2,200.



1910 Automotive engines had been running on a magneto ignition system that was often unreliable. Delco engineered a breaker-point ignition with an external coil that was seen to be a big improvement over the magneto; it became a standard Cadillac feature.

1912 In 1908, Byron Carter, a friend of Leland's and founder of the Cartercar marque, stopped to help a friend crank start his Cadillac. The crank kicked back, hit Carter in the head, and killed him. Leland was devastated, and he and engineer Charles Kettering combined forces to create the electric starter. It debuted on the 1912 Model 30. Cadillac's Delco electrical system integrated electric lighting (including high beams), ignition, and electric starting. In 1914, this combined system was subjected to another RAC test: 1,000 grueling back-to-back starts and shutdowns. Cadillac passed, and the RAC awarded another of its Dewar Trophies for excellence.

1912 Engine temperature was regulated by a thermostat.

1914 Cadillac briefly adopted a two-speed rear axle, something normally used in trucks, to increase speed and lower engine revs.

1916 Cadillac was the first to organize cabin controls into what we can recognize as a contemporary layout as early as 1916. The Type 53 used a key-start ignition; placed clutch, brake, and accelerator pedals next to each other on the floor; and located both the gearshift and the handbrake in the center of the car, at the driver's right hand.

1922 Cadillac drivers could forget about all carburetor functions, save for the cold-start choke, thanks to a newly added thermostatic mixture control.

1924 Smoothness joined V-8 power for the first time as Cadillac introduced crankshaft counterweights to greatly reduce vibrations and harshness.

1924 Cadillac introduced Duco (pyroxylin) paint finishes in a variety of single hues and two-tone combinations.

1925 The second-generation Cadillac V-8 included the first use of crankcase ventilation on a production car.

1927 Cadillac was the first U.S. car-maker to hire a stylist. Styling was frequently an afterthought in the early days of motoring—function was far more important than form—but Cadillac saw the benefit of putting some sizzle on its high-class, high-priced steak. Harley Earl worked at his father's coachbuilders shop in California; local Cadillac dealer Don Lee purchased the shop in 1919, and Earl soon attracted the attention of Cadillac general manager Lawrence Fisher. The success of his trial design, the 1927 La Salle (companion marque to Cadillac), convinced Alfred P. Sloan to hire him to head up GM's new Art and Colour section.

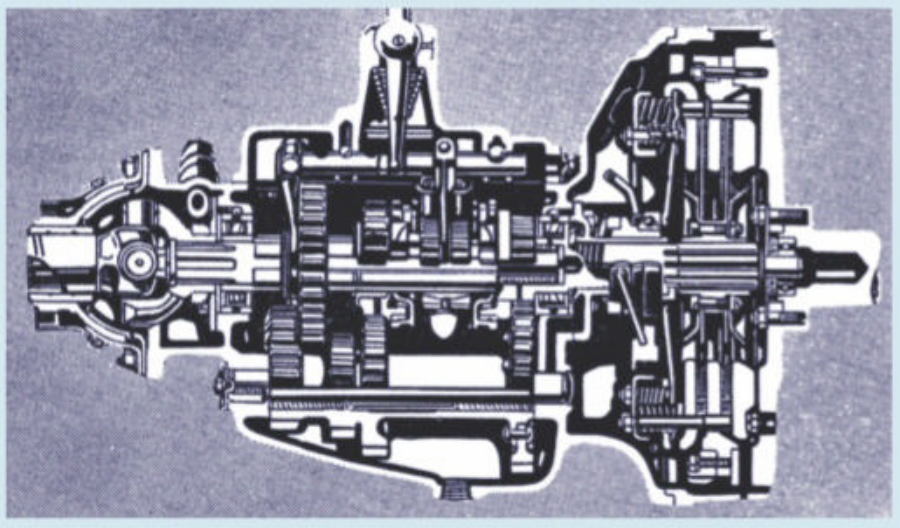
1929 When you try to engage gears that are rotating at two different speeds, you get a whole lot of grinding noise that's neither pleasant to the ear nor healthy for the life of the transmission. Double-clutching was not an art everyone could master. The answer, which debuted on 1929 Cadillacs, was Synchro-Mesh. A cone clutch and blocking ring are employed, and the teeth are prevented from making contact until the rotating gears are synchronized. The result: no more grinding gears, and a far more Cadillac-like driving experience.

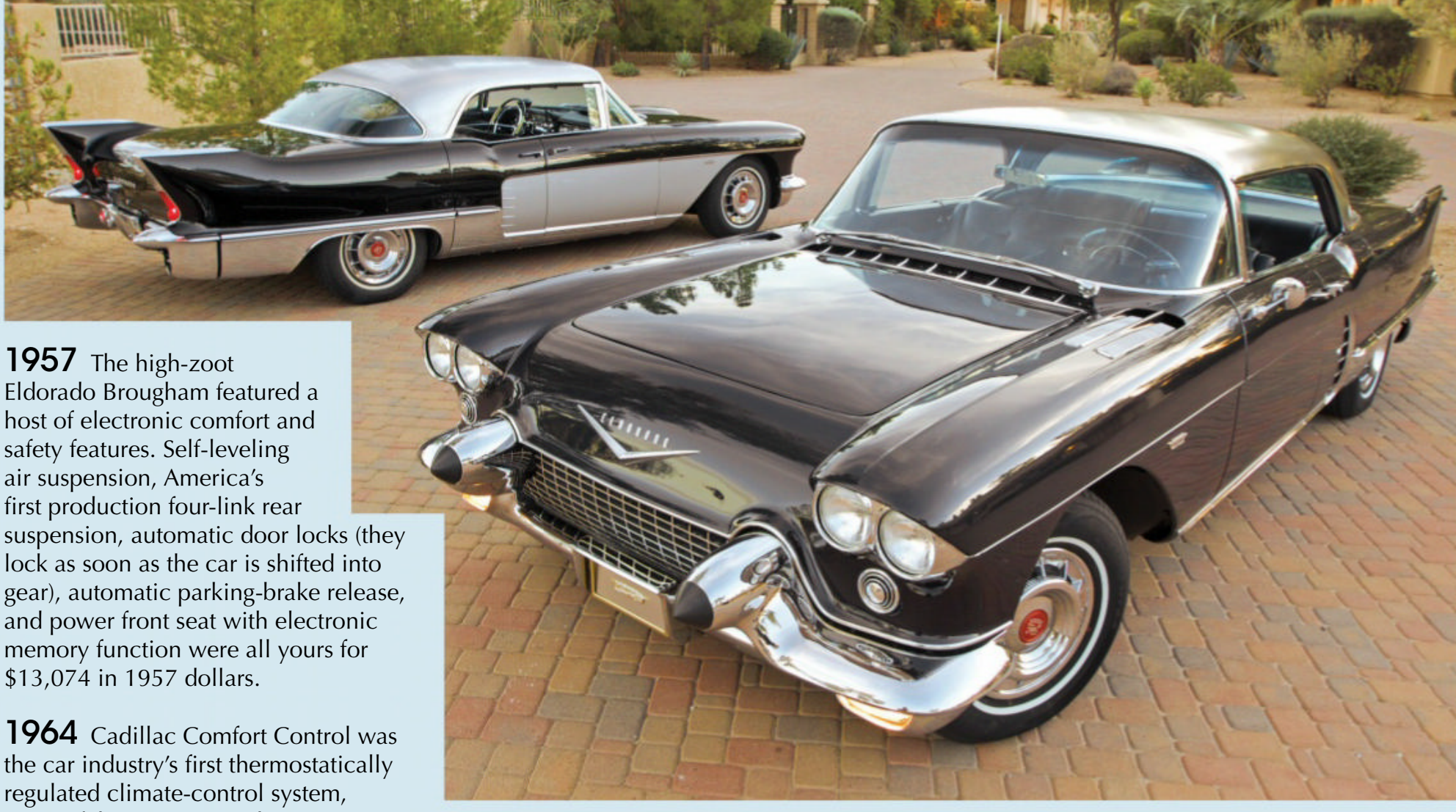
1930 Radio had been around for a decade; aftermarket car radios, from the likes of Transitone and Galvin and Motorola (see page 18), had existed since 1927. But the first factory installation of a radio? Why, Cadillac, of course. Every 1930 Cadillac had antenna wiring buried in the roof, whether the car was radio-equipped or not.

1938 Cadillac offered the first factory-installed sunroof on an American car, on the Bill Mitchell-styled Sixty Special. Just 1,500 sunroof-equipped Cadillacs were sold over a four-year span.

1938 Also in 1938, Cadillac moved the shift lever from the floor to the steering column. This "three on the tree" shifting allows three abreast seating in Cadillacs.

1954 The padded dash was a safety feature that protected in two ways. A glare-proof Elascofab pad atop the instrument panel meant that light would be less likely to reflect into a driver's eyes, and of course the padding could help prevent injury in the case of a minor collision.





1957 The high-zoot Eldorado Brougham featured a host of electronic comfort and safety features. Self-leveling air suspension, America's first production four-link rear suspension, automatic door locks (they lock as soon as the car is shifted into gear), automatic parking-brake release, and power front seat with electronic memory function were all yours for $13,074 in 1957 dollars.

1964 Cadillac Comfort Control was the car industry's first thermostatically regulated climate-control system, a trio of thermistors regulating air conditioning, heating, and ventilation. Just set the desired temperature, and let the car do the rest.

1965 The first tilt-and-telescoping steering wheel appeared.

1966 First use of variable-ratio power steering in the USA, for slower freeway steering reactions at speed, combined with fewer required turns, lock to lock, for ease of parking.

1970 Starting midway through 1970, an optional computerized anti-lock brake system was added to prevent the (unweighted, when braking) rear wheels from locking up. ABS was a mid-year option on the front-wheel-drive Eldorado.

1973 Along with usual theft deterrents like door locks and a locking steering wheel, Cadillac added an alarm that flashed the lights and honked the horn when unwanted intruders visited upon your car.

1974 An optional airbag system, designed to protect the driver in case of a front-end collision, became available.

1975 Fuel injection was nothing new to GM. But integrating electronic controls as a way of regulating idle and emissions was new. The all-iron Oldsmobile 350-cu.in. V-8 used in the 1975 Seville was unremarkable, but the top end was bespoke: On a new intake, Cadillac used a new Bendix-designed electronic fuel injection unit, making the Seville the first V-8-powered American car designed with standard EFI. Sensors fed ambient air temp, coolant temp, manifold air pressure, engine speed, and throttle position data to the ECU. This in turn told the injectors how much fuel to use. A speed-density-type computer, a single four-throat throttle body, and eight injectors nourished the engine. Electronic fuel injection delivered 10 more horsepower—180 versus 170 for a carbureted 1976 350-cu.in. Oldsmobile engine. Electronic fuel injection was also an option across the Cadillac lineup.

1979 Seville and Eldorado gained an optional trip computer that could display the following: engine speed, average speed, arrival time, elapsed trip time, and miles still to travel.

1980 The car's various computers, previously separate entities, now all talked to each other: Integrated electronic circuits worked and monitored fuel injection, ignition, and vehicle diagnostics.

1981 The (in)famous V-8-6-4 system was designed to shut off either two or four cylinders to increase fuel mileage out of the 368-cu.in. Cadillac V-8. This was determined by Cadillac's onboard Computer Command Module, which used sensors to monitor engine speed, EGR, idle speed, intake manifold air pressure, coolant temp, air-pump operation, and exhaust—and adjusted the air-fuel mixture accordingly. If the computer sensed a sustained cruise, a microprocessor capable of 300,000 decisions per second would then signal a solenoid-activated blocker plate that prevented the camshaft from opening the valve. Your 6-liter V-8 would become a 4.5-liter V-6 or a 3.0-liter V-4 at cruise; a digital "MPG Sentinel" gauge on the dash would reveal how many cylinders were in operation. Fuel economy gains of 15 percent or more were realized when it worked. Unfortunately, the software needed to run the system wasn't nearly fast or powerful enough to manage the job at hand. It disappeared quickly but its features appear on modern generations of GM V-8s.

1990 Front-wheel-drive cars are easy if you want to light the front tires and peel out: The wheels become unweighted as you accelerate, and the front tires scramble for traction. To eliminate such juvenilia, the first front-wheel-drive traction-control system was installed on the Allanté.

1996 Cadillac pioneered onboard GPS (OnStar) and cellphone technology for customer assistance. Or it was the start of Big Brother monitoring your car, if you were really paranoid.

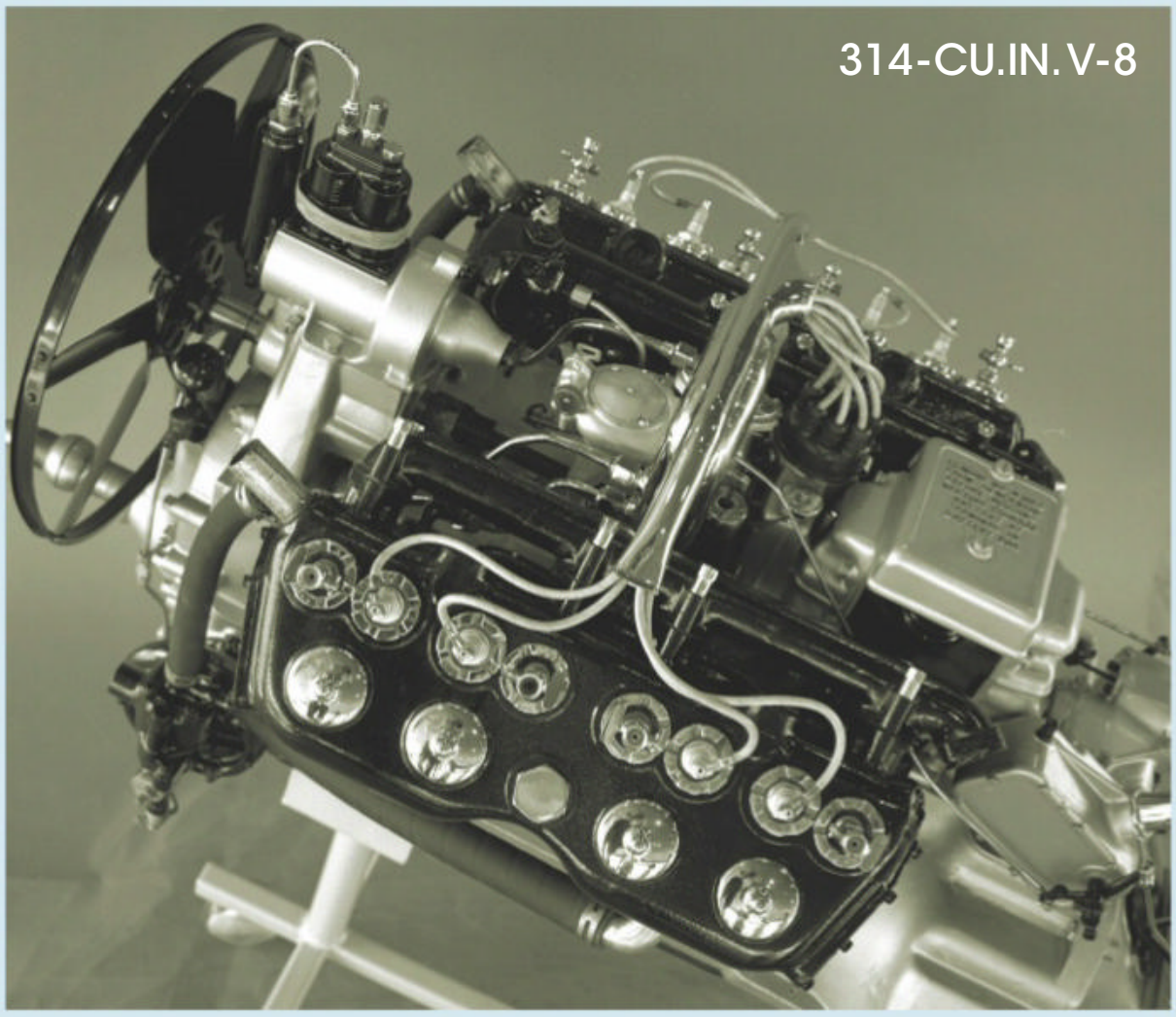
2000 Night Vision, a joint venture between Cadillac and Raytheon, used infrared imaging to see heat signatures before light beams would pick up something in the road ahead—like a deer, or a stranded car.

