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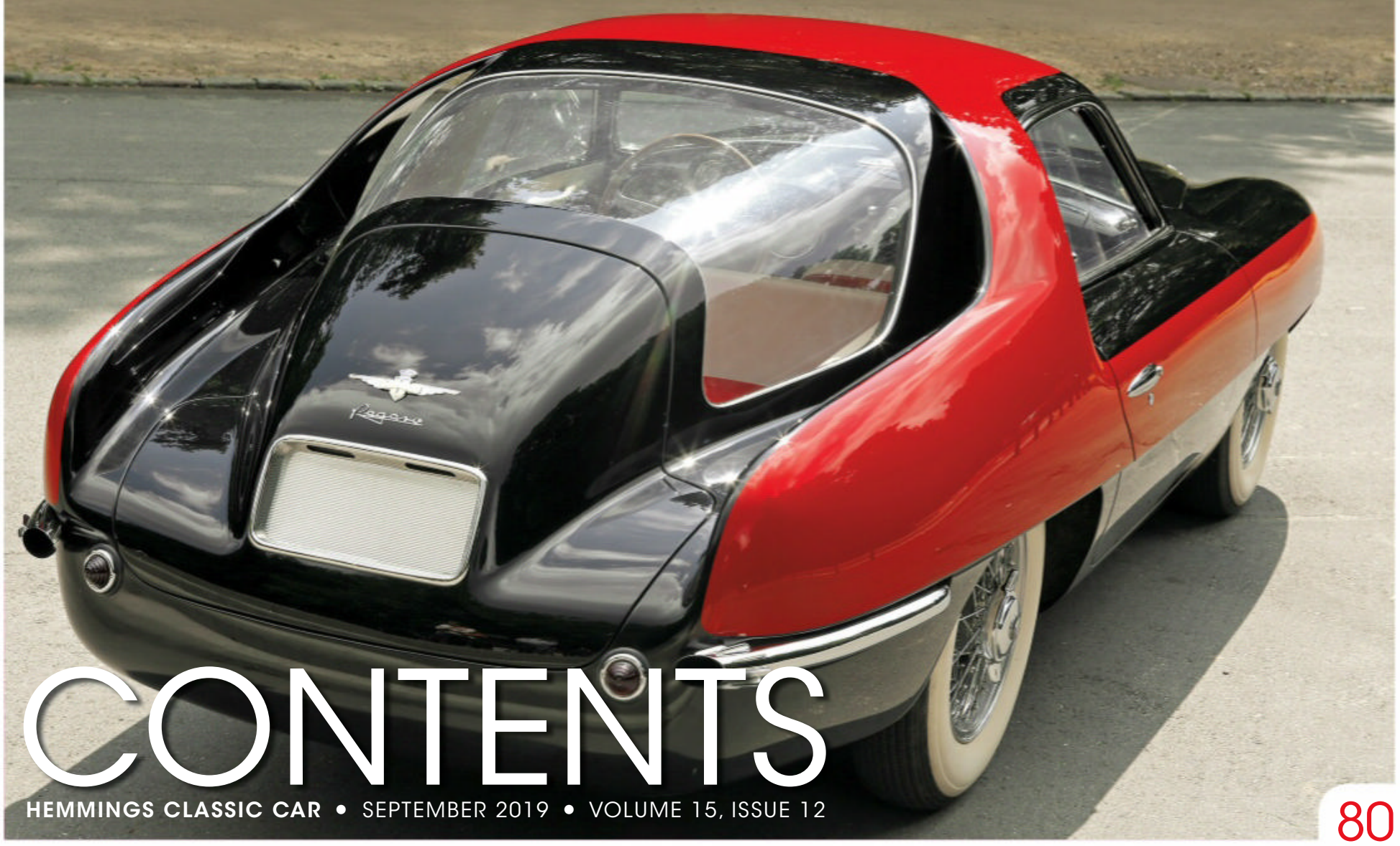

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NBCSN

Motoring in a Monza

It finally happened. After nearly a lifetime of waiting, I now own a Corvair. It's a classy-looking 1963 Monza convertible, black with a red interior and white top. Although it has the desirable 102-horsepower engine option, it's a three-speed manual. Oh well…

A 1965-'66 Corvair Corsa coupe or any 1965-'69 coupe with a four-speed was – and remains – my primary goal, as I truly didn't want to own another convertible, but this Monza was one of those rare cars that was too good to pass up. It was just a few years ago that I finally came to the conclusion that if a noteworthy, honest car comes your way, and the price is right, then buy it. Better to have that particular car that doesn't meet all the criteria you want in that model than to wait and perhaps never get the chance to own something similar. So, I bought it.

Thanks to *Hemmings Classic Car* subscriber Mitch Hubelbank, who remembered reading that I had been wanting to buy a Corvair, and sent me an email about this 1963 Monza convertible he had long known about and that its owner wanted to sell. After making the connection with Jennifer Sauer, the Corvair's caretaker, one Saturday morning this past March I drove down to Ramsey, New Jersey, to inspect the car. While it clearly was in need of some interior work and required some minor body repair – it had been repainted many years ago in its original black – its body was solid, the interior was all original, and there wasn't a single loose wire dangling from under the dash – which is always a good sign. Best of all, Jennifer's mother was the Monza's one and only owner. And that's why I decided to buy this Monza.

Back on January 14, 1963, Susan Sauer traded in her 1959 Buick LeSabre convertible to Trinity Auto Sales in Providence, Rhode Island, and, after getting a trade-in allowance of $1,000, paid $2,375 for her brand new 1963 Corvair. According to Jennifer, her mother loved her Corvair, and would drive about town with the top down as often as she could. To date the odometer reads only 58,345 miles.

Few 50-plus-year-old cars can still be bought from their original owners – or, in this case, the family of the original owner. It had always been garaged and well maintained, all of which can be proven by the folder full of work receipts from literally day one that Jennifer gave me. I know exactly what kind of work had been done to the car, and which parts had been repaired or replaced. Knowing a car's provenance – and being able to document it – and the fact that it had always remained in the same family and been well taken care of, makes a huge difference. It may not be perfect, and it surely isn't, as all the tell-tale signs of being used are there, but it had never been abused or received any cover-up repairs. And that's something that you just can't pass up.

Back in the mid-1990s, my daily driver was a 1964 Pontiac Le Mans that had the same color red interior as this Corvair. It instantly brings me back to those memorable days when I would drive my Le Mans each morning from my home in Brooklyn to my job in Saddle Brook, New Jersey – not an easy commute, especially for a 30-year-old car with drum brakes that had to dodge taxi cabs on the crowded streets of Manhattan. This Corvair has that same smell as that Pontiac – that signature General Motors' smell that only cars from this era had. I love it because each time I get in, that aroma reminds me of all the wonderful Oldsmobiles and Buicks that my father used to own back in those days. It's amazing just how powerful and evocative our sense of smell really is and how happy it can make us when certain aromas strike.

This Corvair's best trait is its condition; at best it's a 3-, or more likely a 4+. That means that I'm able to drive it anywhere I choose and won't have to worry about scratching the paint or dinging the doors. The paint has plenty of scratches and chips already, the body is dinged here and there, and the bumpers are dented along with being badly tarnished in places. The driver's seat is torn, the carpets stained. But I truly don't care. It is what it is and I'm going to enjoy driving it until the snow arrives, because it's the driving experience that counts, not how it looks.

"It is what it is and I'm going to enjoy driving it… it's the driving experience that counts, not how it looks."

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BY TOM COMERRO

Hemmings Concours Weekend

THE 13TH-ANNUAL HEMMINGS MOTOR NEWS CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE WILL TAKE place September 13-15 at the Festival Commons Charles R. Wood Park in Lake George, New York. The three-day event has something for everyone and welcomes attendees at the gateway to the Adirondacks as summer comes to an end. Friday will feature a rally that will make its way up to Fort Ticonderoga at the southern end of Lake Champlain, followed by a dinner cruise in the evening. Saturday is the Cruise-In Spectacular, open to all makes and collector cars, and the annual banquet that night will feature keynote speaker Bill Warner. The festivities wrap up on Sunday after the Concours d'Elegance, which opens for spectators at 9 a.m. Special classes include the Class of 1949, Early SUVs through 1978, Vintage Race Cars, and Fresh Restorations, among others. Spectator tickets are available in advance or at the show. Please visit www.hemmings.com/events/concours for more information.

Lincoln National Meet

THE LINCOLN & CONTINENTAL OWNERS CLUB EASTERN NATIONAL MEET WILL TAKE place in the Hudson River Valley of New York this September 19-22. Thursday's driving tour in and around Dutchess County will take members to many of the region's landmarks, such as the Vanderbilt Carriage House and President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Springwood estate. Saturday will feature a special Mark II exhibit and Lincoln judging on the showfield at the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park. The full weekend's itinerary is available at www.lcoc.org, or you can contact Owen Clarke at 845-889-8891.

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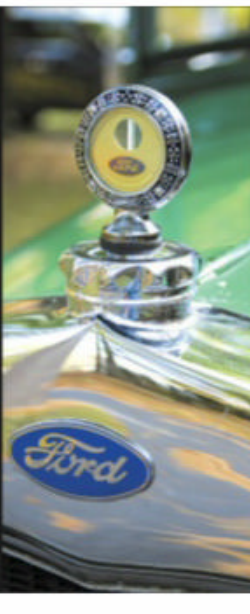
A-Day

WHAT BETTER PLACE TO HOLD MODEL A DAY THAN AT THE MODEL A FORD Museum in Hickory Corners, Michigan? This meet, taking place on September 21, will feature a large Model A swap meet and some special Model A seminars. The event will also serve as a setting for induction of new members in the Model A Hall of Fame. All attendees will have full access to this museum and all of the Gilmore museum buildings that exhibit more than 400 antique automobiles on Gilmore's 90-acre campus. Special display vehicles will include a 1928 Fire Truck, a '31 AA Service car/wrecker, and a '28 Business Coupe. Seminars will be $5 each and include Model A Horn Restoration, differential rebuilding, and the development and reproduction of Model A Parts. Visit www.maffi.org for more information.



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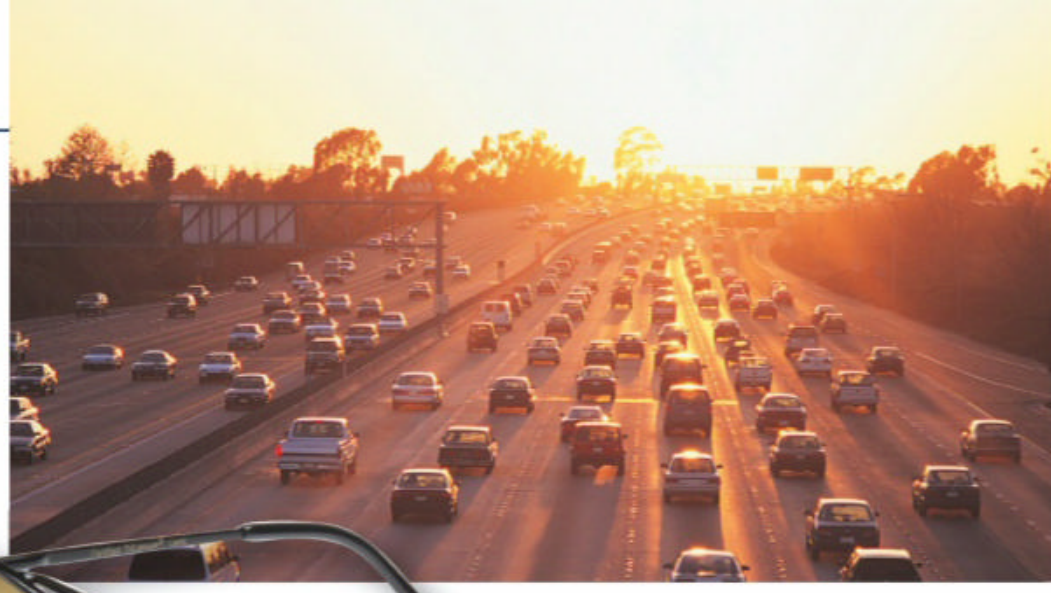
But When Driving, These Sunglasses May Save Your Life!



Drivers' Alert: Driving can expose you to more dangerous glare than any sunny day at the beach can… do you know how to protect yourself?

Studies by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) show that most (74%) of the crashes occurred on clear, sunny days

The sun rises and sets at peak travel periods, during the early morning and afternoon rush hours and many drivers find themselves temporarily blinded while driving directly into the glare of the sun. Deadly accidents are regularly caused by such blinding glare with danger arising from reflected light off another vehicle, the pavement, or even from waxed and oily windshields that can make matters worse. Early morning dew can exacerbate this situation. Yet, motorists struggle on despite being blinded by the sun's glare that can cause countless accidents every year.

Not all sunglasses are created equal. Protecting your eyes is serious business. With all the fancy fashion frames out there it can be easy to overlook what really matters—the lenses. So we did our research and looked to the very best in optic innovation and technology.

Sometimes it does take a rocket scientist. A NASA rocket scientist. Some ordinary sunglasses can obscure your vision by exposing your eyes to harmful UV rays, blue light, and reflective glare. They can also darken useful vision-enhancing light. But now, independent research conducted by scientists from NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory has brought forth ground-breaking technology to help protect human eyesight from the harmful effects of solar radiation light. This superior lens technology was first discovered when NASA scientists looked to nature for a means to superior eye protection—specifically, by studying the eyes of eagles, known for their extreme visual acuity. This discovery resulted in what is now known as Eagle Eyes®.

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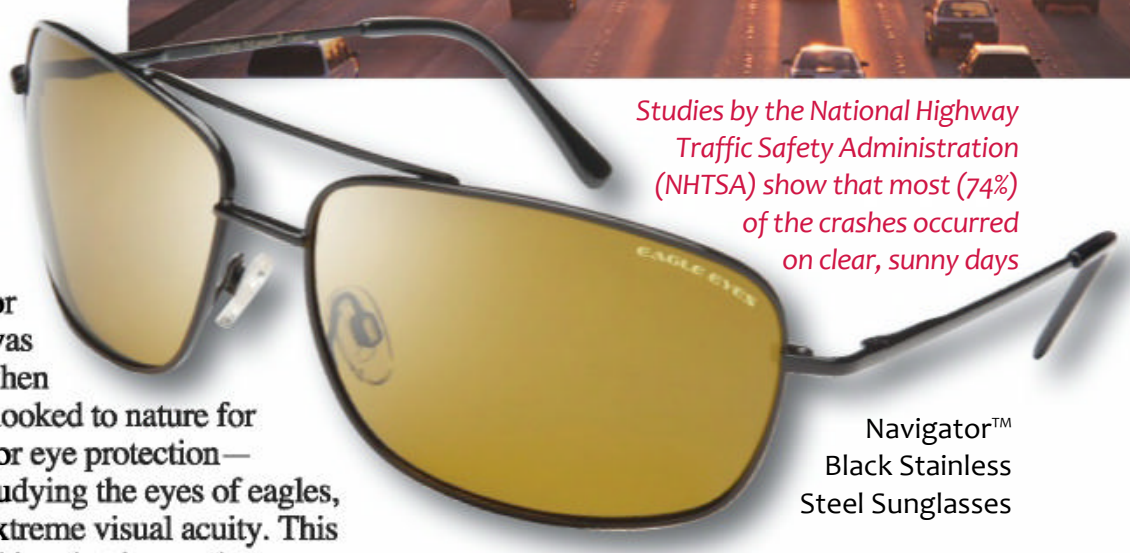

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LOST & FOUND

BY DANIEL STROHL

One-Off Fox

WHILE BUYING ANOTHER CAR, VANYO MOODY OF NORTH MANKATO, MINNESOTA, came across this factory-built 1979 Ford Mustang Cabriolet, a car that most Fox-body Mustang fans will claim should not be.

Indeed, Ford didn't restart convertible Mustang production until 1983, and even then it turned to an outside company to convert the convertibles. However, as the documentation that came with the 1979 Cabriolet shows, Ford code-named the V-6-powered car "Project K326" and designated it for the 1980 show circuit. In addition to the droptop, Project K326 also got a custom interior, wider taillamps, and Lincoln paint.

Once Ford retired it from the shows in late 1980, an executive secretary at Ford bought it and held onto it until 2015, only putting about 45,000 miles on it. According to a Ford official who authenticated the car, it cost $24,500 to build at a time when the most expensive Mustang started at around $5,000.

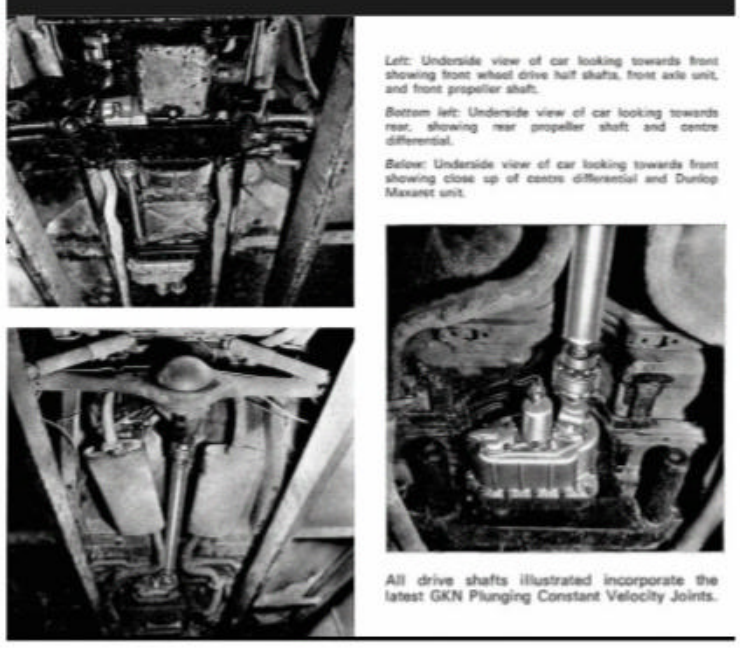
Ferguson Fury

JOHN PERODEAU OF THE TAMPA BAY AUTOMOBILE Museum, which already houses a Ferguson four-wheel-drive Mustang and Ford Zephyr, recently wrote us to see if there's any information out there on the 1970 Plymouth Fury that a Ferguson successor company converted for the Michigan State Police.

Coincidentally, Bill Munro and Pat Turner just released a tome on Ferguson, *Traction For Sale: The Story of Ferguson Formula Four-Wheel-Drive,* which does include a short passage on the 440-powered Fury (Project P196) that GKN Birfield Transmissions converted to four-wheel drive. In addition to the transfer case and front axle, GKN Birfield also fitted a rack-and-pinion steering system and police-spec wheels.

According to a 1972 *Popular Science* article, the conversion cost was estimated at $1,000, but it appears neither Plymouth nor the MSP decided it was worth pursuing.

What John would like to know is what happened to the Plymouth after it was put through testing and whether it still exists.



Left: Underside view of car looking towards front showing front wheel drive half shafts, front axle unit, and front propeller shaft.

Bottom left: Underside view of car looking towards rear, showing rear propeller shaft and centre differential.

Below: Underside view of car looking towards front showing close up of centre differential and Dunlop Maxaret unit.

All drive shafts illustrated incorporate the latest GKN Plunging Constant Velocity Joints.

A Sunburned Land Yacht

TRAWLING THROUGH THE ONLINE ARCHIVES OF THE STATE LIBRARY OF QUEENSLAND, Australia, we came across this photo of a streamlined mobile home taken on a suburban Brisbane street sometime in 1948. Unfortunately, the library had nothing else on the rig, so let's see if we can identify it.

To begin with, that door looks to come off a 1940-'47 Ford truck, but as best we can tell, Ford trucks at the time maxed out at one ton and 122 inches of wheelbase, and this chassis seems much heavier. One online commenter noted that the motor home resembled the old Brisbane-to-Sandgate black-and-white buses, and while this does appear similar to the REOs that made that route, it's certainly much larger. We're also questioning whether the driver sits behind the single side door during transit, which would likely mean that the builder of the motor home kept the same steering wheel-to-front axle proportions. Also, if so, then do the curtains come down while on the road?

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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BY TOM COMERRO

RM SOTHEBY'S

Guyton Goes Big

RM SOTHEBY'S PRESIDED OVER THE GUYTON COLLECTION IN MAY AND SAW MORE THAN $11.6 million in total sales. The two-day event was comprised of cars owned by the late Fred Guyton, who was a well-known architect and pillar of the St. Louis community. The collection spanned more than 40 years and saw 73 automobiles cross the block. Among them was a large array of American Classics that included a 1930 Duesenberg Model J Convertible Sedan, which sold for $1,105,000. This was the highest-selling American car of the auction, and the Duesenberg began its life as a "loaner" to Indianapolis 500 driver Leon Duray. Guyton's collection was very impressive in regards to prewar inventory that consisted of many Packards, Cadillacs, and Fords, with the occasional Independents like the 1922 Wills St. Claire that sold for $71,680. Full results of the Guyton Sale are available at www.rmsothebys.com.

Greenwich Green

BONHAMS FEATURED AN AUCTION IN tandem with the Greenwich Concours d'Elegance on June 2 that resulted in total sales of more than $4.4 million. Of the 72 cars that sold, over 25 percent were American Classics, and there were some good deals to be had. This 1948 Lincoln-Zephyr cabriolet featured an older restoration, that had aged nicely. With less than 54,600 miles on the odometer, the Zephyr sold for $20,160. There was also at least one sale below the $20,000 mark for each decade, from the 1930s to the '60s, with a 1933 Plymouth PD Convertible Coupe selling for $19,600, a 1947 Packard Custom Super Clipper at $9,520, a 1951 Buick Estate Wagon for $19,040, and a 1964 Thunderbird changing hands at $9,520. Be sure to look at the full results from the Greenwich Auction at www.bonhams.com.

BONHAMS

AUCTION PROFILE

CAR	1930 Cord L-29 Convertible Phaeton Sedan
AUCTIONEER	RM Sotheby's
LOCATION	Auburn, Indiana
DATE	June 1, 2019
LOT NUMBER	6088
RESERVE	None
AVERAGE SELLING PRICE	$170,000
SELLING PRICE	$157,300

RM SOTHEBY'S

THE STYLISH CORD L-29 WAS THE FIRST mass-produced front-wheel-drive car available to the public in the United States, beating out the Ruxton, but its timing was about as bad as it could be, coming out around the same time as the Stock Market Crash of 1929. Falling between the Auburn and Duesenberg on the pricing scale, few L-29s were made before production ended in 1932.

This Full Classic Cord received a complete restoration and has been certified as a Category One Original Car by the ACD Club. Recent two-tone paint and a tan leather interior were said to be in excellent condition. Accessories included dual side-mount spares with mirrors and chrome wire wheels. Powered by a 298-cu.in. Lycoming straight-eight, this well-cared-for Cord had all of its documents and restoration photographs included, and was a fine example of prewar engineering that would be copied by other manufacturers in following years. Both seller and buyer made out well.

SEPTEMBER

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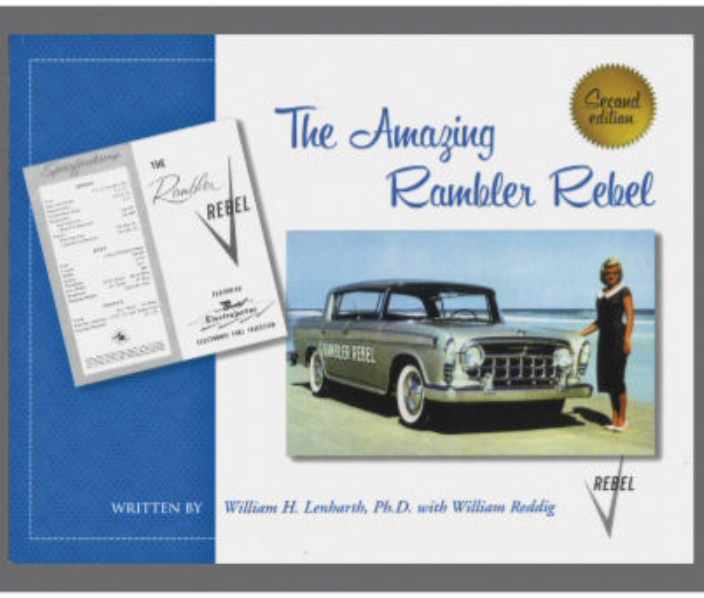
Hoosier Highlights

MECUM WRAPPED UP ITS INDIANAPOLIS Auction in mid-May with 1,189 vehicles finding new owners and total sales eclipsing the $70.4-million mark. There were over 200 cars ranging from the prewar era to the late 1950s, with plenty of lots that caught our attention. This 10th-series Packard Twelve Touring was a Full Classic and just one of 244 made in 1933; meticulously restored, it had only two owners since 1970 and it sold for an impressive $244,750. Other Independents included a 1935 Packard 120 sedan going for $18,700, a 1952 Kaiser Manhattan for $7,700, and a 1948 Nash 600 Slipstream at $8,800. Of course, Chevrolets and Fords were on full display with the most popular models, Bel Airs and Thunderbirds, reaching final sales of 15 and 25, respectively. Full results are available at www.mecum.com.

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

ART & AUTOMOBILIA

BY MARK J. McCOURT



Rambler Rebel Redux

203-877-6717 • WWW.OLDEMILFORDPRESS.COM • $34.95

It's been a decade since we examined the first edition of William H. Lenharth's tribute to American Motors' sporty, low-production Rambler Rebel, written as it was with assistance from former AMC designer William "Bill" Reddig. This title has been updated and expanded substantially in its second edition, going from 92 pages to a generous 154 and adding restoration material, a chapter on period racing of this sport sedan, and appendices that include reproductions of AMC internal documents. Since a mere 1,500 examples of the innovative flagship V-8 car were built, the Rebel is not well known, but the book does a nice job of explaining what made it unique, including the proposed Bendix Electrojector fuel-injection system and its special silver/copper livery. If you're a Rambler fan, or simply appreciate American performance cars, you'll want to add *The Amazing Rambler Rebel*, Second Edition, to your bookshelf.

American Torch

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The famous red, white, and blue torch has been a recognizable symbol in the petroleum industry for more than a century. It has been used on three brands: the original Standard Oil of Indiana, American Oil, and most recently, AMOCO. This colorful and eye-catching "Satin Style" American-brand display (item GAD-GA1140) represents the mid-century logo version. It's die-cut to shape, measures 42 inches across, and sports pre-drilled rivets for easy hanging. The one-sided sign is built from durable 22-gauge steel, and made to order here in the USA. A similar-size "Vintage Style" version (item GAD-GA1141) offers the appearance of attractive patina without worry of deterioration. This patriotic-looking collectible is estimated to ship in 14 to 21 business days, and is subject to a $30 oversize shipping charge.

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Rarely seen and little celebrated are the hundreds of mechanical components that comprise the engines and drivetrains of our beloved classic automobiles. Each one of those parts plays a key role in making our cars and trucks go, and each has its own special functional beauty. Industrial design-trained artist Steven Shaver spends hours sifting through oil-covered, discarded engine parts at machine shops to collect piston and camshaft bearing shells. "It was by accident that I discovered these 'gems,' because I often search for larger car parts that have a sculptural shape," he tells us. "It would have been easy to overlook them at first glance because of their simple ring shape. Yet, upon wiping off the oil, the amazing metal surface is revealed — a palette of distressed patina resembling a landscape or terrain. The original specs, logo, and year that identify the car, origin, and point in time are also stamped into the worn metal."

Steven gives new purpose to these reclaimed bearing shells, highlighting their unique patterns and markings while reshaping them into cufflinks, bracelets, keychains, and more. He uses other cast-off car parts to create a wide range of clocks, trophies, and wall art. "With the decline of the automotive industry and car capitals like Detroit, where many of the parts and artifacts originated," Steven muses, "the jewelry pieces become even more collectible, historic, and valuable."

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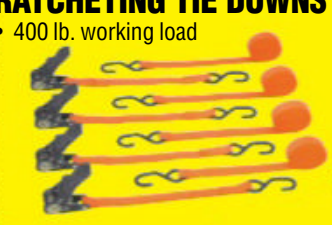

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BY TOM COMERRO

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BY DAVID CONWILL
PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY THE AUBURN CORD DUESENBERG AUTOMOBILE MUSEUM

Alan Leamy

GORDON BUEHRIG CAN RIGHTLY be acknowledged as the designer behind the "coffin-nose" Cords of 1936-'37, but he was preceded by an equally capable designer who unfortunately died quite young, before he could build the kind of reputation that would follow men like Buehrig, Harley Earl, Virgil Exner, Bob Gregorie, and Brooks Stevens. That man was Alan Leamy.

Leamy was born in Arlington, Maryland, a neighborhood of Baltimore, June 4, 1902. In 1905, the family moved to Columbus, Ohio, where Leamy was stricken with polio. His left leg was permanently crippled as a result, requiring him to use a brace and a cane for the balance of his life. An avid automobilist, Leamy developed a clutch-release technique using his leg and arm together—it's said he was so good at it, most passengers never even realized.

After high school, Leamy studied architecture via correspondence courses, leading to initial employment in the real-estate field—which necessitated a move to New Jersey. The sharp-dressing Leamy soon attracted the attention of Miss Agnes Garrett, and the pair were married in August 1927.

The year 1927 was a good one for Leamy, as his father was friends with the chief engineer of luxury carmaker Marmon, in Indianapolis. At that time, body design was a function of engineering, so the connection landed Leamy his first job as a stylist.

Unfortunately for Marmon, Leamy's superiors did not recognize his talents or eye for design, ignoring his ideas and assigning him drudge work. With his foot in the door of his chosen industry, Leamy was soon looking for a lateral move that would give him more creative control.

