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Visiting History

Wherever I travel, I always try to make time to visit local museums, be they automotive or art. Exploring our past provides lots of insight to our country's and the world's history, and the distinguished men and women behind it all. All too often we are rushing our lives away to get where we are going, but taking an hour or two to visit a museum will add value to your life.

During my recent visit to Auburn, Indiana, where I had been invited to be part of the judging team for the AACA's Zenith Award and attend the club's incredible Grand National event, I took time that Saturday afternoon to visit the nearby Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg Museum. I've always wanted to visit the ACD Museum, but never had the chance, so I wasn't going to let this opportunity slip by. All I can say is that it is an absolute must-visit for not only all automotive enthusiasts, but anyone who appreciates the pioneering achievements this great country of ours has accomplished. Set in a truly spectacular building, the selection of automobiles—and being able to view, up close, the many engineering and design drawings on display—was simply amazing. For more details, see this issue's Museum Profile.

While there, I also visited NATMUS—the National Automotive and Truck Museum—that's conveniently located behind the ACD Museum. Seeing the vast array of vintage trucks, and how the commercial transportation industry evolved through the years, was an absolute treat.

Last year, when I attended the CCCA Grand National and Stutz-Marmon meet held in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, on the advice of noted restorer Ralph Prueitt from Prueitt Automotive Restorations, I visited the Eastern Museum of Motor Racing in nearby York Springs. Although I have little interest in dirt track racing, quarter midgets, and sprint cars, I was truly fascinated by the history of this unrivalled form of competition. Inspecting the large collection of innovative racing cars on display, gave me newfound appreciation for this uniquely American form of motorsports. When in the area, this is a must-visit museum—being less than an hour's drive from Hershey, you can add it to your itinerary the next time you attend the Fall Meet. And it goes without

saying, you should plan a visit to the AACA Museum when in Hershey, too.

Back in July of 2011, I attended the Vintage Chevrolet Club of America's Centennial Celebration in Flint, Michigan. With the club's spectacular car show being held on the grounds of the Alfred P. Sloan Museum, time was put aside to enjoy all

that collection had to offer. Before catching my evening flight out of Detroit, I headed to Dearborn to visit The Henry Ford. If ever there was a truly spectacular museum that all Americans must visit, this is it. In addition to all the automobiles, its recreated village showcases life

back in the early days and exhibits many insightful non-automotive innovations, such as the inventions by Edison.

Attending the Studebaker Driver's Club International meet a few years ago in South Bend, Indiana, also afforded me the opportunity to visit the Studebaker National Museum. A must for Studebaker fans, its display of Studebaker-produced vehicles dating back to the wagons they built in the 1800s was highly informative.

One of my favorite towns in Maine is the quaint seaside village of Boothbay Harbor. While driving into town a few years back, we passed the Railway Village Museum, and immediately made a U-turn for a quick visit. Our visit was anything but quick, though, as this relatively unknown gem of a museum was packed with all sorts of Americana, including a noteworthy collection of old cars and trucks. It even had a 1957 Lotus Eleven factory team car, of all things.

As we headed up the coast to Camden, we made another detour when we spotted the sign for the Owl's Head Transportation Museum. That was the day when the annual vintage truck show was taking place, and all the hangers were open to view the museum's aircrafts and automobiles. That experience made our weekend all the more special.

There's no better way to enrich your life and expand your appreciation for mankind than by spending time in a museum. Regardless how big or small, well known or unknown it may be, you never know what you'll discover behind a museum's doors. 🐼



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Orphans Go West

THE VINTAGE MOTOR CAR CLUB OF AMERICA ANNOUNCED DETAILS ABOUT ITS Orphan Car Tour, hosted by the club's Colorado West Chapter, which will be located in Western Colorado this October 21-25. The tour will take place around Glenwood Springs and Palisade, and is open to any car built from an American manufacturer that is out of business. Tour highlights include scenic drives through the Colorado National Monument, and a trip to the Gateway Auto Museum and the Redstone Castle near Aspen. For more information, call 303-514-6587.

Lee Iacocca, 1924-2019



LEE IACOCCA, WHO LED TWO OF THE BIG Three auto companies and had become a household name, died July 2 at his home in Bel Air, California. He was a driving force behind the Mustang and later the Pinto, and would eventually take the reigns at Chrysler, presiding over the development of the minivan and the K-car, while saving the struggling automaker from potential bankruptcy.