2002 Magnetic Ride Control debuted on the Seville and was soon licensed to everyone from Ford to Ferrari. MagneRide shock absorbers allowed a better blend of ride and handling. A computer senses road conditions and sends a signal to an electromagnetic coil to switch on and off (up to thousands of times a second). The shock absorber fluid is filled with magnetic particles. When the coil is switched on, the magnetic particles snap into place, allowing for greater resistance in the shock absorber, and more spirited cornering. Yet over the open road, the traditional Cadillac soft ride remains.

Engines of Distinction

Legendary Cadillac V-8s, V-12, and V-16

BY THOMAS A. DeMAURO • PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF GENERAL MOTORS AND THE HEMMINGS STAFF



314-CU.IN. V-8

Luxury automaker Cadillac developed several celebrated engines in the 20th century fortified with trailblazing engineering that improved performance, operation, and/or efficiency while maintaining or enhancing its hallmark smoothness. Proving that progress isn't always a guarantee of success, however, there were also some noteworthy strides that didn't fare as well.

The selection of engines presented here denotes a few Cadillac firsts (and in some instances, industry firsts) or significant achievements that reaffirmed the company's commitment to excellence. Also included is an engine that may have set Cadillac's reputation back a pace, yet all are deserving of discussion.

314-CU.IN. V-8

Cadillac garnered praise and prestige when it engineered America's first mass-produced V-8 to replace its four-cylinder engine. Released in the fall of 1914 for the 1915 models, the Type 51 314-cu.in. 90-degree V-8 featured a 3.125-inch bore and a 5.125-inch stroke.

Its block consisted of two individual iron cylinder banks with nondetachable L-heads bolted to an aluminum crankcase. Capped inspection holes provided access to the bores and valves to remove carbon buildup without having to tear down the engine. The crankshaft, with four throws in a single plane, was supported by three main bearings. Alloy steel fork-and-blade connecting rods were 12½-inches long, and the pistons had three ring packs of three rings each. The centrally located camshaft had eight lobes. Tulip-shaped head intake valves and flat exhaust valves were all 1 9/16-inch. A one-barrel carburetor delivered air and fuel, and a Delco ignition provided the spark. Output was 70 hp at 2,400 rpm.

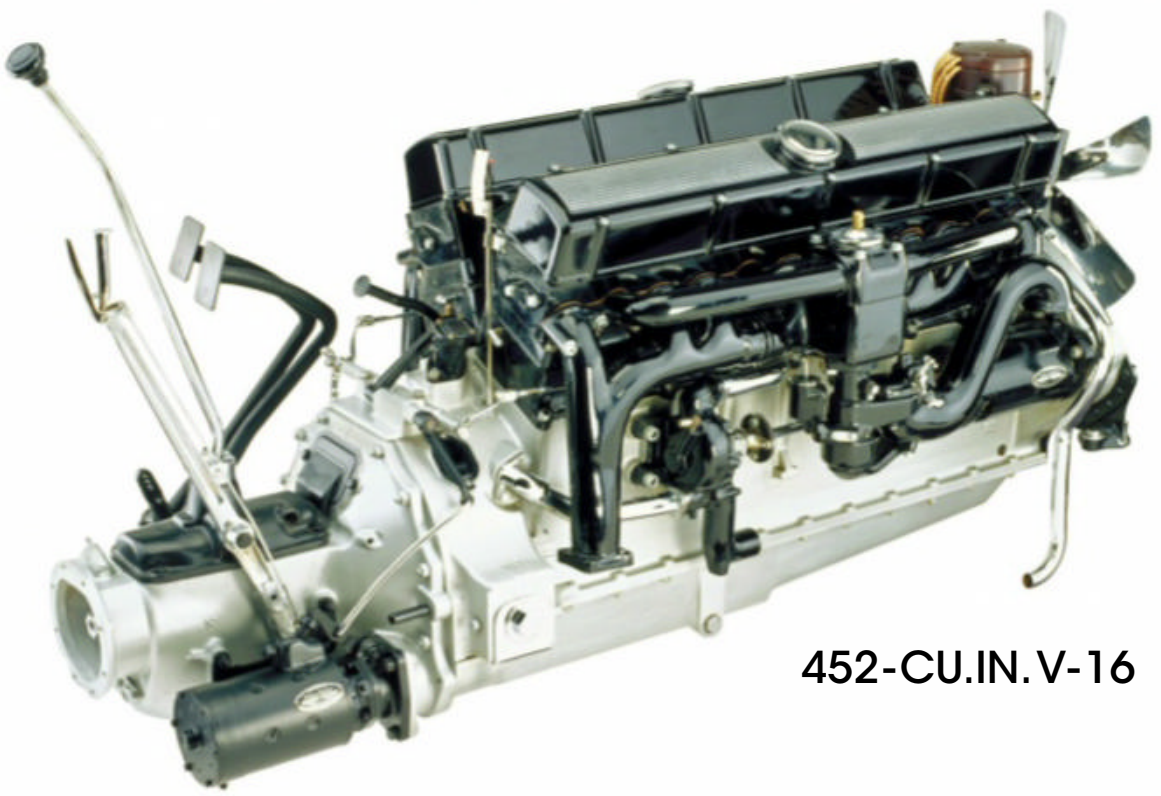
Among many later refinements, detachable heads arrived in 1918, as did a "compensated crankshaft" for 1924 for smoother operation.

452-CU.IN. V-16

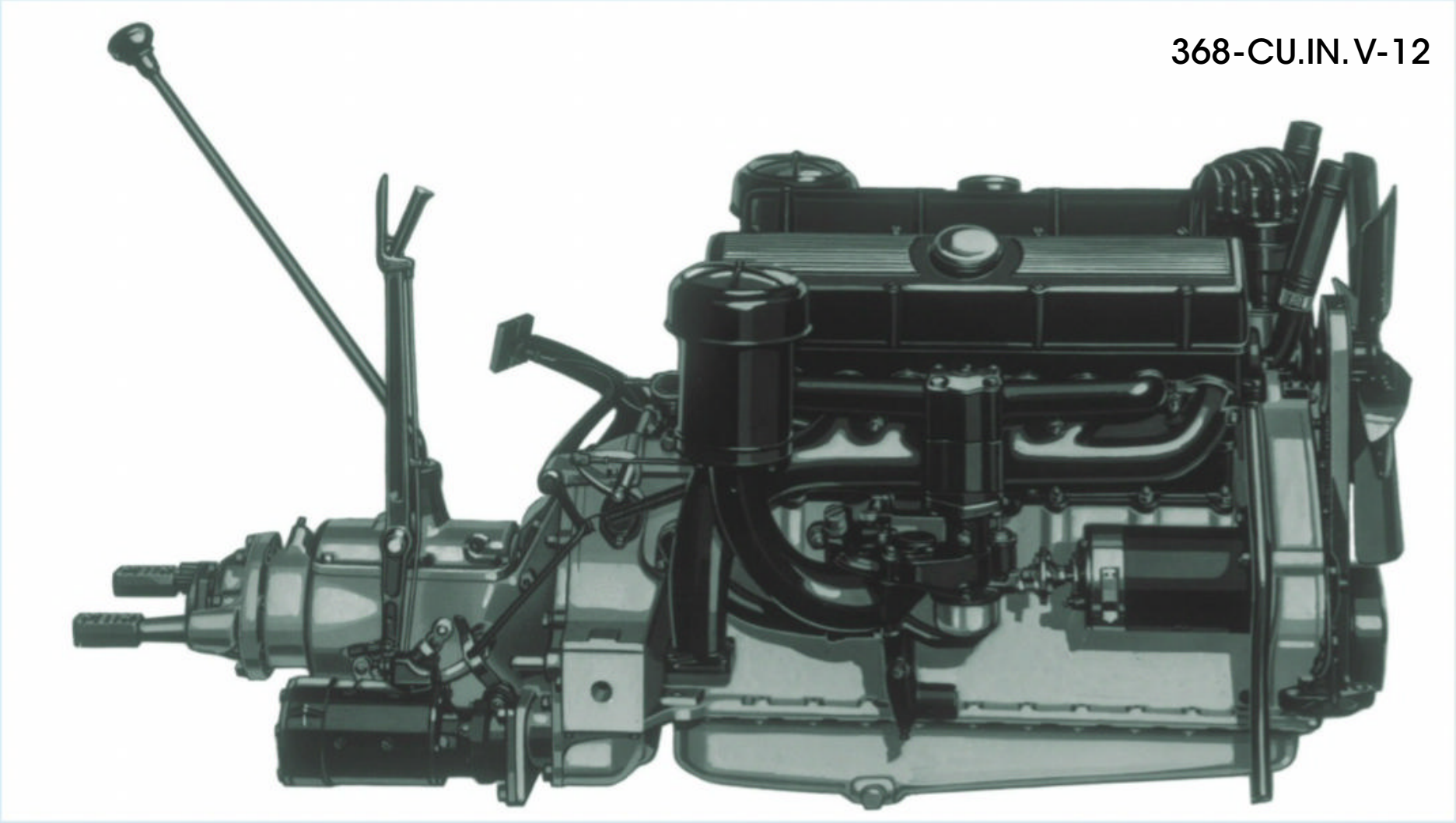
While V-8s continued in other Cadillacs, the most prestigious and expensive of the brand were the breathtakingly styled V-16s. The Series 452 was the first V-16 offered for public sale in the U.S., debuting for the 1930 model year.

The 452-cu.in. engine had a narrow 45-degree V angle, aluminum alloy crankcase, bolt-in iron cylinder blocks, 3-inch bore and 4-inch stroke, five main bearings, counterweighted crankshaft, 5.5:1 compression ratio, and cylinder heads with overhead valves actuated by shaft-mounted rocker arms, valve springs, pushrods, hydraulic valve silencers, and a cam. There was a one-barrel carburetor on each side of the engine and a centrally located distributor. Even the exterior of the 452 was exquisitely detailed.

At 165 hp and 320 lb-ft of torque, the V-16 was powerful, inherently smooth, and



452-CU.IN. V-16



368-CU.IN. V-12

perfectly in character with the luxury cars it powered. Later rated at 185 hp, the 452 continued to be produced through 1937. For 1938, a redesigned 135-degree V-angle 431-cu.in. V-16 replaced it, and lasted through the 1940 model year.

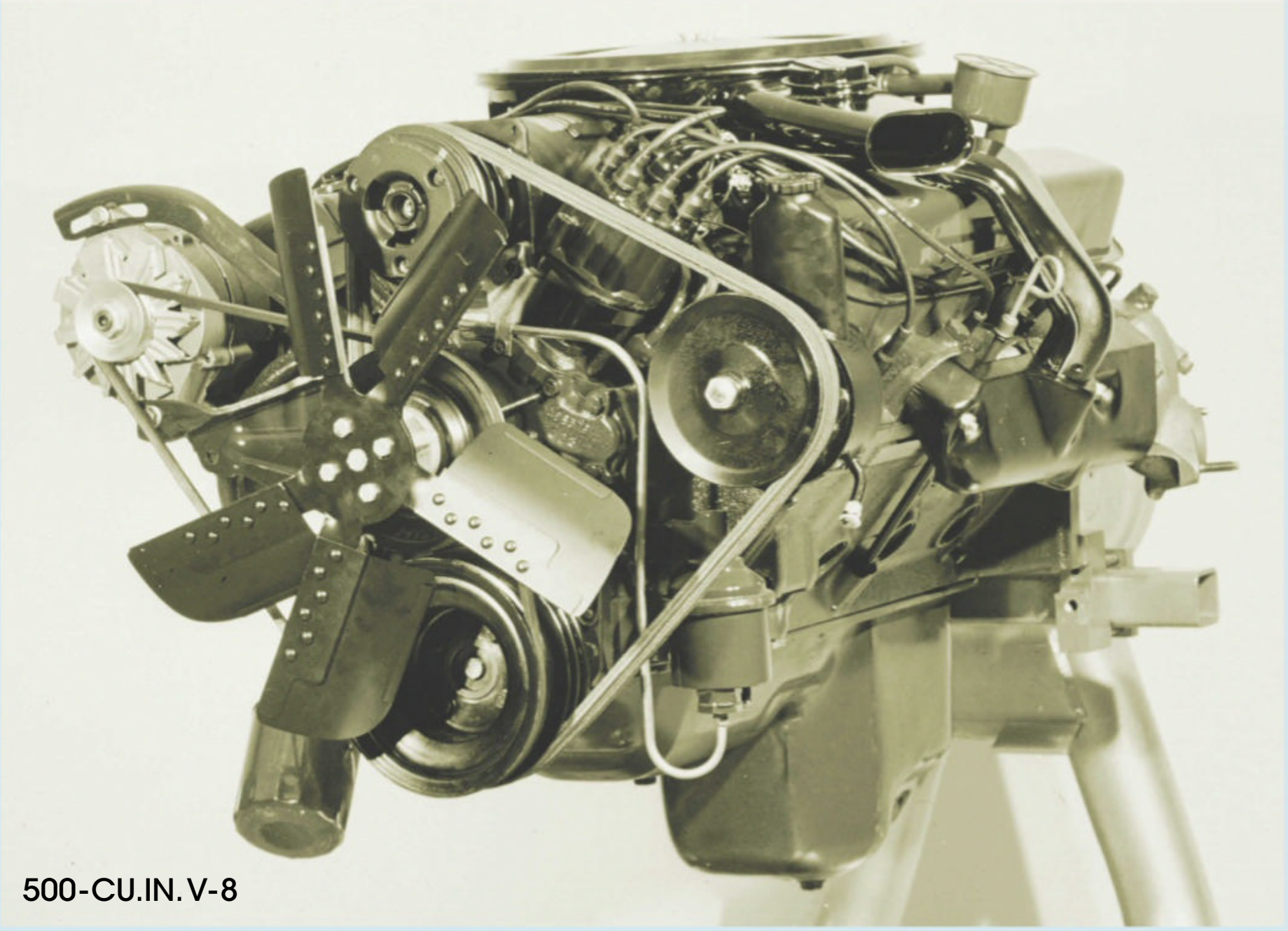
368-CU.IN. V-12

Information regarding the V-12 was sometimes used as a distraction to throw competitors and the public off the trail of the V-16's development, as both were being engineered simultaneously. The V-12, essentially the V-16 design less four cylinders and with four main bearings instead of five, retained the 4-inch stroke but had a larger 3.125-inch bore for 368-cu.in. Cadillac's only production V-12 engine produced 135 hp. It arrived in 1931 models and was retired following the 1937 model year. V-12-equipped Cadillacs were status symbols in their own right.