In Indianapolis, it was an open secret that E.L. Cord was working with race car impresario Harry Miller on a revolutionary front-wheel-drive chassis. Leamy figured that his forward-looking designs would be ideally suited for the technically daring new car and he reached out to Cord, expressing his interest in joining the firm, also in Indiana.

Leamy met with, and showed off his portfolio to, C.W. Van Ranst, Auburn's chief engineer and the man who was working with Miller. Van Ranst was impressed and arranged for Leamy to meet with Cord himself. Less than 18 months after starting with Marmon, Leamy was working at Cord. His first assignment was updating the Auburn sedan for the 1929 model year.

At Auburn, Leamy taught the other body engineers the technique of building fullsize clay models, layering clay over a wooden buck and then shaping it with wires. This allowed a three-dimensional presentation of designs heretofore limited to paper.

Further evidence that Leamy was a smart hire came from his adept handling of the project that had caught his attention to begin with—the Cord L-29. Cord, the man, wanted his eponymous automobile to proudly show off its front-wheel-drive componentry and inboard brakes.

Through consultation with Cord, Leamy translated this vision into reality. The result speaks for itself. While L-29s carry a variety of coachwork (including some Leamy-penned closed bodies), it is the Leamy-designed grille, hood, and front fenders that set the tone for the rest of the car.

The low-slung L-29s were warmly received, but Leamy was already on to his next project. This may or may not have been the new Duesenberg Model J. Buehrig, who did not come to the company until later, initially appeared to credit E.L. Cord and sales manager Harold Ames with the styling of the Model J, but later qualified his statements suggesting that Leamy may have been involved—a conclusion bolstered by some Model J-like drawings produced by Leamy while he worked at Marmon.

The world may never know the truth, as the Model J is such a quintessential Classic that everyone wants a part of its glory. The real story may well be something like that of the L-29 design, with Leamy providing a starting point while Cord and Ames used their own vision and Leamy's talents to refine the look. Leamy himself never claimed credit for it.

The next all-Leamy project was the 1931 Auburn 8-98, a graceful restyling of the company's signature product. Most memorable was the speedster body, an offering that predated Leamy, but one that he refined into one of the company's landmark designs. The 1931 redesign was so successful, it was kept in production with only minor refinements through 1933.

Leamy's 1934 Auburn design was, sadly, less well received. Shovel-nose styling underwent a brief vogue in the early 1930s (see also the 1932 Packard, '34 Dodge, '34 Brewster, etc.). That was the direction Leamy pursued for his design. While it must have been approved by others, it was Leamy who took the blame for its lukewarm critical reception (sales-wise, it actually did better than Buehrig's 1935 revamp).

Perhaps because of the 1934 Auburn, Leamy started looking for a new position in the autumn of 1933. His designs were too radical for Packard, but Harley Earl recognized his talent. In the spring of 1935, Leamy joined the La Salle team at General Motors.

Unfortunately, as a GM employee, Leamy was required to get an annual physical along with a battery of vaccines. The diphtheria inoculation gave him blood poisoning and he died four days later, June 12, 1935, at only 33 years old. The world can only wonder what more he might have produced.

Actual size is 26.5 mm

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BY MILTON STERN

Ambitious Autocars Sussita

IN THE EVENINGS, I TEACH ENGLISH as a second language to adults. During one class, I asked my class, "What was your first car, and what did you like or not like about it?" There were a few with Peugeots, Renaults, and Audis, the requisite Chevrolets and Fords, and one woman had a big smile on her face when she told me about her car.

This woman, who's my age and a happily married mother of three adults, is really into motorcycles, and because she was an only child, her father taught her how to work on motorcycles and cars. Her dream was to become an auto mechanic, but she never pursued it because, in her day, it was considered an inappropriate vocation for a woman. Tell that to Queen Elizabeth II, the only world leader still alive and in power who served in the military during World War II, where she was a truck mechanic!

When my student became pregnant with her first child, her husband insisted she no longer ride a motorcycle, so he bought her an Autocars Sussita. I grinned along with her because just a few months prior, I saw not one but three Sussitas at an afternoon Cars and Coffee Meet-up in Israel. She said it was her favorite car. It was easy to drive, simple to work on, and best of all, a "strong" car. I asked if the camels ever ate her car (more on that later), and she laughed. She did tell me how once she was rear ended by another car. Her Sussita sustained no damage, but the other guy's front bumper was on the ground. Her fiberglass body had apparently popped back into place.

Another fun fact: Autocars marketed the Sussita, along with their other models, in Europe and the United States, but not with much success. However, there are a few Sussitas still registered and operational in the United States.

The Autocars Company was born in 1957, thus becoming Israel's first homegrown car manufacturer. Its offerings were Sabra Sport, Sussita, and the company's most popular models, Carmel and Gilboa. The Carmels were mostly sold to the government and were snapped up in a second whenever they came up for sale to civilians due to their low mileage and regular maintenance. Many are still on the road today.

Autocars ceased operations after the 1980 model year.

All its cars had fiberglass bodies and running gear from either Triumph or British Ford. Both the Triumph and Ford engines and transmissions were quite reliable, allowing the cars to keep their value for years. The fiberglass bodies, the majority painted white, and lack of snow in the Middle-Eastern climate kept the bodies and frames from rotting away. An urban legend was that if you parked an Autocars model in the desert, camels would eat your car. Would that be a desert legend?

Introduced in 1959, Autocars' first car, the Sussita, aimed to satisfy the need for an estate model for families that was both roomy and efficient.

Reliant Motor Company, an expert in fiberglass cars, aided in the design and manufacturing of the Sussita. Autocars didn't want to just assemble someone else's cars from knock-down kits. Ironically, early Sussitas were sent as knock-down kits from Reliant's U.K. plant before Autocars took over the entire process within the first few months of production.

The Sussita was initially available as an estate, panel van, or pickup, and was powered by the Ford Anglia 105E 1-liter, 39-horsepower, four-cylinder engine, and four-speed manual transmission. The optional engine was a Triumph 1,700-cc four-cylinder generating 61 hp and mated to a four-speed.

Styling was tall, narrow, and dumpy (so you know I love it), but it quickly became Israel's bestselling vehicle and earned a reputation for reliability and strength. *Sussita* is the Biblical (Aramaic) word for "mare."

Being so successful at home, it was only natural for Autocars to try and sell Sussitas around the world. The positive response to the Sussita at the 1960 New York Trade Fair boosted Autocar's confidence; 600 attendees placed orders for Sussitas. The brand name (Autocars) was changed to Sabra (pronounced *Tzabra*), meaning "native Israeli" for export markets.

After 35 deliveries, the Sussita ran into a roadblock as customers complained about its rudimentary and questionable build quality. Many had ripples in the fiberglass bodies, now considered a character trait among collectors. Sussitas benefited from a streamlined facelift midway through their run, which ended in 1966.

Are there any for sale? Surprisingly, yes. Currently there are two available in the U.S., a pickup model and an estate. Both are in very good condition. The pickup is in the hands of a private seller, and the estate is a museum piece. Of course, both are white. They have an average value of $9,000.

While finding a Sussita for sale may take some effort, amazingly 1:18-scale models are all the rage. I met a gentleman who imports and sells Sussita scale models, and they fly out his door with amazing speed for a car with 39-61 horsepower. And yes, I have one.

Facing Off with the Flivver

Created to take on the Model T, the 1922 Gray roadster almost succeeded

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID CONWILL

Henry Ford was notoriously reluctant to change the Model T, his "Universal Car," which he felt was more than adequate for the transportation needs of America and the world. Dissent on this point was treated harshly. According to Ford biographer Robert Lacey in his 1986 masterpiece *Ford: The Men and the Machine*, Henry took such umbrage at one proposal that he literally tore the doors off the prototype with his bare hands.

With such an atmosphere in Highland Park, it is perhaps small wonder that ex-Ford employees with ideas for improving upon the Tin Lizzie often took up residence at other companies. Perhaps the most famous is "Big Bill" Knudsen, who left Ford for General Motors in the early 1920s and wound up as president of Chevrolet Division from 1924 to 1937.

Less well known are the fellows who left Ford to found Gray, including Frank Klingensmith. He had joined Ford Motor Company in 1905 as cashier, eventually took the place of James Couzens as company treasurer, and rose to the positions of vice president, general manager, and co-director. Like Knudsen, Klingensmith left Ford in 1921.

Klingensmith joined with William Blackburn, recently of Cadillac, and Frank Beall, an ex-Packard man. Together, the three controlled Gray Motor Company, a Detroit-based maker of engines with roots in the late 19th century. The well-respected Gray name was primarily associated with marine engines, but Grays also found their way into trucks, stationary applications, and even a few cars, such as Charles King's eponymous effort.

What Klingensmith, Blackburn, and Beall had planned,

The simple, yet elegant, interior is comparable to that of contemporary competitors. Space is somewhat tighter, however, as the Gray is about 5 inches narrower than a Ford. Transmission controls are dramatically different from Ford.

however, was a new automobile to be "The Aristocrat of Small Cars," and hopefully unseat Ford as the nation's bestselling automobile. In order to be less dependent on outside suppliers, the company took a page from the Ford book and brought as much production as possible in house. Some parts, like the Timkin axles and Detroit Gear Company transmission, were still purchased through suppliers, but up to 80 percent of the car was produced by Gray itself—most notably the engine, thanks to Gray's history as a manufacturer of gasoline engines.

It was Beall who designed the engine that went into the new Gray automobile. The design, called the Z engine, was a conventional, L-head (flathead) four-cylinder. It even used thermo-siphon cooling instead of a water pump, like the Ford. Unlike the Model T, it featured a conventional battery and distributor ignition, and came standard with generator and electric start. Output was 21 horsepower, on par with the Ford's 20 to 22—displacement was smaller too: 165-cu.in. versus 177.

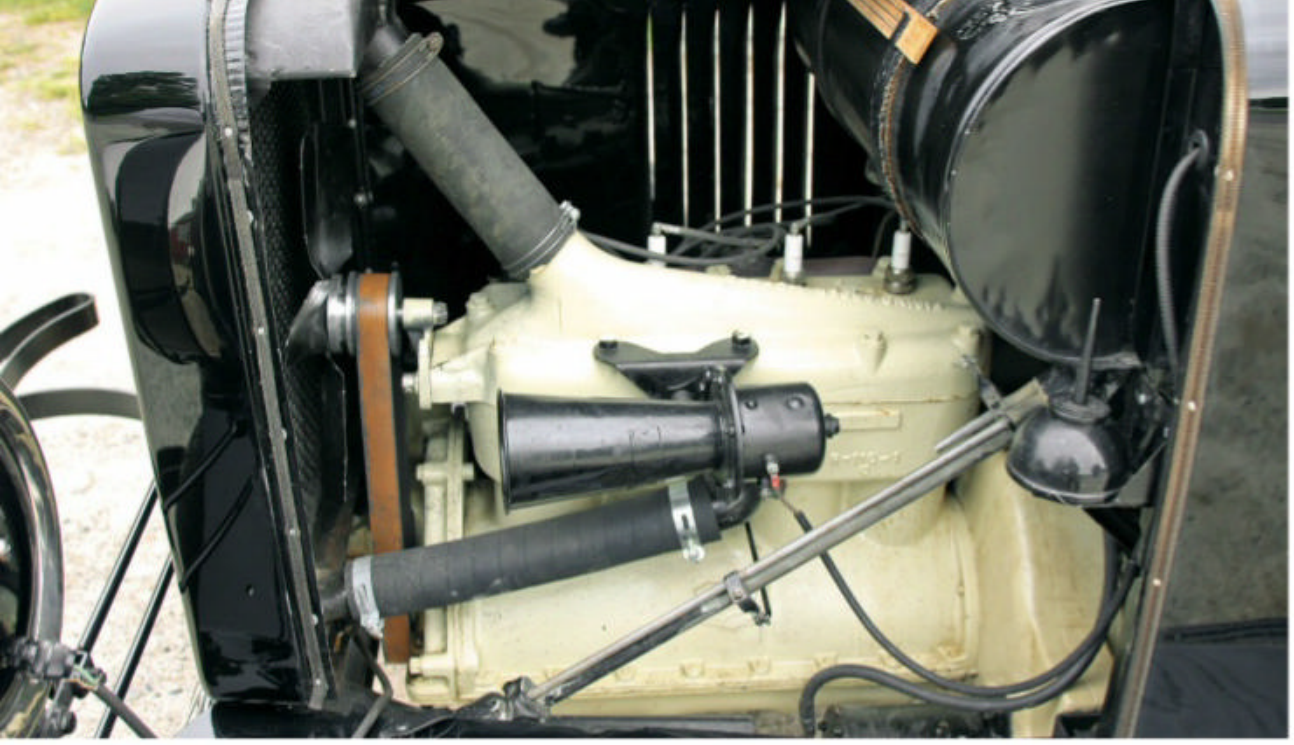
One of the biggest advantages to the smaller engine was that, although its specific horsepower was greater than that of the Model T, it got better fuel economy. In a 1922 San Francisco-to-New York economy run, sanctioned by the American Automobile Association, a Gray was certified having achieved 33.8 miles per gallon. Gray touted the accomplishment in ads by promising prospective owners

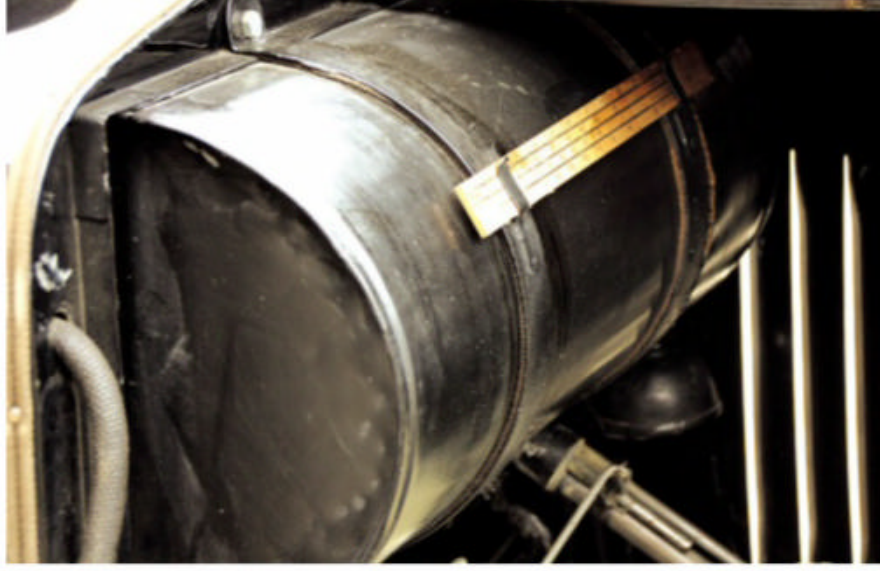
would “save ⅓ the gas and ⅔ the trouble.”

Perhaps the biggest differences between the Gray and the Ford were the transmission and brakes. Ford clung stubbornly to the two-speed planetary transmission, controlled with foot pedals, while the rest of the industry had embraced sliding gears controlled with a cane-type shifter protruding from the floor. The Gray was no exception, featuring a three-speed sliding-gear transmission.

Likewise, the Ford service brake was a band in the transmission with a separate, lever-controlled hand brake for the rear wheels intended for emergency use and/or parking. The Gray followed industry standards and used the rear-wheel

Cantilever springs are similar to contemporary Chevrolet practice and the Elliot-type front axle is nearly identical to Chevrolet 490 or Model T. Axles were from Timkin and final-drive ratio was 3.90:1.





The 165-cu.in. engine gave up 12 cubic inches to its rival from Ford (6-cu.in. to the OHV Chevrolet), but matched its power. Its fuel economy was unrivaled. Gasoline was fed via gravity from the tank in the cowl.

brakes as service brakes, controlled by a foot pedal. A lever disengaged the transmission and activated a driveshaft brake when thrown.

All of this adds up to a very competent car. "It's very nice to drive," says owner John Houston, of Topsham, Maine, "Very nice." He should know—John purchased the car in 1986 and restored it himself. It has spent its entire life in the Topsham area.

John acquired the Gray from some gentlemen who had acquired it from the original owner back in the 1950s. Not much is known of its life before that, but during their ownership, it was simply stored "in a hundred pieces." John and a coworker wound up buying it from the daughter of one of the men, who was liquidating her father's estate. Ultimately, John also bought out his coworker.

Although complete, the long-neglected car required a complete restoration. John had the engine rebuilt by The Babbitt Pot in Fort Edward, New York (see *HCC* #13). He also had the top replaced, fitted a new set of Wards Riverside 30 x 3.5 tires, and had the car painted, by Columbia Classic Cars of Winthrop, Maine. The big labor, however, was rebuilding the chassis and re-wooding the body—tasks he undertook himself.

"It's one of only two 1922 roadsters that we know of," John says, "The other belongs to a man in Tennessee." That man is Raymond Gray, of Sevierville, Tennessee. He and John have corresponded about their roadsters somewhat frequently over the years. The rarity doesn't keep John from exercising his roadster periodically, however, he says he drives it "once a month—minimum." That's all the more impressive when you learn that John's collection also includes a 1923 Ford touring car, a '26 Ford roadster pickup, and a '55 Thunderbird.

While touring cars are slightly more common, it's unusual to see any Grays these days. Their $490 selling price was attractive when they were introduced in 1922. At that time, a similarly equipped Model T roadster had a list price of $465. The Chevrolet 490, so named for its own $490 selling price when introduced for 1916, was by the 1922 model year selling for $510 in roadster form.

The trouble for Gray was that in September 1921, the price of a Ford roadster dropped to $420; then in January 1922 it was lowered further, to $414. In October 1922, the price of a Model T roadster with demountable rims, electric start, and generator was only $364. Ford could do that, thanks to its economies of scale (not to mention the lack of expenditures resulting from retaining a basic design dating to 1908)—Gray could not.

Chevrolet would ultimately work around the problem by refining the 490 into the Superior series and offering more colors and options than Ford—gradually stealing away market share. Gray attempted something similar by ultimately increasing the wheelbase of its automobile from a Ford-like 100 inches to 104 inches for 1925, but it was not enough. Without the profits of other divisions (as at General Motors) to prop up Gray, there was no way forward and the company ended production in 1926.

The portion of the company that produced marine engines was sold back to its original owner in 1924. Twenty years later, it was purchased by Continental Motors, and it would continue producing marine and marinized engines through the 1960s. Very few Gray automobiles remain, and they're a fascinating reminder of the sheer power of Ford Motor Company in the 1920s and the all-too-frequent fate of those who dared challenge it.

It's one of only two 1922 roadsters that we know of. It's very nice to drive… very nice.


63-779
MAINE 1922

Wooden Splendor

America's station wagon design of the Forties is exemplified in this 1947 Plymouth Special Deluxe woodie wagon

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY MATTHEW LITWIN

Contemporary perception of Detroit's immediate postwar era paints a rosy picture. Following the end of hostilities on August 14, 1945, the industry instantly pulled its 1942 tooling from mothballs and bolted it back into assembly line form, and began stamping millions of tons of metal into transportation for a car-starved nation full of returning GIs, all before the calendar flipped to 1946. Reality was quite different for many.

Plymouth, for one, first had to fulfill its remaining military obligations. As auto production was readied, labor disputes—brought on in part by the elimination of wartime strike restrictions—arose from a swelling "dual-income" work

force. These factors impacted Plymouth's production when it officially began in October 1945, but material shortages compounded matters further, even while the "new" cars were introduced in February '46.

Retitled the P-15 Series, both the entry-level Deluxe (P-15S) and upscale Special Deluxe (P-15C) were built on the old 117-inch-wheelbase chassis fitted with an independent front coil-sprung suspension. Its rear suspension was swapped from coils to leaf springs. A Hotchkiss differential, telescopic shocks, a front anti-roll bar, 10-inch hydraulic brakes, and 16-inch wheels, were standard equipment.

Similarly, Plymouth used the same "Floating Power"-mounted 217.8-cu.in. straight-six engine from 1942. Although the L-head's primary internal architecture and output didn't change—3.25 x 4.38-inch bore and stroke; 95 hp and 172 lb-ft of torque—compression slid from 6.8 to 6.6:1. Feeding fuel was a one-barrel Carter carburetor, or a similar Stromberg when supplies ran short. A column-shifted three-speed manual completed the mechanical ensemble, all enveloped by one of six body styles, based on trim level, that received equally minimal styling updates.

Bolstered by an ad campaign touting "50 new features and improvements," some reports state that Plymouth's 1946 output reached a tick over 263,300 units, or a logical 73 percent increase over '42—enough to maintain third with more than 11 percent of the market share—yet it fell short of 1934's total. That changed when the 1947 models became available in January. Demand was still high and, coupled with lead times that truly new designs required, Plymouth continued to produce the same models with virtually no discernible changes beyond serial numbers and wheel size. Given the sellers' market, the nearly 45 percent increase Plymouth witnessed was no surprise. Nor was the near 10 percent increase seen during 1948.

Within this three-year window of automotive renaissance was Plymouths Special Deluxe station wagon—the only wood-bodied wagon offered from Chrysler Corporation. Coachwork by U.S. Body & Forging Company featured white ash framing with a choice of mahogany or light maple panel finish, along with sliding side windows (front doors excluded), a dual-window liftgate, and a tailgate that lay perfectly flat when opened. This was possible by the lack of rear bumper guards and the relocation of the spare tire to a cavity built into the rear of the front seat.

Reproduction leatherette upholstery matched to the factory color is now trimmed with red piping and seat belts to match the exterior paint. Art Deco styling of the instrument panel is a virtual copy of that in the upscale Chrysler Town & Country. Retained during the restoration was the optional heater/defroster mounted under the dash; the optional radio is functional.

The combination taillamp and license plate bracket was hinged, permitting the appendage to swing down as the gate was lowered. As a member of the Special Deluxe line, the wagon also featured stainless steel beauty rings, fog lamps, chrome windshield trim, and series emblems on the aft corners of the hood.

Interiors were stylish from the front bench seat forward with an instrumental panel that mimicked Chrysler's Town & Country Art Deco style, and complemented by an elegant, yet utilitarian passenger/cargo space dressed in wood paneling and oak flooring, the latter partially protected by rubber floormats. With room for eight, the three rows of seats were upholstered in leatherette. The second and third rows were interchangeable, allowing the wagon to be converted from workhorse to family cruiser quickly. Costing an average of $1,791, the wagon was the most expensive Plymouth on the market; only 12,913 were made through 1948, including this example from 1947 now owned by Henri David, of Old Saybrook, Connecticut.

"I've always had an affinity for woodie wagons," said the Connecticut native. "I spent much of my youth living with my grandparents in Brookline, Massachusetts, and the vehicle used to pick us up for school was a 1946 Ford woodie. As a young man, getting into that car early in the morning, the smell of the wood and leather was incredible; it stayed with me. My father had Pontiac woodies, so they were an integral part of my youth. When I worked as a junior mechanic, we'd have different woodies come in for service and I got to know their nuances, but I remained enamored by the wood."

Flash forward to 2005. Henri was eager to find a woodie to purchase and restore, but, as he explained, he found the market restrictive. "In my heart I wanted a Ford, but I couldn't afford one, even a real basket case. The Pontiacs were expensive, too—both were more money than I was willing to invest. Then a friend located this 1947 Plymouth in a barn in Westborough, Massachusetts. I examined the car and was naïve enough to believe that I could restore it, so I bought it. When I got it home, I thought to myself, 'What have I done—what kind of stupidity is this?' What I didn't realize was that this was a rare diamond waiting to be cleaned up. There are less than 10 registered in the Plymouth and Woodie clubs combined."

Henri learned that others with far more restoration experience had already examined, and passed, on the Plymouth, believing that the wood had rotted. His experience with wooden boats throughout the shoreline communities told his eyes a different story, as he explained.

"When varnish deteriorates, it turns to shoe polish and looks just like rotted wood; it looks flakey, there's no grain, there's nothing—it's just very dry and most people would say the whole car is gone. Chances are, it isn't. To see for sure, you heat the varnish and strip it off the wood with a pull knife. You can't push it with a putty knife because the blade will bend, and you'll scar the wood. Over a period of nine months, I was able to strip all the varnish, confirm nearly all the wood was intact, and then rebuild the finish. First, I rubbed in some boiled linseed oil to give it some patina, then added three coats of sealant, and finally sealed it all in eight coats of Pettit 2015 varnish; it has a good ultraviolet filter."

Henri continued with the body-on-frame restoration, repairing two tailgate panels while refinishing the cargo floor. Concurrent to refinishing the wood, Henri switched the exterior panel finish from white maple to mahogany, and had the seats reupholstered. Meanwhile, the steel panels were stripped to bare metal, exposing multiple layers of paint.

"The car was originally Sumach red, but it was covered by an almond tan hue, then turquoise. Changing colors was rela-

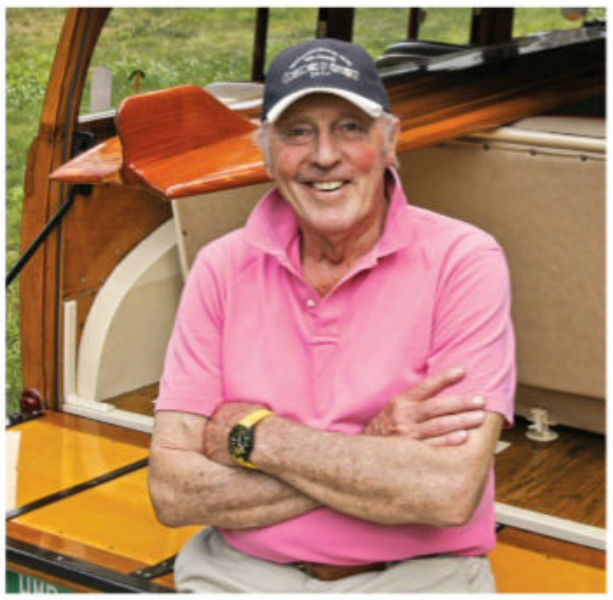
The station wagon market of 1947 wasn't driven by performance, but rather functionality and affordability. Plymouth's tried-and-true 217.8-cu.in. L-head straight-six engine carried a 95-hp rating through 1948. Sliding rear windows were falling out of favor, yet Plymouth retained the design.

tively common because you only had the fenders and the hood to paint. I brought it back to the original red.

"Despite being a New England car from day one, there was no rot anywhere—I didn't have to address metal or frame repairs. The original engine and transmission functioned perfectly, so they were cleaned and repainted. The prior owner had put a new roof on a year before I purchased it. It got better and better the deeper I got into it. I was even able to find—and later resell—a 1947 sedan donor to replace the cracked plastic instrument panel control knobs. Everything went exceptionally smoothly, and by June 2006, the Plymouth was done in time for the Greenwich Concours in Connecticut. I recall the last coat of varnish was still drying, yet the wagon was bestowed with First in Class honors," said Henri.

The Plymouth has been to several Concours events, as well as national club and regional car shows, since then. Annual excursions to special wooden boat and car shows along the shore remain integral to the wagon's calendar of events as well. And while accolades have continued to land on the tailgate, Henri's reflection on his ownership remains in tune with its humble beginning.

"It was the challenge. Financially, I was able to get the car, but the challenge of turning something that everyone had given up on, and turning it back into rolling art, was the most gratifying. It could have been a piano, a classic boat, an old house or barn; there's a tremendous satisfaction of working with your hands—using whatever mechanical aptitudes the good Lord gave us—and seeing it come together in front of you. You begin to say, 'Wow! It's an interesting thing, keeping nostalgia alive.'"



…Turning it back into rolling art, was the most gratifying. …It's an interesting thing, keeping nostalgia alive.

Chic Chevrolet

Refined styling and bold colors typified the comfortable 1954 Bel Air

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY THOMAS A. DeMAURO

Leader in the low-priced field and perennial dominant force in U.S. auto industry sales, Chevrolet was endeavoring to outpace its competition in the early 1950s by dedicating its resources to developing the styling, engineering, promotion, pricing, and all required to sell cars at volumes that would increase the divison's marketshare.

Following a significant redesign for the 1953 model year, the styling updates for 1954 Chevrolets were more subtle. The automaker described its new models as having a "lower, longer, and fleeter appearance."

A few features that contributed to that narrative included the wider and more heavily decorated grille with five chromed vertical elements in place of the 1953-model's three, reshaped parking lamps that were also moved outward, and a front bumper that extended further from the body and jutted forward near its ends, thereby accentuating the leading edges of the fenders. Front bumper guards were now bullet-shaped and the stylized bird-in-flight hood ornament and the Chevrolet emblems on the hood and decklid were redesigned. The headlamp bezels, taillamps, and rear bumper guards were also subtly revised.

The 1954 Chevrolets were again offered in three series—the top-of-the-line Bel Air, mid-pack Two-Ten, and economy-minded One-Fifty. Though various four- and two-door body styles including wagons were in each one, only the Bel Air offered the fashionable two-door sport coupe and convertible.

To set it apart from its two sibling series, the Bel Air's additional exterior embellishments included rear fender skirts and side trim that bridged the rear fender shield and bright side molding, and also outlined an area to contain a contrasting paint color, the "Bel Air" script, and another version of the Chevrolet emblem. Windshield A-pillar covers adorned the sport coupe and convertible, and extra-wide window reveals dressed up sedans. Wheel covers were standard on the Bel Air instead of the hubcabs on the One-Fifty and Two-Ten, and the interior trim differed.

Chevrolet's dependable overhead-valve 235.5-cu.in. straight-six engine proclaimed its 115 hp in its name "Blue Flame 115." It contained a drop-forged steel crankshaft and

Interior upholstery patterns were revised for 1954, and this turquoise-and-white example was restored by the previous owner.

connecting rods, cast aluminum pistons, 1.875-inch intake and 1.50 exhaust valves, a solid-lifter camshaft, a one-barrel carburetor, and a 7.5:1 compression ratio. A column-shifted three-speed synchromesh manual transmission was standard, as was a 3.70 rear axle ratio.