Jim Donnelly reviewed Iacocca's extraordinary career and interviewed him for the May 2012 issue of *HCC*. They discussed the decisions and actions that made Iacocca a titan in automotive history.

You can read the article online at www.hemmings.com/blog/article/lee-iacocca, and if you'd like to donate to the Iacocca Family Foundation to fund diabetes research, visit www.iacoccafoundation.org.

Charlotte AutoFair

CAN'T MAKE IT TO THE NORTHEAST THIS October for Fall Carlisle or Hershey? The Fall Charlotte AutoFair makes a great substitute; it takes place October 17-19 at the Charlotte Motor Speedway in North Carolina. The spring and fall shows regularly see attendance of over 100,000 combined, yet this is the first time the fall event will take place in October. More than 7,000 flea market spaces are scattered throughout the infield and in a large car corral. To secure available space, it's suggested you book in advance. For information, visit www.charlotte-autofair.com.

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Valiant That Shouldn't Be

MOST PEOPLE WOULD SEE THIS 1964 PLYMOUTH VALIANT WITH MISMATCHED PAINT

and dismiss it as just another old car. Dale Edward Johnson of Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada, however, picked up right away on what made it unique: Plymouth never built a two-door hardtop station wagon Valiant in 1964.

"Did they make them in limited quantities?" he asked. "Perhaps only in Canada? Is this a prototype? Or might this be the work of a creative autobody specialist?"

We scoured both U.S.- and Canadian-market brochures for 1964 Plymouths and didn't see mention of such a creature. Sure, Plymouth built two-door hardtops and station wagons that year, but it didn't even offer any two-door station wagons, with a post or without.

So somebody very well could have played weld-'em-up with some Plymouth body panels. If they did, however, they did a remarkable job, considering that we don't see any evidence of bodywork aft of the doors. Curious...


RE: Jagerrari

THE PHOTOS OF A FIBERGLASS CAR OF UNKNOWN parentage that Tom Jacobsmeier sent in (see *HCC* #179), generated a couple responses, including one from Ed Salerno, who suggested Marcos GT. "It has been modified in the front but the rest of the car is Marcos," he wrote.

The ducktail and those rear haunches certainly support Ed's hypothesis, but we see far more differences between this car and the Marcos than similarities. The side and rear glass shapes, for instance, along with the flattened wheel arches, the taller Kamm panel beneath the spoiler, and, of course, the funky hatches instead of doors.

Then again, this car has clearly had a lot of fiberglass work, so whoever built it may well have used a Marcos GT as a launching point.



 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.

Edsel Ford's Third Speedster Found, Sort Of

A FEW YEARS BACK, WE WONDERED OVER on the *Hemmings Daily* what ever became of Edsel Ford's third speedster, the one he designed in 1935 with Bob Gregorie and that Jensen in England used as the basis for its 3½-Litre roadster. While the actual car hasn't turned up — its last known whereabouts was a used car lot in Burbank, California, in 1952 — our readers did manage to spot it making a cameo in an old film.

Traffic With the Devil, a 1946 Theater of Life short film about traffic problems in the Los Angeles area, includes a quick 2-second shot of the speedster driving past. As shown, it features light-colored



paint, beat-up fenders, the Carson padded top of its later appearance, and its original Ford grille instead of the La Salle grille added later on. There's no real explanation of why it appeared in the film — we're guessing it simply caught the eye of whoever was gathering B-roll that day.

This doesn't, of course, answer the question of the car's ultimate fate. Where might it have gone after sitting on that used car lot?

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Keystone State Triple

THREE AUCTIONS ARE SLATED TO TAKE place in Pennsylvania during the Carlisle and Hershey stretch. Morphy's automobilia and petroliana auction will take place in the town of Denver on October 5-7, featuring gas station collectibles and vintage toys. Bonhams will continue its auction tradition at the Simeone Museum in Philadelphia on October 7. Last year's auction netted \$2.5 million in sales, with a 1954 Kaiser Darrin leading the way for American cars at \$135,520. On October 10-11, during the AACA meet in Hershey, RM Sotheby's will be at the Hershey Lodge. Its 2018 sale eclipsed the \$11-million mark. This year's auction will feature cars from the Merrick Collection, including this 1917 Abbott Speedster.