331-CU.IN. V-8

Cadillac and Oldsmobile released their first OHV V-8s for their 1949 models and they set the tone for future American V-8 design. The valves were now located in the heads of Cadillac's 331 V-8 instead of the block as with the previous L-head engine, and they were actuated by a camshaft that used quiet hydraulic lifters along with pushrods, shaft-mounted

331-CU.IN. V-8



500-CU.IN. V-8

rocker arms, and valve springs. Overhead valves allowed more efficient wedge combustion chambers for later compression ratio increases.

The 331's block incorporated five main bearings instead of three to increase rigidity, and it was oversquare with a larger bore diameter (3.8125 inches) than crankshaft stroke length (at 3.625 inches). The shorter-stroke/larger-bore design reduced piston travel and friction power losses. It was a departure from the undersquare Cadillac flathead engine and others of the day.

A new "slipper"-type aluminum piston had the skirts cut out on the sides to allow the crank counterweight to pass without hitting the piston when at the bottom of its stroke. Consequently, shorter 6.625-inch-long connecting rods could be used, which in turn permitted more compact block dimensions.

A two-barrel carburetor and breaker-point distributor were employed, and the compression ratio was 7.5:1. The engine was rated at 160 hp and 312 lb-ft of torque, and was considerably lighter than the previous design.

Compression ratios continued to increase through the 331's production run, a four-barrel arrived in 1952, and by 1955 output had surged to 270 hp for the dual-four-barrel engine. Displacement was increased to 365-cu.in. for 1956.

500-CU.IN. V-8

New for 1970, the 500-cu.in. four-barrel Eldorado engine was the largest mass-produced by Cadillac to date. An earth-moving 550 lb-ft of torque and 400 hp also made it the division's most powerful of the era.

Based on the existing 472-cu.in. engine, which was new for 1968, the 500's

stroke was increased to 4.304 inches from 4.06. Retaining the 4.3-inch bore, the engine was essentially square. The 2.00/1.625-inch valves remained, as did front-mounted distributor and engine accessories.

The horsepower honeymoon was short-lived, however, as the 500 arrived just in time to be emasculated by emission regulations of the 1970s. For 1971, the compression ratio dropped to 8.5:1 from 10:1 to run on regular fuel, and output slid to 365 hp/535 lb-ft. For 1972-'73, more real-world net-power ratings revealed 235 hp/385 lb-ft. Just 210 hp/380 lb-ft were on tap for 1974. The catalytic converter debuted, and the 500 was now also standard in large Cadillacs at 190 hp/360 lb-ft for 1975-'76.

Advancements included the arrival of optional electronic (HEI) for 1974 and optional electronic fuel injection for mid-year 1975 that increased the ratings to 215 hp/400 lb-ft. The 500 was retired after 1976 and replaced with the 425-cu.in. version.

HT-4100 V-8

HT-4100 V-8

On the heels of the tribulations with the 6.0-liter V-8-6-4 engine (see page 59), Cadillac hurried to market for 1982 with its new High Technology (HT) 4100 V-8, which was assembled in a heavily computerized plant. A 3.465-inch bore and 3.307-inch stroke netted 4.1 liters (250-cu.in.). Earning its high-tech name, the light 420-pound engine had a deep-skirt, open-deck, die-cast aluminum block with replaceable wet iron cylinder sleeves; a broad aluminum intake manifold, which reduced the required size and weight of the cast-iron heads; enhanced cooling; a bolt-in aluminum valve lifter carrier, Digital Fuel Injection (DFI) with a two-barrel throttle body; functions commanded by an ECM; and on-board diagnostics. The HT-4100 also ran at 210-degrees to reduce emissions. However, it generated just 125 hp and 190 lb-ft of torque—later years 135 hp, 125 hp, and 130 hp.

The HT V-8 was not without teething issues, however. There were coolant leaks into the oil, head gasket failures, intake gasket leaks, cylinder head bolts pulling out, and more.

Power peaked for the 4100 with an electronic SPFI 170-hp and 235 lb-ft of torque version in the 1987-'88 Allanté. After 1988, the 4100 was phased out in favor of the larger 4.5-liter that had debuted that year.

4.6-LITER NORTHSTAR V-8

The tech-laden Northstar V-8 arrived in the fall 1993, Allanté (initially) arming Cadillac for battle against prestige class imports. This all-aluminum 4.6-liter (3.7-inch bore, 3.3-inch stroke, 279-cu.in.) engine had dual overhead cams and 32 valves. Its die-cast aluminum 90-degree V-8 block used a separate lower crankcase that supported the crankshaft. The iron cylinder liners were not replaceable. Each head had two camshafts (intake and exhaust), 16 valves—four per cylinder, and direct-acting hydraulic lash adjusters. The cams were chain-driven and employed tensioners. Sequential port fuel injection, a distributor-less ignition, and more were commanded by a Powertrain Control Module.

4.6-LITER NORTHSTAR V-8

Performance was improved with 270 hp/300 lb-ft of torque or 295 hp/290 lb-ft of torque for early engines depending upon the model. A 275-hp and 300-hp version arrived around 1995. Hi-po models received a 320 hp 4.6 with variable valve timing in 2004, and 4.4-liter 443-hp and 469-hp supercharged VVT engines starting in 2006. Production of the 4.6-liter ended after 2011.

Hemmings Motor News

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SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14th

- CRUISE-IN SPECTACULAR
  Gates open at 8:00 a.m. An all-makes car show that's open to cars, trucks, and motorcycles. Including: muscle cars, street rods, sports cars, exotics, and classics. Awards at 2:00 p.m.
- CELEBRATORY BANQUET and cocktail hour
  Cocktail reception with cash bar at 6:00 p.m. and dinner available at 7:00 p.m. at Towers Hall on the Fort William Henry property. Keynote Speaker and Honorary Chairman: TBA.
  Limited seating, order early!

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 15th

- CONCOURS d'ELEGANCE — TROPHIES TO BE AWARDED
  9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Open to concours-quality cars, by invitation only. Winners also will appear in the pages of *Hemmings Motor News* and *Hemmings Classic Car*.
  Two awards for Best in Show: Prewar and Postwar.

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Carrozzeria Pinin Farina rebodied just one 1955 Nash Ambassador, and this is it

BY MARK J. McCOURT • PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF KOCH

From the earliest days of motoring, luxury car buyers in America could have French, British, German, Belgian, or other similarly foreign coachwork fitted to their domestic chassis. In the immediate postwar period, automakers again turned to overseas designers when they wanted their most exclusive models to have a fresh, "continental" look. Prominent Italian design houses like Carrozzerias Touring, Ghia, and Pinin Farina sometimes acted like for-hire off-site prototyping departments for Chrysler, General Motors, and Nash-Kelvinator. That Kenosha firm leveraged its relationship with the famed Ferrari stylist in Turin to promote its early-Fifties line, and one of the resulting customs offers a unique taste of what might have been.

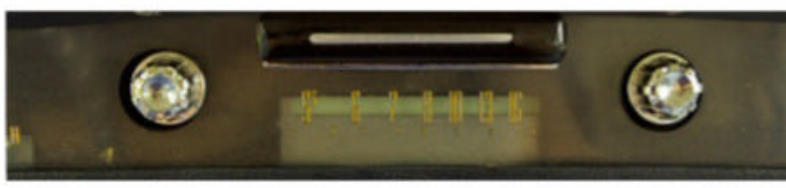
"In late 1949, Nash-Kelvinator vice president George Romney signed an agreement with Battista 'Pinin' Farina to design cars for Nash," explains automotive historian and *HCC* columnist Pat Foster. "At that time, the company had a small styling section attached to Engineering, but no real design office, and often hired outside designers to do its vehicle styling. The Pinin Farina contract specified that the Italian firm would build a certain number of fullsize prototypes of various Nash cars. The first two were for the 1952 Nash senior cars—the Golden Airflyte models—and the 1952 Nash-Healey."

That model year was very important for this independent firm, as Nash would be celebrating a milestone: 50 years in business. Having hired former Oldsmobile and Chevrolet styling studio head Edmund E. Anderson away from GM to lead its first in-house styling studio in 1949, the automaker was exploring new design directions with show cars like the 1950 NXI (Nash eXperimental International), which led to the much-loved 1954 Metropolitan, and production cars like the 1950-'51 Panelcraft-bodied Nash-Healey. The sophisticated-looking second generation of this sporting roadster would be Nash buyers' first pure taste of Pinin Farina design, and would signal a growing relationship between the highly regarded Italian and American companies.

Surprisingly, the carrozzeria's design proposal for the 1952 senior line would be deemed "too European," having stepped away from established Nash cues like fully shrouded wheels, but one of its key elements would be adopted for production: the reverse-sweep C-pillar that allowed for a wrap-around rear window, a styling cue that would be reinforced on the 1954 Nash-Healey coupe. Pinin Farina himself appeared in Nash advertisements for the Golden Airflyte cars, which were well received in the industry. Big changes were in store for Nash-Kelvinator in 1954, when this firm would merge with Hudson to form the American Motors Corporation.

A mild front-end restyle for 1954 hadn't lessened the unit-body Ambassador's thick appearance, which was emphasized by the largely featureless side panels and deeply skirted wheels. A larger change was planned for 1955, and Farina was again asked to submit a prototype flagship sedan. An original styling illustration published in Pat Foster's *The Nash Styling Sketchbook*, captioned "Early 1950s drawing by Pinin Farina," depicts that car in its near-finished form, and the result was the hand-built Nash Ambassador Speciale Berlina on these pages. It was said to have been displayed on the coachbuilder's stand at the Turin Motor Show before being shipped to Wisconsin for review.

Looking at it with 21st-century eyes, we see an understated car that appears timeless, thanks to its subtle, single-volume shape and fuss-free detailing. It carries the designer's favored reverse-slant C-pillar and wraparound rear glass, adding a similarly curved front screen. The glassy arched roofline is almost seamlessly integrated into the lower body, rather than appearing to rest on top of the body—an effect exaggerated on the production car by the stamped, vertical-lined door-top dip



The roomy interior has been upholstered in blue velour, with coordinating white-piped carpeting. Rather than designing a unique dashboard that would require new tooling on the assembly line, Pinin Farina incorporated standard Nash instrumentation.

This one-off show car was built to be completely functional, and uses Nash's one-barrel-carbureted 262.6-cu.in. "Jetfire" straight-six in 130-hp tune. The OHV six sends its power to the rear wheels through a three-speed manual and torque tube drive.

and ring of chrome trim.

The Berlina (Italian for "sedan") has a dynamic stance, enhanced by forward-thrusting front fender tips and open wheelwells that expose the tires and gracefully trail off into the lower fenders. Not surprisingly, it sports a single-bar take on the headlamps-within-the-grille design that established the "face" of Pinin Farina's Nash-Healey, while the production Ambassador Custom's external-mounted spare tire was moved into the trunk, leaving an integrated rear bumper and taillamp treatment. An unusual touch is the mounting of small flip-out semaphores with clear triangular indicators in each C-pillar, and the stylized "N" hood ornament is more demure than the large, George Petty-designed "flying lady" that was commonly fitted to 1955 and '56 senior models.

The interior is carefully and neatly finished, typical of the Italian craftsmen who assembled it. The split-back front bench reclines in famous Nash fashion, while the wide rear bench offers a pull-down center armrest. The steering wheel is a regular production piece, and the visually symmetrical dashboard contains the 1954 Airflyte all-in-one instrument cluster that incorporated the fuel gauge, 100-mph speedometer, temperature gauge, AM radio, and clock. Curiously, it was not built with the automaker's "Weather Eye Conditioned Air System."

This fully functioning prototype shares its donor Ambassador platform's 121¼-inch wheelbase and standard mechanicals. Behind the 15-inch wheels are "Duo-Servo" 11-inch four-wheel drum brakes, and suspension is by unequal-length A-arms, coil springs, and tube shocks in front, with a solid axle, coil springs, and tube shocks in the rear. A torque tube sends power to the hypoid rear axle through a basic three-speed Synchromesh manual transmission, shifted on the column. That power—130 hp at 3,700 rpm and 220 lb-ft of torque at 1,600 rpm—is a product of the "Super Jetfire" straight-six, a seven main-bearing, overhead-valve engine that displaces 252.6-cu.in. through a 3.50 x 4.375-inch bore and stroke and features a 7.6:1 compression ratio and Carter one-barrel carburetor.

According to Pat's research, the Farina Speciale "appears to have been the second-to-last prototype Farina built for Nash/AMC," with the Nash Palm Beach (later renamed Rambler Palm Beach) being the last. Sadly, like the coachbuilder's 1952 design study, this one would also be rejected, although its influence on the production 1955 model was plain to see: Compare the oval grille incorporating the headlamps, the "ScenaRamic" wraparound windshield ("widest in any car!"), the smoothed-out door tops, and the revised "Road-Guide" front fenders with forward-thrusting peaks and taller wheelwell openings, that last element lessening the enclosed wheels, a design element that Pat says neither Farina nor Nash's in-house designers liked.

So, what happened to our feature car after it was inspected by Nash/American Motors executives? We found it at the

Crossed-flags cloisonné trunk badge is similar to that on contemporary Ferraris, here pairing a Nash emblem on a checkered race flag with the crowned Farina "f."

famous Elizabeth, Colorado, "Rambler Ranch" museum (www.ramblerranch.com), in the care of noted AMC enthusiast Terry W. Gale. He explains that, sadly, little is known of the history of this Berlina, although a few photos of the car, presumed taken in Italy, still exist, those showing it painted white with black sidewall tires wrapping two-tone painted wheels and small chrome disc hubcaps. The famous crown-topped Farina crest and "pinin farina" script emblem were situated on the lower front fender. *The Nash Styling Sketchbook* also includes a photo of the sedan, wherein it's wearing an Iowa license plate; when that image was taken, the car was a different color, had the added "Speciale" script fender badge, plus a set of fluted-style full wheel covers and white sidewall tires.

That Iowa license plate indicated the Nash's years as fixture in the collection of a Cedar Rapids, Iowa, AMC retailer named Bill Schamberger. Terry tells us, "I bought it from an older gentleman named Lee Bortmas, in Butler, Pennsylvania, who purchased it from the dealership whose tag [a die-cast badge reading 'Schamberger-Cedar Rapids'] is on the trunk; they used it as a display car. I heard

"I heard it was personally delivered to Nash by Pinin Farina."

it was personally delivered to Nash by Pinin Farina.

"I have a friend who saw this car at a show many years ago, and he told me it was painted pale blue at that time," he continues. "Now it's white, but looking around the car, I can't find any evidence of blue paint. Of course, the pictures of it in Italy are black-and-white, so you can't tell which light color the paint is. The interior is blue, though, and I believe that's original."

For a circa-41,000-mile car built 65 years ago, the Berlina still presents well, especially in photos. It's up close that you see its age, around the edges: fraying of the white edge-piped navy carpeting and window-track windlace, awkwardly touched-up paint chips, metal emblems with chipped enamel that have lost their luster. The sum of those small flaws still doesn't detract from the elegance that still has the star-power presence to stop people in their tracks. While this "1 of 1" prototype Nash spends most of its time on static display, Terry assures us that it remains as roadworthy as every high quality, factory-built Ambassador. "It's a huge car, and is very comfortable," Terry says with a smile. "It drives great."