The optional two-speed Powerglide automatic transmission was instead mated to the "Blue Flame 125." Equipped with a high-lift hydraulic-lifter cam, like its name stated, it produced 125 hp. The automaker proclaimed in the dealer brochure that it was, "the most powerful engine in Chevrolet history!" This statement was likely specific to its high-volume applications passenger car, since the higher output 150-hp (raised to 155 hp during the 1954 run) Blue Flame straight-six was powering the low-production Corvette at the same time.

Chevrolets equipped with the Powerglide and 125-hp engine also received a 3.55 rear axle in place of the 3.70s, and convertibles were fitted with larger 7.10 x 15 tires. The Division was so proud of its automatic-gear-changer, which had debuted as an option for 1950, that a "Powerglide" nameplate was applied to the decklid on cars so equipped.

The powertrain and body were fastened to a standard full-length box-girder frame with crossmembers, and convertibles received additional reinforcements. Short upper/long lower control arm suspension with coil springs and an anti-roll bar were up front with semi-elliptic leaf springs in the rear. Shocks and drum brakes were located at the four corners. Power assists for steering, brakes (with Powerglide), front windows and seats (n/a One-Fifty) were optional. With their base price of $2,185, Chevrolet sold 19,383 Bel Air convertibles for 1954.

Florida resident Clyde Caiazza found this 64,067-mile Bel Air in *Hemmings Motor News* in 2012 and purchased the Bangor, Pennsylvania-based convertible in September. He reasons, "The first car I owned was a 1953 Chevrolet convertible, and when I got married in 1964, I owned a 1954 Bel Air two-door sedan that was the same color, Turquoise, as this 1954 convertible. So basically, this example 'combined' the aspects that I liked most in my first two cars." Clyde's wife Joanne had also driven both cars and the couple had kept the 1954 sedan for about three years.

This convertible is equipped with the 125-hp engine and Powerglide, as well as the optional pushbutton radio, oil filter, windshield washer, and more. It had already been treated to a body-off restoration from 2004 to 2006, during which power steering and seatbelts were added, the electrical system was updated to 12-volt, and an alternator replaced the generator.

With the body, paint, interior, powertrain, and chassis looking like new, the brightwork also had to be brought up to show standards. The bumpers, guards, Chevrolet emblems, Powerglide nameplate, taillamp and parking lamp bezels, and more were either replaced or re-chromed, and the stainless trim was polished or swapped for better pieces. With correct reproduction tires

mounted, the Bel Air was shown by its previous owner in 2007 and it was awarded an AACA National First Prize.

Clyde admits, "When I first saw the car, I was overwhelmed by it because of the history my wife and I have with this era of Chevrolets. It was exactly what I was looking for. Over time however, I did notice a few things that I hadn't seen before I bought it. For example, the engine is likely not original to the car, but that wouldn't have stopped me." Since he's owned the Bel Air, Clyde has continued to improve it, replacing the water pump, power steering pump, and convertible top pump.

Over the course of driving his convertible about 660 miles per year, he's noticed that, "It's somewhat slow due to the Powerglide, but the car drives and handles well since it has power steering and, now, radial tires."

Our turn behind the wheel of the upscale Chevrolet provided some lasting impressions. Instantly noted was the fact that the Bel Air's cabin color palette and upholstery design are perfectly in tune with its era. The festive turquoise-and-white combination makes you feel like every trip's ultimate destination is a sunbathed shoreline where you'll relax in a beach chair while sipping a cool drink and soaking up the sights and sounds of the surf.

The simple yet tasteful chrome-trimmed instrument panel consists of a large, round, easy-to-read speedometer (with an odometer) on the left and a slightly smaller round clock on the right. Fortunately, for monitoring engine vitals, this Chevrolet was built during a time when gauges were still standard instead of warning lamps. As such, between the speedometer and clock are modestly sized horizontal gauges for temperature, fuel, battery, and oil pressure. Turn signal indicators reside in a bright field in the middle of the gauge cluster. Controls for the heater and the rest of the switchgear are within easy reach.

When perched high atop the reupholstered bench seat and peering out, there's a commanding view of the road. Top-down cruising reveals an additional level of awareness and seemingly more verbal reactions from onlookers as the Bel Air passes by.

Engine and exhaust tones are purposely unobtrusive. Like Clyde had mentioned, acceleration could best be described as leisurely. Though 125-gross hp isn't a lot considering the near 3,700-pound curb weight it had to move, the Chevrolet still seemed a touch sluggish. (A few months after this photo shoot and test drive, Clyde had the Bel Air checked over and tuned-up. He reported back that its Blue Flame 125 engine now feels considerably more responsive than it did before.)

Accentuating driving ease is the set-it-and-forget-it automatic transmission. Two interesting features of the Powerglide are a convenient park position (which not all early automatics had) and the fact that the low and reverse gears were positioned next to each other on the selector quadrant. According to Chevrolet literature, it was done to allow for easier shifting between low and reverse when trying to "rock [the car] out of sand, mud, or loose gravel."

Power-assisted steering makes turning the large two-spoke wheel (with full-circle horn ring) quite easy through its lock-to-lock range of just over four-and-a-half turns, but there's virtually no feedback from the road. The manual drum brakes do provide feedback and a higher pedal effort that's typical of a 1950s car.

In keeping with the convertible's cruiser character, the

The 125-hp Blue Flame OHV six-cylinder engine was rebuilt during the restoration. Power steering, a 12-volt electrical system, and an alternator were added, but the disconnected 6-volt voltage regulator remains on the firewall for aesthetics.

One of my favorite memories with my Bel Air was driving it to a car show for the first time and coming home with an award from the AACA. It has also earned several People's Choice, Judges' Choice, and Best of Show awards. I plan to keep this convertible as long as I am physically able to drive it safely with no danger to myself or other drivers. This Bel Air and my 1951 Chevrolet Styleline Deluxe two-door sedan will likely remain in my family with my three sons after I'm gone.

suspension feels softly sprung to coddle its occupants rather than attempt to serve as a corner carver. The ride is smooth and slightly floaty, and body lean is evident in the curves.

As long as you're not trying to push the Bel Air too hard in a straight line or in the corners, driving Chevrolet's top-of-the-line convertible for 1954 can be quite satisfying at normal cruising speeds—and not surprisingly—it was even more so with its top down.

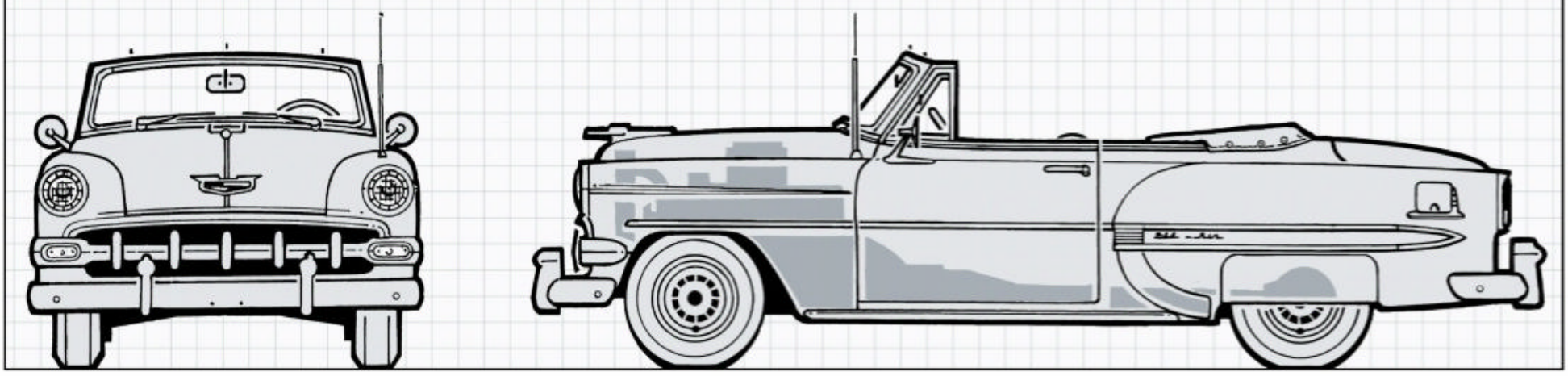
Clyde views his car as, "a beautifully restored example from the 1950s." And he relates, "At car shows and cruises it attracts a lot of attention and compliments from other classic car owners and spectators. It also generates many stories from people who reminisce about the experiences they had with a 1954 Bel Air." With more than 68,200 miles on it and counting, Clyde still drives his convertible weekly.

The 1954 Chevrolets represent the end of an era, because the upcoming 1955 would be radically changed. And though the straight-six would continue for years to come, when Chevrolet finally joined the OHV V-8 sales and horsepower race that same year with the now legendary 265-cu.in. engine, it was a gamechanger for the Division. Industry trends would also drive the evolution of the OHV V-8 designs (many of them predating Chevrolet's) developed by U.S. automakers, as they steadily gained in popularity over the ensuing decades.

Though 1955-'57 models have outshined the '54s in performance and collectability over the years, as illustrated here, these earlier examples still maintain a character all their own. Some fans of 1950s cars believe that there was more to appreciate in that era than just the headline-grabbing tailfins and powerful OHV V-8s.

1954 CHEVROLET **BEL AIR**

ILLUSTRATIONS BY RUSSELL VON SAUERS,
THE GRAPHIC AUTOMOBILE STUDIO © 2019 HEMMINGS CLASSIC CAR



SPECIFICATIONS

PRICE

BASE PRICE	$2,185
PRICE (PROFILED)	N/A
OPTIONS (PROFILED)	Pushbutton radio; oil filter; windshield washer; power steering; gas filler door guard; door handle shields

ENGINE

TYPE	Straight-six
DISPLACEMENT	235.5-cu.in.
BORE X STROKE	3 9/16 x 3 15/16 in
COMPRESSION RATIO	7.5:1
HORSEPOWER @ RPM	125 @ 4,000
TORQUE @ RPM	200 lb-ft @ 2,000
VALVETRAIN	Hydraulic lifters
MAIN BEARINGS	4
FUEL SYSTEM	Rochester one-barrel carburetor; mechanical pump
LUBRICATION SYSTEM	Pressure-type; gear-driven pump; oil pan
ELECTRICAL SYSTEM	6-volt (currently 12-volt)
EXHAUST SYSTEM	Single with reverse-flow muffler

TRANSMISSION

TYPE	Powerglide automatic
RATIOS	1st 1.82:1
	2nd 1.00:1

DIFFERENTIAL

TYPE	Hypoid, semi-floating
GEAR RATIO	3.55:1

STEERING

TYPE	Saginaw worm-and-ball-bearing roller sector, power assist
RATIO OVERALL	21.3:1
TURNING CIRCLE	41 ft

BRAKES

TYPE	Hydraulic, drums
FRONT	11-in drums
REAR	11-in drums

CHASSIS & BODY

CONSTRUCTION	Body-on frame, welded and bolt-on body panels
BODY STYLE	Two-door, convertible
LAYOUT	Front engine, rear-wheel drive

SUSPENSION

FRONT	Independent short/long arm; coil springs; anti-roll bar; hydraulic shocks
REAR	Semi-elliptic leaf springs; hydraulic shocks

WHEELS & TIRES

WHEELS	Steel, drop center; wheel covers
FRONT/REAR	15 x 5 in
TIRES	Bias-ply (currently BFGoodrich Silvertown WW radial)
FRONT/REAR	7.10 x 15 (currently P205/75R15)

WEIGHTS & MEASURES

WHEELBASE	115 in
OVERALL LENGTH	196.5 in
OVERALL WIDTH	75 in
OVERALL HEIGHT	61.8 in
FRONT TRACK	56.7 in
REAR TRACK	58.8 in
CURB WEIGHT	Approximately 3,690 lb

CAPACITIES

CRANKCASE	5 qt
FUEL TANK	16 gal
TRANSMISSION	10 qt
DIFFERENTIAL	3.5 pt

CALCULATED DATA

BHP PER CU.IN.	0.530
CURB WEIGHT PER BHP	29.52 lb
CURB WEIGHT PER CU.IN.	15.66 lb

PRODUCTION

1954 CONVERTIBLES	19,383
1954 TOTAL	486,240

PROS & CONS

+ Desirable convertible style
+ Top-of-the-line Chevrolet
+ Captures the spirit of its era

− Not very powerful
− Average road handling
− Not as valuable as its immediate successors

WHAT TO PAY

LOW
$12,000 – $18,000

AVERAGE
$25,000 – $40,000

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$60,000 – $80,000

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Membership: 8,000

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

I GREATLY ENJOYED THE ARTICLE about Terry Gale's one-off 1955 Nash Ambassador Pinin Farina prototype in *HCC* #177. I can add a chapter to the car's history. When I saw it at the Rambler Ranch several years ago, I told Terry that I immediately recognized the car because it was owned during the 1960s by a gentleman named James Hottel, who was an optometrist living in Iowa City, Iowa. I know this, because he was my next-door neighbor when I was growing up there, and I frequently went over to his house to look at his car collection. He was very proud of the Nash and told me that it was a one-off car built for the 1955 New York Auto Show by Pinin Farina. I'm sure I sat in the car and probably even rode in it. Dr. Hottel purchased the car from the AMC dealer in Cedar Rapids, and owned it for a number of years. I told Terry that I remembered the car as being a baby blue color at that time, although that was over 50 years ago so my memory may not be accurate. My family moved away from Iowa City when I was 13 years old, but I returned to visit during college, and by then Dr. Hottel told me he had sold some of his cars to a collector in Pennsylvania, and I think the Nash was one of them, which would fit well with the history in the article. I credit Dr. Hottel with developing my interest in old cars. After we moved away, I joined the Studebaker Driver's Club at age 13 and bought my first car, a 1955 Studebaker Champion Coupe, at age 14. The rest, as they say, is history.

Jonathan Carter
Scottsdale, Arizona

MR. FOSTER MADE IT SEEM LIKE AMC had just one battle to fight in the small car sales of the early 1960s, but it was in an all-out war. As he stated in *HCC* #177, AMC had the market to itself in the late '50s. People were getting sick of trying to park 1959 model cars in garages built in the early '50s. Then the Big Three brought out the first bombs.

GM, Ford, and Chrysler wanted nothing to do with small cars if they could get around them. They even wanted to make their low-priced three into lower medium-priced cars. They brought out the Corvair, Falcon, and the Valiant, reluctantly.

Then GM figured out how to make money on the Corvair, and it was called Monza. Bucket seats and floor shifters soon became part of all small car lines. By 1963, Plymouth Valiants and Dodge Darts had cute hardtops and convertibles. The Signet and GT models were a significant part of the line. Then they got a lightweight small-block V-8 in 1964. Ford introduced the Fairlane, the first intermediate. It also had a lightweight V-8 for 1962. By 1963, all of the Ford line had interiors that looked like they were taken from the Thunderbird. But 1964 was more difficult.

Not only did Chevrolet introduce the Chevelle, Pontiac introduced the Tempest, Oldsmobile the F-85, and Buick the Special. They went from unit-bodies and aluminum engines to full frames and lighter V-8s. They sold well with their V-8 engines and bucket seat interiors. Oh, and did I mention the GTO? Then Ford introduced the Mustang, Chrysler turned its undersized fullsized cars into midsized cars, and Ford made the Fairlane bigger. But what of AMC?

Rambler did a great job with the 1956-'62. The only real problem was the lack of effective marketing of a small V-8. The 287- and the 327-cu.in. engines were old-school designs developed in the late 1950s. They were heavy and probably cost a lot based on materials. AMC didn't start replacing them until 1966; it did the six-cylinder first in 1964. AMC didn't start pushing bucket seats and four-speeds until it did the "Sensible Spectaculars" of 1965. Too bad the company didn't keep around the Rebel V-8 and start offering sporty drivetrains and interiors; it was money left on the table, along with a sporty image.

Charles Winingham
Alton, Illinois

THE ARTICLE ON GM'S PARADE OF Progress in *HCC* #177 was interesting. On page 86 is my friend Vic Hyde's Futurliner; the pockmark where a projectile hit the center of the windshield appears visible. Vic had the Futurliner parked behind his home in Niles, Michigan. He envisioned using the Futurliner as a traveling stage as he was a one-man-band entertainer, but that didn't work out for a variety of reasons. The Futurliner was then donated to the NATIMUS Museum in Auburn, Indiana, many years ago.

Bob Bryant
Notre Dame, Indiana

SEVERAL TIMES IN ARTICLES ABOUT Hydra-Matic-equipped cars, I have seen reference to the absence of a park position on the shift quadrant. In fact, there is a parking feature. If you put the transmission in reverse with the engine shut down, a pawl drops into a cog on the output shaft and locks the driveshaft. When the engine is running, hydraulic pressure holds the pawl disengaged in reverse, and the mechanical linkage prevents it from engaging in the forward gears.

I don't know if the original 1939 transmissions had this feature, but it was there by the time they built my dad's 1949 Lincoln. It also worked that way on my '51 Pontiac. So far, I have never encountered a Hydra-Matic-equipped car that didn't have it. The only cars I have encountered that do not have a positive-lock provision are the fluid-drive Chrysler products and the two-speed automatics it built up until 1957.

Wylie Johnson
Knoxville, Tennessee

JUST READ YOUR ARTICLE "BEST- selling Postwar Mopars" in *HCC* #178 and don't know why you didn't talk about the 1955-'56 Plymouths. If this was just about bestsellers, I've read that the 1955-'56 Plymouths exceeded all expectations. But there are other more important reasons you should have included the 1955-'56 years; that was the last time the Chrysler Corporation ever built a good looking car. The De Soto, Chrysler 300, and the Imperial were especially beautiful that year. Chrysler cars have been butt-ugly ever sense. Granted the 1957-'59s had a certain elegance, but at the end of the day fins are silly. You kind of prove my point by showing all those hideous Plymouths of the '60s. Even the functionality of the designs were awful.

Brad Ennis
Spokane, Washington

PAT FOSTER'S ARTICLE IN *HCC* #178 brought back memories from my youth in the mid-1950s in Upland, Indiana. I remember a Mrs. Minie Bragg driving around in her late 1920s Chandler. Her husband and my grandfather both went to Kokomo, Indiana, together, and each of them bought a new Chandler four-door sedan from the Elwood Haynes dealership as it was closing out. I don't know the year of these cars or what happened to my grandfather's car, but the "Bragg car" was still being used in the mid-1950s. Minie's great grandson, Gary, remembers riding in it. He remembers that it had

wood spoke wheels, mohair velour seats, and brakes that made a very unusual noise; he thought they were air brakes. I remember that it had one tail/stop lamp right in the center of the rear mounted spare tire. I also remember that Minie was a very small lady, and when she drove the car, you could hardly see her behind the steering wheel.

After Minie passed, the family offered to sell me the Chandler for a very reasonable $75, which I did not have. This was a very nice, good running car.

A fellow from Hartford City bought the car, took it home, and parked it beside his garage. Several years later, out of curiosity I drove past the garage, and there it sat. The wheels were down to the axle in mud, a tree was growing through the roof, and the headlamps were gone. What a sad ending.

Ed Miller
Upland, Indiana

READING *HCC* #178, I WAS surprised about the claim regarding the Pontiac Chieftain's little flathead six-cylinder being so spirited. However, I disagree with the claim it can be compared to a 1950 Oldsmobile 88 in acceleration. The only chance from a standing start the Pontiac would have would be if it had about a 4:56 or 4:88 rear axle ratio, and that would only help up to about 40 mph; Pontiac didn't offer them anyway. I had a 1950 Oldsmobile 88 in 1953 and it was a dragster. And it burned rubber with the Hydra-Matic. I doubt the six-cylinder Pontiac could "lay a strip."

If the Oldsmobile had a manual transmission, all the Pontiac would see after 25 feet would be Oldsmobile taillamps. But I still want that Poncho. It is gorgeous!

Tom Ziem
Laguna Hills, California

I'M IN TOTAL AGREEMENT WITH Richard's column in *HCC* #178 that getting the right color for the right car is like pairing the right wine with the right meal. Throughout my years of car collecting, I think I've had the right color for the right car, with a couple of exceptions. Here are some examples: A 1961 MGA roadster was orange, but restored it back to its original white/black interior. A 1959 Jaguar XK 150 convertible, originally white, had been painted red when I purchased it, and I left it red. A '70 XK-E convertible in original brown with tan interior—never cared for the color and should have changed to British Racing Green. A '64 Oldsmobile 4-4-2 convertible purchased red, but was originally silver; I left it red because silver is boring for that car. A '60 Thunderbird in its original light blue was stunning, and it stayed light blue. A '72 VW Super Beetle, purchased new in yellow, remains all original with 32,000 miles. I also have a '72 Mercedes 350 SL in its original dark blue with light blue interior. With the exception of the VW and Mercedes, I have sold off all the others; color was never a problem selling any of them. To each his own.

John Miller
Upper Saddle River, New Jersey

Continued on page 40

Continued from page 39

I ALMOST FELL OUT OF MY CHAIR when I went through the mail and saw the front cover of *HCC* #178. I felt sure that black Pontiac was my old car from back in 1980—the only thing missing was the windshield visor—but it wasn't.

In 1979, I had just sold my beloved 1947 Chrysler Windsor sedan with fluid drive and replaced it with a 1950 Pontiac (see photo). That car was a perfect survivor—never restored or fussed with. It had about 37K miles on it, the interior was perfect gray with pinstripes just like your cover car, but without seat covers. The only difference I can see is that my car had a visor with a prism on the dash to see the overhead traffic lights. Mine also had red wheels and the smaller wheel covers. It ran like a top with its flathead six-cylinder and three-on-the-tree.

I kept that Pontiac until 1983 when I had to sell it for extra money for our house move; it was one of the saddest days of my young married life.

Bob Holden
Steelmantown, New Jersey

IT WAS GREAT TO SEE A "PLAIN-Jane" classic like that black 1950 Pontiac Chieftain in *HCC* #178, as they are just so rare now. I was wondering though, do you know what is the significance of the "Silver Streak" designation on the front fenders and the dashboard under the odometer?

Keep these kinds of articles coming!

Ken Weber
Tampa, Florida

I JUST FINISHED READING IN *HCC* #177 Bob Palma's reminiscence of his Father's travails trying to make a bad deal work at the family dealership. In my position of Archivist for Jaguar Land Rover, NA, I have access to the original build records on the subject Jaguar XK120 that was part of this unfortunate (for the dealership, at least) transaction.

The Jaguar in question was purchased by Colonel Riley McClain and was an XK120 Fixed Head Coupe. Interestingly, the color was Birch Gray with a red leather interior—the same combination as the 1956 Studebaker Golden Hawk he traded the Jaguar in on! Unfortunately, the trail goes cold there. No subsequent owner filed for a Heritage Certificate, so there is nothing beyond this early information. But it does show that Mr. McClain liked his cars gray on the outside and red on the inside.

Thanks, Bob, for a very interesting story!

Fred Hammond
Heritage Archivist
Jaguar Land Rover North America
Mahwah, New Jersey

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

What's the Deal?

Recently I was going through my large collection of automobile and truck advertisements, sorting out ones I want to keep and ones I want to give away. (My office is getting a little too cluttered.) There were so many great ads – American Austin, Duesenberg, Packard, Auburn, Studebaker, Hudson, and dozens more – it's quite a bunch. At one point, I came across the ad shown here. "What's a Deal?" I thought to myself. It's a brand I'd actually never heard of.

Well, the ad itself answered my question. A Deal, it says, is a car that "solves the problem for many who want a good, serviceable car at a moderate price." (That's pretty much everybody in the world, right?) Then, thanks to the *Standard Catalog of American Cars 1805-1942*, I was able to find out more about the car and the company that built it.

The Deal automobile was the product of the Deal Motor Vehicle Company of Jonesville, Michigan. Like many auto manufacturers, Deal started out in the 1800s in the horse-drawn-vehicle business. Founded by Jacob J. Deal as the Deal Buggy Company, it was later renamed the J.J. Deal and Son Carriage Factory after son George joined the firm. In 1890, young George installed a gasoline motor into one of the firm's buggies for use as his personal car, though it's believed that over the next couple of years he may have motorized a few more to sell as trucks to some of his wagon and buggy customers. (Apparently, the company initially referred to its motorized vehicle as the Autobuggy.) In 1908, the firm was formally organized as a motor vehicle manufacturer and introduced its first automobile for general consumption.

That car was the handsome Deal Model S – a sturdy four-passenger runabout powered by a 30-horsepower four-cylinder. As was common back then, the engine was cast "en-block" and used a simple splash lubricating system. Like some other cars of that time, including the soon-to-debut Ford Model T, the Deal used a two-speed planetary transmission. At 102 inches, the Deal's wheelbase was 2 inches longer than the Model Ts.

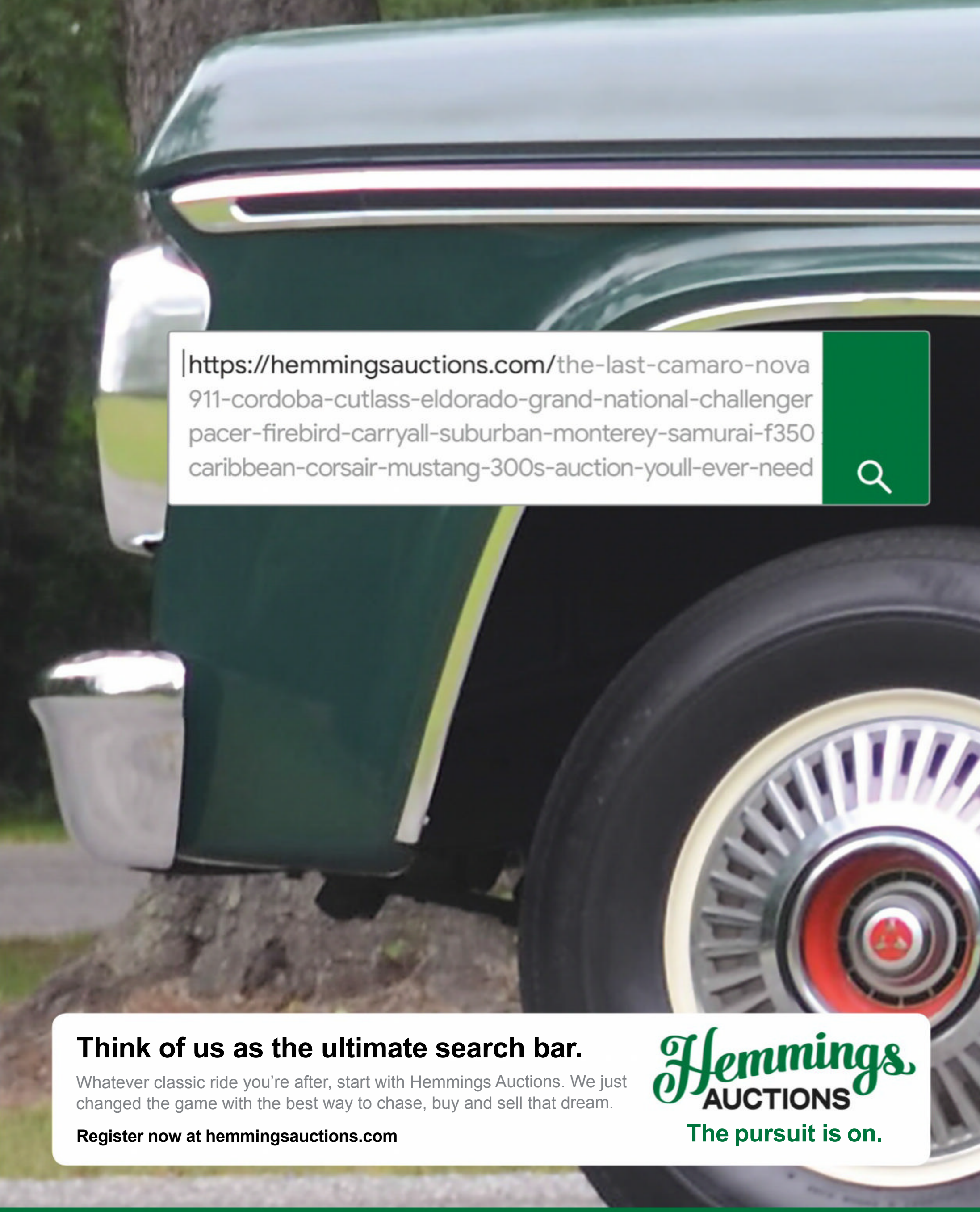
When it was introduced, the Deal carried a base price of $950. As far as I'm able to determine, the only model offered from 1908 to 1910 was the Model S runabout. However, in 1911, Deal dropped the S and offered two new models – a Model C five-passenger runabout and the Model R five-passenger Touring. The Model C, described as a "pleasure and business car," rode a 102-inch wheelbase, the same as the S, while the Model R boasted a 104-inch wheelbase. Both were powered by the 30-hp four-cylinder used in the S. The Model C's base price was $900, with the top, windshield, and speedometer costing an extra $100 – the usual practice for that era. The Model R Touring was reportedly priced at $1,250.

Deal had a well-earned reputation for building wagons, buggies, and automobiles of very high quality. However, although the Deal automobiles were well received by the public, production ended with the 1911 models. Why? Because, in November 1908, George Deal passed away quite unexpectedly from meningitis. The family carried on with car production through 1911, but George had been the spark plug behind that part of the business – when he passed on, it was only a matter of time before the car business would also die.

You're probably thinking, as I did, that its unlikely that any Deals have survived. After all, it was a small company that produced cars for just four years, more than 100 years ago. In such cases, it would be unlikely that an example would survive, limiting us to viewing period advertisements of the car, like the one pictured here. There is at least one Deal still around, however, on public display in – you guessed it – Jonesville, Michigan. Just go to the city offices and you can get a close-up look. The city also offers a neat booklet about the car and company. They're rightly proud of their heritage.