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New England Exchanges

BARRETT-JACKSON COMPLETED ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL AUCTION IN CONNECTICUT THIS JUNE with its Northeast Auction raking in more than \$21.8 million and 545 vehicles changing hands. Among the consignments were 14 cars from The Vault Portfolio, which will also include cars in the upcoming Las Vegas and Scottsdale Auctions. This 1957 Bel Air had an extensive two-year body-off restoration and was equipped with a Super Turbo-Fire 283-cu.in. V-8 with dual four barrels paired with a Powerglide automatic—it sold in Connecticut for \$62,700. Also selling from The Vault Portfolio were two 1940 Ford coupes, a Standard and Deluxe. Both had flathead 221 V-8s; the Standard sold at \$38,500 and the Deluxe for \$46,200. Barrett-Jackson's next auction will be held at the Mandalay Bay Resort in Las Vegas October 3-5.

AUCTION PROFILE

CAR	1932 Buick Model 66 S
AUCTIONEER	RM Sotheby's
LOCATION	Auburn, Indiana
DATE	June 1, 2019
LOT NUMBER	5009
RESERVE	None
AVERAGE SELLING PRICE	\$25,000
SELLING PRICE	\$28,600

THE YEAR 1932 WAS A DISTINGUISHED ONE for Buick as it exchanged the long-used hood louvers for a different style of side hood doors. The windshield was slightly sloped, the grille was redesigned with a narrower base, and the fenders were longer. The Series 60 Buicks were the mid-level option for the marque that year, with the two-door special coupe starting at a factory price of \$1,270, which would be about \$23,500 today.

This Buick was equipped with a 272.6-cu.in. straight-eight engine and three-speed manual transmission. A



RM SOTHEBY'S

Texas car, it had a body-off restoration completed in 2011 and earned multiple awards, including the AACA Senior award and Buick Club of America Senior Gold

Award. The rarity of this Buick—one of 1,678 built that year—and its recent restoration, no doubt contributed to its impressive final bid.

OCTOBER

5-7 • Morphy Auctions

Denver, Pennsylvania • 877-968-8880
www.morphyauctions.com

7 • Bonhams • Philadelphia,
Pennsylvania • 212-461-6514
www.bonhams.com

10-11 • RM Sotheby's

Hershey, Pennsylvania • 519-352-4575
www.rmsothebys.com

10-12 • Mecum • Las Vegas, Nevada
262-275-5050 • www.mecum.com

10-12 • Vicari Auctions

Biloxi, Mississippi • 504-264-2277
www.vicariauction.com

18-19 • The Branson Auction

Branson, Missouri • 800-335-3063
www.bransonauction.com

24-26 • Mecum • Chicago, Illinois
262-275-5050 • www.mecum.com



MECUM

Mecum in Portland

MORE THAN 400 CARS CROSSED THE BLOCK

at Mecum in the Portland Expo Center, June 21-22, with 57 percent of them finding new homes for a total greater than \$6.35 million. Among cars sold was this 1953 Lincoln Capri convertible. An older restoration, it was a rust-free car from Idaho with power top and windows, and one of 2,372 Capri convertibles produced that year; it sold for \$26,400. Other notable deals were a pair of Nashes — a 1951 Rambler convertible selling for \$31,900 and a 1957 Metropolitan for \$13,200. Mecum's next auction will also take place in Las Vegas, on October 10-12.



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A Pair of Porsches

BOB COLAIZZI • 937-477-5530 • WWW.COLAIZZIDESIGN.COM • \$300

One of the latest pieces to emerge from the ColaizziDesign studio of Dayton, Ohio, automotive artist Bob Colaizzi is “Niemeyer Brothers,” a tribute to the vintage, air-cooled Porsches of Kurt and Bill Niemeyer Jr. It features Kurt’s unrestored original 356 Cabriolet, along with Bill Jr.’s once-repainted, otherwise untouched Speedster. Like Bob’s other mixed-media portraits, this one combines hand drawing with layers of Photoshop digital painting, resulting in an image that genuinely looks like it was finished in opaque acrylic or watercolor paint. He’s making a limited run of 17 x 22-inch giclée prints of this piece, on archival paper, and they’re ideal for the 356 enthusiast in your life.