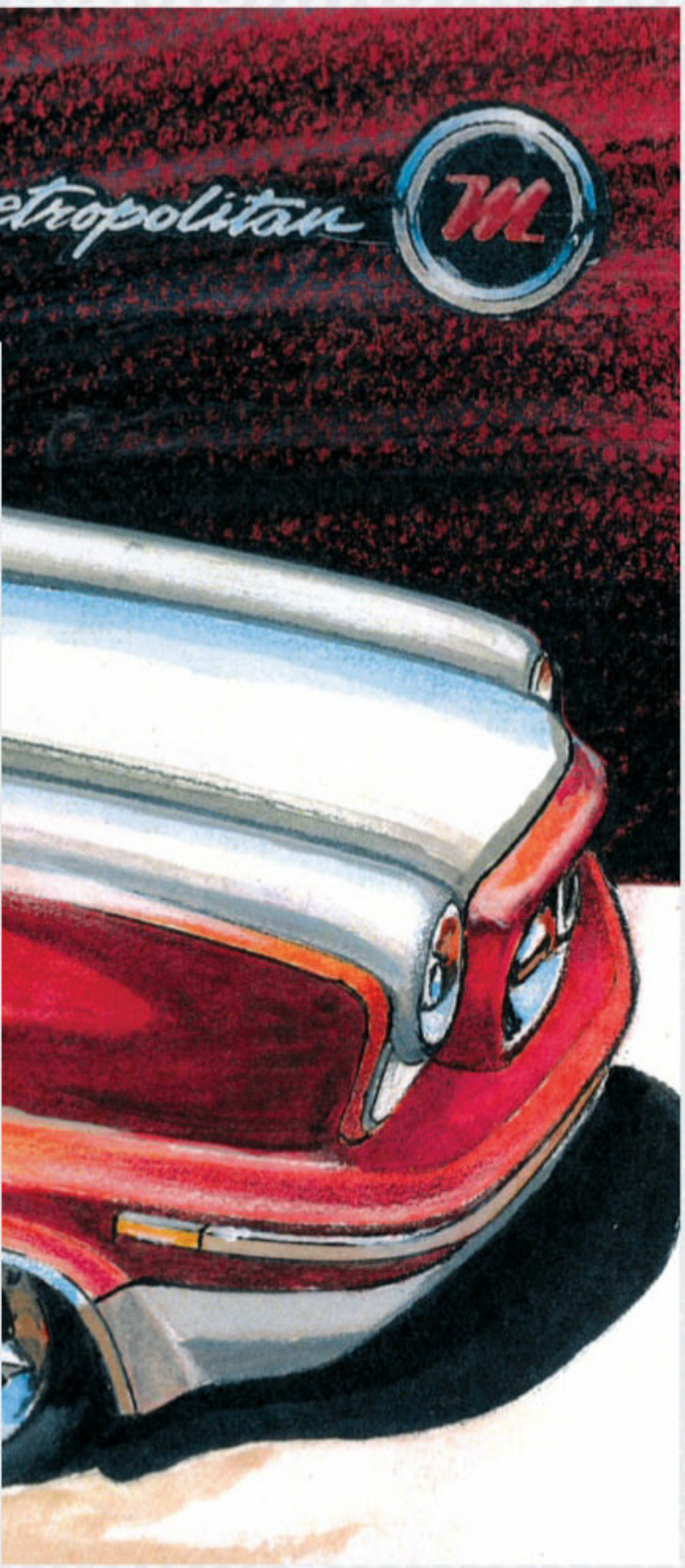
The Modern Metropolitan

How former AMC employees joined together to create a retro design

BY PATRICK FOSTER • PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY FRANK PASCOE AND VINCE GERACI

Somewhere on the outskirts of Detroit lies a hidden automotive styling studio concealed in a back room within a nondescript commercial building. Inside that studio several highly talented designers and clay modelers, formerly with American Motors and Chrysler, have labored for years on a top-secret project: the creation of a modern Metropolitan sub-compact car.

Sound a little crazy? It's not. The men who have been involved with this project from the beginning are veteran automotive designers, stylists, modelers, and engineers with years of industry experience, some of them counted among the best in the business. The team, which varied over the years of the project, has included Bill St. Clair, a retired AMC designer; Frank Pascoe, a



The American Motors team created a styling studio in miniature. Left to right are designer Vince Geraci, and clay modelers Felix DeRose and Keith Goodnough with the wooden buck on which they would create the modern Metropolitan.

Modeler Frank Pascoe joining with DeRose and Goodnough to continue work on the clay model.

highly skilled clay modeler who worked at AMC, moved over to Chrysler after the merger, and is retired; two other extremely talented AMC clay modelers, Keith Goodnough and Felix DeRose; retired AMC engineer Bob Bristow; and the legendary designer Vince Geraci, who led AMC's interior design team for many years. In its time, Geraci's group created the Levi's Gremlin and Hornet, Cassini Matador, and Cardin Javelin, among other automobiles. They put a denim interior in the Jeep CJ and were the first to put leather seating in an SUV—the Jeep Wagoneer Limited and Grand Wagoneer. Think about that.

Right after the time of the merger with Chrysler, Geraci was elevated to Director of AMC Styling—the last person to carry that title.

The idea of designing a new Metropolitan for the 2000s all began innocently enough around 2008. Clay modeler Frank Pascoe had recently retired from Chrysler—he's sort of the "youngster" of the AMC group—and he and the other guys who would eventually make up the core of the

Just as in the old days, the clay slowly begins to take shape.

"Metropolitan of the Future" design team used to meet up at various local American Motors-type club meets and events around Michigan. It was around that time that Pascoe and Geraci first heard that the American Motors Owners Club National Meet for 2010 was slated to be held in the Detroit area. As Pascoe recalled recently, "We were at breakfast, and Vince showed us his renderings of a modern Marlin. He said it would be nice to do something special for the meet. Both Keith Goodnough and I immediately said, 'Let's do a scale model of the Marlin drawing,' because after all, Vince was affectionately known as the 'Father of the Marlin.' Vince said to us, 'Is it possible?' We answered, 'It's a piece of cake.' I know we made his day. Every designer's dream is to see his sketch transformed into 3D reality."

With about two years to go they had time, so they tossed around various ideas together. Finally, someone came

The final shape is becoming much more apparent, and "wheels" have been added to make it look more realistic. Note the large painting in the background. Vince Geraci created the design, which the modelers used as a guide to follow.

Designed and engineered to fit the current Fiat 500 platform, the Modern Metropolitan could actually be put into production if only someone at Fiat Chrysler Automobiles had the nerve to do it.

up with the idea of pooling their talents together to create a "new" American Motors car. They wanted to base it on a significant car from AMC's past—redesigned and restyled—in other words virtually recreated for the future. They wanted it to look almost as if the car had never gone out of production, instead continuing to evolve over the years. The idea was to combine stylemarks of the present era with an over-arching retro theme.

Frank Pascoe was especially excited. After moving over to Chrysler in 1987 he'd worked his trade only until 1991, when he was elevated to management. Because of that promotion, he hadn't been able to use a styling tool since 1991. "Oh, believe me, I wanted to," he says today, "but if I had so much as tried to touch it even once, the union over at Chrysler would have been all over me with grievances." In the end, Pascoe, Goodnough, and DeRose would make up the clay modeling team. Geraci and St. Claire would be the lead designers, while Bristow would do the engineering detail work.

So, the first model they worked on was Geraci's 2010 AMC Marlin. A brown T-top coupe with quad projector beam headlamps and a bright targa roof band, its low, racy lines were highlighted by bright grille venturi, and special wheels with Marlin "M" center caps that mixed retro and modern styling. On the front

Pardon the fuzzy image, but left to right are Frank Pascoe, Keith Goodnough, and Felix DeRose at work on the clay model. True artisans, they created a miniature body fixture and "bridge" to ensure they stayed true to the design and engineering specifications.

fenders was an AMC "A-Mark" badge, with a trademark Rambler stylized "R" placed in a pod projecting from the front end. The AMC hobby's enthusiastic response to Geraci's design encouraged the men to take on similar projects.

In the meantime, Geraci had continued to draw modern renditions of classic AMC cars, including a Javelin, AMX, and even a Rebel Machine. His first take on a modern Metropolitan was a proposal for a sleek, blue 2010 two-seater with racy lines and an aggressive stance.

From that concept was born the Met of the Future project. Collectively, the men decided to do another automotive project, using all the same disciplines they'd employed in their careers, but this time with the goal of creating a design model that could actually be put into production. They decided to design a Metropolitan and, with an eye on history, chose to design it to fit on a modern Fiat 500 chassis, because the original Nash Metropolitan had been created around a Fiat Topolino chassis. Engineer Bristow figured out the dimensions they'd need to work with, and Geraci got to work on a concept drawing. Dubbed the "2012 Metropolitan," it differed from his earlier attempt in certain details. The windshield was shorter in height and rested at a greater angle than before, and the pod-style rear fenders were replaced with a more conventional, more integrated look. The door notches now had the same character lines as the original Mets. And the body color was now red and silver, with red hub covers on the alloy wheels.

Keith Goodnough uses a handmade fixture to check the body curves.

The next step was to render Geraci's design in clay. The team needed a place to work, and they found a good one—a back room in Bill Deringer's automotive shop—it's called Wrenchers, in Novi,

The front design of the Modern Metropolitan has an aggressively handsome style to it.

In this rear ¾ view, you can see the small hand-carved wooden shape used as bases for the windshield and taillamps.

Nearly completed, the Metropolitan shows off its smooth lines and semi-ghost interior details.

A perforated metal grille, mirrors, and trim pieces are added to the finished model.

Imagine how difficult it must have been to create the Metropolitan nameplates for the body!

Michigan. Deringer himself had been with AMC, where he worked in the engine labs. When he heard his old friends were looking for a place to set up a styling studio in miniature, he agreed to let them have space in his building rent-free with one condition. Since his shop specialized in bodywork and customizing services, Deringer wanted to be able to bring potential customers to the back room from time to time so he could show them: "See, we even have an on-premises styling studio available to design custom work for you." (In fact, the team was called upon to design a custom instrument panel for a customer.)

The veteran design team got to work, and after many weeks of effort, created the clay model seen here. They then arranged with a friend to have the car digitized so that it could be easily recreated in larger or smaller sizes. Since the Modern Met was designed from the outset for production, Fiat Chrysler could actually build it in their factories if they

Image quality aside, we wanted to show how the body was digitized via a handheld machine, in order to capture all the dimensions for future use. With this data, replicas can be made in virtually any size.

chose to. If that seems an outlandish idea, consider this: The production Fiat 500 is being dropped from the U.S. market because of poor sales. If you were given the choice of buying a Fiat 500 or the Met seen here, which would you choose? I for one can't help believing the Met of the Future would be more successful than the 500 was.

Currently, the clay model is being used to make a mold from which copies can be produced, and these will eventually be offered for sale on a limited basis for collectors. I've already got my order in.

On a sad note, this is probably it for the AMC Styling team. They finished their last model three years ago and have moved out of Deringer's building. Time has taken its cruel toll; DeRose, Goodnough, and St. Claire have since passed away, all quite unexpectedly. The remaining team members say they have no plans to do any further models, although knowing them all as well as I do, I suspect the urge to create might cause them to resurrect another famous AMC car. We can only hope.

Curious, I decided to ask Geraci why these men had expended so much time and effort on this project. After all, it's not like Fiat Chrysler is going to pay them for their work and put the little Met in production. "Well, you know, this is what we did for a living, and we had a great time together back then. This time we did it for fun; it's a great way to spend time with old friends. And in the end, I guess I'd have to say we're doing it because American Motors lives on forever. This camaraderie, this 'can do' spirit, that's the spirit of American Motors."

The finished clay model, a beautiful and faithfully created design ready for production. The final design includes the American Motors "A-Mark" emblem on the side. Note the small reflectors on the mirror heads.

Four members of a legendary design team captured together on film one last time. Left to right: Bob Bristow, Frank Pascoe, the late Keith Goodnough, and Vince Geraci.

GM's Parade of Progress

Boss Ket wanted all America—even the most remote communities—to share in GM's latest technology. So from 1936 through 1956, the Parade toured and delighted many millions of citizens.

GM's first Parade of Progress opened in Feb. 1936 at Lakeland, Florida. Streamliners were tied together with awnings, and a command car was a stretched 1936 Chevrolet.

BY BILL WILLIAMS • *REPRINT FROM* SPECIAL INTEREST AUTOS *#39, MARCH-APRIL 1977*

When GM's Parade of Progress rolled into Muskogee or Ashtabula, Yuma, or Ft. Pierce, everybody turned out. Its appeal was so compelling that no one could endure staying home. In Fredericksburg, Virginia, for instance, enthusiasm ran so high that two and-one-quarter times the town's population attended.

The first Parade of Progress hit the road on February 11, 1936, opening in Lakeland, Florida. By Pearl Harbor, the Parade had covered well over a million miles, had visited 251 towns and small cities in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, and Cuba, and had played to some 12.5 million people.

There would eventually be three GM Parades of Progress, the last one taking its final curtain in mid-1956. But in abbreviated form, the Parade still lives even today [March 1977]. Called Previews of Progress, it now consists of a dozen GM station-wagon shows that travel to high schools across the country.

The man who sparked General Motors's original 1936 Parade of Progress was none other than Charles F. Kettering. "Boss Ket" was GM's resident genius and research vice president—the man behind the division that spawned such inventions as the first commercial electric self-starter, Ethyl gasoline, the diesel-electric locomotive, and much more.

Kettering hit on the Parade idea one day as he strolled through GM's science and technology exhibit at the 1933 Chicago World's Fair. The thought suddenly struck him: Why not take all this out to the people—let those who can't see it here see GM's exhibit in their own hometowns?

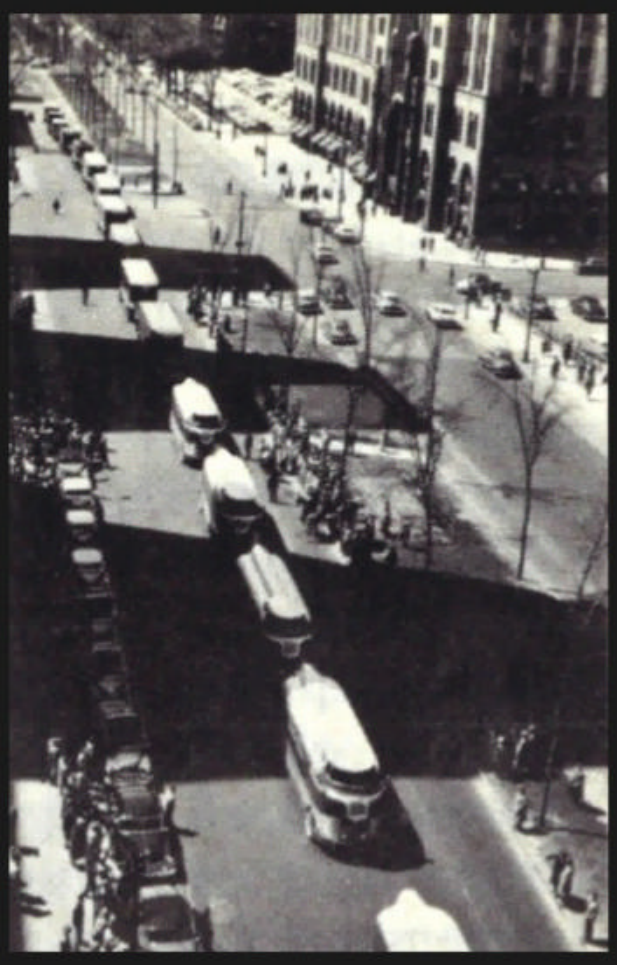
Ket talked with GM board chairman Alfred P. Sloan Jr. and public relations vice president Paul Garrett. Both liked the idea. Together with GM's public relations committee, they decided that the Parade and its timing were right. Depression-weary Americans flocked to movies, shows, fairs, and any sort of entertainment that took their minds off the country's plight.