Its been said that over the years some 2,700 automobile companies have come and gone in the U.S. Some of them became large businesses for a while and some, like the Deal, remained small, mostly regionally known brands. To me at least, all of them are missed.

"
...it was a small company that produced cars for just four years, more than 100 years ago.
"



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Birth of a Bestseller

When did you last see a Ford F-150 pickup truck? You probably saw one within a mile or two of home in the course of your day's activities. After all, various iterations of Ford's F-series trucks, most of them F-150s, have been the bestselling trucks in the United States for more than four decades, and, through 2018, the topselling vehicle overall for the last 37 model years.

Conversely, when did you last see a Chevrolet Big 10, a GMC Heavy Half, or a Dodge D-150? True, some Chevrolet dealers teased new-truck customers with a 2018 Big 10 package, but since the original Chevrolet Big 10 wasn't offered after the 1980 model year, much less the rarer GMC Heavy Half, there's little chance you've seen one recently.

Common to all those trucks, however, was an unusual market condition that created them in the first place: Each manufacturer's desire to offer a light-duty, fullsize, ½-ton pickup without a catalytic converter in the exhaust system early in the 1975 model year.

New Environmental Protection Agency emission standards for 1975 model-year vehicles extended to light-duty trucks; those defined as having a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) under 6,000 pounds. Falling below that threshold were 1975 Ford F-100s, Chevrolet C-10s, GMC 1500s, and Dodge D-100s. Hence, when they were introduced, those popular models needed catalytic converters to meet 1975 model-year emissions standards. Catalytic converters, in turn, mandated that those trucks only be fueled with new, more expensive, unleaded gasoline.

This did not sit well with many pickup truck customers, especially fleets with many trucks who wanted ½-ton pickups that used regular leaded gasoline. Nor did those buyers want to buy heavier, rougher-riding, more expensive ¾-ton pickups with higher GVWRs exempt from emission standards for trucks under 6,000-pound GVWR. No manufacturer wanted to alienate important customers and lose part of the growing, lucrative light-duty truck market.

Where there's a will, there's a way: Light-duty truck manufacturers determined they could create new models rated just over 6,000-pound GVWR by fitting heavy-duty chassis components to standard ½-ton pickups. For example, Chevrolet Big 10s and GMC Heavy Halfs were simply C-10s and 1500s ordered with the F44 Heavy-Duty Chassis Package. Those models would run on cheaper regular leaded gasoline, because they would not need catalytic converters.

Ford and Dodge thus created, respectively, the F-150 and D-150. General Motors chose to brand their comparable trucks as either Chevrolet C-10 Big 10s or GMC 1500 Heavy Halfs. International Harvester, then in its swan-song year as a light-duty pickup truck manufacturer, already had a 150 as its lightest-duty offering.

FORD MOTOR COMPANY

So, having enjoyed market success, why were most of those models phased out after only six years? The answer may be found in California's revised light-duty/heavy-duty truck classifications for the 1978 model year. That year, California advanced the light-duty dividing line from 6,000-pound GVWR to 8,500-pound GVWR. The EPA followed California's lead nationally for 1979.

Those revisions had the effect of putting all ½-ton and most ¾-ton pickups into the light-duty classification, rendering unnecessary the need for separate models to skirt the 6,000-pound GVWR threshold. By that time, tightening emission standards on all light-duty trucks regardless of GVWR, and the universal availability of unleaded gasoline as regular leaded was phased out, conspired to obsolete the original 1975 marketing plan that had created ½-ton pickups without catalytic converters.

Who would have thought that new EPA emissions standards for the 1975 model year would ultimately produce the bestselling vehicle in the United States? With Dodge and International Harvester light-duty pickups no longer being marketed and the last Chevrolet Big 10s and GMC Heavy Halfs sold as 1980 models, it was either accidental or sheer marketing genius that Ford drove their F-150 to unprecedented market dominance. Somebody at Ford apparently had a better idea.

"

...it was

either

accidental

or sheer

marketing

genius...

"

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Avoiding Inside Baseball

A little over a month ago, one of my colleagues read over an article I'd submitted and suggested some changes to make it more accessible to the general reader. He told me what I'd written "seem[ed] a little inside baseball." It was solid advice and I was glad to take it because I'd violated one of my own cardinal rules as a car enthusiast and writer – I want to cheerlead this stuff and get other people just as excited about it as I am.

Richard Lentinello, our editor, set out the mission statement for *Hemmings Classic Car* back in 2010, and I keep that document on my desk. It states in both italics and bold: "Our goal is to make *HCC* the hobby's chief cheerleader." I think that's the best possible philosophy for a magazine like ours.

Back in the days of *Special Interest Autos*, a bimonthly publication in the pre-Internet era, it was a given that we would dig deep into historical and technical issues because we were one of the few outlets for that type of information. Longstanding enthusiasts turned to Hemmings publications to deepen their understanding of their passion.

Today, with the instant communication of the Internet always at our fingertips, plunging deeply into a given topic is super easy. Do you want to know the torque specs for the lugnuts on a 1953 Plymouth? I'm sure it's out there. The part numbers for the jets in a '79 Oldsmobile Quadrajet? Easy peasy. What's less easy to find is encouragement and base-level presentation. In fact, going into some forums without a lot of pre-existing knowledge can sometimes be a recipe for humiliation and the extinguishment of a burgeoning interest.

Experts and veterans of the hobby may have forgotten what it's like to be a newbie because they are focused on the minutiae of their corner of the scene. That's where we come in. We are the ones who get to give you a 20,000-foot view of the subject matter and hopefully get you excited about it if you weren't already. Our focus is, of necessity, breadth of coverage rather than depth.

That '53 Plymouth is awesome because it's the first truly 1950s design from the division. It's also super cool because it didn't sell well and is thus rare. It's one of those Detroit Underdogs you read about on these pages from time to time. It's easy to work on because it has that anvil-reliable flathead six-cylinder under the hood and never got the odd fluid-coupling drive of the more-expensive Mopars (though those are really neat too, if you're looking for a period driving experience).

The '79 Oldsmobile story is similar, but different. In 1979, Oldsmobile was the third bestselling domestic marque in the U.S., right behind Chevrolet and Ford. The reasons for that popularity remain true. The downsizings of 1977-'78 were successful and had reinvigorated the product line. They were well-built cars for the era and actually quite handsome. In 1979, many of the electronic complications that would be added in the '80s didn't exist yet, which makes that Q-Jet-equipped Oldsmobile even more attractive.

If you were to buy either of these cars (or even *think* about it), it would be important to join a club or at least a message board or group on social media. That is when you need those experts who know everything about a particular car. They're great for advice about general maintenance and restoration, and especially for getting the car ready for participation in scored shows, where accuracy to the nth degree is critical.

The point is this: We love old cars and want others to love them too. It doesn't matter what they are. Each of us has our own favorites and some of us even approach expert status on particular years, makes, and models, but that's not why you come to us each month (or more, when you consider we publish three print magazines and the *Hemmings Daily*). You come to us for the cheerleading, we hope, and we're going to keep on doing that – it's the future of the hobby far more than following any kind of trend for the next hot thing.

Every old car has something cool about it ("there's a butt for every seat") and by taking a fresh look at every topic, we can find a new generation of butts for even the oldest and oddest of seats. Once we've kindled that interest, we pass them on to you, the experts, to educate and fan the flames of that passion.

Don't let us down!

Hemmings Motor News

CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE

13th Annual

SEPTEMBER 13–15, 2019

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FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13th

- REGISTRATION
  9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Registration at the Festival Commons, Lake George, New York.
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  10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Rally through the beautiful Adirondack region to historic Fort Ticonderoga and enjoy a boxed picnic lunch with your fellow enthusiasts. ***Limited tickets, order early!***
- DINNER CRUISE
  5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Cruise on scenic Lake George, aboard the *Lac du Saint Sacrement* and enjoy a dinner buffet (cash bar) with live music. ***Limited seating, order early!***

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: Bill Warner.
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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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- Datsun Z and ZX Cars (240, 260 & 280), through 1983
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KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Bill Warner

Bill Warner may be best known as the tireless founder and chairman of the Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance, but his résumé goes far beyond this. He's been an automotive journalist, a race car driver (and Road Racing Driver's Club inductee), a business owner, a car collector (with chapters of his own in the books *The Cobra in the Barn* and *The Hemi in the Barn*) and a vehicle restorer, to name but a few of the hats he's worn over the decades. Bill can also lay claim to being a participant in the Cannonball-Baker Sea-to-Shining-Sea Memorial Trophy Dash, competing in the 1975 running in a Porsche 911 he still owns today. *Photo credit: Nathan Deremer/Deremer Studios*

MASTER OF CEREMONIES: Bill Rothermel

Bill's broad knowledge and experience as an automotive historian and writer – as well as his role as master of ceremonies or judge in over 20 concours-level events nationwide – position him as an unrivaled expert. He's also a valued member of the Boards of Directors of the AACA Museum in Hershey, Pennsylvania, and the Elegance at Hershey, and a past-Board member of the Rolls-Royce Foundation and the Boyertown Museum of Historic Vehicles. His lifelong interest in cars of all kinds and eras makes him a fascinating automotive commentator.

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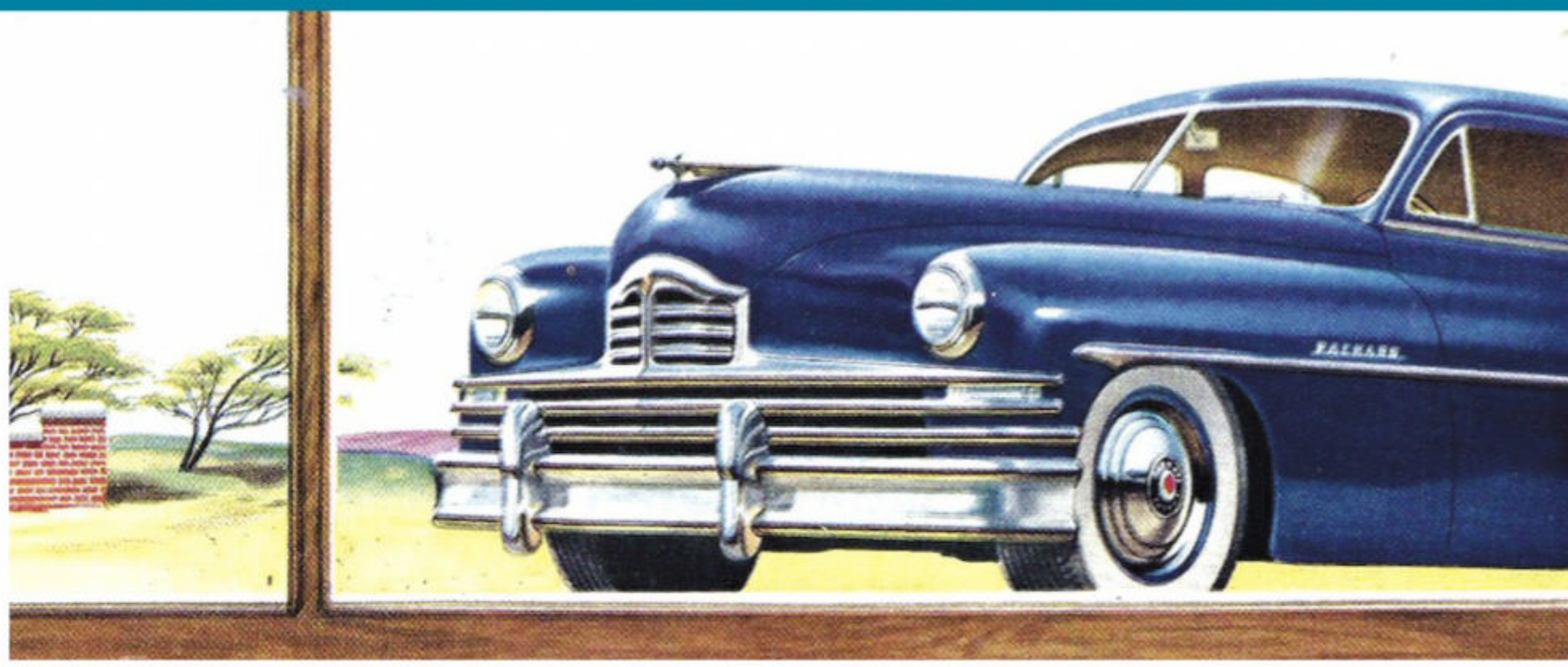


Independent Thinking

BY RICHARD LENTINELLO • IMAGES FROM HEMMINGS ARCHIVES

Many forward-thinking automotive designs, cutting-edge engineering principles, creative innovations, and distinctive body styles stemmed from America's vast array of Independent automobile companies. American Motors, Franklin, Hudson, Hupmobile, Nash, Packard, Pierce-Arrow, Studebaker, and Willys all contributed greatly to our automobile heritage in one form or another.

There were many other equally important companies that were significant contributors to America's great automotive industry: American Bantam, Auburn, Cord, Crosley, Detroit-Electric, Duesenberg, Doble, Graham, Kaiser-Frazer, Peerless, Rambler, Rickenbacker, Stanley Steamer, Stearns-Knight, Simplex, Whippet, and several more.

This country has a long history of independent-thinking industrialists who built manufacturing companies by doing things their way and, as a result, forced Chrysler, Ford, and General Motors out of their complacency. The competition that stemmed from producing unusual automobile designs and diverse mechanical componentry has had a positive, far-reaching effect in many different ways.

If you are seeking to buy an old collector car that will stand apart from the crowd, one that doesn't wear a nameplate from one of the Big Three companies, there are plenty of alternatives to consider. These Independent-brand models are the types of cars that make you a standout, whichever show or cruise-in you take them to today, because they simply were never considered mainstream cars in their time. These Independent-built orphans are all distinctly individualistic, well-built, and way more durable than people would consider them being. Most importantly, they're all fun to own and drive!

1970 AMC HORNET

Dared to be Different

Some of the brightest ideas came from some of the smallest car companies

BY JEFF KOCH • PHOTOGRAPHY FROM HEMMINGS ARCHIVES AND THE AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

What makes a benchmark car? For the purposes of this story, it should be the car that you think of when you hear the name of a particular marque. It isn't necessarily the bestselling, the prettiest, or the most valuable in today's old-car market. It should be a car that embodies the values of the company that built it. It should be a car that either no other company could have done, or would dared to have built—something that the Independent marques, daring to be different to stand out in a crowded field, excelled at.

Many of our Independents only made one or two models in their lifetimes, and so the choice reveals itself easily. For longer-lived Independents (AMC, Studebaker, Packard) our suggestions may prove more controversial.

Because of our space allotment, we are sticking with Independents that made it beyond World War II. For the same reason, we are not going to be discussing every coachbuilder, neo-classic conversion house, and entrepreneur that ever made a prototype. Also, we are sticking strictly with American cars this go-round: Bring European cars into the fold and you'd have a book rather than a magazine story. Although we threw a Euro-American hybrid in the mix just for fun.

American Motors Corporation

1970 HORNET

Hornet kept AMC alive. Never mind that the Hornet most closely embodied the traditional Rambler ethos in the AMC lineup (compact, sturdy, steel unit-body, cleanly styled, no-nonsense, economical). Consider instead that the Hornet underpinned large swaths of AMC's model lineup for nearly two decades. Gremlin, Spirit, Concord, Eagle, Eagle SX4… all have healthy doses of Hornet DNA. What's more, Eagle wagons survived clear into 1988, a year after Chrysler bought out AMC.

Avanti

AVANTI II

Rescued from the ashes of Studebaker, the fiberglass-bodied Avanti GT coupe was resurrected by a dealer group in 1965, and continued finding a couple of hundred customers a year, adding ever-more-efficient Chevrolet V-8 engines into the vintage chassis. (Even that changed: Monte Carlo floorpans, and later Caprice chassis, were introduced.) Four-door and convertible models were released. Model year 1989 was Avanti's biggest production year ever—350 cars.

AVANTI II

Checker

MARATHON

The Marathon, choice taxi of cabbies nationwide from 1961 and for two decades after, became so popular as a meter-running worker bee that it was unusual to see one in civilian livery. Why? Sturdy construction, ample passenger space, and the idea that it didn't change much, which helped make them efficient to maintain. Other than driveline components and adapting to various new federal regulations, the Marathon was largely unchanged over time. It was iconic clear through the end of building new Marathons in its Kalamazoo, Michigan, plant in 1982.

1949 CROSLEY HOTSHOT

Crosley

1949 HOTSHOT

Was the Crosley Hotshot, riding on a long 85-inch wheelbase, America's first postwar sports car? Consider. Two passengers, check. Low ground clearance? Oh yes. Open top? But of course. A well-sorted chassis designed for easy maneuverability and lightning-fast cornering response? Absolutely. It also used the company's new CIBA (cast-iron block assembly) 44-cu.in. four-cylinder, extracting 26 horsepower for the 1,100-pound car. Crosley's wagons sold in far greater numbers, but it's the Hotshot that gets enthusiasts in a lather today.

Frazer

1951 VAGABOND

Frazer was given a substantial, Dutch Darrin-penned facelift for 1951—the marque's final season. It was also given, at the end, two models shared with its Kaiser sibling: a four-door convertible, and a new version of the hatchback-esque Traveler that Frazer called Vagabond. K-F could only afford a single body—a four-door sedan—and ways to expand upon that basic body were explored. The Vagabond became an ersatz station wagon—and possibly the world's first hatchback. The trunk was reverse hinged, like a tailgate, and a section of the rear body that included the rear window was cut out and hinged. With the rear seat folded down, it carried an 8-foot load on its wooden runners.

Henry J
1951

Built by Kaiser but marketed as its own animal, the compact Henry J was a small, honest, economical machine built to a price—about $1,300. Problem was, Chevrolet and Ford sold cars that cost just a few dollars more, and included items like an opening trunk, a glovebox, armrests, and roll-down rear windows that the Henry J lacked. Plus, with gas at about a quarter a gallon, the idea of a 25-mpg car didn't mean much. Sales halved annually, until Kaiser-Frazer called time. Sears also sold a version of the Henry J, called the Allstate, in the early 1950s.

Hudson
1952 HORNET

Hudson's combination of the "Step-Down" bodies—shells that were lowered around the frame rails, rather than perched atop them—and Twin H Power (a pair of downdraft Carter single-throat carburetors mounted on separate cast-iron intakes) made for a smart performance-car bargain in the early 1950s. Racing helped the cause. Bob Flock put a Super Six on the pole for NASCAR's first event in 1949; the Hornet dominated stock car racing in 1951, including the 1951 NASCAR title. Decades later, kids learned of the Hornet's history through the Disney/Pixar film *Cars*.

Kaiser
1948 LINE

The Kaiser-Frazer Corporation launched in 1945, pooling the talents and resources of ship-building magnate Henry J. Kaiser, and Graham-Paige CEP Joseph Frazer. By the summer of 1948, the 300,000th car came off the Willow Run, Michigan, production line, and the 1948 line was the absolute sales peak of the Kaiser brand: nearly 92,000 for the model year, with another 48,000 similar-but-upscale Frazer models built. All were four-door sedans.

1952 HUDSON HORNET

1948 KAISER

Muntz
1952 JET

Audiovisual guru, bon vivant, used-car empresario and former Kaiser-Frazer dealer Earl "Madman" Muntz bought out Frank Kurtis and his fledgling sports car operation for $200,000 in 1950. He stretched the wheelbase to 113 inches, allowed for a back seat, made a removable (not retractable) top, and installed Cadillac V-8 power. (Lincoln V-8s, and another wheelbase extension, came later.) It cost $5,500, in an era when a Cadillac convertible cost under $4,000. Yet Muntz lost about $1,000 on every single one he built, since it was virtually a hand-built machine.

1952 MUNTZ JET

Nash
1952 NASH-HEALEY

Nash sold more than 100,000 cars yearly from 1947 to '53 (and in 1951, topped 200,000 sales). That allowed Nash to have a bit of fun: It sent the 234.8-cu.in. Ambassador Six to British sports car empresario Donald Healey, who then dropped it in a modified Healey Silverstone chassis with new styling. Pinin Farina crafted the steel body with an eye toward integration with the rest of the Nash lineup. At $5,908 to start, there weren't many takers, but the concept was valid.

Packard
1953 CARIBBEAN

Packard's lower-line 115C launched in 1937, thus making Packards affordable and staving off the Great Depression—but longer term, the low-line Packards hurt the marque's high-end image. The Caribbean,

1953 PACKARD CARIBBEAN

launched for 1953, overdid it with the "sports car" schtick in its ads, but there's little question that the convertible's power and style brought new attention to Packard as the top-tier luxury carmaker it always was. The $5,200 price tag was another hint.

Playboy

1948 CONVERTIBLE COUPE

The ahead-of-its-time Playboy was meant to be a postwar suburban second car in the voracious market of the late 1940s, offering economical motoring and cheeky fun. Advanced features included independent front suspension and a folding hardtop à la Ford Skyliner, but manually operated. Playboy used Continental and Hercules four-cylinder engines. The convertible coupe retailed for $985. Fewer than 100 pre-production units were built before lack of funding sealed their fate in 1950.

Studebaker

1947 CHAMPION

The South Bend, Indiana, firm's 1947 lineup was peak Studebaker: solid build quality, funky styling, hitting the market with a splash before the other guys did, and being fundamentally unable to capitalize on its lead. (See also: 1959 Lark, launching a full year before the compact revolution of 1960, and the Avanti, which caused disappointment when models were not available for immediate purchase on launch.) Short term, Studebaker went from 15th to 8th in the sales race.

Rambler

1958 LINE

The recession of 1958 affected every American car company bar Rambler, now with twin headlamps and baby fins. Rambler's combination of low price, economy, and reliability proved irresistible. Leaping from 91,000 units in 1957 to 162,000 in 1958, the Kenosha crew jumped from 12th in the sales charts clear up to 7th; this momentum would later see them reach as high as 3rd in the sales charts. The industry surely marveled at the notion of smaller cars, bereft of gadgets and styling tricks, capturing the imagination of the American public.

Stutz (revival)

1971 BLACKHAWK

Lots of personal luxury coupes from the 1970s had retro styling flourishes. This one had all of them. The Stutz Blackhawk melded a vintage name with neo-classic touches atop a restyled, retrimmed Pontiac Grand Prix; styled by Virgil Exner, with bodies handbuilt in Italy, its pricing started at $22,500. In 1971 dollars. Approximately 350 were built by 1980, the bulk going to moneyed celebrity owners: Elvis Presley, Lucille Ball, Sammy Davis Jr., Dean Martin, Evel Knievel, and others. It was also immortalized as a Hot Wheels car.

Tucker

48

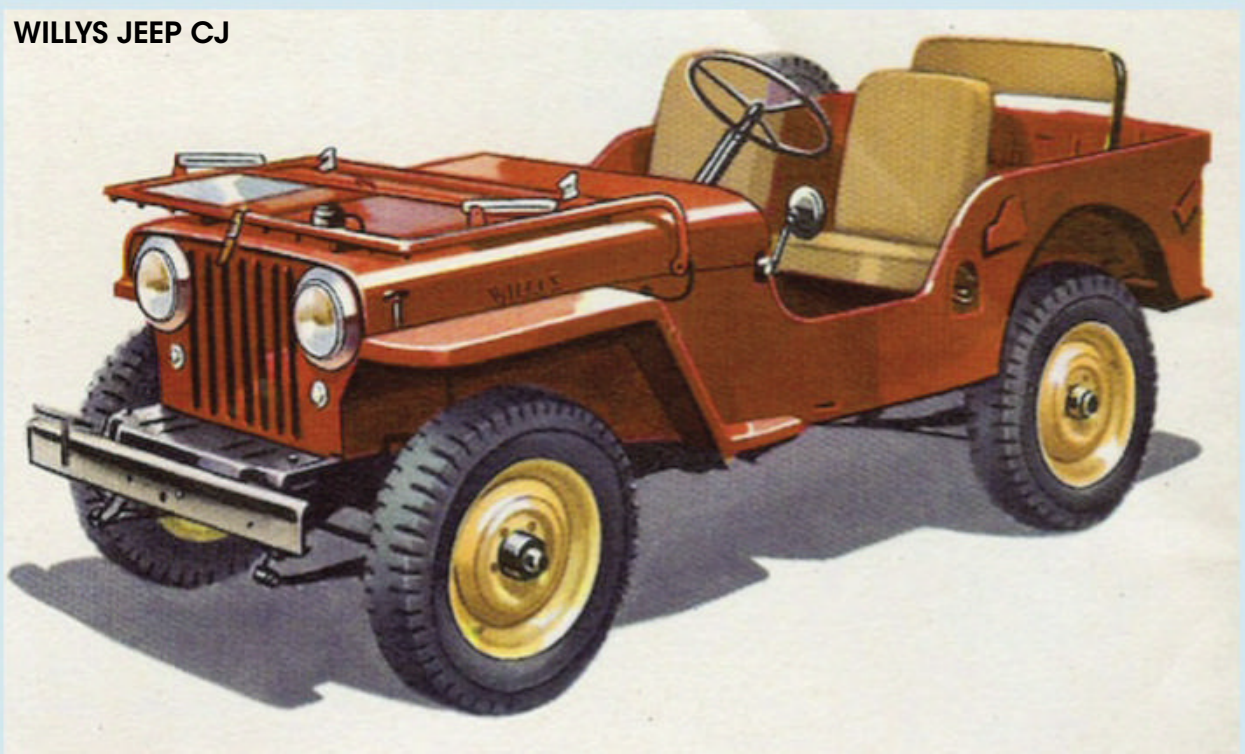
Tucker's story has been told on countless occasions, in magazines and movies alike: one man's dream, the struggle against the odds, a conspiracy of carmakers and government officials who had it in for the plucky Independent. Safety! Aerodynamics! Helicopter engines! Whether there was a government conspiracy to shut Preston Tucker down, or whether the man was a silver-tongued con, is neither here nor there seven decades after the marque's brief, shining moment. In its premature death, the Tucker became more famous than it could have were it allowed to flourish and (inevitably) stumble.

Willys

JEEP CJ

The original Jeep gained its reputation during WWII and was able to turn its wartime success into unseen heights in the civilian world. Simple, rugged, and with four-wheel-drive traction that could climb up hills and obstacles that other vehicles feared to tread, Jeep eventually found favor with anyone who needed to drive on unimproved trails. The legendary brand has been something of a hot potato, having been owned by Willys-Overland, Kaiser, AMC, Renault, Chrysler, Mercedes-Benz (as DaimlerChrysler), and now Fiat (as FCA).

1971 STUTZ BLACKHAWK



WILLYS JEEP CJ

Sixties Icon

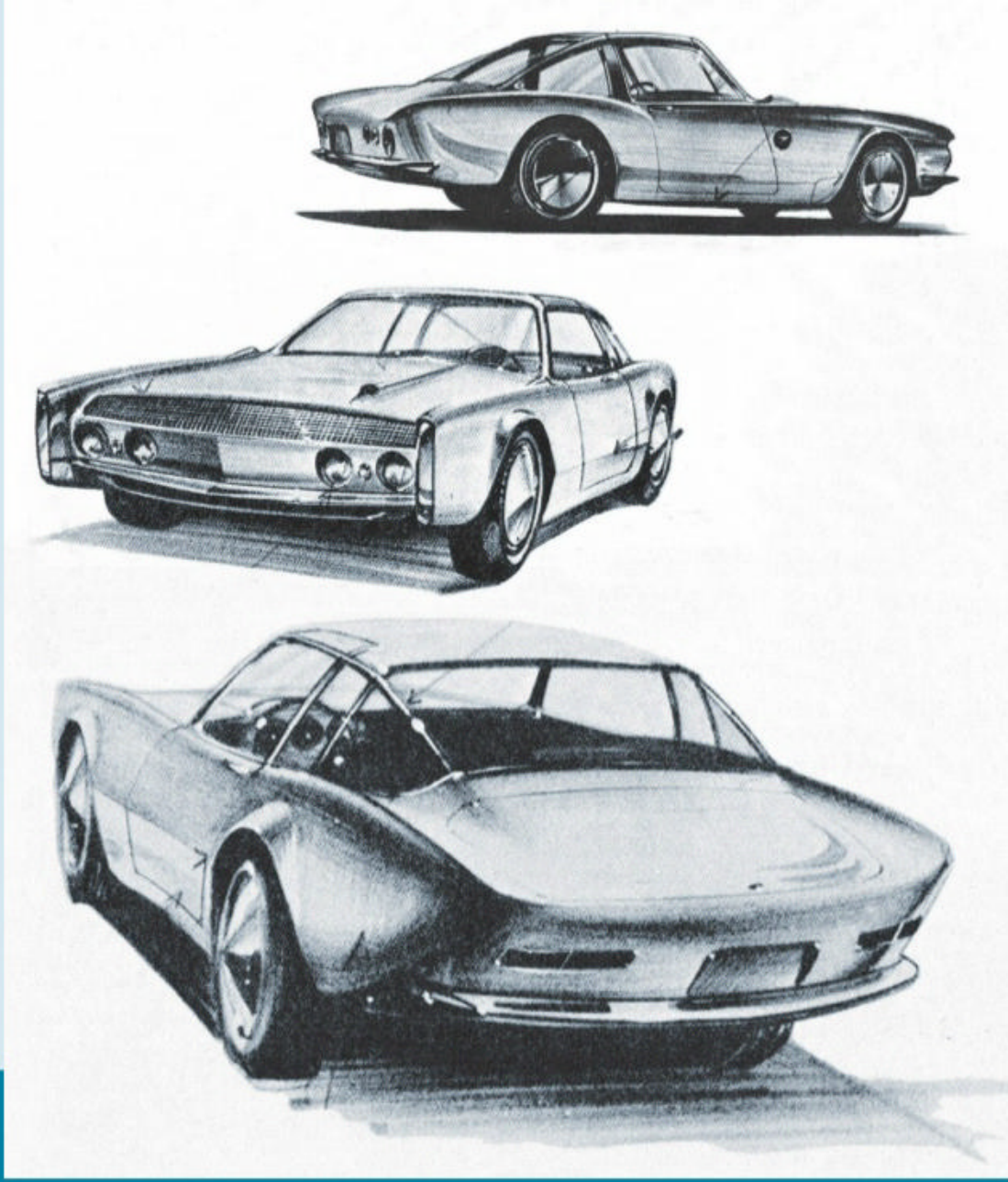
The forward-looking Avanti showed Studebaker still had what it took to produce a groundbreaking car

BY TERRY SHEA • IMAGES FROM HEMMINGS ARCHIVES

From changing tastes to poor management to economic forces far beyond their control, many automakers have seen the lights turned out, gone forever except in the classics that remain and the memories we keep. Amazingly, as a lot of these companies were up against the ropes, they did their finest work. From the supercharged Duesenberg SJ to the Marmon Sixteen to the Hudson Hornet with Twin H-Power, we've seen famed car companies save the best for last. Studebaker managed the same feat with the Avanti.