Black Gold

ACME TRADING COMPANY • 888-209-2263

WWW.ACMEIECAST.COM • \$129.95

While Chrysler’s performance flagship of this automaker’s “100-Million-Dollar Look” era was the C-300, arguably its most glamorous model was the New Yorker convertible. Mid-Fifties Chrysler cars are rarely modeled in scale, and rarer still are they done in 1:18, to the level of this 1956 New Yorker convertible from Acme Trading Company, here rendered in Raven Black over Nugget Gold. Officially licensed by Chrysler, our sample was exquisite, from the detachable simulated soft-top and folded top cover to the detailed undercarriage. The interior sported minute detail on the handsome instrument panel, along with an accurate upholstery pattern and flock carpeting, the latter of which carried over into the trunk, with its removable spare wheel. The engine bay was lifelike, with a correct-appearing FirePower Hemi V-8 engine, brake booster, and period-style battery. Classic-Mopar fans will love this adult keepsake.



Keep It Cool

THINK OUTSIDE • 469-610-7646 • WWW.THINKOUTSIDE.BIZ • \$343-\$941

If you’re a dyed-in-the-wool automotive enthusiast with a sense of whimsy and an appreciation for sustainable living, we think you’ll love these clever handmade Beverage Coolers from Think Outside. This unique Australian firm was founded in 1998 by artist/designer Aaron Jackson with a view toward sustainability. Think Outside exclusively markets sculptures, décor, and furniture items made from recycled and upcycled materials by craftspeople in developing countries like Vietnam, while training those crafters and investing in their local communities. Inspired by the timeless styling of classic cars, trucks, campers, and more, Aaron’s designs for the Beverage Cooler line — and the related Planters & Pots line — are as functional as they are fun to look at. Generously sized between 1 and 5 feet long, these rolling sculptures are made from 44-gallon oil drums. They’re insulated and have lid-holding gas struts, as well as drain plugs, for easy access and cleaning. Whether you’re drawn to the colorful 1950s Caddy, Ford Woody wagon, or pickup trucks, or the 1960s-inspired Airstream camper or VW Bus, your purchase will be making the world a cooler, better place.



"Cool, hip, stylish and very retro. Very pleased with this watch."

— Ernie,
Los Angeles, CA



"One of my all time favorite Stauer timepieces!"

— John,
Spring, TX

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chronograph
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TIME FLIES

The Co-Pilot Watch recalls an era of unforgettable aerial bravery for a most memorable price.

Soaring over English skies in 1940, Royal Air Force pilots knew they were all that stood between the British people below and the impending Nazi invasion. Day after day, these brave men took their Hurricanes and Spitfires to the air, relying on nothing and no one but their instruments and each other, to engage the invaders, defend their countrymen, and change the course of history by handing Hitler his first defeat of World War II. "Never, in the field of human conflict, was so much owed by so many to so few," said Winston Churchill.

The **Co-Pilot Men's Watch** is inspired by what was accomplished in the Battle of Britain. We studied classic aviator timepieces to match the vintage design and then gave it a 1940s price. Our watchmakers updated the movement for the 21st century, making it even more accurate than the originals. It features markings to calculate velocity, and a stylish sepia-toned dial carrying three classic complications: 24-hour at 3 o'clock and chronograph 60-minute at 9 o'clock. A vintage-style distressed brown leather strap recalls the battle-worn bomber jackets of the 1940s.

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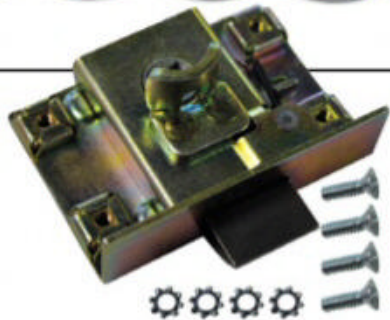


Pontiac Paint

INLINE TUBE • WWW.INLINETUBE.COM

800-385-9452 • \$18 (12-OUNCE CAN)

Engine paints using factory formulas to match the original colors are now available for Pontiacs built between 1959 and 1981. It's formulated to withstand up to 300 degrees and a light application will minimize burn-off on the cylinder head. Six different colors are available.