GM reasoned that a well done, noncommercial, entertaining, educational, free road show would do wonders to help put General Motors's message across. It would bring GM, in person, to every small city and rural community in the nation.

And so the Parade got its appropriation. The caravan itself—vehicles, personnel, exhibits, props, tents, etc.—took most of 1934 and 1935 to prepare and assemble.

The focal point of the Parade was the fleet of eight huge, red-and-white, streamlined vans. These were custom built in Fisher Body's Fleetwood plant in Detroit. All eight spanned the 223-inch truck chassis and were powered by GMC gasoline engines. Six of the streamliners formed walk-through exhibits when joined

First Parade assembles in front of Detroit's GM Building.



Below: In 1940, the first series of streamliners was replaced by a second set. The revamped streamliners had such modern amenities as power steering, articulated dual front wheels, Dual-Range Hydra-Matic, automatic headlamp dimmers, bubble cockpit, and much more. The second set consisted of 12 units instead of the previous eight.

First-series streamliners—all eight of them—were built in Fisher Body's Fleetwood plant, were gasoline powered and contained exhibits and stages.

Right: Second series was dusted off in 1953 to become the third Parade of Progress; it drives away from the GM Building for its final tour. The Parade ran until mid-1956.

After 1940, the Parade used a tent invented by Fred Huddle, with collapsible aluminum exterior girders and aluminized canvas. Free shows attracted many millions of people and gave GM fine publicity.

together, three by three, with canvas awnings. Another van opened up to form a stage, and the eighth carried equipment.

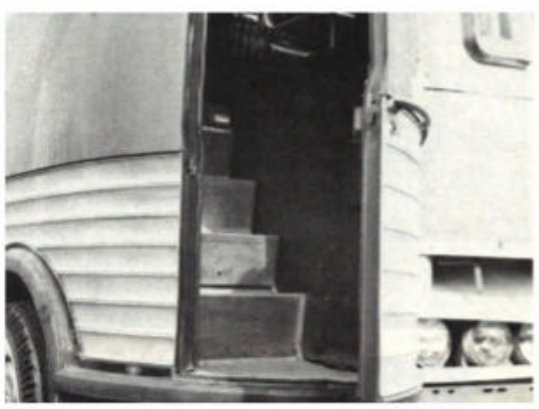
In addition to the eight streamliners, the original 1936 Parade included nine GMC and Chevrolet tractor-trailers. These hauled gear, tents, power generators, lamps, booths, and additional exhibits. Too, the caravan used a stretched, air-conditioned 1936 Chevy "command car" on a 185-inch wheelbase. The command car served as a mobile office and general field headquarters. Finally, the caravan brought along representative models of all six GM lines: Chevrolet, Pontiac, Oldsmobile, Buick, LaSalle, and Cadillac. These cars were traded in every 2,000 miles at local dealerships along the way.

"The show's staff consisted of 40-50 young men, all college graduates and taken from a cross section of the country," remembers Edward A. Bracken Jr., one of the early Parade participants and now manager of GM's corporate projects. "There must have been at least 30 universities represented by these young men—everyone the same age bracket and, I might add, all bachelors. It was our job to drive the trucks and, on arrival at the site, change into coveralls and put up the show. We then dressed and became lecturers on the exhibits. At the conclusion of each 24-day visit, we'd pack up and drive to the next town."

Raymond E. Hayes, another native son of the 1936 Parade and now GM's director of public relations field operations, adds, "The three guys I broke in with were from Harvard, Columbia, and Brown—all eastern guys. We were all hired as lecturers, but there was an apprenticeship period. While you were apprenticing, they put you on the utility crew—we called it the 'futility crew'—and that meant you didn't lecture until you learned every other job and also until one of the regular lecturers dropped out. What you did, you reported from the hotel to the show at about 6 o'clock in the morning in coveralls, and you waxed floors, took a stick with a nail on the end of it, picked up papers, that sort of thing."

Everyone I talked to who'd been with the Parade of Progress during its 20-year lifespan (I interviewed 17 people in all) told me that those days were the best of their lives. They couldn't remember enjoying a job more. Inspired and led by J. M. (Jack) Jerpe, they formed a close-knit, congenial group that worked hard, enjoyed the travel and adventure, liked to meet people, and felt they had a genuine mission, to put GM's best face forward. Jerpe's personality made him part father, part friend, and part boss to his boys.

The idea behind the Parade was to play not the great metropolitan U.S. cities but to keep to the smaller ones. There was absolutely no "sell" involved in any of the shows or exhibits. GM cars and appliances were placed strategically, and young men were prepared to answer questions about them—in fact Jerpe held regular quizzes on such items as car specifications, listings of auto accessories,



Entertainer Vic Hyde of Niles, Michigan, owns [March 1977] one of seven Parade streamliners known to survive. Stairway leads to glassed-in cockpit, which seats driver in front center and two more people on the bench behind. Lighting pod can be raised from rear roof section.

capacities of Frigidaire refrigerators, etc., with prizes going to the "students" with the highest scores.

The Parade moved with the seasons—south in winter and north in the spring. The route was chosen a year in advance. A town would receive its first notification of a visit from Paul Garrett in New York. Garrett would send a letter to the local chamber of commerce, and a few days later, one of three Parade advance men would drive into town. Bob Emerick, recently retired as public relations director for Pontiac, remembers those days.

"There were three of us advance men alternating towns—hopscotching along the route. We'd work with the chamber of commerce and city officials, find an empty lot to pitch the tents, make hotel reservations, then work with the newspapers and radio stations; also the schools, civic clubs, and local GM dealers. We had a short movie that we brought along to give these groups a teaser of the actual shows."

The Parade of Progress presentations themselves were totally live and used no help from movies. One full show in the main tent lasted about 45 minutes. The first conventional tents, which used an opened-out streamliner as the stage, were replaced in 1940 by an external-girder type developed at GM by Fred Huddle. The early tents seated 1,200, the later ones up to 1,500.

In January 1938, the Parade went into Mexico. Ed Bracken remembers training Mexican lecturers in Texas before heading south. "We became official guests of the Mexican government," says Bracken, "and, in fact, we opened the Pan American Highway from Laredo to Mexico City. We stayed in Mexico City for two weeks, played to huge crowds, and had a marvelous time. After that we went back north, toured the Midwest, and ended up in New York a year before the 1939-'40 World's Fair opened there. We had Christmas vacation in Miami and Key West; I remember we spent the enormous sum of $10 a day for a three-bedroom cottage on the ocean. I spent New Year's Eve in a Key West saloon discussing baseball with Ernest Hemingway. In January 1939 we took the Parade to Havana, and this, too, was very enjoyable. I was then transferred to New York to work on the GM exhibit at the World's Fair."

In 1940, the caravan was revamped, and its original eight streamlined vans were replaced with a new set of 12, called Futurliners. The Parade's exhibits were also updated, and the operation became bigger.

World War II broke out while the Parade was again in Texas. Two weeks after Pearl Harbor, during its visit to San Antonio, the Parade disbanded and most of the staff traded its GM uniforms for khaki or blue.

Streamliners opened up to form a stage and exhibits. Young college grads became show lecturers but also performed menial chores such as driving trucks, picking up rubbish, and setting up tents. Jack Jerpe, Parade's leader, stands in center of front row in lighter suit.

The caravan vehicles were driven to Ohio, where they were warehoused for the war.

The Parade wasn't reactivated until April 1953, when the third caravan took to the road. It remained essentially the same as the 1940 version, numbering 44 vehicles and 57 men. Fred Huddle's Aerodome tent, with its external aluminum arches and silverized vinyl-impregnated canvas skin, was made bigger. New exhibits included jet propulsion, the atmosphere, the atom, stereo, and metal-powder forming. Many of the older exhibits were held over, of course.

The postwar Parade, though, never drew the crowds of its prewar ancestors, mostly because Americans now had nightly free shows right in their own homes. Television caused the demise of the Parade, and in 1956 GM decided to disband the caravan for good. Many of the young men who'd begun their GM careers with the Parade are still with the corporation, and several have even retired by now.

One of the Parade's dioramas showed 50 years of change in 10 minutes of movable, automatic scenery. This $1 million exhibit is now at Chicago's Museum of Science & Industry.

Longing For the Outdoors

Chevrolet's extended-bed Longhorn hauled campers in high style

BY MIKE McNESSOR • PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF KOCH

Do you remember those halcyon days of the 1980s and '90s when pickup cabs were short and beds were long? For decades, two-door trucks with one row of seating were the norm—in contrast to the sedan-like crew-cab rigs of today with 5.5- and 6.5-foot beds. Yes, they're fantastic for hauling people, but forget slamming shut the tailgate with a couple sheets of plywood and some 8-foot lumber lying flat in the back.

Of course pickups, old or new, aren't strictly for serious work. They're for fun-related work too: pulling a boat, hauling motorcycles, or, when that yearning to get away from it all strikes, packing up and heading to the great outdoors for a few days of camping.

This month's feature truck, a 1970 Chevrolet C20 Longhorn owned by Don and Emma Gilbert of Chino Valley, Arizona, was manufactured just for that purpose. Though the Gilbert's Longhorn resembles a standard ¾-ton, its bed is about 6 inches longer. The giveaway is that vertical body seam on the bedside about 6 inches from the front: Chevrolet didn't offer an 8.5-foot fleetside bed, so it simply tacked a filler panel onto an 8-footer. Problem solved. The Longhorn's custom bed also used a wood floor, as it probably didn't make much sense to tool up for a special longer floor stamping. All Longhorns—¾ or 1-ton—rode on a 1-ton frame spanning a 133-inch wheelbase, with standard rear leaf springs, and were offered only with two-wheel drive.

The model's added length and stout rear suspension was aimed at buyers looking to haul around a bulky slide-in camper. By the time the Longhorn rolled out, slide-ins had grown in popularity because of their versatility, but they'd also grown larger and heavier thanks to a full load of amenities. A state-of-the-art 11-foot slide-in, built in the late 1960s, might've sported a kitchen with a double-basin stainless sink, a gas stove with multiple burners, an electric refrigerator, a dinette that converted into a double bed, and a bunk over the truck's cab. All of that luxury came at a price too, as these units could cost $2,000-$3,000, which was about the base MSRP of a Longhorn (sans the options that would make traveling in your new pickup turned motorhome even more comfortable).

We're not RV historians here at *Hemmings Classic Car*, but the popularity of slide-ins around the time of the Longhorn's 1968 introduction, coincided with the exposure they'd received a few years earlier in John Steinbeck's bestselling 1962 book, *Travels With*


CHEVROLET

A 402-cubic-inch Chevrolet big-block V-8 moves this Longhorn, empty or loaded, with power to spare for air conditioning. An open-element air cleaner resides in place of the restrictive original. Inside, the CST package adds upholstery with simulated leather tooling, carpeting, bright pedal trim, door-operated dome lamp switches and more.

Charley. Though Steinbeck's famous nonfiction travelogue about driving around America with his poodle Charley has been criticized in recent years for containing fictionalized accounts, there's no denying that the pickup driven by the literary giant was a forerunner to a fully loaded Longhorn. Even if you're not a camper by nature, a pickup with a comfy slide-in sounds pretty good when one of history's greatest novelists describes it:

"I had to go alone and I had to be self-contained, a kind of casual turtle carrying his house on his back," Steinbeck wrote. "With all this in mind I wrote to the head office of a great corporation which manufactures trucks. I specified my purpose and my needs. I wanted a three-quarter-ton pick-up truck, capable of going anywhere under possibly rigorous conditions, and on this truck I wanted a little house built like the cabin of a small boat. In due time, specifications came through, for a tough, fast, comfortable vehicle, mounting a camper top—a little house with double bed, a four-burner stove, a heater, refrigerator and lights operating on butane, a chemical toilet, closet space, storage space, windows screened against insects—exactly what I wanted. It was delivered in the summer to my little fishing place at Sag Harbor near the end of Long Island."

That "great corporation" was General Motors, and Steinbeck's truck was a green, two-wheel-drive 1960 GMC. How the slide-in made it into the back of Steinbeck's Jimmy must've been another story altogether, as GM didn't sell campers over the counter. It seems likely that the truck must've been sent to an upfitter before making the trip to Sag Harbor.

Steinbeck's pickup, which he named *Rocinante*, after Don Quixote's horse, performed on the journey as old GMC trucks do, reliably. It must've been comfortable, too, with its torsion bar suspension, and powerful enough to get the job done, thanks to deep gears and its 305-cu.in. V-6. Still, time marches on, and it would've been no match for the Gilberts' 1970 Longhorn.

Under this expansive Chevrolet's hood? A thumping 402-cu.in. big-block engine, armed with factory air conditioning, and backed by a Turbo Hydra-Matic 400. It has power-assisted steering and brakes, too, for effortless maneuvering around any campsite. The optional Custom Camper package on this truck further outfitted it with a front stabilizer bar, heavier springs, and shocks as well as 9.50-16.5 tires.

This Longhorn also sports the CST—Custom Sport Truck—package with woodgrain exterior trim and additional brightwork, plus a rear cab light. Inside, CST added woodgrain-trimmed upholstered door panels with tooling that matched the scrollwork on the full-depth foam bench seat. It also included carpeting on the cab floor, bright pedal trim, a headliner, door-operated dome lamp switches, and more. The Gilberts have added some personal touches to their truck as well, including a modern stereo with speakers in the kick panels, dual exhaust, an open-element air cleaner, a rear chrome bumper, and a chrome front bumper with integrated fog lamps.

Over the years, the Gilberts haven't been shy about road tripping in their Longhorn. In 2004, they drove it 500 miles round trip to a show in Yuma, Arizona. In 2005, they piled 1,200 miles on the Longhorn's odometer driving it to and from the Truckin' Nationals, in Santa Maria, California, where it hauled off two awards. They have also pulled a car trailer with it and use the truck around town.

"It's really easy to drive and rides nice, especially for a ¾-ton," Don said. "In fact, my wife was just driving it and commented about how nice and smooth it is. I have towed our 20-foot car trailer, and it works really well. With that engine, you have no trouble pulling anything."

The Gilberts have owned the truck for about 15 years and performed some cosmetic restoration work on it during that time. "We got it in 2004—it was a pretty straight truck, but it needed a rocker panel and a windshield," Don said. The truck's tailgate has been repainted, but the rest of the bed hasn't. Even the paint on the bed's wood floor is original.

When Don first spotted the Longhorn in nearby Prescott, he wanted to add it to his collection because it reminded him of a pickup his father once owned. "My dad had a 1970 Chevrolet truck," Don said. "I went with him and we special ordered his Custom Camper, brand new in late 1969; I was 17 at the time. He opted not to get the Longhorn, and I later swapped the 350 engine for a big-block, like this one has—something that was necessary when hauling his 10.5-foot (slide-in) camper."

Of course, a modern crew-cab truck could shoulder a slide-in with ease—there are even campers designed for today's long-cab/short-bed trucks. But for hitting the road and sleeping wherever it leads you, nothing could rival the function or style of a Longhorn. We suspect Steinbeck and Charley would have approved.