Founded in the 1850s as a carriage maker that soon grew to the largest company of its kind in the world before turning to automobiles at the beginning of the 20th century, Studebaker was a resilient company. Despite its reputation for solid engineering and top-notch build quality, it always faced an uphill battle against Detroit's biggest players. It weathered a bankruptcy at the height of the Great Depression, and postwar

Raymond Loewy (left), whose industrial design studio created the lines of the iconic Avanti, stands next to the car along with Sherwood Egbert, Studebaker president.



difficulties continued even after Packard bought Studebaker in 1954. Though ultimately doomed, Studebaker continued to follow its own path, resulting in the revolutionary Avanti.

Split between those who valued the car business and those who wanted a diversified corporation to exit the industry, the Studebaker board chose a new president in 1961, one who gave the carmaking fans in South Bend, Indiana, new hope, for a few years anyway. A 41-year-old ex-Marine with a commanding 6-foot 4-inch, 200-pound presence, Sherwood Egbert began his tenure at Studebaker in 1961, doing what he could to improve operations and rebuild company morale. While overall sales in the entire U.S. market had noticeably dipped in 1961, the figures for Studebaker suggested a free fall, the numbers off more than 50 percent.

Egbert managed to turn that slide around, with 1962 sales rebounding, though not quite to 1960 levels. Among the first big moves he made at Studebaker was the decision to build an exciting and entirely new sports car the likes of which the industry had never seen. Egbert wanted the car done quickly, so he turned to longtime Studebaker collaborator Raymond Loewy, whose influence on the looks of the cars from South Bend went all the way back to the 1930s.

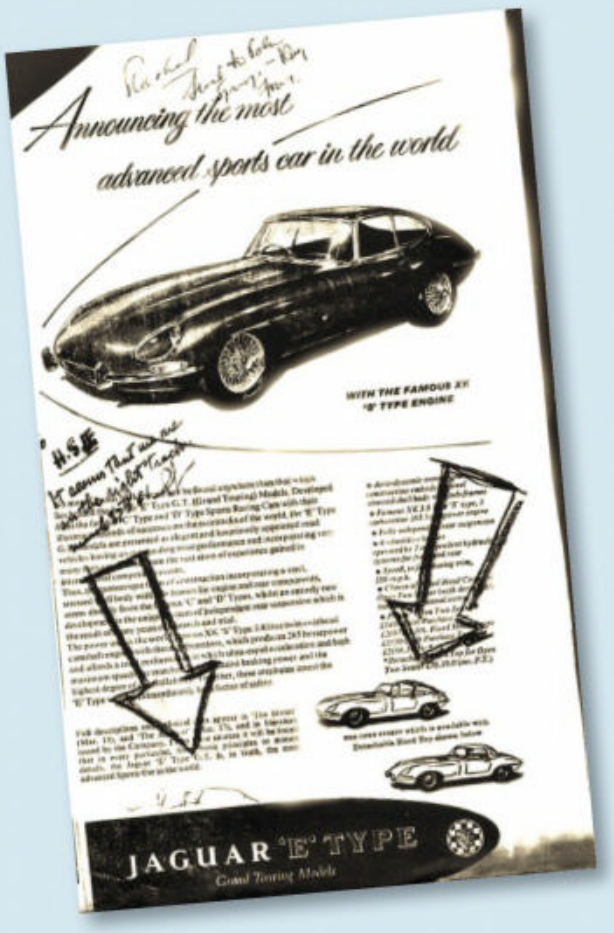
According to Loewy in his 1979 retrospective book, *Industrial Design*, "The birth of the Avanti is a short, happy story." Remarkably, the look of the Avanti was nailed down in a little over six weeks, a process that started when Egbert called Loewy at his Palm Springs, California, studio in early March 1961. Within days, Loewy was in South Bend, meeting with Egbert and Gene Hardig, Studebaker's chief engineer. According to Loewy, "Although Egbert promoted the sports car idea for a specific market, he never actually had a specific concept in mind, and he never showed any conceptual sketches to Gene or me."

Back in Palm Springs, Loewy made some basic sketches and then assigned three men to complete the task: John Ebstein, Tom Kellogg, and Bob Andrews, with Ebstein in charge. Loewy rented a "rather run-down, two-room building in the desert where the three designers… could work and sleep." Over the course of a week in their sequestered studio, the trio fleshed out the details that were to become the Avanti. From Loewy shuttling back and forth to Indiana, and Ebert likewise making the trip to California—piloting his own plane, no less—the details were hammered out over a few weeks, with a full-scale clay model garnering Studebaker board approval on April 27, 1961, just a short time after Egbert's invitation to Loewy.

Loewy wrote that the process for the creation of the Avanti was "a lightning-like shoe-string operation, compared to the hundreds of thousands of man hours and millions of dollars Detroit expends on an average new body design to achieve a 'committee' look. With Avanti, a great part of the expenses were for airfares between California and Indiana, plus a few cases of champagne at appropriate moments." Still, between the board's approval and delivery of the first cars, Studebaker still had its work cut out.

Truly a distinctive, ahead-of-its-time automobile, the Avanti eschewed most chrome and even a traditional grille—both directives from Loewy. With raised tops to the fenders, a hood bulge the length of the hood and directly in front of the driver, and wraparound rear glass behind sloping C-pillars, the Avanti's design was like no other. It also proved all but impossible to be rendered out of steel and still kept to an affordable price. Studebaker turned to the same company that was supplying Chevrolet with Corvette bodies: Molded Fiber Glass Company of Ashtabula, Ohio.

With MFG contracted to produce the bodies, Hardig and his colleagues in Studebaker engineering set about adapting the Lark chassis to accommodate the Avanti and make it a sports car in the process. Different Lark models had the pieces



Among the ideals chased by Loewy's designers was Jaguar's own timeless icon, the E-Type. After the Loewy team created a quarter-scale model, a full-scale clay mockup was created for executive review in Studebaker headquarters in South Bend.

Studebaker needed, from the convertible's reinforced X-frame chassis required to stiffen up the relatively flexible Avanti body to the heavy-duty police package that provided the front coil springs to the station wagon with its beefier rear leaf springs. An integrated roll bar in the roof added additional strength. Other improvements to the Avanti chassis included front and rear anti-roll bars and a rear radius rod. Its front caliper-type disc brakes were among the first fitted to an American production car.

A planned interior using a molded plastic material called Royalite never entered production, due to the Avanti's development budget creeping ever higher. Instead, the cockpit featured sewn and padded vinyl on top and a driver-focused instrument panel with a full set of gauges, including a 140-mph speedometer and a tachometer. All Studebaker Avantis were powered by the company's 289-cu.in. V-8, which made an approximate 240 horsepower in R1 guise and 290 in R2 guise, the latter equipped with a Paxton supercharger. The extremely rare R3 engine made even more power. Transmission choices were three- and four-speed manuals and a three-speed automatic.

An Avanti prototype made a big splash at the New York Auto Show in April 1962, with Studebaker garnering headlines for its breakthrough design. Appropriately enough, *avanti* is the Italian word for "forward." Unfortunately for Studebaker, MFG had problems ramping up body production and the Avanti did not reach showrooms until late in 1962, priced nearly $200 more than the also all-new Corvette Sting Ray. Studebaker ultimately sold just 3,834 Avantis for 1963 and a further 809 for the 1964 model year before the company closed the doors of its South Bend factory on December 20, 1963.

Less than three years later, Studebaker made its final cars at its Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, plant before shutting down production there, too. But the groundbreaking Avanti lived on thanks to a South Bend-area Studebaker dealer that began producing the car in a leased section of the former factory, using the original suppliers, save for the engine, which, ironically enough, came via the Chevrolet Corvette. The Avanti II, as it was dubbed, remained in production, virtually unchanged, for more than 20 years, with sales averaging more than 100 cars per year. Today, the Avanti legacy survives with collectors who keep perhaps Studebaker's brightest flame still burning.

Pens Behind the Passion

Meet some of the designers and stylists who drafted the looks of our favorite Independent cars and trucks

BY THE HEMMINGS STAFF • IMAGES FROM HEMMINGS ARCHIVES AND AS CREDITED

From the earliest days of America's automotive industries, smaller Independent automakers had to make the most of their typically limited resources. Styling was one aspect in which Independent firms could assert their creativity and foster the unique qualities of their brands. Some of the most brilliant and talented designers, stylists, and body engineers spent time working at—or tangentially for, in the case of contracted coachbuilders and body firms—those smaller car companies. We've put together a who's who list of the designers and stylists who contributed mightily to the successes of the Independent automakers, and helped create some of the most influential and iconic vehicles of the 20th century.

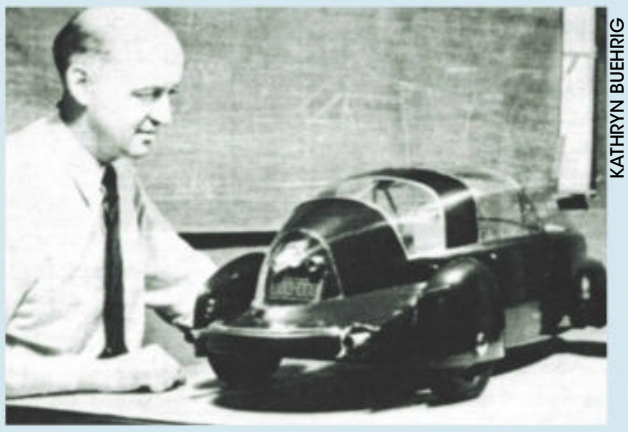
Bob Bourke and Virgil Exner, above, in Studebaker's styling studio, 1940s.

STUDEBAKER MUSEUM

ROBERT "BOB" BOURKE

1916-1996

After a start designing products for Sears Roebuck, Bourke was hired by Virgil Exner in late 1940, working at Studebaker through the Raymond Loewy Studios. His designs included the 2R5 truck, the "bullet nose" 1950 Studebaker, and the timeless 1953 Starliner hardtop coupe. He contributed to the design of the 1949 Ford, as well as the Greyhound Scenic Cruiser.

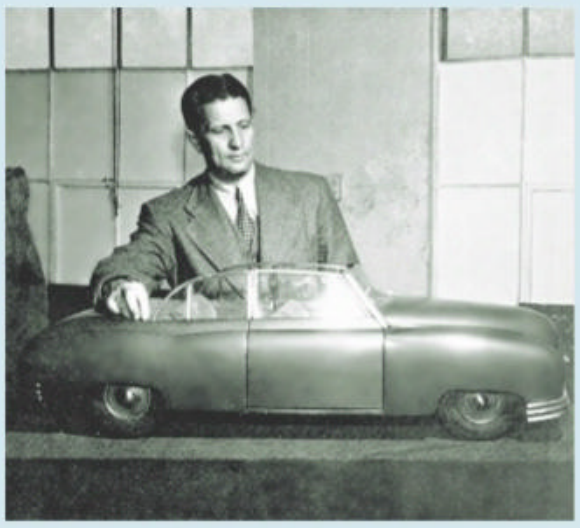


KATHRYN BUEHRIG

GORDON BUEHRIG

1904-1990

Having worked at Packard, GM, and Stutz by age 24, this talented stylist went to Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg, where he'd create the Duesenberg "Twenty Grand," the 1935 Auburn Speedster, and the Cord 810. Buehrig worked for Budd, Studebaker, and Ford, where he had a part in the 1956 Continental Mark II. After his 1965 retirement, he taught at the Art Center College of Design.



HOWARD "DUTCH" DARRIN

1897-1992

Darrin started in the Brewster design studio, and with World War I friend Thomas Hibbard, formed the innovative Hibbard & Darrin firm in Paris. He subsequently established Darrin of Paris in California, and became a designer to the stars. His Packard Darrins were influential, and after World War II, he designed the Kaiser, Frazer, and the sliding-door Kaiser-Darrin sports car.

RAYMOND DIETRICH

1894-1980

Trained as an engraver, "Ray" worked at Brewster & Company. He joined Thomas Hibbard to form LeBaron Carrossiers, acting as automotive architects and contractors, and bodying Lincolns, Locomobiles, Minervas, and Packards. His successful Dietrich Inc. firm designed semi-custom production bodies with Murray, later working with Checker and Preston Tucker.

VIRGIL EXNER SR.

1909-1973

After a brief time in General Motors' Art and Colour Section, he headed Pontiac, before leaving to join Raymond Loewy's firm to work at Studebaker. After overseeing designs of those South Bend cars through the 1940s, Exner joined Chrysler in 1949, and by the mid 1950s, had created The Forward Look, with its courageously advanced designs. His Ghia-built show cars were a prelude to the retro-style designs he penned in later years.

FRANKLIN HERSHEY

1907-1997

This California native got his design start at Murphy Coach Works, styling the advanced Peerless V-16 prototype at age 22. He briefly was design chief at Hudson before moving to GM, where "Frank" suggested the 1935 Pontiac's Silver Streak, and would spend time at Opel and Holden. After a period at Packard, he went to Ford and designed the 1953-'57 Fords, as well as the 1955 Thunderbird.

RAYMOND LOEWY

1893-1986

This was the French-born industrial designer whose work included commissions from Sears, the Pennsylvania Railroad, Westinghouse, the Hupp Motor Company, and Studebaker. Loewy's team designed the "Lazy S" logo, the bullet nose models, and the 1963 Avanti. Prominent individual projects included the Coca-Cola bottle redesign, the livery of Air Force One, the Concorde's interior, and the Shell Oil and U.S. Postal Service logos.

EDWARD MACAULEY

1896-1973

Son of Packard president James Alvan Macauley, he was in charge of Packard's Custom Body Shop, working with the firm's designers and contractors like Ray Dietrich and Count de Sakhnoffsky. He oversaw the

postwar Clipper, as well as popular late show cars like the Panther, Pan American, Caribbean, and Monte Carlo before his 1955 retirement.

AMOS NORTHUP

1889-1937

After spending time at Pierce-Arrow in Buffalo, New York, the Wills Sainte Claire was his first full design commission; Northup then styled production bodies for Hupmobile, Marmon, REO, and Willys-Knight while at the Murray Corporation. His streamlined 1932 Blue Streak and 1938 Spirit of Motion were trendsetting Graham designs with modern features like integrated fenders and flush headlamps.

COUNT ALEXIS DE SAKHNOFFSKY

1901-1964

Born into Russian nobility, he was a famous, highly sought industrial stylist who worked with Packard, Nash, Bantam, Auburn, Cord, Crosley, and Willys-Overland, and was a technical editor for *Esquire* magazine. Count de Sakhnoffsky's streamlined custom White tractor-trailers made Labatt's beer popular in Canada, and he also designed furniture, bicycles, radios, and boats.

FRANK SPRING

1893-1959

Spring created the "Clear Vision" body style for the Walter Murphy coachbuilding firm before becoming Hudson's style engineer in 1931. There, he oversaw the design of the revolutionary 1948 "Step-Down" Hudson, as well as that of the Jet and limited-production Italia, built in Milan by Carrozzeria Touring.

BROOKS STEVENS

1911-1995

Son of the inventor of the preselector gearshift, this prolific industrial designer worked with Willys (Jeep wagon, Jeepster); Kaiser-Frazer; Excalibur; Studebaker (Lark, Gran Turismo Hawk); AMC (Hornet, Gremlin, AMX, Pacer), and Harley-Davidson. Stevens created more than 2,000 products for more than 600 clients—including the 1958 Oscar Mayer Weinermobile—and was a charter member of the Industrial Designers Society of America.

RICHARD "DICK" TEAGUE

1923-1991

Teague got his start in the GM styling studios before becoming Packard's chief stylist in 1951, and designed the Request and Predictor show cars. He started at AMC in 1959, working there as head designer through 1983; he created cars like the Rambler American, Javelin, AMX, Gremlin, Pacer, and the wild, Bizzarrini-built mid-engine AMX/3. He also oversaw the iconic 1980s "XJ" Jeep Cherokee.

JOHN TJAARDA

1897-1962

Netherlands-born Joop Tjaarda van Starkenberg—anglicized to John Tjaarda—engineered Duesenberg race car bodies with Harry Miller before a short stint at GM's Art and Colour Section. He designed the streamlined, rear-engine unit-body sedan for Briggs Manufacturing that became the production 1936 Lincoln-Zephyr. Tjaarda turned the Cord 812 into the Hupp Skylark and Graham Hollywood, and later ran his own industrial design firm; his son, Tom Tjaarda, was a successful auto designer in Italy.

FORD DESIGN CENTER

ALEX TREMULIS

1914-1991

A tour in the U.S. Army Air Forces informed Tremulis' futuristic designs throughout his career, with the Tucker Torpedo and Chrysler Thunderbolt as early standouts. Tremulis worked on projects for Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg, Crosley, American Bantam, Packard, and Kaiser-Frazer. At Ford's Advanced Studio, he created the "Square" and "Bullet" Thunderbirds and numerous Ford show cars; the Subaru Brat was among his last designs.

NEXT MONTH'S SPECIAL SECTION IN HEMMINGS CLASSIC CAR:

CHRYSLER CLASSICS

The Elegance at Hershey

A nostalgic throwback to old-world concours, where quality outshines quantity

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD LENTINELLO

If you want to go back in time and experience what it must have been like to attend a European-style concours between the late 1920s and the 1950s, all you have to do is travel to Hershey, Pennsylvania, the first weekend in June. There, at the posh Hershey

Hotel, you'll feel as if you have been transported back in time.

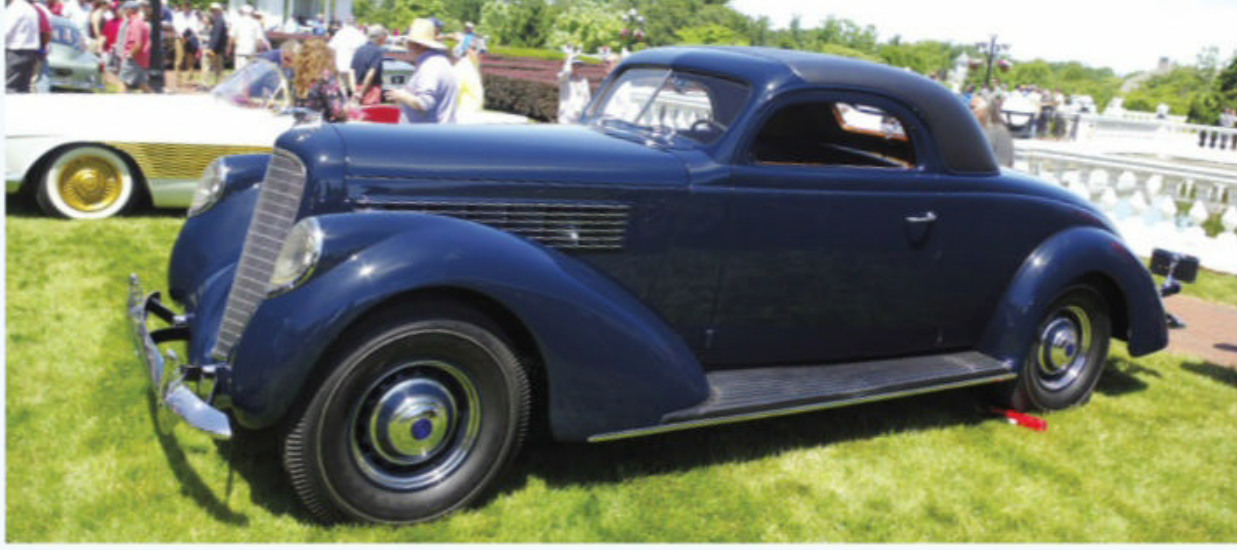
On the well-manicured lawns on the spacious grounds of this hilltop landmark hotel, The Elegance at Hershey Concours will forever change your view of just how inviting a small concours can be. Each and every one of the 75 cars on display were magnificent examples of specific eras and categories, the likes of which have rarely ever been assembled before.

The Elegance at Hershey has just concluded its ninth year and has quickly earned its place among the world's top concours events. Distinctive setting, artful arrangement of automobiles, and primary focus on design and style — it's a "competition of elegance," as its French name implies.

I was fortunate to be one of the 45 judges, all of whom had a difficult task choosing the very best of those 75 automobiles. Best of Show, known here as the Governor's Cup, was awarded to a stunningly beautiful 1933 Isotta-Fraschini Tipo 8A.

For more details about this incredible event, please visit www.theeleganceathershey.com.

Renowned Packard collectors Fred and Dan Kanter displayed their 1930 Speedster Eight 7-34 Roadster. They bought this Packard in 1972!



The coolest looking car on display was this LeBaron-bodied 1938 Lincoln K Coupe owned by Wayne Carini.

Built under the direction of Harley Earl for his son Jerome to race, this exciting 1956 Corvette SR-2 took home the Elegance of Competition award. It was shown by owner Irwin Kroiz.

Powered by a BMW 328 engine, this 1949 Veritas 200RS roadster was shown by Elizabeth Jans; it won the desirable Rolling Sculpture award.

With a 331-cu.in. Cadillac V-8 under its louvered and blistered bonnet, this 1953 Allard JR roadster is one of seven built, and was shown by owner James Taylor.

This beautiful 1949 Delahaye 135M is owned by the BHA Museum of Hunt Valley, Maryland; it won the Most Elegant Open Post-war award.

Created by French coachbuilder Saoutchik and now owned by Sonny and Joan Abagnale, this 1948 Cadillac 62 Cabriolet won the Chocolate Town Award.

This lone surviving 1911 E-M-F Model 30 Racer, owned by Dale Critz Jr., was bestowed the Society of Automotive Historians award.

Powered by a Volumex supercharger, this 1934 MG PA roadster owned by Randy and Suzanne Morgan won the Best Use of Color award.

Joseph and Maryanne Lucks proudly displayed their multi-colored 1930 Willys-Knight 66B Great Six Coupe.

Packard collector Ralph Marano displayed his distinctive one-off 1938 Packard Super Eight 1604 Coupe, with body by the Mayfair Carriage Co. of England.

This 1922 Secqueville-Hoyau, believed to be the sole surviving Sports Torpedo example from this French company, won the Best of France Award. It's owned by Alex and Teri Giacobetti.

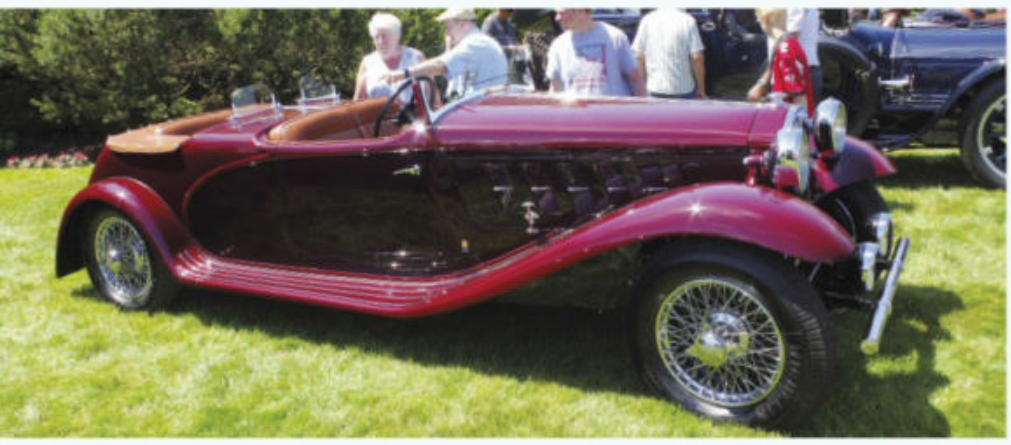
Renowned literature collector Walter Miller showed his distinguished Brewster-bodied 1919 Cadillac T57 Parade Phaeton.

William Davis, who bought this stunning 1964 Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud III Drophead brand new in 1963, took home the HVA Preservation Award.

Winner of two awards — the Motoring's Pioneers Award and the SAH Award, in honor of Henry Austin Clark — this 1903 Cadillac Model A rear-entrance tonneau was shown by owner Steve Heald.

Reggie and Cindy Nash came up from Virginia to display their unique 1904 Rambler Model L Canopy Tonneau.

This 454-powered 1971 Iso Grifo Berlinetta is one of 412 Grifos built; it was shown by owner Chris Auty.



The Best European Open Car—Pre-war—1900-1933 award went to this amazing 1932 Lancia Dilambda Torpedo Sport with body by Carrozzeria Viotti. It resides on Long Island with owner Albert Kalimian.

Best of Britain 1900-1949 award went to this beautiful 1939 Lagonda V-12 owned by John Shibles. It also won the Hagerty Youth Award.

David and Linda Kane showed their stunning 1937 Packard Twelve 1507 coupe. Apart from a repaint, it's mostly an unrestored original.

The Most Elegant American Closed Pre-War went to this exquisite Weymann-bodied 1933 Stutz DV-32 Monte Carlo owned by Nicola Bulgari.

The John Rich Award, named after the founder of The Elegance, was given to this 1912 Fiat Tipo 55 Roadster. Owned by noted car collector George Dragone, the roadster features a body made by Fleetwood.

The General Motors Heritage Center displayed the 1951 LeSabre concept car that was the brainchild of GM Design Chief Harley Earl. It won People's Choice.

Restored by owner John McAlpin, this very rare 1917 Locomobile 48 Sportif Victoria won the Elegance Heritage Award.

One of four 1934 Packard Twelve 1106 Sport Coupes by LeBaron, its owners Bob, Sandy, and Gary Bahre took home the American Spirit Award (Best American Car 1932-1942).

One of 138 Miura S models built, this 1970 Lamborghini, owned by Richard and David Biafora, won the Best European Sports Car—1960-1971 award.

WIN A 1966 CORVETTE Coupe or $25,000! Huntingtown Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad's 24th Annual Classic Corvette Raffle. Corvette has original motor, 327/300 hp, frame-on restoration, numbers matching, AM/FM radio, 4-speed M-20 transmission, black interior. Drawing October 20, 2019. Tickets: $10 for 15. 2nd place prize is $2,000, 3rd is $1,000, 4th is $700, 5th is $300. Need not be present to win. Send checks to Huntingtown Volunteer Fire Department, PO Box 987, Huntingtown, MD, 20639, call 410-414-3427 or visit our website www.hvfd6.org to purchase tickets.

This 1936 Bugatti Type 57 Atalante, with its Gangloff-built body, was shown by owner Alan Rosenblum.

The Dawn of a New Era Award for the best postwar car went to this one-off Michelotti-designed 1959 OSCA/FIAT 1185 Touring Coupe. Peter Boyle is its proud owner.

American Spirit Award for Best American Car of the 1920s was given to this eye-catching 1921 Kissel 6-45, owned by Andrew and Tanya Heller.

One of the rarest cars on display was this 1915 Pierce-Arrow 38C Town Car Landau. Owned by Brian and Trish White, it won the Most Elegant Brass or Early Car award.

One of the most striking cars on display was this 1930 Cadillac 452 Sport Phaeton by Fleetwood. Owners Edward and Joanne Dauer brought it from Florida.

Another rarely seen car was this 1935 Hoffman X-8 sedan owned by Myron and Kim Vernis; it took home the HVA National Automotive Heritage Award.

The coveted Governor's Cup, The Elegance's Best of Show award, went to this spectacular 1933 Isotta-Fraschini Tipo 8A Sports Tourer with a body crafted by Carrozzeria Castagna. Its proud owner is Stephen Plaster from Missouri.

driveable**dream**

Time Machine

Largely untouched, this 1949 Ford Custom convertible transports its owner in more ways than one

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARK J. McCOURT

New front coil springs dropped the ride height back to stock, and new rubber seals were fitted; the refurbished interior is inviting.

Every automotive enthusiast has fond memories of his or her first car. After all, who among us hasn't sentimentally pondered, however briefly, what it would be like to once again experience the vehicle of our formative years? While we can never truly go back, those with vision and perseverance will work hard to make that dream come true. They're the lucky ones for whom the stars align, and who get the opportunity to relive their youth behind the wheel of a now-classic automobile.

It was 1956 when Harry "Butch" Von Haggin became the proud possessor of a freshly minted driver's license. The 16-year-old Hoosick Falls, New York, native had passed his driver's test behind the wheel of his father's 1940 Ford coupe, a car that he would drive for about three months. "I wanted my own car, and found it parked on the side of the road."

The 1949 Ford Custom Convertible Coupe that caught Butch's eye was one of 51,133 soft-tops that the Dearborn automaker built for that breakout model year. This sleek model sported all-new styling, along with improved packaging and some modern mechanical features. Carried over was a new generation of the tried-and-true flathead V-8 engine, mated to a column-shifted three-speed manual transmission; both were already reassuringly familiar to the novice driver. Among its niceties were leather-trimmed cloth upholstery, an electro-hydraulic folding cloth roof, and an AM radio.