CHEVROLET
179·NCW

Neglected No More

Three generations finish the restoration of a 1931 Ford Model A Victoria—Part II

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY MATTHEW LITWIN
RESTORATION PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF DAN BAKER

The plan was simple. Dan Baker and his father, Dan, were going to buy their neighbor's 1931 Ford, a long-neglected Model A Victoria that was being swallowed up by a sea of vegetation. Others had the same idea prior, but inspections deterred those would-be suitors. It was too far gone, was the common claim, amid dejected frowns. But the Bakers saw past the overgrowth and weathered appearance, and after acquiring the Ford in 2008, the pair was going to clean it up, put things back where they belong, and sell the Model A as-is for a modest profit.

In theory, the Model A was worth the effort. Both men had vast experience with Henry's Lady, crowned by a lifetime of Ford tinkering by the senior member of the family; they knew, then, that the Victoria was a relative rarity. Introduced in November 1930, only 40,212 were built, with either a fabric or steel top, by Ford through the '31 model year. The Bakers' example was fabric-topped, originally manufactured by Briggs, and motivated by a 40-hp, 201-cu.in. four-cylinder engine. Despite the Victoria's lower build numbers, the overall popularity of the Model A has spurred decades of restorations, which in turn have led to a vast parts industry dedicated to preserving them.

As many of us are aware, however, the best-laid plans of mice and men often go awry, in this case, the idea of flipping the car over to someone else. Having relocated the Ford from its Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, slumber to son Dan's abode in Chandler, Arizona, the two were able to execute phase two, as discussed in part one of this saga in last month's issue.

"It had sat for years, so there was a lot of stuff inside that needed to be cleaned out. Dad and I were able to put all the dislodged parts back into place and make the Model A look presentable. We never bothered to try to get the engine to run, but the car looked nice enough to list for sale. Unfortunately, we ran into two problems: The economy tanked, and a few who did express an interest all said the same thing—it was too far gone," Dan says.

To further recount the first installment of this story, the economic climate, coupled with the Ford's condition, meant it sat dormant a further two years before the Bakers were struck by an automotive epiphany. Rather than let the car languish further, they opted to restore the Victoria, aided by friends in the local Model A community.

In January 2010, the Ford was moved into Dan's garage for its climate-controlled disassembly. Notes and a series of detailed digital images accompanied the effort, documenting everything from the missing drip rails to the incorrect wheels, as well as the arrangement of the wooden body frame and its connections that were exposed after the interior was removed. The idea of saving as much of the

The Victoria's reproduction top material, matched to the factory color, has been unpackaged and stretched across a sheet of plywood. The idea is to allow the material to naturally flatten, eliminating the folds that resulted from shipment.

After the shipping creases had been eliminated, the top is temporarily set on the roof of the Model A. Only a series of early rough cuts have been made, allowing extra material for both the underlying padding and fine adjustments during installation later.

As the Ford's top was being attended to, the front fenders were outsourced for corrective reconstruction. Four pairs had to be cut and spliced via welding to create a single set. A skim coat of filler helped eliminate seams.

Fabric-topped Model A Victorias featured padding below the covering when new. As with the covering material, correct padding is available. Here it's being installed, cut to match the body contours. Painter's tape, rather than staples, is used to keep it in place.

The reproduction top has been firmly secured to the roof with original equipment-style fasteners, as has a key piece of top trim. The fasteners still have to be covered by proper piping, and the excess fabric needs to be carefully trimmed and tucked.

Each of the Ford's original seat frames had been carefully inspected and restored earlier; springs, when necessary, were replaced, and a protective coat of black paint will help ensure that the new upholstery will not be damaged by crusty metal.

With the top firmly secured to the Ford, focus returns to the interior. Although the sill plates had been installed long ago in conjunction with the body, the floorboards still needed to be test fitted, adjusted accordingly, sealed, and finally installed.

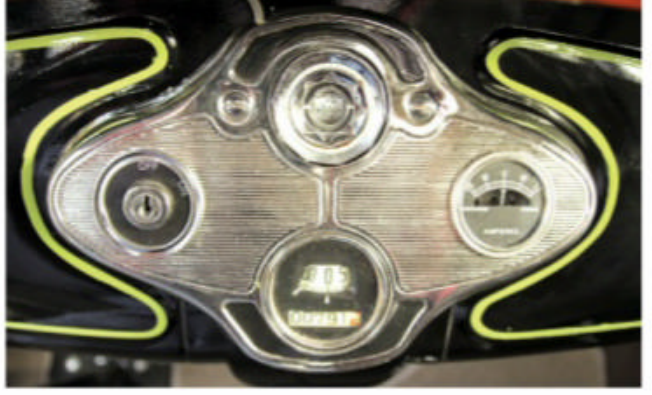
Again, the top-down method of interior upholstery installation is on display here. You'll note that this completed side panel also includes Ford's styled arm rest, window crank, and woodgrain window trim, the latter of which took three months to restore.

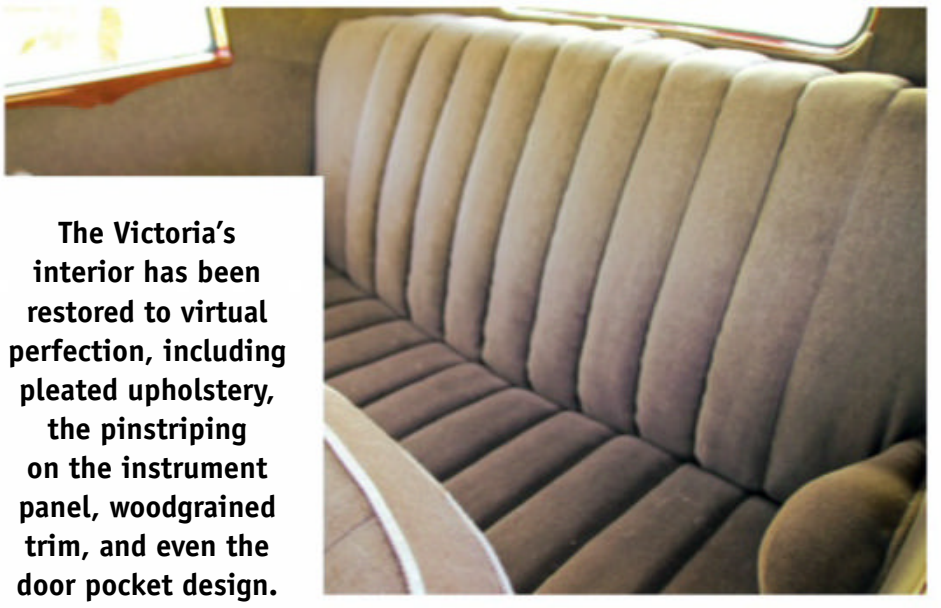
Under careful observation, a very eager Derek — here, age 9 — assists "Pappy" with the attachment of decorative upholstery piping to the top section of one of the restored front seat frames. Fitted underneath is a proper-thickness padding.

Ultimately hidden from view will be this touching time capsule: a portion of the seat backing featuring the names and ages of the entire Baker family and friends who assisted with the Model A Victoria's restoration.

A monumental moment for the team as Dan Baker maneuvers the Ford under its own power. It's obvious more work lies ahead at this point. Here it wears a second set of proper wheels, this time matched to the factory color combination.

One last piece of outsourced work is the application of pinstriping, which, aided by painter's tape, will follow the natural body lines with precision. The color chosen matches the Ford's 19-inch wire wheels, maintaining factory originality.





The Victoria's interior has been restored to virtual perfection, including pleated upholstery, the pinstriping on the instrument panel, woodgrained trim, and even the door pocket design.

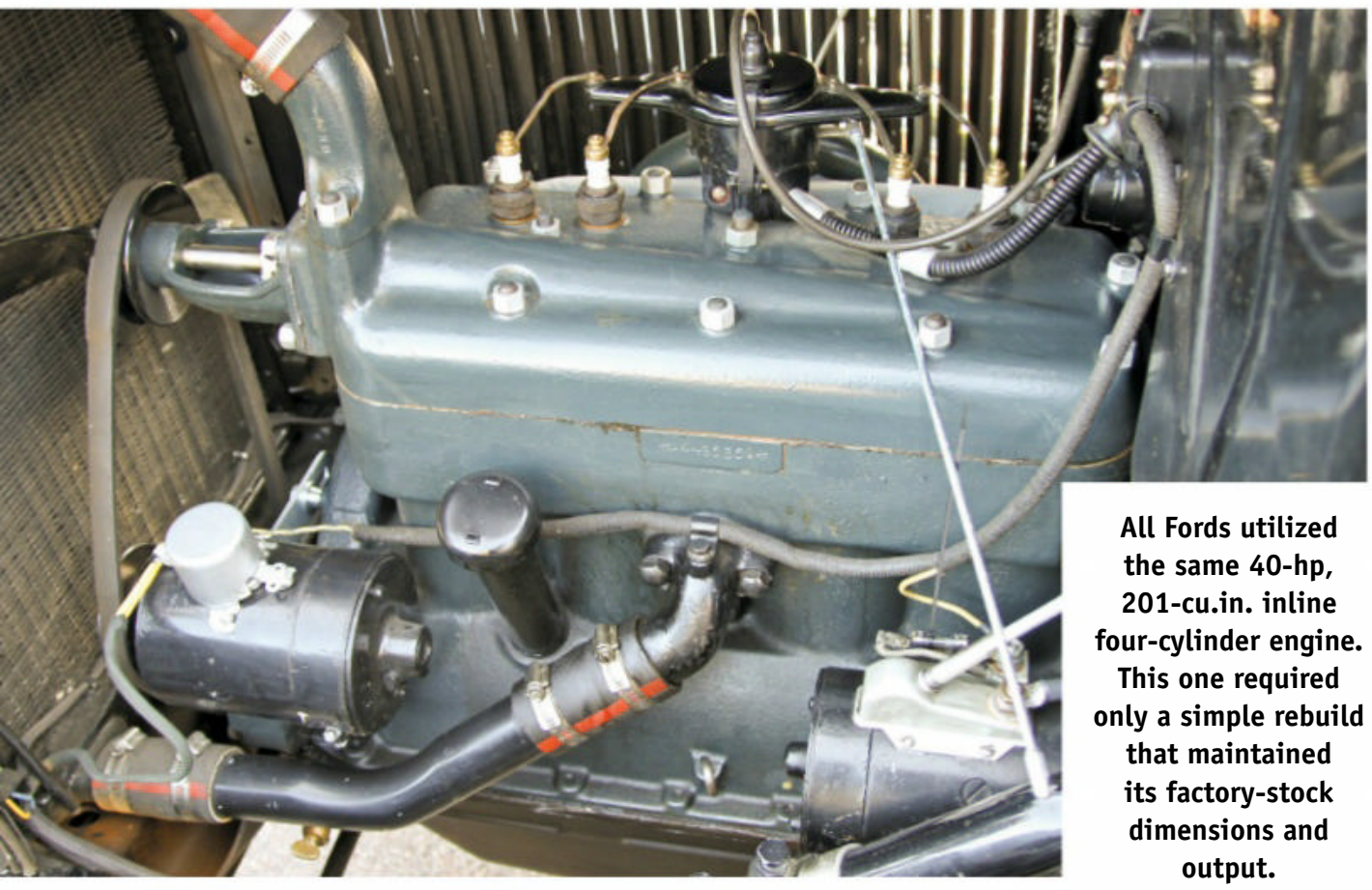
wood as possible, however, was dashed when the organic material began to disintegrate during disassembly.

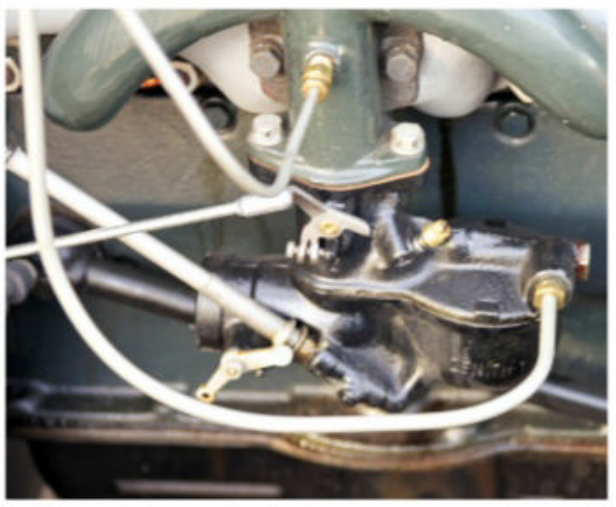
Fortunately, the rotting wood did not retain enough moisture to introduce rust to the adjoining metal body and frame. This was later confirmed when the main body was cut into two sections and media blasted. The decision to cut the body made considerable sense as it enabled the Bakers to remove the steel from the wooden skeleton and chassis, with ease. Part of the decision was driven by the wooden framing, as it was originally designed in three main sections: chassis, body, and top.

"The only rot we found were two small areas at the bottom of each side of the cowl. Patches were fabricated and MIG welded into place. We knew we'd find some rot on the body, but were surprised to see that the frame was solid after stripping it and having it blasted. The only other area of concern was the front fenders. We had some help splicing a couple together later so that we'd have a good pair. Although the desert is a dry region, we still sealed any bare metal in self-etching primer to prevent flash-rust from occurring," Dan says.

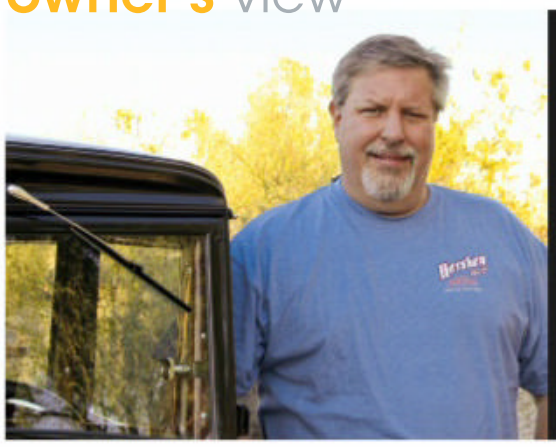
With disassembly completed, the team restored the chassis, beginning with a fresh coat of black enamel paint and rebuilt suspension and brake system. Simultaneously, the Ford's four-cylinder engine was rebuilt to stock configuration, as was the three-speed manual transmission. After completion, the units were reunited with the chassis, as was the Victoria's differential.

Reproduction body framing was obtainable in three main sections. According to Dan, "It was like working with a giant jigsaw puzzle. The kits were supplied with basic pictures, but you had to figure out how it went together. The best approach was to test fit the framing first, then slip the body sections over it to see where adjustments needed to be made. It's a good thing we did because we had to shave a few pieces of the framing so that the body could fit properly. Then we started the process all over again, beginning with the floor sill and then repositioning the body frame and roof section as a subassembly on top of the chassis. We did one more body test fit, just to make sure we had it right. Then we





All Fords utilized the same 40-hp, 201-cu.in. inline four-cylinder engine. This one required only a simple rebuild that maintained its factory-stock dimensions and output.



We called this more of a "resurrection" than a "restoration" because of the amount of work that it needed. Dad, and our friend Gary Johnson, did a lot of work on the car during the winter months, then the snowbirds would fly back home, and I would get as much done as I could after work. The hardest part for us was the wood framing; it easily consumed several months of time as we test fitted everything over and over again. In fact, if there's one tip I could provide it's to carefully understand what you're getting into by examining the wood. Almost everything is available for these Model A's but you have to understand that working with wood is a large undertaking. If you can work through it, the reward when completed is phenomenally gratifying.

sealed the wood in a preservative, just as Ford had done."

The Bakers had created a temporary paint booth within Dan's garage, which allowed them to coat the inside of the body panels in black earlier. After a skim coat of filler had been applied to the exterior and sanded smooth, the same booth was used to apply a few coats of high-build primer. Having allowed for proper cure time, and extensive sanding, the body was ready for paint.

"Ford used a single-stage paint, so we applied nine coats of single-stage black acrylic paint to match the body tag codes. We kept aiming for a particular sheen, which is why we ended up with so many coats, until we realized the only way to bring out the shine was to wet sand, polish, and buff the paint. After that, we were able to permanently mount the body to the chassis and start installing the interior and new wiring," Dan says.

Which brings us to the Bakers' final push to complete their Victoria, several key parts of which we outline in detail within the photo spread of the previous pages. These processes—guided by the Ford manual—included the installation of the fabric top, reupholstering the seats, installing the remaining floorboards, securing the rest of the body, and adding pinstriping, the latter of which matched the Ford's factory-new appearance. Not to be left out was the effort required to duplicate the wood-grained panels within the cabin, or the acquisition and installation of proper 19-inch wire wheels. By May 2013, the Model A had been completed, but not without another turn of events.

"My son, Derek—who was 7 years old when the restoration began—would come out to the garage and keep Dad and I company. He quickly showed an interest in doing some of the work, so Derek did things like install slotted screws in the body framing, apply some of the wood preservative, and help reupholster the seats. At the time, we still thought we'd sell the car when it was done, but my wife, Dawn, said, 'Hey, the three of you are all working on it. Why don't you just keep it?' She didn't have to twist my arm twice. It's a part of our family legacy now; we're really proud of that."

Fiberglass Flyer

The race-bred 1965 Matra Bonnet D'Jet V was a roadgoing pioneer

BY MARK J. McCOURT • PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID LaCHANCE

Mid-engine placement has been around since the earliest days of motoring, but its potential to improve a car's weight distribution and handling performance was first exploited by pioneering German and American race cars in the 1930s. Porsche built a handful of mid-engine 550 Spyders in the 1950s, and, in the late 1960s, Lamborghini electrified the world with its mid-mounted V-12-powered Miura, but neither were considered the first production sports car to utilize this layout for the

road—this honor went to René Bonnet's fascinating D'Jet.

Competition was the primary goal for cars using this mechanical layout, and racing was the raison d'être of France's Deutsch-Bonnet. Charles Deutsch and René Bonnet would start building race cars in Champigny-sur-Marne, near Paris, in 1938, using second-hand Citroën mechanical components. Their first racer, the open-top D.B. 1, was followed by the D.B. 2 coupe, a car intended to be powered by an over-bored Traction 7 engine, but World War II intervened.

These men formally established the company D.B. shortly after World War II, and in 1949, built the first D.B.-Panhard 500, employing Panhard Dyna air-cooled, horizontally opposed two-cylinder engines and other mechanical components under Deutsch's sleek bodywork. The Panhard-powered racers, which used D.B.-designed backbone chassis and independent rear suspensions, began racking up prominent wins, while the fastback 2+2 GT Coach, whose attractive exterior shape was designed in 1952 by Deutsch and built by the industrial coachbuilder Chausson, would establish D.B.'s expertise working with fiberglass.

This working relationship imploded in 1961 when René Bonnet, having decided front-wheel-drive Panhard drivetrains were no longer competitive, signed on to race for Renault at Le Mans in 1962 under the aegis of a new firm, Société des Automobiles René Bonnet, leaving Charles Deutsch to form C.D. and build 150 replicas of the more successful C.D.-Panhard racers in 1963. Bonnet's new company would build sports cars powered by Renault's larger-displacement four-cylinders, and this firm's chief engineer, Jacques Hubert, was tasked with designing a new car to compete in France's 24 Hours of Le Mans race. The first examples were called "CRB1" and "CRB2," short for Competition René Bonnet, and these would lead to the creation of our roadgoing feature car.

The D'Jet, unveiled in 1962, would be Bonnet's ultimate vision of a Renault-powered mid-engine sports car for road and track; the odd spelling of its name was chosen to make "Jet" sound the same in French as it does in English. This car featured a square-tube steel backbone frame that mounted fully independent coil spring/wishbone suspension components, the rear featuring twin coil-over shocks per side. Its standard mechanical package consisted of the water-cooled four-cylinder engine from

a Renault 8 mated to a fully synchronized four-speed manual transaxle, with D'Jet-specific gearing, that originated in Renault's Estafette van. The longitudinally mounted engine contributed to a near-ideal 48/52 front/rear weight distribution, displacing 1.1 liters (67.6 cubic inches) through its 70 x 72-mm (2.75 x 2.82-inch) bore and stroke. With a 10.2:1 compression ratio and two-barrel Zenith 32 NDIX carburetor, this aluminum cylinder head, five-main four made 70 hp and 65.5 lb-ft of torque. Braking was by four-wheel discs, more than adequate to slow the 1,353-pound coupe from its 106-mph top speed.

Covering this car's sophisticated underpinnings was an eye-catching, wind-cheating fiberglass-reinforced polyester resin body. The sleek, dart-like styling of D.B.'s 1959-1961 Le Mans prototype roadsters—attributable to Deutsch—notably influenced that of the D'Jet. Bonnet's masterpiece sported wrap-around front and rear glass and a plunging nose with covered headlamps, integrated driving lamps, and a central air inlet. The large, 15-inch wheels gave the two-seater the appearance of an unusually tall ride height, and emphasized the comparably long 94.5-inch wheelbase within the D'Jet's compact 166-inch overall length. The roadgoing model was said to achieve an incredible 0.27 coefficient of drag in wind-tunnel testing, while the modified, aptly named Aérodjet built to run in the 24 Hours of Le Mans was even better, at 0.21.

Automobiles René Bonnet would build just under 200 racing and roadgoing versions of this two-seater, in four series that included power ratings up to 100 hp, through 1964, when bankruptcy forced it into the hands of its largest creditor, the diversified aeronautics firm of Matra (Mécanique Aviation TRAction). This company—which, within a decade, would become world-famous for its competitive Formula 1, Formula 2, and Formula 3 cars, as well as its endurance racers that won Le Mans three years straight and twice won the World Championship for Makes—had been responsible for the D'Jet's body through its composites subsidiary, GAP (Générale d'Applications Plastiques), run by Bonnet's friend and fellow racer, André Moynet. Matra established a new company, Matra Sports, to continue production of the D'Jet, which from spring 1965 featured numerous design modifications engineered by Bonnet's son, Claude, and was called the Matra Bonnet D'Jet V (spoken, and typically written, as "5").

Our feature D'Jet V is one of 166 believed built for 1965, and features developments from Matra Sports that increased

The simple cabin of this compact sports car was all-business, with comprehensive Jaeger instrumentation in a wood fascia, a drilled-alloy/wood Moto-Lita steering wheel, and floor-hinged pedals. Pop-out quarter windows, rear deck props, and the roof helped summer comfort.

This Matra Bonnet D'Jet V sports a rare lift-off sunroof. The 70 hp from its mid-mounted Renault engine could push the light, aerodynamic car over 100 mph. Stamped aluminum C-pillar vents sported a pattern of Matra emblems.

passenger comfort. It's powered by the standard 70-hp Renault engine; a contemporary D'Jet VS (5S) variant received a Gordini-spec, twin Solex-carbureted 90-hp version, and one of those VS models was famously gifted to Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin. The example on these pages has been part of the permanent collection of the Lane Motor Museum in Nashville, Tennessee, since 2003, having been purchased by founder Jeff Lane three years prior. We asked museum manager David Yando to tell us what's known of its history.

"Sometime in the early 1970s, Ronald Pope of Southern California bought the car as a project. He passed away before completing it; his son Kevin finished the car and used it for some time before selling it to Jeff. Receipts that came with the car showed the engine and transmission were rebuilt by PF Engineering of Chula Vista in 1987. When our restoration manager Greg Coston started on the project, it was complete, but rough both inside and out. Fortunately, the engine and transmission were deemed good, and largely left alone. It seemed the interior and trim had never been replaced, but it's possible the car had been painted in the past," he says.

Greg performed a two-year, body-off restoration that proved challenging. David notes, "The sunroof seal was tough to source. Sunroofs were rare, as Matras were discovered to have a bad habit of blowing out the rear glass with the roof open! Greg found a similar seal and, with some effort, was able to make it work."

North American Matra Register and Club D'Jet USA (www.club-djetusa.com) president Walt Koopman knows our feature D'Jet and believes it may be one of 10 D'Jets brought to the U.S. in-period by "Coco" Chinetti, aka Luigi Chinetti Jr., son of the prominent Ferrari importer. That lift-off sunroof—and small posts that raise the rear deck to a venting position—was fitted to eight of those 10 Matras in an attempt to improve airflow for our climate. Walt believes this is one of around 30 D'Jet variants now in North America.

Matra Sports would build about 1,500 of these pretty and capable coupes through 1968, including the D'Jet V's replacement: the 105-hp, 124-mph Jet 6. The Lane Motor Museum's collection also includes a 1955 D.B. HBR 5, an Automobiles René Bonnet CRB1, and a 1967 Jet 6. You can learn more about these French delicacies on the museum's website (www.lanemotormuseum.org), and ponder the legacy of these rarely seen racers for the road.

The fixed bulkhead behind the bucket seats limited their adjustability for taller drivers, a compromise forced by the engine placement. The spare wheel, battery, fuel tank, and fluid reservoirs sat under the side-hinged front hood.

Chris Koch
Owner
Chris Koch Ford Dealership

MY FIRST REAL JOB AFTER COLLEGE was with the Philadelphia District Sales Office of the Ford Division of Ford Motor Company in Pennsauken, New Jersey. I started in September 1966 and was assigned to the Distribution Department, where I learned to be a vehicle scheduler.

Ford dealers signed monthly stock orders, one for cars and one for trucks. It was the dealers' responsibility to submit these orders, either for retail sales or for dealer stock. In the event a dealer failed to submit his order on a timely basis, it was the vehicle scheduler's job to create an order on behalf of the dealer.

The vehicle schedulers kept the factories running by submitting "daily lineups" for production. If the dealers didn't submit their own orders, they got what the young college kids considered to be an appropriate vehicle for his stock. These units were referred to as "bulk units" and often not the most desirable cars for a retail dealer to have for sale on his lot.

It was most interesting at the end of the model year as that was when it was time to "balance out." The scheduler had to make his daily lineup, but it was further restricted by engine, trim, paint, and equipment choices.

The most interesting vehicles got built during the balance out period. Examples were green cars with red interiors, LTDs with Galaxie interiors, four-door sedans with five-speed transmissions, and other unsaleable combinations due to a limited availability of parts and the need to clean out the factory with whatever was left over from the model year.

Even at that early age I was a car buff, and I thought about when we had to put 400-cu.in. V-8s in 1972 Thunderbirds that were supposed to be equipped with either a 429 or a 460 engine, because those were temporarily unavailable. I thought, "What happens 25 years from now when the owner shows his 'antique' Thunderbird and the judge advises him: 'Your engine is wrong. Ford never built this car with this engine!'" Oh, yes we did. We did all sorts of things to keep the factories rolling during model changeovers or equipment shortages. The factories had to use up whatever was left over, no matter what, and these cars got built and shipped to the dealers to sell.

After two years of making lineups in the Distribution Department, I was promoted to the Fleet Sales Department where I mostly ordered police cars with special equipment and worked with dealers on bids for local and state governments. Next stop was the Sales Planning Department where we assigned quotas for dealer contests and reported our 10-day sales and set objectives for dealers and zone field managers.

My last corporate promotion was to field manager, a position that was given a geographical location with anywhere from eight to 20 dealers in the assigned zone. Being a field or zone manager, I was responsible for those dealers, and I learned that there was quite a bit of money to be made on the retail side of the business. Working for the factory was wonderful, and I made a good living and drove a different new car every couple of months, but the big money was on the retail side of the business.

I was tempted by several of my dealers to come work for them, but I always resisted these offers. Eventually I did accept an offer from one of the major dealers and exchanged my wholesale hat for a retail one. I worked myself through the various dealership positions to V.P. and general manager. I was happy until another dealer in my hometown announced he was retiring, and he wanted me to buy his dealership.

That was my opportunity to make my own future, and I took it. I started with that suburban Ford dealership and then added a Subaru franchise a couple years later. As the years advanced, I acquired or built other facilities and added other franchises including Toyota, Hyundai, and over a half-dozen others. I'm now retired and lease some of my former dealerships to others. The car business has been a wonderful and interesting career for me, and all my children still work in it today.

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.

2019

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SATURDAY, JUNE 22
START: Mission Inn Ave, Riverside, CA - 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
LUNCH: California Route 66 Museum, Victorville, CA - noon
OVERNIGHT: The Boulevard, Lancaster, CA - 4:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, JUNE 23
LUNCH: Bishop City Park, Bishop, CA - noon
OVERNIGHT: Lampe Park, Gardnerville, NV - 5:30 p.m.

MONDAY, JUNE 24
LUNCH: Mill Street, Grass Valley, CA - 11:45 a.m
PIT STOP: State Theater, Myers Street, Oroville, CA - 2:30 p.m.
OVERNIGHT: City Plaza, Downtown Chico, CA - 5 p.m.

TUESDAY, JUNE 25
LUNCH: Recreation Grove Park, Willits, CA - 12:15 p.m.
OVERNIGHT: 2nd Street, Old Town, Eureka, CA - 5:15 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26
LUNCH: Curry County Fairgrounds, Gold Beach, OR -- noon
OVERNIGHT: Southwest G Street, Grants Pass, OR - 5 p.m.

THURSDAY, JUNE 27
LUNCH: Rim Village, Crater Lake, OR - noon
OVERNIGHT: Tower Theater, Wall Street, Bend, OR - 5 p.m.

FRIDAY, JUNE 28
LUNCH: Aeroplane & Auto Museum, Hood River, OR - noon
OVERNIGHT: WAAAM West, Vancouver, WA - 5 p.m.

SATURDAY, JUNE 29
PIT STOP: Maritime Museum, Astoria, OR - 10 a.m.
LUNCH: Commerce Avenue, Longview, WA - noon
OVERNIGHT: LeMay Collections at Marymount, Spanaway, WA - 5:15 p.m.

SUNDAY, JUNE 30
FINISH: LeMay - America's Car Museum, Tacoma, WA - 1:30 p.m.