"I'd never paid attention to it around town before, but that car was in good shape," Butch recalls. "The engine was probably a bit tired, but it ran well, and the car was fast—it did 80-85 mph, easy. People were putting duals on their cars in those days, and I wanted to, but I didn't have the money to hot rod my '49. Still, I was always getting speeding tickets! I never went far with it, but had fun on the local roads. I ended up denting the fenders, turning the rocker panels out, different things like that. I was a kid," Butch says with a laugh.

This car's 239.4-cu.in. flathead V-8 was rebuilt with a high-pressure oil pump; it now exhales through headers and a dual exhaust system that performs great and sounds even better.

Teenage exuberance and an eye for what's next meant that Ford didn't stick around for long; after a year, it was replaced with an early muscle car, a gold-trimmed silver 1957 Rambler Rebel. A true car enthusiast with a gift for mechanical work, Butch would own a long string of vehicles, but kept returning to the Blue Oval. "My dad, who had a service station, was always a Ford man," he explains, "and as people will tell you, it's hereditary. There's a lot of other cars that I like, but you can buy any kind of parts you need for Fords. They're easy to work on."

A number of Model T's and Model A's have come and gone from the Von Haggin garage, and three years ago, Butch succumbed to the itch he'd been experiencing; "I thought about that '49 convertible every time I'd go to a car show and see a 'shoebox' Ford. I decided, if the chance ever comes, I'm going to get another one." It wasn't long after that this longtime subscriber found a *Hemmings Motor News* ad that perfectly fulfilled his wish.

"There was a fellow in Chittenango, New York, who buys cars in California and trucks them back east; he was selling this 1949 convertible," he explains. "I thought maybe I'd end up with a 1950

or 1951, even a different body style, and never thought I'd find one the same color, Midland Maroon. When I found this car, I had to have it."

Butch's second shot at being a 16-year-old came around 60 years after his first, and his second soft-top shoebox Ford was in remarkably solid shape. It was nicely accessorized with some items that weren't on the first '49, including rear "fender shields" (i.e., skirts), twin outside mirrors, and tall grille/bumper guards. Decades on the West Coast had preserved the factory body panels, and a look under the car revealed no signs of previous repairs. The chrome was largely presentable, and the upholstery had been replaced at some point, probably when the interior paintwork was refreshed; it's possible the exterior paint was similarly resprayed, although it was already baked into dullness and had accumulated some chips and scratches. He muses, "It didn't look like there was a lot of restoration on it."

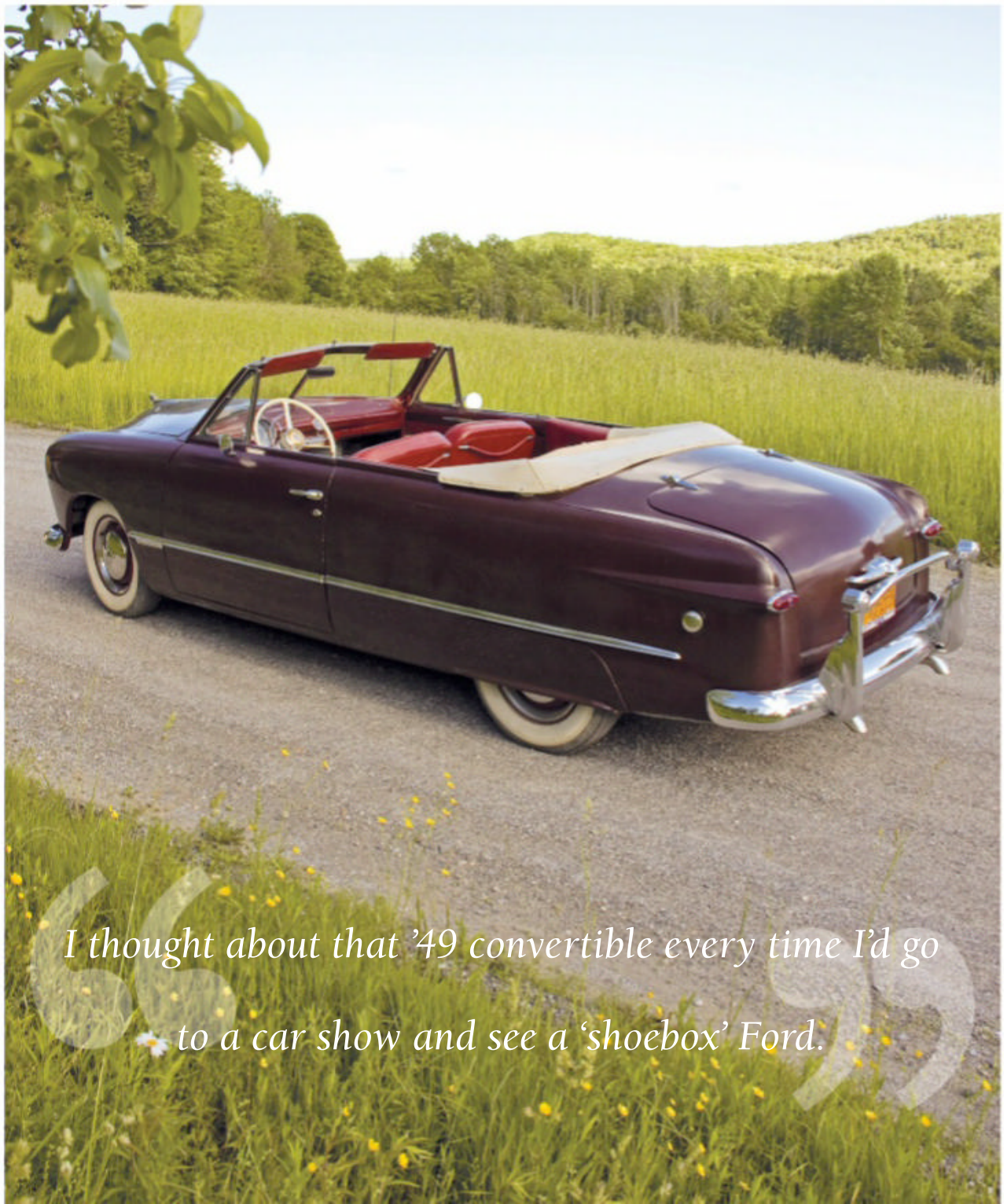
Like his original Convertible Coupe, this car was powered by a 239.4-cu.in., three-main bearing V-8 with 6.8:1 compression ratio and a two-barrel downdraft carburetor. This copper-colored flathead made 100 hp at 3,600 rpm and 181 lb-ft of torque at 2,000 rpm, all sent to the rear wheels through a three-speed without the optional overdrive. Behind 16-inch wheels mounting original-style 6.00 x 16 bias-ply tires, four unassisted 10-inch drums offered "Magic Action" braking ability. Ford's new-for-1949 independent front suspension featured wishbones and coil springs, while the leaf-sprung rear axle traded a single transverse unit for two longitudinal springs, improving comfort for passengers now positioned "Mid Ship," as contemporary advertising dubbed the car's new interior packaging and the resulting ride.

When the car arrived in Upstate New York, it had some needs, Butch reveals. "I did a lot of little things to it when I got it. The doors didn't shut tight because the rubber seals around the doors had hardened up; I replaced those, and the rubber on the cowl, at the back of the hood. I sent the radio out to be rebuilt. The hydraulic brakes were frozen up, and someone had put the wrong size coil springs up front, so the front rode about 2 inches higher than the back.

"It wouldn't run," he continues; "An electric fuel pump was fitted that just didn't work right. You only need 3 pounds of pressure for these cars, and the electric pump runs around 6. It must have been that the needle valve was sticking, and the engine wouldn't start. The minute I put the stock fuel pump in, all the problems went away!" Today, the Ford's odometer reads a bit over 62,200 miles, and that figure is thought to be accurate, although the engine was definitely rebuilt at some point in this car's 70-year history; "I would assume they put in a high-pressure oil pump, because it's got 60 pounds of oil pressure, and that's unheard of in a flathead V-8!"

While a teenage Butch couldn't afford to modify his first car for greater performance and sound, the mature Butch could, and did. He helped the strong-running engine breathe better with a tuned, tuneful exhaust system, although the special X-brace-reinforced box section frame used under open Fords posed a real roadblock. "I had an awful job getting a set of headers for it; nobody made duals for the '49 convertible because of how the frame was built," he recalls. The local exhaust shop he was working with struggled until reaching out to Red's Headers and Speed Equipment in Thousand Palms, California; "They said, 'It's funny you should call, we've got the first set sitting on the bench right now!'"

The rumbly sound emanating from those headers — and the chrome exhaust tips exiting below period-perfect blue dot taillamps — gives our featured Driveable Dream a real air of mid-century menace. Butch treated us to a top-down summer evening's ride through the country, where the palpable power and sound of this car's V-8, especially its popping, crackling overrun, were delightful. While the brakes require planning to stop the car, this Ford accelerates strongly, and handles corners well, considering its old-style tires. "That's what nice about it… it's an old car, but new enough to easily keep up with traffic. I don't have to worry about it — it's a driver, not a trailer queen. And it drives better than the first one I had. This is a good, nice car," he says, pausing before beaming a distinctly youthful grin; "It makes me think of all the trouble I got in with the other one."

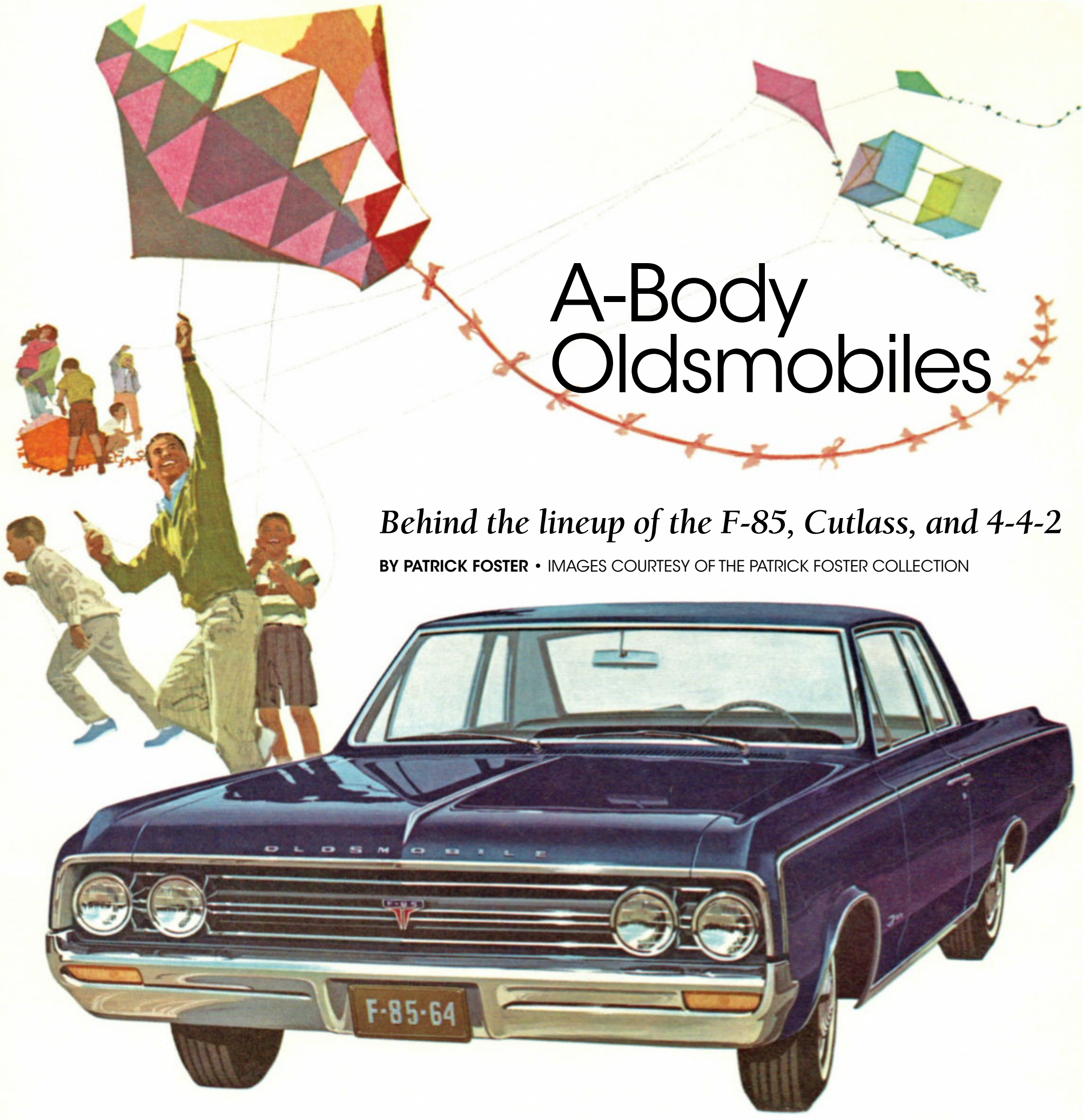


I thought about that '49 convertible every time I'd go to a car show and see a 'shoebox' Ford.

A-Body Oldsmobiles

Behind the lineup of the F-85, Cutlass, and 4-4-2

BY PATRICK FOSTER • IMAGES COURTESY OF THE PATRICK FOSTER COLLECTION



By the 1960s, the Oldsmobile division of General Motors Corporation was America's oldest surviving automobile manufacturer. Founded in 1897 by Ransom Eli Olds, Oldsmobile was known for light, inexpensive runabouts in its earliest days. However, by the early 1900s, the company's financial backers decided to move upscale in size and price, building larger, more expensive cars. R.E. Olds only wanted to build low-priced cars for the mass market, so he quit in disgust, going on to found the REO Motorcar Company.

In his absence Oldsmobile began to grow, in time becoming a medium-price product. And there it remained for decades, comfortably ensconced between Pontiac and Buick in the "car for every purse and purpose" hierarchy of General Motors.

Until 1961, that is, when market pressures forced Oldsmobile to introduce a smaller car. Sales of import cars, barely discernable in 1950, soared in the later part of the decade and now accounted for a worrisome share of the market. In addition, compact Ramblers and Stude-

Left: The newly redesigned F-85 series for 1964 included this attractive mid-range Deluxe sports coupe priced at $2,537. Only 6,594 units were produced that year. Top: A sporty 1964 Cutlass convertible. Above: Anchoring the bottom of the 1964 Oldsmobile lineup was the all-new F-85 Club coupe. With base-level trim its price began at a mere $2,343. Right: The F-85/Cutlass/ Vista-Cruiser line was expanded for the 1964 model year, and included 13 distinct models.

baker Larks were being snapped up by a public suddenly in love with smaller cars. The world seemed to turn upside down; in 1957 Oldsmobile outsold Rambler by more than four to one, but from 1959 to 1961 Rambler actually outsold Oldsmobile! That challenge needed to be met head on.

In response, for 1961 Oldsmobile debuted the new F-85. Built on a 112-inch wheelbase, featuring unitized construction, and powered by an aluminum 215-cu.in. V-8, it was more than a compact, less than a fullsize car. Known internally as the Y-body, Oldsmobile advertised it as an "intermediate." Buick and Pontiac debuted similar-size cars that industry journalists initially termed "senior compacts," though in time they too adopted the intermediate terminology. The F-85 joined the three existing big Oldsmobile models: Dynamic 88, Super 88, and the 98, anchoring the bottom of the model lineup. Though large compared to most compacts, the F-85 was a full 2 feet shorter than the big Oldsmobile.

They sold fairly well, with more than 76,000 F-85s produced the first year. In April 1961, Oldsmobile added a sporty Cutlass model with bucket seats and luxurious interior trim. For 1962, production climbed to over 94,000, and it rose to nearly 119,000 for the 1963 model year. Then it was time to restyle the series for 1964, which the division had big plans for.

Oldsmobile introduced its 1964 models on October 4, 1963, and as

The Vista-Cruiser station wagon for 1965 had a base price of $3,270 for a V-8 Custom, which was fairly high priced but buyers loved them. These wagons are prized by collectors today.

the only all-new Oldsmobile, the F-85/Cutlass series was the star attraction. The new cars rode a longer 115-inch wheelbase perimeter frame and were about 10 inches longer bumper to bumper. "Oldsmobile's sparkling new F-85 gives you more car for your money than ever—with extra stretch-out room…" boasted the sales catalog. The all-new styling displayed a solid, more substantial look. Indeed, the F-85 now resembled a down-sized Jetstar 88—Oldsmobile's new low-priced fullsize car.

Reflecting its growing importance in the Oldsmobile lineup, the F-85 fielded a broad array of models for 1964. There were three series: Standard, Deluxe, and Cutlass. Standard models included a two-door coupe for $2,343, a four-door sedan listed at $2,397, and a four-door station wagon for $2,689. The Deluxe series offered a two-door sports coupe for $2,537, four-door sedan at $2,505, and wagon costing $2,797. The sporty Cutlass series offered two-door models only: a sports coupe listed for $2,644, the Holiday hardtop coupe at $2,784, and a gorgeous convertible at $2,984.

Standard equipment was typical for the era: Base models got a three-speed manual transmission (with synchro only on second and third gears), rubber floor covering, heater/defroster, and dual sunvisors. Deluxe and Cutlass models added a Deluxe steering wheel, floor carpeting, and a padded dash, while

Cutlass also got bucket seats and, this year, an optional center console. Available equipment included a floor-mounted shifter for the standard three-speed gearbox, a four-speed with floor shift, the new variable-vane Jetaway Drive two-speed automatic transmission, power steering and brakes, air conditioning, AM radio, and a range of engines.

There was a change in powerplants this year. The aluminum V-8 used in prior F-85s was dropped. Its replacement was a new cast-iron, one-barrel-carbureted "Econ-O-Way" V-6 displacing 225-cu.in. that produced 155 horsepower, same as the prior V-8. It was the first time in years that Oldsmobile offered a six-cylinder. There was also a new optional "Jetfire Rocket V-8," a two-barrel-equipped, cast-iron 330-cu.in. V-8 good for 230 hp. Cutlass' standard engine was a high-compression, 290-hp, four-barrel version of the 330-cid dubbed the "Cutlass V-8."

There were a number of improvements in the new car. Brakes were bigger and a foot-operated parking brake was introduced, while the gas tank capacity was now 20 gallons. New options included a Tilt-Away steering wheel and an electrically adjustable front bench seat.

Some months after announcement day, Oldsmobile introduced yet another F-85 model at the 1964 Chicago Auto Show. It was a well-appointed station wagon called the Vista-Cruiser, offered in two- and three-seat versions (also as Customs). Riding on a 120-inch wheelbase (5 inches longer than the F-85s), the Vista-Cruiser had a raised rear roof section fitted with glass panes to brighten the interior while allowing rear seat passengers to gaze upwards at the sky.

Also introduced mid-way through the

Here is the complete F-85, 4-4-2, and Vista-Cruiser lineup for 1966. By this point, the Oldsmobile midsize cars were setting the sales charts on fire!

model year was the 4-4-2 performance package; the numbers stood for four-barrel carburetor, four-speed, and dual exhausts. With its 330-cu.in. V-8 turning out 310 hp, it was a blast to drive.

The restyled F-85 proved to be a hit, accounting for nearly one-third of Oldsmobile sales for the year. Somewhat surprisingly, one of the topsellers was the Cutlass Holiday hardtop, with more than 36,000 produced for the model year. In fact, approximatey 65,000 of the pricey Cutlass series were built.

For the 1965 model year, the F-85 got a fairly substantial facelift with a new hood, grille, front bumper, taillamps, and side trim updating the styling. Prices for the F-85 now ranged from $2,344 for the base coupe to $3,270 for the Vista-Cruiser Custom three-seat V-8 station wagon. There was some shuffling of models in an attempt to capitalize on the popularity of the series.

The 4-4-2 package was improved this year with a potent—and exclusive—400-cu.in. V-8 pumping out 345 hp and a thumping 440 lb-ft of torque. With redline tires, heavy-duty frame, heavy-duty engine mounts, heavy-duty suspension, and a heavy-duty transmission included in the package, the 4-4-2 option was available on any F-85/Cutlass coupe or convertible for less than $200 extra! As a result, sales of the F-85/Cutlass models were hotter than ever for 1965, with over 210,000 cars produced.

There were some exciting new models for 1966. A four-door hardtop Cutlass Supreme was added to the line, debuting a name that would become almost synonymous with Oldsmobile for years to come.

Here is the Cutlass lineup for 1966. Oldsmobile produced nearly 100,000 Cutlasses for the model year.

Base-priced at $2,846, more than 30,000 were produced for the model year. For those style-seekers with somewhat tighter budgets, Oldsmobile also offered the F-85 Deluxe Holiday sedan, a four-door hardtop tagged at $2,629 for the six-cylinder version, $2,699 with the V-8.

The body was redesigned for 1966. Its front and rear treatments retained Oldsmobile styling cues, but were new, and the roofline featured sail panels and a recessed backlite on two-door models. Replacing the former straight-through rear fender shape this year were quarter panels featuring a raised fender top just forward of the wheel opening, providing a hint of the separate fender look of cars of the 1940s. It seemed to suggest a crouching animal about to spring, offering an attractive look of power and fleetness.

The standard six-cylinder this year was a 250-cu.in. engine called the Action-Line Six, rated at 155 hp. The workhorse 330 V-8 could now be ordered with 250, 310, or 320 hp, depending on the model. By this time the standard three-speed manual transmission had synchromesh on all three gears.

The 4-4-2 models were given unique grilles and taillamps this year, along with recessed vents set in the front fenders. The 400-cu.in. V-8 was rated at 350 hp with its standard four-barrel carburetor, a new optional tri-carb set-up boosted output to 360 hp and there was a limited run of W-30 4-4-2s for drag racing.

During 1966, Oldsmobile sales continued on their red-hot run-up and the division jumped two spots on the sales charts, becoming the fourth bestselling brand in the country. The F-85/Cutlass/

Vista-Cruiser production rose to nearly 230,000 units, and the Supreme hardtop sedan was among the topsellers. Calendar-year sales of all Oldsmobile models came in just shy of 600,000 units — a very good year indeed!

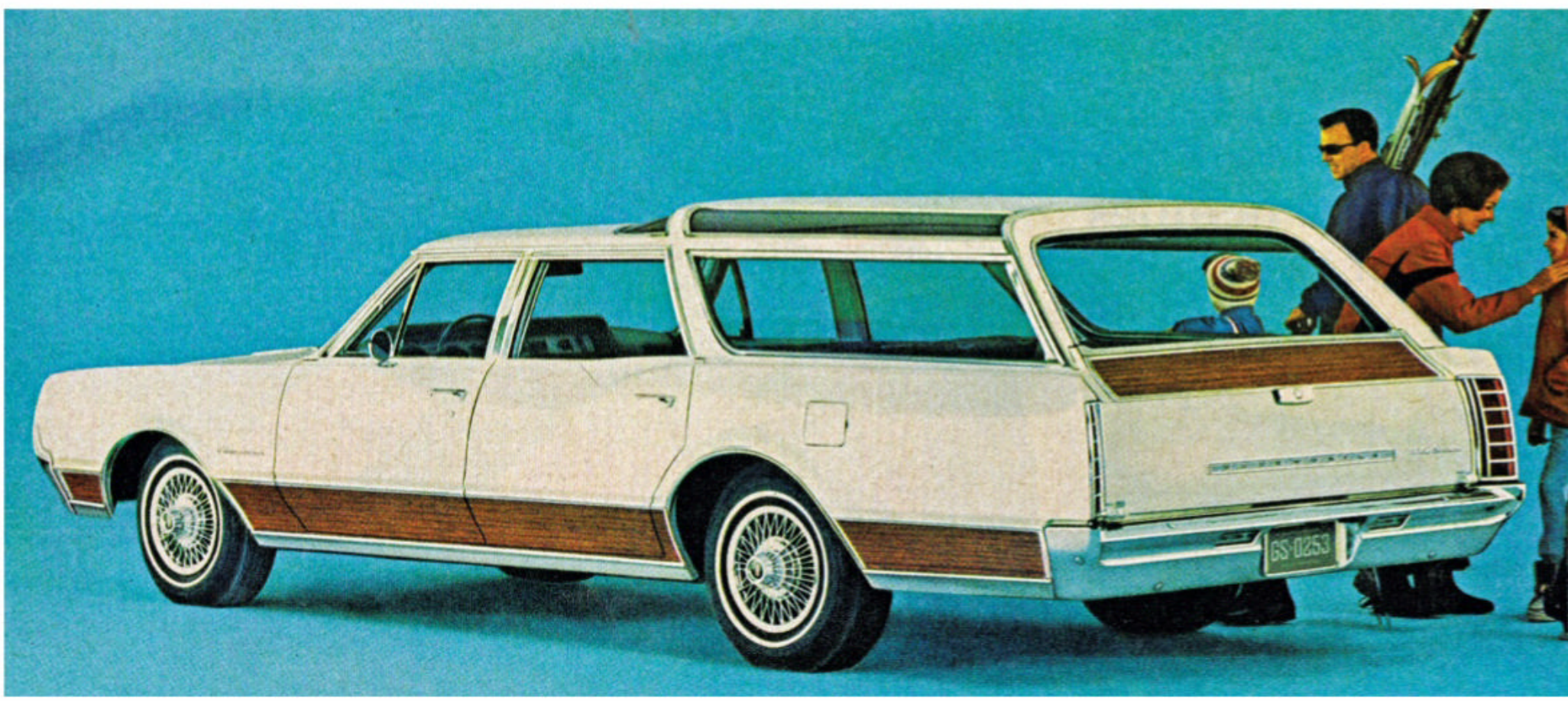
Considering the surprising success of the upscale — and more profitable — Cutlass and Supreme (versus the basic F-85 models) during 1966, it shouldn't be hard to guess what Oldsmobile management did for 1967. The lineup was shuffled again, with the F-85 Deluxe series dropped entirely. The base F-85 line was continued, with station wagon, coupe, and sedan models offered in six-cylinder and V-8 versions. Meanwhile, an expanded range of Cutlass models became the new mid-range series. The Cutlass line now included Holiday hardtop coupes and sedans, convertibles, pillared sedans, and station wagons, also offering a choice of six-cylinder or V-8 versions, for a total of 10 distinct models.

Slotted above that was a new Cutlass Supreme lineup that included a sports coupe, convertible, two- and four-door hardtops, and a sedan. All Supreme models were V-8-powered. Vista-Cruiser offered two- and three-seat wagons in standard and Custom trim. This year a new "Rocket 400" V-8, good for 300 hp, was included on Supreme Holiday two-door models fitted with the optional "Turnpike Cruising Package." Equipped with a two-barrel carburetor, high compression ratio, Turbo Hydra-Matic, specific rear gear, and heavy-duty suspension, the package was designed to provide excellent fuel economy for folks who did a lot of highway driving. The 4-4-2 line was reduced to just the three higher-priced Cutlass Supreme models: sports coupe, Holiday hardtop coupe, and convertible, and the W-30 option returned, now based on the four-barrel 400.

For 1967, the high-performance 4-4-2 muscle car models were given some styling improvements to enhance their prestige appearance.

Styling was evolutionary, and very nicely done. A new hood featured a drop-down center mirroring a kickup on the revised front bumper and 4-4-2s received hood louvers. A single chrome bar filled in the grille area, but the 4-4-2's bar was thinner and had bold color-outlined 4-4-2 numbers. Headlamps on all were widely separated by turn indicator lamps, a neat look first seen on the larger Oldsmobiles. A stylish new rear bumper held large backup lamps in F-85s and Cutlasses. The low-set reverse-lamp housings mirrored the taillamps, giving the effect of being part of a single unit. The Supreme and Supreme-based 4-4-2 had red taillamps in the bumper instead, with smaller backup lamps on either side of the license plate mounting area. Other new safety features included a dual-chamber master cylinder, four-way flashers, an energy-absorbing steering column, and a padded steering wheel.

The old magic worked again; F-85/Cutlass production rose for 1967 and the series was again Oldsmobile's bestselling. Americans were naturally attracted to the Oldsmobile's blend of a roomy, reasonably plush automobile with a prestige name and excellent styling at the price of a midsize car. It was a winning combination the Oldsmobile Division would use for years to come.



The Frisson of Pegasus

1953 Pegaso Z-102 Thrill

BY GÉRALD GUÉTAT • PHOTOGRAPHY BY HENRI THIBAULT
VINTAGE IMAGES COURTESY OF THE BIANCHI ANDERLONI FAMILY ARCHIVES

Like heroes who die young, automobile brands with mixed fortunes have always fascinated. In Pegaso's hall of fame, the Z-102 *Thrill*, with 1953 coachwork by Touring, became a legend.

In February 1953, in New York, Fred Pittera launched his first World Motor Sports Show at Madison Square Garden, and it was an event certainly not to be missed. Somewhat like the luxury trade shows that flourish today where money flows, this exhibition of sports cars focused on exotic imports, and attracted many European manufacturers represented by their local agents. Even the modest Gordini workshop, on Boulevard Victor in Paris, made the journey.

The Pegaso brand—Pegasus, in English, representing the mythical flying horse—had a strong presence with, among others, its famous bright yellow 1952 Z-102 Cùpula, together with a more discreet Carrozzeria Touring-bodied Z-102 Spider, and its then-famous clear Plexiglas-bodied rolling demonstration chassis, shown in Paris in 1954. For all companies, visibility in New York—the flagship city of the richest market on the planet—was a major challenge, and this was especially true for newcomer Pegaso, whose sales prices were considered astronomical.

It was in anticipation of this show that the Milanese-based Touring workshop and the Spanish factory agreed to produce an exceptional car, guaranteed to catch the visitors' eyes. What's more, *Thrill* was the name chosen for this prototype. It would be a true American-style concept car designed to demonstrate the excellence of Pegaso in all areas, from design to performance—even including passenger safety, a rare concern at the time. However, this ambitious car, aimed to be nothing less than perfection, could not be assembled in time to embark on its voyage from Genoa to New York at the beginning of 1953. It seemed,

The front end of the *Thrill* was rendered in Pegaso's typical style, with a forward-leaning grille and nostril-like hood-corner ventilation ports. This two-seater's colorful interior was very sporting and luxuriously trimmed, the driver handling a wood-rim steering wheel.

therefore, more reasonable for Touring to unveil the car in Turin in April, where it would be greeted with universal admiration, equal to that of the other aerodynamic-futuristic research projects present at the show, including the Bertone Alfa Romeo BAT 5.

Pegaso is known as an entity of the Spanish state consortium ENASA — *Empresa Nacional de Autocamiones SA*, or National Motorcar Company — specializing in trucks and heavy commercial vehicles. This consortium was placed under the technical authority of the Catalan engineer Wilfredo Ricart (1897-1974), who, in the mid-1930s, had been the engineering manager at Alfa Romeo in Milan, where he'd butted heads with Enzo Ferrari. *Il Commendatore* had a difficult relationship with the Spanish engineer, and wrote in his memoirs: "With sleek, oiled hair and smart clothes that he wore with a somewhat Levantine elegance, Ricart affected jackets with sleeves that came down far below his wrists and shoes with enormously thick rubber soles. When he shook hands, it was like grasping the cold, lifeless hand of a corpse." One day, Ferrari dared to question Ricart about his strange looking shoes, and the answer given with much seriousness was astonishing: "A great engineer's brain should not be jolted by the inequalities of the ground, and consequently needs to be carefully sprung…."

Back in Spain in 1945, when the government of General Franco began implementing a conquering industrial policy, Ricart secured the assignment to create a prestigious automobile brand intended to become the preferred ambassador of the image of the country, especially abroad. At the end of the 1940s, stimulated by his mission of national interest, this very energetic engineer succeeded in his challenge. The Pegaso Z-102, presented for the first time at the 1951 Paris Motor Show, was simply described by its manufacturer as "the fastest car in the world."

The high-quality chassis and engine were directly derived from the experiences of their creator in competition. A short-wheelbase steel platform with chrome-molybdenum reinforcements accommodated an independent double-wishbone front suspension with torsion bars and hydraulic shock absorbers, while the rear axle was a de Dion type located with radius arms, sprung with torsion bars, and damped by telescopic shock absorbers. Its 90-degree aluminum V-8 engine was very refined, with four overhead camshafts and a desmodromic-actuated valvetrain activating sodium-filled exhaust valves. It was fed through four Weber carburetors. This V-8 was initially available in 2.5- and 2.8-liter [153- and 171-cu.in.] displacements, both sharing dry sump lubrication. Power was sent to the Borrani rear wheels through a close-ratio five-speed manual transmission, single-disc clutch, and ZF limited-slip differential.

With such a pedigree, it seemed inevitable the Pegaso would be raced, but the car got mixed results; it competed in the

Touring's team posed with the *Thrill* before its April 1953 debut; Mrs. Anna Solera Bianchi Anderloni won the "Gran Premio d'Onore" at Stresa's Concours d'Elegance; at right, this car's original Touring Superleggera body color illustration.

Note the modern-style side bolsters on the bucket seats, along with the advanced-for-1953 safety belts; comprehensive Jaeger gauges included engine rpm, fuel level, amperage, water temperature, and oil temperature and pressure. Side windows slid forward, not into the doors.

Carrera Panamericana, failed at the 24 Hours of Le Mans, and, in 1953, set two world speed records at 243.079 and 241.602 km/h [151.042 and 150.125 mph], leading to the initial slogan of the brand. However, pure speed was not the real domain of the most surprising model that the public discovered in Turin — the thrill of the *Thrill* was elsewhere.

Sculpted on a 1952 Z-102B chassis equipped with a 2.8-liter V-8 making 170 hp, the car appeared to be an exercise in style. Wilfredo Ricart and the founding Anderloni family of Italy's Carrozzeria Touring had known each other since the Spanish engineer worked at Alfa Romeo in the 1930s. As soon as the Pegaso project took shape, Touring was consulted, and the first open-roof Spider was built in 1952. For this company that developed the patented Superleggera coachbuilding process, the appearance of a promising new car manufacturer was a boon, especially since Ferrari tended to favor competitors Pinin Farina and Vignale.

Recently, M. Giovanni Bianchi Anderloni, grandchild of Carrozzeria Touring founder Avv. Felice Bianchi Anderloni and son of Ing. Carlo Felice Bianchi Anderloni, who ran the company until the end of 1966, further researched the collaboration between Touring and Pegaso. He wrote: "There is another unknown detail of the history of the relationships between Pegaso and Carrozzeria Touring. At the time, a joint venture between the two companies to produce the bodies in Spain, under license, was strongly considered, to reduce the very high importation taxes of the cars to Spain. This came to the point that a new badge was created with the two emblems attached, but the joint venture fell apart due to the financial difficulties of the Spanish car factory."

That important historical point measures how much, in that crucial period, the Pegaso models had to make a strong impression. The mission of the *Thrill* prototype was of the upmost importance. At Touring, Carlo Felice Bianchi Anderloni and the designer, Federico Formenti, worked on a concept that encompassed everything that appealed to a wealthy clientele already widely approached by the most prestigious car brands. The new two-seater had to be a vision of the future of elegant comfort while traveling at high speed, with lots of light in the passenger compartment and generous space for luggage.

Several elements dealt with aerodynamics, very much in vogue at the time due to the space-flight projects and the introduction of jet-propelled long-range aviation. The front featured some of the themes of the first Pegaso Touring, including the hood's prominent air intakes, which appeared to quiver like the nostrils of a bull. The rear section displayed a beautiful audacity, with its flying buttress-like C-pillars acting as lateral tunnels to catch the air flowing downstream of the doors. As if this promise of subsonic speeds was not enough, Touring integrated these aerodynamic details in the general body lines as a robust arch, guaranteeing pro-

The 2.8-liter quad-cam V-8 engine powering the Pegaso *Thrill* owes much to former Alfa Romeo engineer Wilfredo Ricart's previous experience in European racing; this example sports four Weber DCF carburetors, while some other Z-102s were fitted with a supercharger.

tection of the passenger compartment—even that was equipped with leather-strap seat belts and a fire extinguisher.

The new Touring looked like a dream car—minus the gadgets—that would stand out in a Motorama-style show on the other side of the Atlantic. Yet, missing the boat for the New World greatly influenced its initial destiny. After Turin in April 1953, the *Thrill* was displayed in June at the Barcelona car show before being modified slightly, with ventilation ports in the front wings; it went on to win the Stresa Concours d'Elegance on Lago Maggiore in Northern Italy, and then participated in the Paris and London shows.

In 1954, its first owner was Felix Huarte, influential building contractor and supplier to the great projects of the Franco government. With their stunning red and black Pegaso bearing tag number NA-7445, Huarte's wife won the San Sebastian Concours d'Elegance in Spain's Navarra province. Its next owner was the famous Spanish driver, Antonio Creus, who kept it until the end of the 1950s; he sold it to Mr. Demetrio del Val, who kept it until 1961, when the car eventually went on to live the American dream at Bill Miller's Horse and Buggy ranch in California. Miller modified the wheel arches to accommodate 15-inch wheels, and worked on the gearbox to "normalize" the shift grid, changing it from Pegaso's unique opposite pattern. In 1979, the Los Angeles branch of Christie's auction house sold the car to Wasken Manasian as part of a lot of engines and original parts. His son, Raffy Manasian, took care of the *Thrill* after his father's death, and had Stephen Block return the car to its original configuration. This Pegaso participated in the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance in 1994, and was sold in 1995, returning to its home country. Since the early 2000s, it has belonged to European owners.

Antonio Creus, the former owner who spent the most time driving this car in the 1950s, was interviewed by Madrid's *Motor Clàsico* magazine. His testimony was revealing: "I had the great opportunity to drive four of these most interesting cars, and owned three of the eighty-seven Pegasos that were built. They were extraordinary, enduring and very fast sports cars. My first Pegaso was a green berlinetta that I used extensively, all over Europe, even towing a trailer carrying my racing motorbikes. The second Pegaso was where I experienced its ability in road racing; it ran perfectly, but had a major problem related to brake cooling. My third Pegaso was a Spider Touring with the 2.8-liter V-8 that ENASA entrusted to me, so I could transform it into a true racing car by working on the brakes, suspension and the carburetors. In 1956, ENASA replaced the 2.8-liter V-8 with a 3.2-liter. I remember having driven the 2,300 km [1,429 miles] from Madrid to Spa Francorchamps at an average speed of 120 km/h [75 mph], then entering the 1,000-km [621-mile] race and clocking a lap at 168 km/h [104 mph], and driving back to Madrid on the following day for an important family event I couldn't miss!

"Then, finally, it was the *Thrill* that I drove most for several years, both daily and on tours throughout Europe," Creus continued. "It was like new. I clocked more than 100,000 km [62,137 mi] with it and have wonderful memories. It was impossible to stop anywhere, from a gas station or in front of a café, without attracting a crowd of admirers. This car was a real star on the road and in the streets."

Imagine if the whole Pegaso venture hadn't ended in 1957, and that this manufacturer's stand had been one of the attractions of the World Motor Sports Show in New York. The blowing winds of history have unfortunately come and gone, but the thrill of the adventure remains.

Editor's note: *This article originally appeared in the October 2016 issue of the French magazine,* Automobiles Classiques.

The unusual flying buttress design of the *Thrill* was said to be aerodynamically effective in combination with the boattail rear deck treatment, a portion of which lifted, hatchback-style, to expose the luggage area and, in a separate compartment below, the spare wheel.

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE .....V-8, DOHC, 2,816 cc, four Weber carburetors
COMPRESSION RATIO..... 7.5:1
BORE X STROKE ..... 80 x 75 mm
HORSEPOWER @ RPM..... 175 @ 6,300
TORQUE @ RPM..... 160 lb-ft @ 3,600
TRANSMISSION .....Five-speed manual
BRAKES .....Four-wheel drums
SUSPENSION ..... Independent w/double wishbones and torsion bars (front); De Dion live axle and torsion bars (rear)
WEIGHT..... 2,800 lb
MAXIMUM SPEED.....140 mph
0-60 MPH..... 8.5 sec

From Toledo in a Tuxedo

Jeep's 1984-'91 Grand Wagoneer defined the luxury SUV

BY MIKE McNESSOR • PHOTOGRAPHY PROVIDED BY FCA

On pricey Nantucket Island, you can't swing a $300 designer beach tote without hitting a Jeep of some sort. There are ferry loads of Wranglers, for sure, but Toledo's Grand Dame, the Grand Wagoneer, has long been a staple of this well-to-do retreat off the coast of Cape Cod, Massachusetts.

Of course, it's not just there. Jeep's top-of-the-line SUV was made for any place where wood-sided vehicles are a popular fashion accessory, people have a lot of disposable income, and there are occasional opportunities to engage four-wheel drive.

You really have to hand it to the Grand Wagoneer (and earlier versions) for its amazing staying power. These trucks were popular among the well-heeled when new and, years after production ceased, achieved a cult-like popularity that drove up the values of nice examples. The Grand Wagoneer's lineage can be traced all the way back to the 1963 Wagoneer that made its debut alongside the J-Series Gladiator pickups. The Wagoneer's angular upright styling was trendsetting: civilized and car-like yet somehow rugged looking. It proved timeless too: The design soldiered on with little to no major exterior body changes from 1963 to 1991.

When introduced, the SJ-Series Wagoneer was also a technological tour de force boasting features uncommon on four-wheel-drives — many of which have since become part of almost every manufacturer's portfolio.

Today, for instance, 4×4 sport utilities with automatic transmissions are the norm, but in 1963, the Wagoneer was unusual in that it mated a transfer case to a Borg-Warner AS-8F automatic. The downside was that the automatic option mandated a single-speed Dana 21 transfer case, so serious off-roading was out of the question.

For a brief time, the Wagoneer was also available with an overhead-cam, inline six-cylinder engine. With a two-barrel carburetor, the OHC Tornado produced an impressive 155 hp. A variety of teething problems for the new engine led to it being yanked from the lineup and replaced in 1965 with a 232-cu.in. AMC straight-six.

The original 4×4 Wagoneer also could be had with an optional torsion bar independent front suspension until 1965, when it was discontinued. A similar setup has since seen widespread use on fullsize pickups and sport utilities, due to its car-like ride.

In 1966, the Wagoneer continued pointing the way to the future of upscale SUVs by making a long list of creature comforts available to buyers. The "Super Wagoneer" package boasted a 327-cu.in. V-8 AMC "Vigilante" engine, a GM Turbo Hydra-Matic transmission, and a Dana transfer case, along with such luxury features as power steering, power brakes, and air conditioning—all standard. Inside, buyers found bucket seats, a console, carpeting, an AM/FM stereo with optional 8-track tape player, tinted glass, and even a power rear window.

When AMC took over Kaiser Jeep in mid 1970, it too took the Wagoneer upmarket, offering a special edition for 1971 with a 350-cu.in. Buick V-8, a strip of woodgrain down the side, and a special color, Golden Lime.

In 1974, the Wagoneer received a new grille, a wider front and rear track, power front disc brakes, and a Dana 44 front axle instead of the Dana 30. The 360-cu.in. two-barrel replaced the 258-cu.in. six-cylinder as the base engine, while a four-barrel 360 as well as a 401 four-barrel V-8 were options. The sporty two-door Cherokee also appeared in 1974 to do battle with the Blazer, Bronco, and Dodge's new-for-'74 Ramcharger.

In 1978, the Wagoneer Limited was introduced as the top model, loaded with amenities and creature comforts, including leather upholstery. Then, in 1984, the all-new compact XJ-Series "SportWagons" were released and they assumed the Wagoneer and Cherokee names. The old Wagoneer Limited was dubbed the Grand Wagoneer. These new XJs didn't replace the larger truck, but they were innovative and in-step with the era.

The XJ-Series Wagoneer was more than 1,000 pounds lighter than its predecessor, almost 2 feet shorter and 6 inches narrower, and its roofline was 4 inches lower. The XJ used a unibody design, officially known as UniFrame, and ditched front leaf springs in favor of coils and locating arms, which Jeep called Quadra-Link. While the new kid on the block was clearly more advanced and economical to operate than the original, the fullsize rig rolled on, continuing to attract buyers.

The Grand Wagoneer's light-truck body-on-frame construction certainly offered an advantage when towing a big sailboat or a travel trailer, for instance. The base tow package carried a 3,500-pound rating but the optional setup—with a weight-equalizing hitch receptacle and transmission cooler—raised the capacity to 5,000 pounds. Also, if you craved a V-8, the Grand Wagoneer could deliver. Until 1987, the 258-cu.in. straight-six was standard issue rated at 115 hp and 205 lb-ft of torque. The AMC 360 was the optional powerplant until 1987, when it became the only available engine in the Grand Wagoneer. The 360 was carbureted until the end of the Grand Wagoneer's run and produced 175 hp and 285 lb-ft of torque. Paired with a 727 Torqueflite three-speed automatic, the 360's fuel mileage was about as abysmal as you'd expect from a V-8 in a fullsize 4x4—11 city, 13 highway. Jeep's Selec-Trac system was standard on the Grand Wagoneer and got shift-on-the-fly capability in 1985. Selec-Trac gave the Grand Wagoneer all-wheel-drive (or full-time four-wheel-drive) capability on any road surface—dry, wet, icy, snowy, etc.

By the end of its run, the Grand Wagoneer came standard with a host of creature comforts: power assist steering and brakes; power locks and windows; air conditioning; six-way power seats covered in leather with Cumberland Cord inserts; tilt column; cruise control; tinted glass; and the "AccuSound by Jensen" sound system. A power sunroof was one of the few items available on the Grand Wagoneer's short list of options.

Recently, the internet has been abuzz with talk of a new Jeep Grand Wagoneer. The latest reports maintain that it will arrive as a 2021 model atop a modified Ram 1500 pickup chassis. It seems fitting that the new Jeep luxury liner will dock—likely in force on Nantucket—an even 30 years after the original sailed off into the sunset.

Sentimental Suncatcher!

Dramatic restoration of a one-family 1968 Pontiac Le Mans—Part I

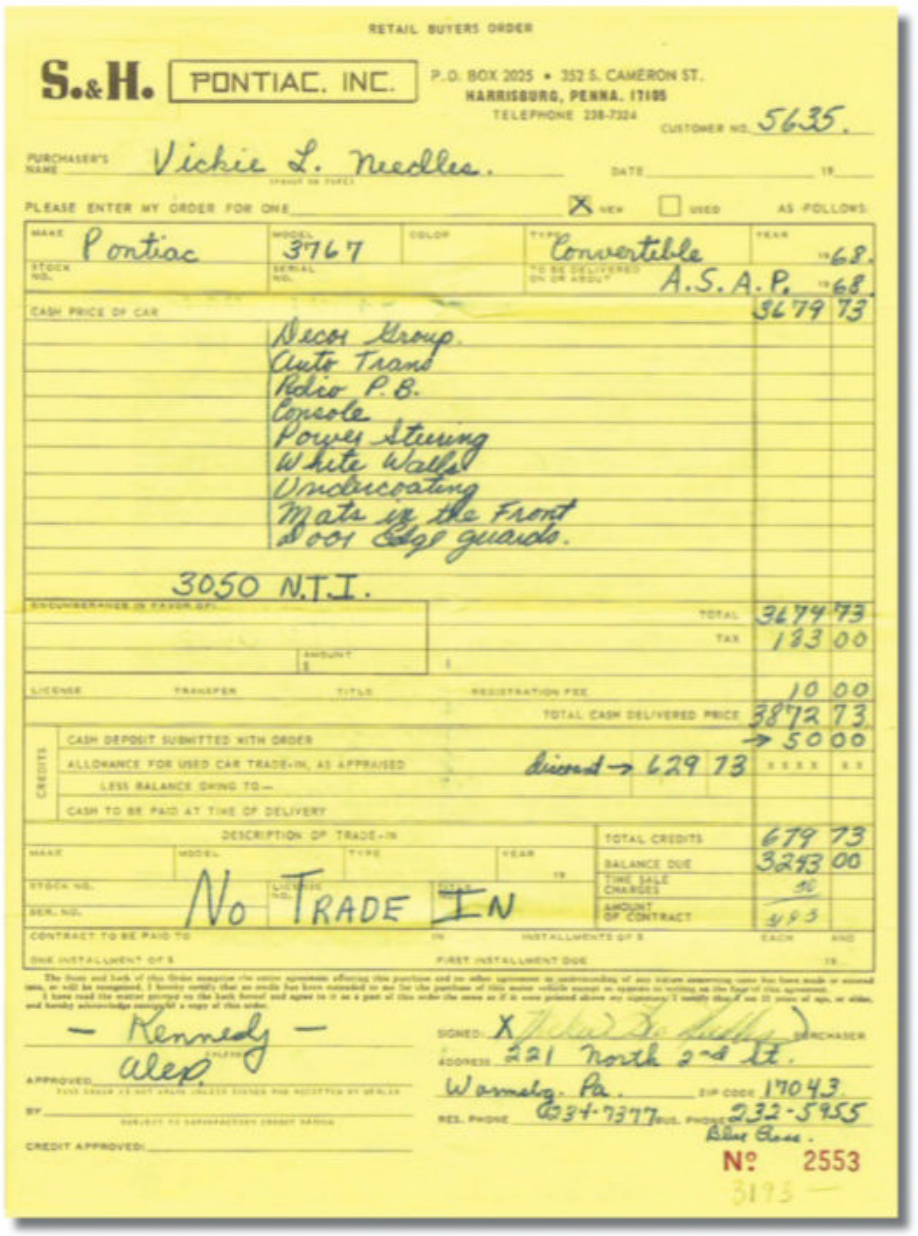
BY MATTHEW LITWIN • RESTORATION PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF MATT GOOD AND WARD GAPPA

In March 2013, Ward Gappa, proprietor of Quality Muscle Car Restorations in Scottsdale, Arizona, welcomed a visit from Matt Good, a Pennsylvania native who had earlier relocated to the region. With Matt was a 1968 Pontiac Le Mans convertible wearing well-weathered Verdoro green paint and a tortured white top. Below the hood was Pontiac's 175-hp, 250-cu.in. overhead-cam straight-six engine—commonly referred to as a "cammer" among gearheads—backed by a Super Turbine 200 two-speed automatic transmission. The two-tone green Morrokide interior, optioned with the Décor group, fared better; however, it still oozed a tired vibe.

"I grew up in a snowbelt region, so one glance at the Pontiac and it was obvious that Mother Nature had not been kind," Ward recalled. "Matt prefaced his story a little slow at first, admitting that it had originated in Pennsylvania, then went on to explain that his mother, Vickie, had been gifted the Le Mans as a high school graduation gift in June 1968. It was her daily driver until she sadly passed in 1979. Matt's father then drove the car briefly until Matt's grandparents received the Pontiac. It was in their care until they passed, at which point Matt—an only child—received the Pontiac."

"After expressing a desire to have it restored, I gave him a base estimate, adding that a more realistic figure wouldn't be possible without getting the car on a lift. A couple weeks later, he returned and left the car so I could examine it thoroughly. The frame looked solid, but the floorpan was toast, as were most of the lower extremities; enough that I tried convincing Matt he would be better off starting with another convertible from a dryer climate. Matt said, 'It was my mother's car, I want this restored.' You could see the sentimental value was deep while understanding that the car was essentially a base Le Mans, skewing the cost versus value—it wasn't a Ram Air GTO—so we sat down in my office and I outlined a plan that included finding a donor car. I showed him the detailed spreadsheet, pointed out where costs could fluctuate depending upon whether we found any hidden problems or not, and asked him if he still wanted to proceed. His reply was almost immediate: 'I want to do this.' The only thing left to do was fit it into our schedule," said Ward.

The small staff at Quality Muscle Car Restorations manages two to three restorations at any given time, and it would not be until November 2013 when the team was able to formally receive the top trim level Tempest and begin its anticipated transformation from tired transportation to as-delivered show-winner. Let's follow the work in this first installment.



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DESCRIPTION OF TRADE-IN

MAKE	MODEL	TYPE	YEAR
			19

No TRADE IN

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BALANCE DUE 3293 00
TIME SALE CHARGES 00
AMOUNT OF CONTRACT 493

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ONE INSTALLMENT OF $ FIRST INSTALLMENT DUE 19

— Kennedy —
alex

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Blue Cross.

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Nº 2553

The Le Mans had been ordered with standard Morrokide bucket seats, along with an optional center console and the Décor package that added simulated walnut inserts. Though complete, the interior was tired and the upholstery's color had faded.

Pontiac's standard engine in the Le Mans series was its 250-cu.in. overhead-cam straight-six. Fitted with a Rochester one-barrel carburetor, the engine had a factory rating of 175 hp. This was a factory-replacement block installed a few months after purchase.

The Pontiac was originally ordered with factory undercoating, but the 15 years of winter driving in Pennsylvania had a dramatic impact on the undercarriage, especially the floorpans. When the car was placed on a lift, it became obvious that rot had eaten into every seam.

It's clear that disassembly of the Pontiac is already underway, including the removal of the original top. The discolored canvas material, which had effectively dry-rotted, had been patched multiple times with white duct tape.

While disassembly of the convertible was still in its early stages, the restoration team located and purchased this same-year Tempest coupe in Tuba City, Arizona. Laying dormant for four decades in the dry climate, it was devoid of debilitating rot.

The extent of floorpan damage was more visible after removing the interior. Note the gaping gash in front of the left-rear body plug that has been removed by the restorers. What appears to be surface rust elsewhere left the metal dangerously thin.

Both the “cammer” engine and the optional two-speed automatic transmission were removed from the Pontiac as a subassembly. This allowed the team to easily document the exact routing of the transmission’s cooling lines before separating the units.

By April 2014, much of the engine had been rebuilt to factory specifications, but during testing, a multitude of problems arose. Reportedly, many parts are scarce and were out of factory tolerance, forcing the rebuilder to custom-fabricate several components.

As the engine was being rebuilt a second time, both the convertible and coupe bodies had been gutted and removed from their corresponding frames and placed on makeshift dollies, the latter having had it fixed top cut off earlier.

Though they required massaging later, the coupe’s solid rear quarter panels were to be used to eliminate the rot found on the convertible’s quarters; however, differences in panel design prevented a direct swap. Custom cuts, as taped, would be made.

A portion of the convertible’s forward quarter panel was removed, helping the team separate the rear body section from the rest of the body shell. The primary mounting points had to be strengthened before further quarter panel repairs could be executed.

While part of the team diligently began the long task of correcting the body, others focused on other aspects, including driveline components. It was decided to rob the factory air conditioning from the donor car, which necessitated a differential swap.

Meanwhile, the convertible's fully boxed frame had been media blasted and inspected for damage. By sheer luck, Pennsylvania's harsh winters had not damaged the critical structure, aside from minor pitting, which was sealed below filler and primer.

In May 2014, the Pontiac's floorpan—from the toe board back—has been secured to the convertible's body shell, in addition to the original rear section. Look closely and you'll see spot welds behind the original door temporarily holding the units together.

Helping keep multiple projects well organized are itemized checklists containing a series of detailed notes that aid the common bag-n-tag method of small parts storage, such as these restored fasteners for the front grilles and bumper.

The restoration shop had earlier determined that corrosion had also compromised several of the convertible's key suspension parts. Rather than attempt to correct those issues, cleaner parts from the coupe were restored and made ready for installation later.

The Pontiac's original gauge cluster after its restoration in July 2014, which included new faux walnut applique and rechromed trim. The standard gauges were cleaned and reinserted, including the odometer showing its 61,000 original miles.

By mid-August, the first major step of the bodywork had been accomplished when the main structure was test-fit against the coupe's frame. At this stage, most of the body has been media blasted and sealed in a layer of self-etching primer.

As bodywork continued, substantial progress was made with the chassis. The frame had been painted chassis black, while the suspension parts were powder coated. New bushings were installed during reassembly, as well as new OE shocks and brake lines.

Helping complete the chassis restoration in January 2015 was the installation of the engine and transmission. The latter of the two had not received any preventative maintenance, forcing an extensive earlier rebuild of the two-speed automatic.

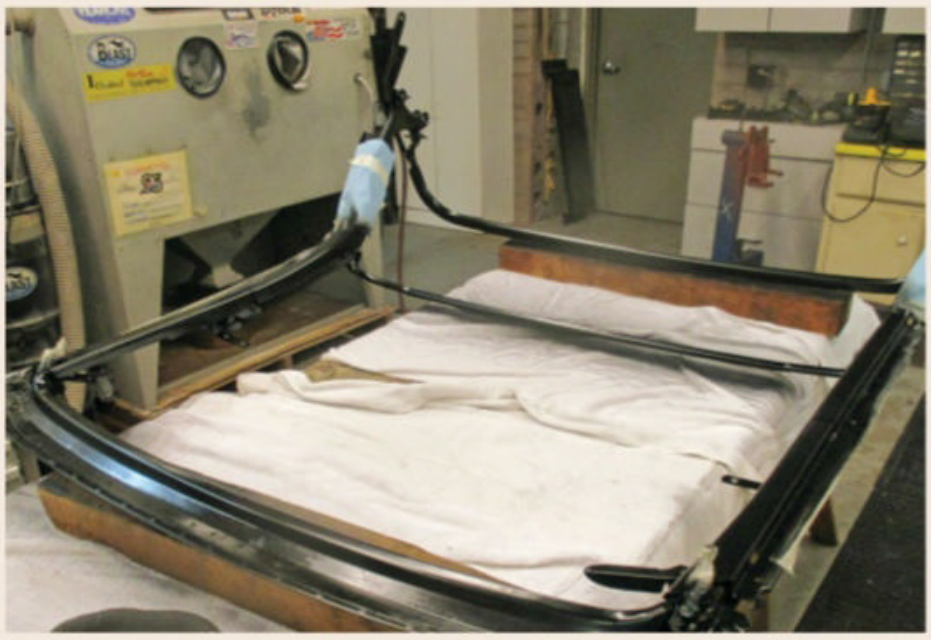
According to the team, the Pontiac had originally been sealed in red oxide primer, which is in the process of being duplicated here. Of note is the test-fit of the coupe's massaged quarters against the convertible's original flank positions.

As mentioned, quarter panels between the coupe and convertible are different enough to make direct swaps impossible, particularly along the panel crown and end caps. Extensive spot welding prevented the panels from warping as a new cap is fabricated.

A small detail not to be overlooked were the mounting holes required for the "Le Mans" quarter emblems. The original panel was used as a template to mark their positions on the former Tempest's metal. All of the welding seams are still clearly visible.

Several small parts were receiving restoration work, including the dual-headlamp grilles. Generally delicate, neither had received damage over the years, eliminating the need for corrective work. Each was refinished in a proper argent color after cleaning.

Phase two of the bodywork — metal surgery — has been completed. The welding seams have been ground smooth and further eliminated with a skim coat of filler and extensive sanding. Epoxy primer completed the exterior, leaving red oxide elsewhere.



There's usually little mention of convertible top frame restoration, but it's just as important. The metal structure can succumb to the elements as well; however, such was not the case here. It required only cleaning and new paint visible in this image.

In July 2015, the convertible body emerged from paint wearing several coats of a factory-correct shade of Verdoro green. Replicating the factory build, the floorpans were left in red oxide, while the firewall was finished in a correct shade of chassis black.

After masking off the rest of the body, some of which has already been removed, the convertible's metal dash panel was finished in a correct shade of green paint that would ultimately replicate the factory two-tone scheme.

Rather than use the brute strength of several men, the team utilized the shop's hydraulic lift to slowly lower the main body shell onto the carefully positioned and fully restored chassis. New body mounts were used to secure the two units together.