TACOMA, WA
SPANAWAY, WA
Longview, WA
VANCOUVER, WA
OVERNIGHT STOP
LUNCH STOP
Hood River, OR
BEND, OR
Crater Lake, OR
GRANTS PASS, OR
Gold Beach, OR
EUREKA, CA
Willits, CA
CHICO, CA
Grass Valley, CA
GARDNERVILLE, NV
Bishop, CA
LANCASTER, CA
Victorville, CA
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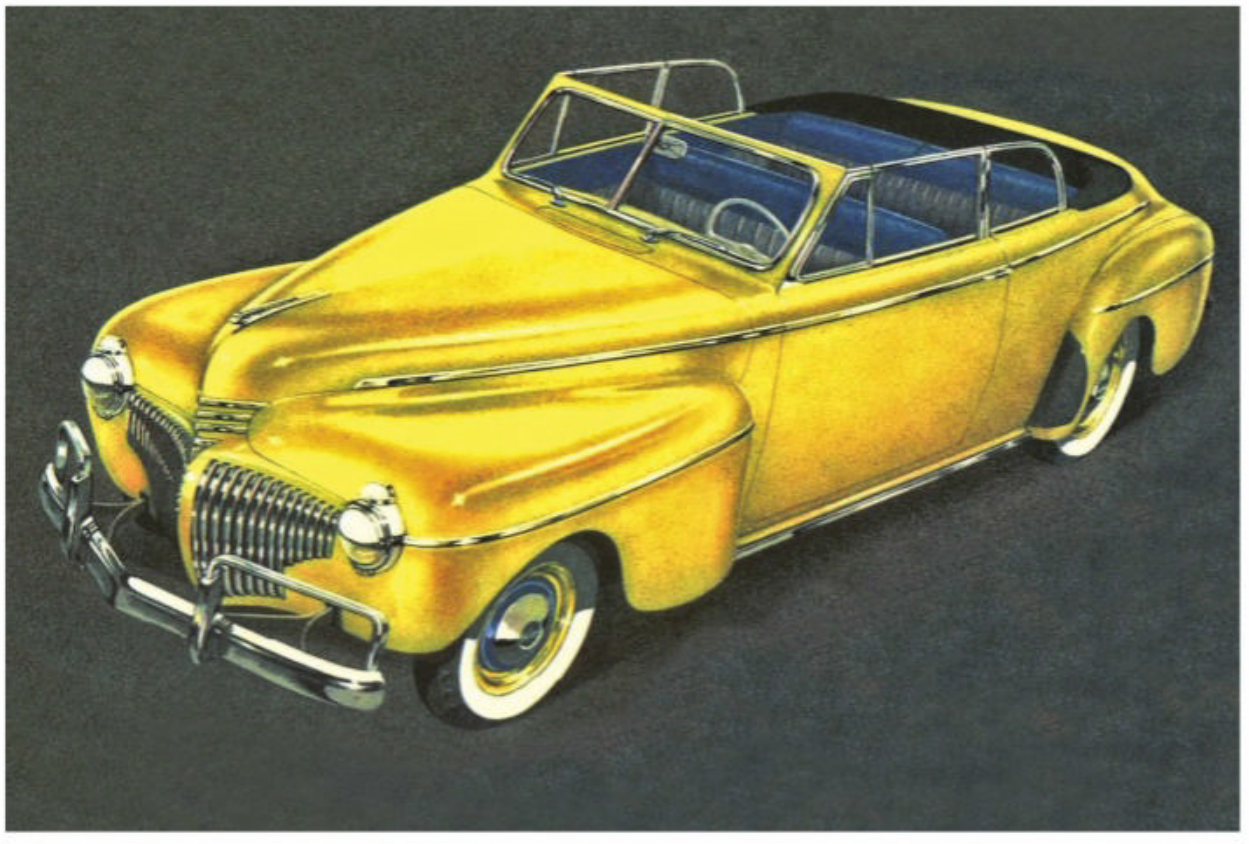
BY STEVE GURNEY
HAMDEN, CONNECTICUT

My Great De Soto Adventure



AHHH, DE SOTO. MAY BE GONE from most living memories, but not from mine. At age 18, I acquired a dark-red, 10-year-old, 1941 De Soto convertible—6 volts, straight-six, Fluid Drive, three-on-the-column. The clutch pedal was half the area of the large brake pedal next to it. That little clutch said plainly that it was mostly optional. Just leave it and the shift lever alone, and the car would drive in whichever of its three gears you put it in. Starts and stops, too. Of course, third-gear acceleration from stop was painfully sluggish and even dangerous for entering traffic with only 100 horsepower at best, so I usually worked that midget clutch through at least two and usually all three of the gear ratios with which the De Soto was endowed. The Fluid Drive could be a little mushy, but it did the job.

My De Soto lived through three Buffalo winters. For five months or so of each of them, it was stored with its radiator drained in a damp, unheated shed attached to a garage on optimistically named Summer Street. The spring ritual was to close the radiator drain petcock, fill the radiator with clear Lake Erie tap water, install its aged but recharged battery, pour a few thimbles of gas into its carburetor, and turn the key. It always started and ran flawlessly, and if it ever needed new spark plugs or a tune-up I don't remember. It just liked to start and run with few complaints.

One spring, we drove east on Route 20 through the long scenic climbs and descents of central New York's Cherry Valley and Finger Lakes region for lunch in Cazenovia and then across the Rip Van Winkle Bridge at the Hudson River and south to New Haven. Later that summer, I drove the car further east to Bangor, Maine, then back to Buffalo for its third winter rest. During all this, only one problem arose: Near my friend's house in Connecticut, a fire broke out under the dash near the speedometer. By fortunate timing, my friend was waiting for me, and he responded to my first words of greeting: "Quick, get a glass of water and don't ask why." He did, handed me the glass through my open window. I shut off the ignition and threw the water up under the dashboard, which put out the fire and the only damage was charred insulation on two crossed wires, quickly repaired by a couple of Band-Aids. The car had nice leather seats whose seams under the driver often needed restitching to hold in their stuffing, and the canvas power top worked most of the time and could be coaxed when it turned reluctant. Dependable with faded elegance was that car. But an unknown test was coming.

After its third Buffalo winter, for its usual spring awakening, I closed the drain at the bottom of the radiator, poured in a few rusty coffee cans of nearly fresh Lake Erie tap water, connected the battery, dumped the usual gas into the carburetor, and climbed in for the annual start-up. With a few accelerator pumps it started as always but immediately a flow of water appeared, running out from under the car. Since there was no possible source other than what I had just poured in, I lifted the hood to look for clues. There were plenty. The engine and everything beside and below it was covered with water. I ran my hands down its oily sides in the dim light and discovered a long, protruding sharp-edged gash on the left side of the block that I knew shouldn't be there. My hand came away wet as well as oily. From that I soon learned that the engine block on a De Soto, like the radiator, had its own drain and if that drain is ignored, no mere cast iron can withstand the force of water as it freezes. I have no explanation as to why the undrained block survived two previous Buffalo winters uncracked. Nor why I didn't simply fill it up with anti-freeze in the fall. Maybe I once did, and those winters it may have contained some residual antifreeze.

Clearly there was a problem, maybe big time. I had planned to drive to California for a summer job with the Forest Service up north near Mount Shasta. A call to the local Buffalo Chrysler dealer confirmed that another engine to get me there, if one could be found new or used, would start at $300, a princely sum for a 19-year-old college student in 1953 when full tuition and room and board cost $1,500. Some imagination was needed, and a lot of it, which led me to a local hardware store. They had a tube of what could be glue with "Liquid Solder" clearly printed on the tube. Those two words sounded promising to this non-metalurgist. I remember those words perfectly all these years and cars later because the mind concentrates

when faced with impending doom… or the profound disappointment of having to cancel a job in California where I had never been. I also bought a 2-inch roll of white adhesive tape. I tore off a piece of the tape, cleaned off the dirt and grease from around the crack as best I could with an old T-shirt dipped in gasoline, and smeared a gob of the glue on both sides of the protruding crack. I then massaged more glue into both sides of the tape to saturate it, shoved a few wires out of the way, pressed the tape over the crack by feel because I could not see it, and held it there waiting for the glue to set and hoping that I was not cementing my bare fingers to the engine block.

Then the test: Fill the radiator to the brim with water, make sure bubbles show that radiator water is overflowing into the empty engine block jacket, fire it up, and see what happens. In my favor, it might be remembered that in that golden era of do-it-yourself car repairs, cooling systems were unpressurized and so the Liquid Solder's undoing could be only heat, not pressure.

After some local driving tests, I picked up my two traveling buddies, swung our canvas Desert Water Bags from the front bumper guards, and drove 3,000 pre-interstate miles to Northern California. Kansas was hot, Berthoud Pass was high, the Salt Flats were harsh, Winnemucca was cold, and California was a new world. Our Desert Water Bags repeatedly proved themselves, and the De Soto's six cylinders always fired. And that's not all. The De Soto brought me back to Buffalo over 10,000-foot Tioga Pass, then across the shimmering 110-degree Nevada desert through Tonopah and Indian Springs, Las Vegas, Amarillo, St. Louis, and Akron, and never a drop of water appeared that wasn't freely boiled out past the radiator cap or a leaky hose clamp.

I would guess that 6,000 miles on $3 worth of glue and adhesive tape to hold an engine together remains uncommon, even for De Sotos. Yet this car was wisely named for the 16th-century Spanish explorer, of whom much was expected, and much was achieved.

REARVIEW MIRROR 1955

BY TOM COMERRO

CHEVROLET'S BEL AIR FEATURES SHOW-CAR STYLING AT ITS FINEST. THE LINE HAS something for everyone—wider, longer, and lower with crisp lines, classy chrome, and six body styles available. Choose between a variety of engine options including the new "Power Pack" V-8 that brings you added power, performance, and versatility. Starting at $1,668, the Bel Air series can be found at your local Chevy dealer.

FACTORY PRICES

Buick	$2,291-$3,552
Cadillac	$3,882-$6,402
Chevrolet	$1,685-$2,472
Chrysler	$2,660-$4,208
Dodge	$1,988-$2,736
Ford	$1,606-$2,492
Jaguar XK140	$3,595-$4,090
Lincoln	$3,563-$4,072
Mercury	$2,218-$2,844
Oldsmobile	$2,297-$3,276
Packard	$2,586-$5,932
Plymouth	$1,614-$2,326
Pontiac	$2,164-$2,962
Studebaker	$1,741-$3,253
Triumph TR2	$2,448-$2,695
Volkswagen Sedan	$1,495-$1,995

OLDSMOBILE ROCKETS AHEAD AGAIN with power and new looks in the 88, Super 88, and 98 series. Coupled with the reliable Hydra-Matic transmission, the new "Rocket" 202-hp engine balances performance with economy and efficiency, giving you complete control in every driving range. The low center of gravity will let you glide through the curves effortlessly, and the solid chassis is precisely matched to the engine. Head over to your Oldsmobile dealer, and get into a new Oldsmobile for as little as $2,297.

FORD RETURNS WITH NEW STYLING AND the latest engineering to give you automobiles that are strong and reliable performers. Interior styling has been updated with brand-new instrument panels, and the longer and wider design yields a more spacious cabin. The Crestline has been replaced with the new Fairlane series, and keep an eye out for the new two-passenger Thunderbird available for $2,944. All other Fords start as low as $1,606.

EXPENDITURES

(per capita)

Auto parts	$9.68
Auto purchases	$83.49
Auto usage	$193.01
Gas and oil	$52.03
Intercity transport	$6.65
Local transport	$11.49

BACKING UP PACKARD'S NEW POWERFUL V-8—among the strongest you'll find in any production car—the new Twin Ultramatic transmission gives you the choice of two distinct drives in one: high-range for a smooth ride and an underdrive gear for acceleration. Sculpted styling and a decorated interior bring class and comfort to the new Packards, which are available starting at $2,586.

CHAMPIONS

Indy 500	Bob Sweikert *(128.213 mph)*
F1	Juan Manuel Fangio *(40 points)*

SALES RACE

(total model-year production)

1. Chevrolet	1,704,693
2. Ford	1,451,157
3. Buick	738,814
4. Plymouth	705,455
5. Oldsmobile	583,179
6. Pontiac	554,090
7. Mercury	329,808
8. Dodge	276,936
9. Chrysler	152,777
10. Cadillac	140,777

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June, 1926 THE JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY OF AUTOMOTIVE ENGINEERS 29

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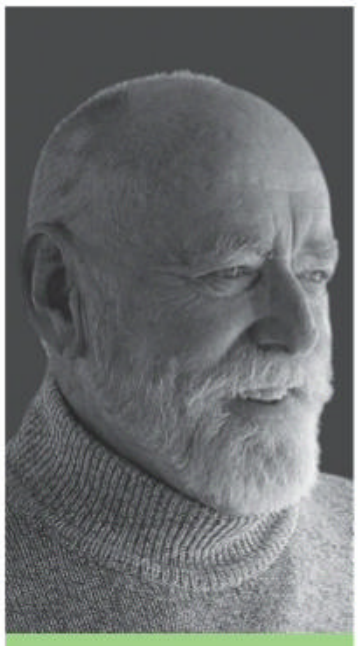
The Journal of the Society of Automotive Engineers
June 1926



> I still detail my own cars, …I will forever be indebted to Percy for teaching me how to work mindfully and patiently…

From Wrecks to Riches

One summer long ago, I worked at a carwash. My job was to wipe down the driver's side and then unhook the car and drive it around so the girls could do the interior and windows. And yes, there was a gender division in those days. High school girls were employed to do the interiors and windows because they were smaller and not as clumsy.

The best part about working there for me (other than the girls) was on weekday afternoons when there would be no customers for an hour or two. I would be diverted to helping a fellow named Percy. Percy ran a side business as part of the car wash in which he detailed cars for customers, many of whom were used car dealers. He was a man of few words and many skills, and he taught me a lot.

He could take a tired trade-in and make it look new. He would send the car through the car wash, have the engine steam-cleaned, and then he would give the engine a good brushing, and wipe it down with lacquer thinner. After that he would shoot on rattle can engine enamel that sort of matched the factory color.

Percy would then polish the car with rubbing compound and a buffer and, finally, apply Harly Carnuba paste wax to make it shiny. He used fine steel wool on the chrome to clean and de-rust it, and then waxed it too. He would fill cracks in the rubber seals around the windows with Henry's Roofing Cement, which was a slow-setting black tar, and then use shoe polish to make the rubber look new and shiny.

Leather interiors got neatsfoot oil rubbed into them to make them supple. Wool or mohair seats got a good brushing and vacuuming. He also had scented spray that helped disguise cigarette odors. Another trick he had that I still use today is to wax the windshield on the outside, and hand buff it too. It filled in the little pits that were inevitable if you drove to the desert or in dusty conditions.

In cases where the paint was too far gone to polish, Percy would wash the car with a solution of water and kerosene, which would make it look shiny long enough to flog it off on some poor unsuspecting sap who didn't have a sense of smell.

When Percy had finished waxing a car, he would take a small stiff household paint brush that he had cut short and use it to get into any cracks or seams to remove remaining wax or dirt. He would then take a little Windex to the chrome in order to get it to sparkle. He worked slowly and deliberately in a sort of Zen meditative state.

One particular used car dealer would occasionally apply a little sticker with a Biblical quotation to the dash of a car. I thought that was nice until I found out why. As it turns out, that dealer would tell customers that the car's previous owner was a minister who only drove it to church and back.

That dealer would also drive his cars to a shop nearby that would take the speedometers apart and stick a pocketknife blade in between the gears on the odometer to set them back to whatever he thought was believable. Actually, there were many dark tricks dealers used in those days, but they shall go unmentioned.

That summer, between my junior and senior years of high school, I learned a lot. Percy taught me how to power buff, and how to detail a car to look its best. He also taught me how to bend down and sight along the sides of cars to check for badly done repair work. Also, I learned that used car dealers were in business for themselves, and that it paid for me to be in business for myself when dealing with them.

Detailing cars has come a long way since then, and pros get paid handsomely to do classics for shows and auctions. They use multispeed buffers and professional products, detailer's clay to get rid of embedded contaminants, Lexol for leather, and a host of other specialized products that weren't around in Percy's day.

I still detail my own cars, so I am thankful for the new products that make the job easier. But I will forever be indebted to Percy for teaching me how to work mindfully and patiently, and to pay attention to detail. That approach is advisable for anything you set out to do on an old car.

Percy also taught me that nobody is perfect, and to ask a friend or spouse to walk around the finished car, because they will spot that patch of wax you failed to wipe off a hubcap, or that cloudy streak in the windshield that will cost points at a show later.

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