Before the calendar flipped to August 2015, the Pontiac Le Mans emerged from the Quality Muscle Car Restorations' shop on its own set of wheels, shod with white stripe bias-ply tires, for the first time. Join us next month for its intriguing conclusion.

Bold Bavarian

Its first postwar sporting coupe, BMW's 1958 503 laid the groundwork for a future filled with exciting automobiles

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY TERRY SHEA

Following World War II, BMW faced an uphill battle. During wartime, this firm was a major producer of radial, jet, and even rocket engines. Much of its factory capacity had been destroyed, the Soviets had seized its properties in the eastern parts of Germany, and the Allied forces in charge put such a strict prohibition in place to prevent the company from making anything that could be used as war materiel that they ordered the disassembly and shipping of factory machines and machine tools to other countries as war reparations. Instead of making cars, motorcycles, or any engine of any kind, BMW made do by producing household implements and bicycles, and repairing American military trucks. In the latter task, at least, BMW established some renown as American troops came to believe the rebuilt engines, tagged with "BMW," were better than the factory had delivered from Detroit.

BMW's survival was hardly set in stone, even as the company resumed making motorcycles late in 1948, upon permission from the Allies. That restart of motorcycle production was somewhat akin to pulling a rabbit out of a hat, as prewar and wartime motorcycle production facilities were located in the Soviet-controlled part of Germany. Following some degree of success on two wheels, BMW began making automobiles again in 1952, with the debut of the 501 sedan, a somewhat large vehicle that had plenty of prewar styling cues to go along with its overhead-valve straight-six, which also dated to the 1930s. The luxury 501 was not particularly fast, but earned the nickname

"Baroque Angel" due to its elegance and size. A V-8 engine, in development since 1949, followed in 1954, making its way into the sedan, which earned it a new model name, 502, and at least a little more street cred for being able to get out of its own way with the new-found power.

Despite the solid design and engineering, BMW sold very few of these exclusive cars. Up against the ropes financially, the cash-strapped company simultaneously went after the lowest and highest ends of the market. At the bottom end, BMW went to Italy's Iso, a refrigerator maker that had designed the simple Isetta, a tiny bubble car powered by a motorcycle engine. Under license from Iso, BMW built hundreds of thousands of Isettas, providing the basis for the company to survive the decade and later prosper.

At the high end, BMW built two very exclusive models intended for export. At the request of U.S. importer Max Hoffman — the impresario who introduced many European automakers to the American market following World War II and also convinced Mercedes-Benz to build the 300 SL coupe and roadster — BMW designed the 507 roadster and 503, a four-seat GT coupe or cabriolet, and introduced them at the 1955 Frankfurt Auto Show. On a promise of a large order from Hoffman, BMW began manufacturing both models and went for broke, and very nearly ended up there when the selling price worked out to be double what Hoffman had planned on.

With a desire to put the new V-8 engine into a sports car, BMW Sales Director Hanns Grewenig, at the behest of Hoffman, hired the German-born American designer Albrecht Graf Goertz. (A protégé of Raymond Loewy, Goertz originally caught the eye of the famous designer while parking his own modified car in the garage of New York's Waldorf Astoria.) Grewenig had initially hired Goertz to design only the 507, but plans soon changed after Goertz set up shop in Munich. According to Goertz, recorded in a 2001 interview with BMW Group Classic, BMW's in-house designs weren't quite making the cut: "While I was doing the 507, there was another designer, who was supposed to do the

Elegance extended inside, where leather seats, big gauges, and stylized controls gave the sporting car a more luxurious feel. Rear seats are more akin to a 2+2 than a true four-seater.

503 and somehow it didn't work…so, one day Grewenig called me: 'You have enough time anyway, so do the 503 as well!' So, we finished the two cars in a really very short time…All together it took us eight-and-a-half months."

While both the 503 and 507 emerged from the pen of Goertz, the 503 projected a very different image from the voluptuous 507. As a four-seat, two-door hardtop coupe, the 503 sported somewhat similar proportions to the Vignale-bodied Ferraris, Lancias, and Fiats of the day, with a high beltline and a rounded greenhouse. But Goertz's design carried its own unique elements, such as a longer trunk and narrower C-pillars as compared to the Italian competition. At the front end, where the Italian designs often featured a large, rounded opening, BMW stayed with its signature twin-kidney grille going back to its prewar heyday, and kept the headlamps at the leading edge of each fender, while some Vignale models had them inset between fender and grille.

Goertz, who operated an industrial design studio in New York, had his own philosophy on design and was adamant that a single person be responsible for creating a car's look. In that same interview from 2001, he said, "I talk to designers and they always say, 'What's new?' I always reply, 'There is no need for new things, it only depends on how you combine things. I always compare it to human beings: They have two eyes, one nose, one mouth—and they are absolutely different. [A design] needs to be homogeneous, where the front and the transition to the side are well done and harmonic; that's something I like."

The low-volume 503's construction befitted such a premium car, with an aluminum body mounted on a steel frame. The underlying perimeter frame was sourced directly from the 501/502, with which the 503 shares its 111.6-inch wheelbase. At 187 inches, the 503 measures an inch longer than the sedan, and, despite its aluminum body panels, lower overall height, and narrower overall width, the elegant coupe weighs a bit more than a 502 sedan.

Interior appointments include leather seats and stylish VDO gauges behind a large plastic four-spoke steering wheel. Instruments include a large speedometer and large tachometer separated by a small clock. Our highly original feature car, owned by BMW itself and stored near its expansive factory in Spartanburg, South Carolina, has a Stewart-Warner vacuum gauge in place of the clock. Among the uncommon features found in the 503 were electric windows, and, in the cabriolet, an electro-hydraulic operated folding top, the latter a first for a German production car.

The cast-iron straight-six engine in the 501 sedan was developed from BMW's prewar overhead-valve six-cylinder, and was based on the 2.0-liter BMW six that dated to the early 1930s. It was clear to BMW that a heavy luxury sedan like the 501 needed more power, so the engineers set about developing an all-new engine, a mill that would also power the upcoming sports and GT cars.

For the V-8, the company pulled out all the stops, which only seems appropriate for an entity that has "Motor" as its middle name and got its start making aircraft and motorcycle engines before it made a single vehicle with its iconic blue-and-white roundel on the grille. BMW engineers designed an aluminum-alloy V-8, similar in concept to the contemporary V-8s coming out of Detroit, with crossflow cylinder heads and two pushrod-activated valves per cylinder driven by a single camshaft lying in between two cylinder banks offset by 90 degrees.

Unlike those much larger and heavier cast-iron American V-8s, the alloy BMW engine featured steel wet cylinder liners along with extended webbing in the block for strength, as well as additional cooling passages for each cylinder. Initial

The 140-hp BMW V-8 shared a general concept with American V-8s, but displaced just 3.2 liters and was of aluminum-alloy construction.

displacement of the V-8 was 2.6 liters (157.5-cu.in.) with a 74-mm bore against a 75-mm stroke, with the engine making 100 horsepower even; not a huge figure, but substantially more than the 501 six-cylinder's 64 to 72 horsepower. A 3.2-liter (193.4-cu.in.) version followed with an enlarged 84-mm bore, slightly higher compression and a bigger carburetor, all good for 120 horsepower.

For the 503, the compression ratio in the 3.2-liter was upped to 7.3:1 and dual carburetion was fitted, with a pair of Zenith 32NDIX carburetors atop the intake manifold. Rated at 140 bhp and 159 lb-ft, the V-8 provided enough power to get the car from zero to 60 mph in 12.5 seconds and on up to a top speed of 118 mph. Getting all of that power to the ground and keeping the car stable was the same suspension found under the 501/502: independent up front with unequal-length control arms and torsion bars, and a live rear axle with torsion bars. All cars were equipped with a four-speed manual, with earlier examples having the shifter mounted on the column and later cars, on the floor in front of the seats.

Albrecht Graf Goertz, German-born American designer of the BMW 503.

Despite the near destruction of the company during the war and the ban on producing cars, BMW proved that it was capable of making an elegant, luxurious, and sporting car with the 503. Essentially a hand-built model, it proved a hard sell. Initially promised to Hoffman at 12,000 DM, BMW shipped the cars at a price nearly double that, with retail pricing close to $10,000 in the U.S. Hoffman's planned order of thousands of cars per year vanished, as did the most promising market for the 503, leaving BMW in dire financial straits, even with the steady income provided by Isetta sales.

Between 1956 and 1959, BMW manufactured just 412 examples of the 503, split between 273 coupes and 139 convertibles. An estimated 250 of all types survive today, making the elegantly styled 503 a valued collectible and irreplaceable piece of BMW history.

[A design]

needs to be homogeneous,

where the front and

the transition to the side

are well done and harmonic;

that's something I like.

I WAS THERE

Jim Patrick

Body welder and Supervisor
General Motors Assembly Plant
Framingham, Massachusetts

HAVING GROWN UP TINKERING and taking everything apart that I could get my hands on in my youth, and not knowing how to put it all back together, my natural curiosity led me to cars. So in 1978, I went to work at General Motors in Framingham, Massachusetts, as a welder in the body shop.

The inside of the plant covered in excess of 40 acres of production assembly lines, equipment, material storage, and all of the associated support required for an operation of this size. Multiple workshops covered toolmaking, pipe fitters, and electricians, and there was a hand-tool repair area and an office space. I thought this was my big break. I recall being shocked at the money I was making. Not only did I enjoy cars, I now got to build them. I really enjoyed the work and, after a couple of years, I had learned many of the several hundred jobs along the assembly line in the body shop.

My experience at the body shop helped me to be a pretty good welder and I seemed to learn the different jobs quickly. I believe this photo is of 1980 Buick Regal and Oldsmobile Cutlass production rolling down the assembly line at about 45 cars per hour. Every once in a while, we would receive notice of a "special edition," or for a car being built for someone of importance that required closer attention to detail, and was followed through the plant by quality experts. I used a hanging spot welder to weld the rear shelf assembly to the seat back support frame, additionally using a MIG welder as I had several welds to make for fender supports, front hinge pillar, and rear window flange. It was very common for a particular workstation to have multiple spot welders, or a combination of spot welders and MIG welding.

The experience of working in an automobile factory building cars was tremendous, but about four years into this great experience, I grew tired of chasing the iron horse every day; I wanted something more. Shortly thereafter, I was asked to join the ranks of management and became a supervisor in 1982. At the ripe old age of 25, I must have known everything — after all, I had just received a big promotion to supervisor!

I was supervising a group of United Auto Workers that assembled interiors including windshields, rear windows, carpeting, door panels, and seatbelts. After working in the body shop welding the body together, I now had the opportunity to learn how the interiors were assembled.

Back in the early '80s, the auto business was pretty tough from the standpoint of union/management relations, as well as quality issues; at least that was my impression. The U.S. was beginning to address long-term quality issues, but relations with the union could still be a little testy. As a new supervisor, learning the ropes was not easy, and some of the union workers were ready to put the new guy to the test.

The auto factory was not on par with a college education and it was a very tough learning experience. They used to say it took about five years for a new supervisor to learn enough to become a good supervisor, where he or she could be really effective in this role. I can tell you firsthand, I was not very effective the first few years, and on more than one occasion I thought about how easy life had been, but I hung in there. On-the-job training is often more painful, but a more educational process. In my post-GM years, I would tell people of my experience in the automotive world and describe being a supervisor as going to work every day with the goal of getting into five fights, and if I won three of them, I had a successful day.

The GM Framingham plant opened in 1948, and I was there for its 30th anniversary and continued to work there for 10 years. In 1987, we were informed that the plant would be closing, and GM was not allocating production to the Framingham plant going forward. We couldn't believe it. GM had just invested over $100M in a new paint shop over the past few years so we figured we had some pretty good job security, but the economy and union/management relations, as well as local and state politics, led us down a different path. The plant closed in 1989.

We built many cars over the 10 years and I received an education that would shape me for my lifetime. My favorite general foreman was very highly respected in the plant for his straight shooting, no BS, level-headed management style. His knowledge of the business and the process was a great resource for me to tap into. I seemed to pick up on his style and like to think I carried it, with my own personal touch, throughout my career.

After my work with GM, I went to work for the nearby Bose Corporation making audio systems supporting the automotive business. It was great to still have the automotive connection.

I took many things from this experience at General Motors and also met my wife of 30-plus years as she was a secretary in the labor relations group. Now retired and still tinkering with big-boy toys (I'm the proud owner of a 1937 Chevrolet pickup that's been fully restored) and still I love to work on cars.

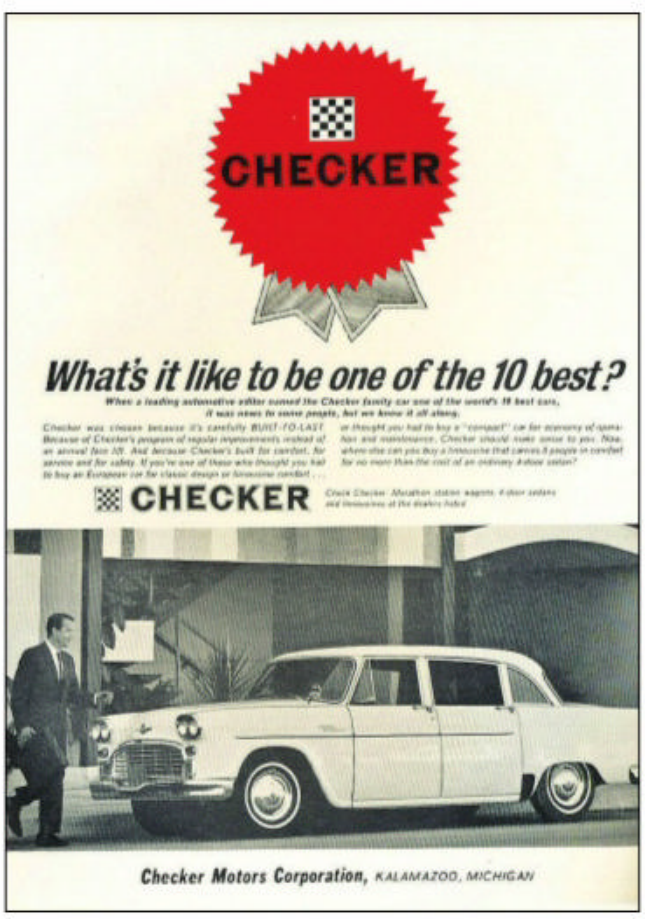
I Was There relates your stories from working for the carmakers, whether it was at the drawing board, on the assembly line, or anywhere in between. To submit your stories, email us at editorial@hemmings.com or write to us at I Was There, c/o *Hemmings Classic Car*, 222 Main Street, Bennington, Vermont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

DAVID BRUCE
BRADENTON, FLORIDA

Checker Memories

IT WAS A CRISP, EXTREMELY BRIGHT, perfect late summer day on September 10, 1965. As I drove my 1963 Checker Marathon through the gates of Westover Air Force Base in Chicopee Falls, Massachusetts, that early afternoon, I realized that I was leaving a major part of my life behind and a new, unknown, and exciting chapter of my life was about to begin.

I was 22 and single, and had just spent almost three years as a clerk in the Commercial Transportation Office at Westover AFB. Being stationed in Massachusetts was a welcome reprieve from my previous duty stations in the panhandle of Texas and the Gulf of Florida. My girlfriend at that time was a WAF [Women in the Air Force] from Portland, Maine, and our trips up Route 1 to Portland and Kennebunkport were wonderful. For me it was the best of times.



I'm sure there are many ex-GIs who remember seeing my Checker all over Westover. Not at all like a taxi, it was a Marathon four-door sedan with an upgraded deluxe interior similar to Checker's limousines. It was dressed up with a metallic blue/silver exterior and a two-tone light and dark cloth and vinyl interior. With four-ply Firestone tires, radio, and heater, it was quite attractive, although admittedly, large and boxy. However, what made this Checker such a pleasure to drive, particularly at high speeds on the interstates, was its Continental six-cylinder engine. It had a three-speed manual on the column with the optional overdrive.

Acceleration was sluggish, but once I got on the freeway and exceeded 50 mph, with overdrive engaged, I was able to wind that Checker up to 80 mph, lighten up on the gas pedal, and could cruise all night at 80 like a Swiss watch. I spent many weekends driving back and forth, 600 miles each way, to my home in Cleveland, Ohio, along the New York State Thruway. The only vehicle I could not keep up with at 2:00 a.m. was a Greyhound bus. They flew and I just tried to follow their red taillamps until they eventually became smaller and smaller, then disappeared.

Gas mileage was an honest 22 mpg for all types of driving, which was decent for its day. Remember, this was not anywhere near an "aerodynamic" car, and gas was at most 29-cents a gallon. With comfort features such as power steering and power brakes, the Checker was an easy car to drive and maneuver, despite its size and weight. Its boxy shape allowed driver and passengers alike to sit in a more upright position than the more stylish cars of the day. Interior seating and positioning were very similar to the Chrysler Corporation's models of the early 1950s. Of course, the one unique feature of all Checker sedans was the extremely large and flat surface floor in the rear seat area. Upon my discharge from the Air Force and on that last ride home, I was able to place a huge wooden trunk, containing my clothes and personal effects, on the flat floor without touching the front or rear seats. Anyone who has ever been in a Checker cab remembers the easy step-up entry and lots of room in the rear. One of Checker's more popular options were two collapsible jump seats to accommodate two more passengers.

The Checker's styling may have been considered "old fashioned" or outmoded compared to the outlandish styling of the late '50s and early '60s but it was an extremely well built and particularly durable car that was very economical to drive and to maintain. Small quantities were produced each year, which made them almost hand-built, and with great attention to detail and quality.

Many parts were interchangeable with other makes and were easily available. I believe the transmission in my Checker was a Borg-Warner and, of course, Chevrolet engines were available in 1964 as an option. My 1963 Marathon was not cheap to buy; as I recall it was about $3,500 equipped as it was, which put it in the middle or high end of the medium price range. I remember a friend of mine buying a 1963 Chevrolet convertible with the 327 and four-speed for $3,050 out the door.

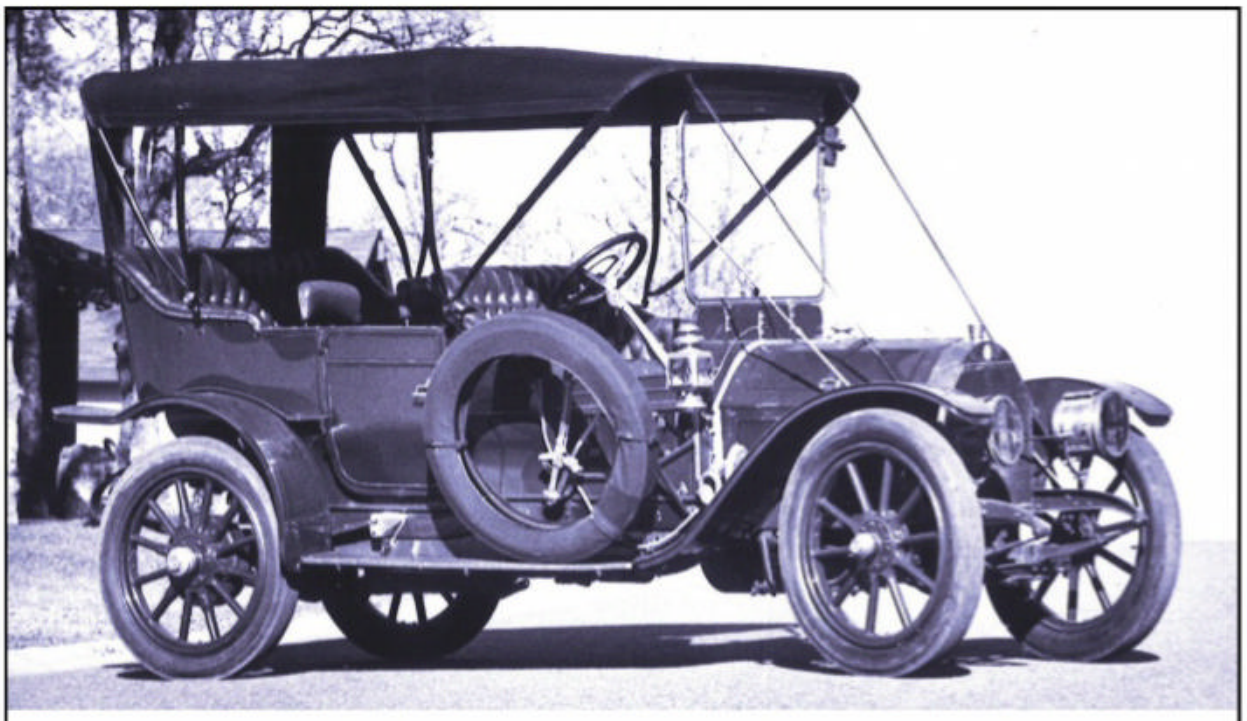
Now retired, I frequently close my eyes and think back to the carefree single days of my youth and bring back memories of driving my Checker up the Mohawk Trail in Western Massachusetts and along the coast of New England. In the five years I owned it, it gave me 90,000 completely trouble-free miles.

After my discharge in 1965, I drove the Checker during my college days at Kent State University and then in 1968, just weeks before my marriage, I sold it to my uncle for $200 — can you believe that! It was in great shape, and he drove it for years all across the U.S. towing an Airstream trailer.

Car, uncle, and marriage are all long gone now, but I still have those wonderful memories. I have been trying to locate my Checker for the past 20 years; I sure miss my car and uncle.

REARVIEW MIRROR 1910

BY TOM COMERRO



CHALMERS IS BACK WITH ITS HIGH-QUALITY MODEL THIRTY AND MODEL FORTY CARS, available in many body styles. The "30" is large, luxurious, and roomy, has made long-distance trips at speeds of 55.5 mph, and is economical with 25.7 miles traveled on 1 gallon of gas. The "40" will give you all of the room and luxury you will need on a 122-inch wheelbase, with ample room for seven passengers. Hugh Chalmers has also announced that a new Thirty will be given to the baseball player with the highest batting average. Ty Cobb is the defending champion and odds-on favorite, but don't count out Honus Wagner and former triple-crown winner Nap Lajoie.

FACTORY PRICES

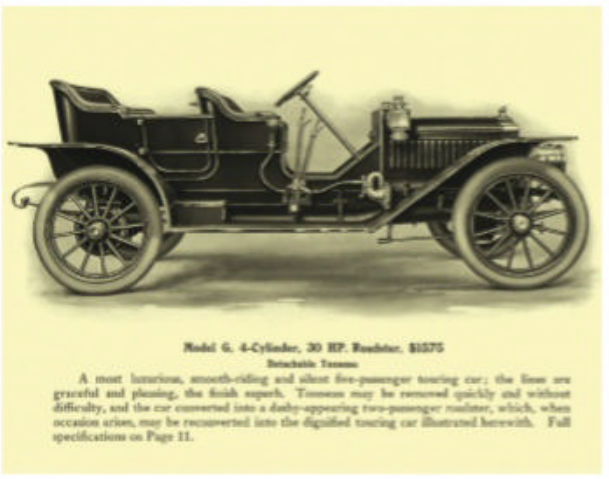
Auburn	$3,900-$4,350
Brush	$485-$850
Buick	$1,000-$1,750
Cadillac	$1,660-$2,200
Chalmers	$1,500-$2,750
Detroit Electric	$1,700-$2,500
Ford	$900-$1,200
Hudson	$900-$1,200
Hupmobile	$750
Locomobile	$3,500-$4,500
Marmon	$2,500-$2,750
Maxwell	$600-$1,750
Oakland	$1,700
Oldsmobile	$3,000-$4,600
Packard	$3,200
Pierce-Arrow	$4,000-$7,200
REO	$500-$1,250
Stanley	$850-$1,500
Studebaker	$3,500
Winton	$3,000-$4,500

SALES RACE

(total model-year production)

1. Ford	32,053
2. Buick	30,525
3. Willys-Overland	15,598
4. Studebaker-EMF	15,020
5. Cadillac	10,039

FORD BRINGS BACK THE MODEL T WITH very few changes from its inaugural offering. The Landaulet and Coupe have been discontinued, but new Tourabouts are available. Mechanical improvements have been made to the rear axle and all models now carry a windshield. The "T" has made its mark all over the country with more than 15,000 delivered prior to December of last year, and you can expect to see more of the same as the new decade begins. The Model T is available for as low as $900.



Model G. 4-Cylinder, 30 HP. Roadster. $1575

A most luxurious, smooth-riding and silent five-passenger touring car; the lines are graceful and pleasing, the finish superb. Tonneau may be removed quickly and without difficulty, and the car converted into a dashy-appearing two-passenger roadster, which, when occasion arises, may be reconverted into the dignified touring car illustrated herewith. Full specifications on Page 11.

MAXWELL BUILDS ITS CARS WITH ROOMINESS, simplicity, and classy styling while giving you reliable performance. With more than 20,000 examples on the road today, you've likely seen them in action or gone for a ride in one of our Maxwells. Available in four different models and seven total body styles, the Maxwell offers something for everyone. Available with the two- or four-cylinder, the Maxwell starts as low as $600.

EXPENDITURES

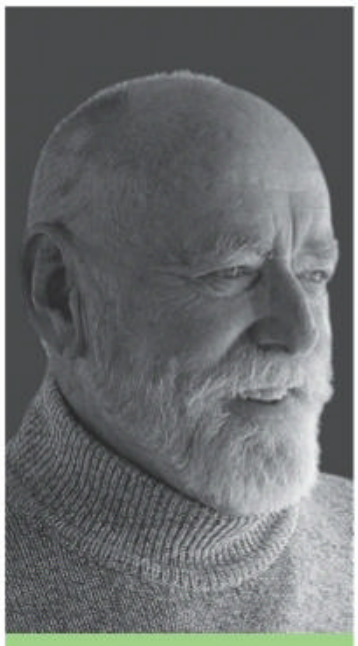
(per capita)

Auto parts	$1.09
Auto purchases	$4.21
Gas and oil	$2.35
Intercity transport	$3.32
Local transport	$6.13

VELIE IS AVAILABLE IN MODELS D, E, AND F, and powered by a Lycoming four-cylinder, 40-hp engine with three-speed selective-type transmission. Entering its second year, the Velie has proven to be durable and strong, as one would expect from a carriage builder founded by Deere & Company. The "very smart" Velie is available in touring, roadster, and toy tonneau bodies, and has a starting price of $1,800.

Pep Ad
Automobile Digest
March 1929

Advertisers in this issue



Making it Better than New

> "...almost all properly restored production cars are better than they were when they were new."

Mass-produced cars of any era from any country were made just good enough. Not exquisitely, not painstakingly, but good enough. They were designed to last for years, be reasonably dependable, and look decent, but they were also built to sell for a price. This was made abundantly clear to me during my stint on the Ford assembly line years ago.

We produced one car per minute for eight straight hours. There was not enough time to lovingly fit each panel, and meticulously machine each part. If we had done that, the cars would have cost as much as Rolls-Royces. However, we did a workmanlike job.

I only mention this to emphasize the point that you can actually make most old cars better than new. In fact, almost all properly restored production cars are better than they were when they were new. And I am not talking about backyard engineering and customizing that sometimes works but is usually more like vandalism than improvement.

The kinds of things I am talking about don't alter the appearance of your classic, but make it more enjoyable and dependable to drive, and help preserve it for future generations. Take engines for example. If, when you overhaul them, you have the pistons, rods, flywheel, clutch, and crankshaft carefully balanced, it will run smoothly and last longer. And if you take the time to grind the roughness and slag out of the intake and exhaust ports and port-match the manifolds to the cylinder heads, it will breathe better and make more power. Also, when you take the heads to a machine shop for a valve job, have them do a three-way cut on the valves and valve seats for better breathing.

One key to building a great engine is to find the best machine shop around. These days they can machine more precisely and carefully than they ever did at the factory. But then the other half of the job is cleaning and assembling the components correctly and precisely when it's done.

Often at the factory, they had bins of pistons that were a few thousandths under, pretty much right on, and a little over size, and they fitted them by feel. You and your machine shop can do better. In addition, to get valves to seal at the factory, they would stake them, but now they can make them seal perfectly.

Another place where you can make a big improvement to performance and safety is with the brake system, and I'm not talking about going to disc brakes. With a little care, the brakes can be made more effective and long-lasting when you know what to do. The master cylinder and wheel cylinder can be sleeved with brass or stainless steel, making them last much longer than the originals – especially if you also use new steel tubing to replace the lines, and then switch to DOT 5 silicone brake fluid.

Ordinary brake fluid is hygroscopic, which means it absorbs water, and if you don't change it periodically, your brake system will rust from the inside. But silicon fluid does not absorb moisture, and will last nearly forever. It's a little more expensive, but I have had it in my 1940 Packard for 25 years, and it's still fine. I say this with one caveat though: You can't use silicone fluid on anti-lock systems. If you can find NOS asbestos brake linings, they will last longer and stop better than the modern stuff. Failing that, you can go to riveted linings, because bonded linings are too hard and will decrease your stopping power. Finally, make sure the shoes are arched to match the drums.

As for your classic's appearance, the new plastic fillers (Bondo is one brand) are great. In fact, they are so good that people often use them for things they were never designed to do, such as filling dents rather than taking them out with hammer and dolly until only a skim coat is required. My father did bodywork back in the day, and I once asked him what he thought of plastic fillers. He said that they only used lead in his day because that was all they had.

Finally, the new base-coat/clear-coat systems are much more durable and resilient than the old lacquers and enamels. Besides, the old paints never had the depth or luster of modern paint. Nowadays, colors can be matched more precisely, and the finished results can be absolutely dazzling if you color sand and polish.

So, can you make your 1937 Buick, '57 Thunderbird, or '64 GTO better than new? Absolutely. Take your time, think things out, and go that extra mile so your classic can go that extra mile, too.

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