Rumble Seat Rumbler

THE FILLING STATION • 800-841-6622

WWW.FILLINGSTATION.COM • \$49.50

Trunk and rumble seat latches are now available for 1929-'38 Chevrolets, Buicks, and Pontiacs. If your car has a wooden framed deck lid, you may need to perform some modifications, but this assembly will replace the old latch with ease. Dimensions from center to center, top and bottom (narrow width) are 1 1/4-inch, and top to bottom (long/tall side) are 2 3/8-inch. The latches will fit most 1929-'34 Chevrolet cars, 1935-'36 Master coupe and sport coupe with trunk or rumble seat, 1936 Chevrolet Master Cabriolet with rumble seat, 1937-'38 Cabriolet/Sport Coupe with rumble seat, and several 1934-'38 Buicks and 1937 Pontiac convertibles.

Handy Wiring Assistant

SUMMIT RACING • 800-230-3030

WWW.SUMMITRACING.COM • \$14.99

Wiring systems can be quite complicated, but it's now easier to track down problems with these new retractable test leads. The leads are perfect for testing circuits and simulating switches. All you need to do is pull them out of the housing when you're ready to use them. When you're finished, each lead retracts back inside without leaving a rat's nest of wires that can clog up your shop drawers and toolboxes. Each unit includes three color-coded, 10-foot-long leads that will stay in place at your desired length; 18-gauge copper wire rated at 10 amps unwound and 6 amps wound; and easy-to-use alligator clips that are insulated for positive connections.



Tri-Five Vent Glass

CLASSIC INDUSTRIES • 800-854-1280

WWW.CLASSICINDUSTRIES.COM • \$119.99

New vent glass assemblies are available for the 1955-'57 Chevrolet hardtop, Nomad, sedan, wagon, and convertible. Offered in clear, green tint, and gray tint, and in three different styles, each vent glass is an OER-authorized reproduction and includes vent frame and new glass ready for installation. Mounting hardware is not included and is sold separately.



Battery Tester

CLORE AUTOMOTIVE • 800-328-2921 • WWW.CLOREAUTOMOTIVE.COM • \$279

Battery and electrical system testing is more accurate than ever with this new 12-volt digital Battery and Electrical Analyzer with integrated printer. It's compatible with a large variety of battery types, including spiral wound, gel cell, start-stop AGM, and enhanced flooded batteries. Each tester comes with 36-inch cable leads, replaceable cable ends, and temperature compensation. This handy device will provide you with accurate assessment of both charged and discharged batteries. The backlit screen can be easily seen in all lighting conditions, and the Analyzer features an operating range and ability to test batteries from 100 to 1,400 CCA.

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PRICE \$726²⁵

SAVE \$536

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HARDY POWDER-FREE NITRILE GLOVES

PACK OF 100 • 5 mil thickness

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COMPARE TO VENOM \$14.97

MODEL: VEN4145

ITEM 97581, 37050, 64417, 64418, 61363, 68497, 61360, 61359, 68498, 68496 shown

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PREDATOR 3500 WATT SUPER QUIET INVERTER GENERATOR

- 212 cc OHV engine, 6 HP
- 11 hour run time

NOW \$699⁹⁹

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SAVE \$1,319

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63584 shown

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BRAUN 5000 LUMENS LED HANGING SHOP LIGHT

NOW \$19⁹⁹

\$29⁹⁹

ITEM 64410

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WELDING STORAGE CABINET

Customer Rating ★★★★★
Welders, tools & supplies sold separately.

SAVE \$90

COMPARE TO KLUTCH \$239⁹⁹

MODEL: 48348

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10" PNEUMATIC TIRE

Customer Rating ★★★★★

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\$5⁹⁹

SAVE 50%

COMPARE TO FARM & RANCH \$8.09

MODEL: FR1055

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ALL IN A SINGLE SUPER POWERFUL LIGHT

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MODEL: W2364

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26" x 22" SINGLE BANK EXTRA DEEP CABINETS

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YOUR CHOICE OF COLOR

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SAVE \$1,450

COMPARE TO SNAP-ON \$1,750

MODEL: KRA4008FPB0

Item 64434, 64432, 64162, 56104, 56105, 56106

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GOOD CENTRALPNEUMATIC

21 GALLON OIL-LUBE AIR COMPRESSOR

Customer Rating ★★★★★

125 PSI

STANDARD LIFE

STANDARD NOISE LEVEL

STANDARD RUN TIME

STANDARD OIL-LUBE MOTOR

\$169⁹⁹

SAVE \$69

COMPARE TO HUSKY \$239

MODEL: CCB1H

ITEM 61454/69091 62803/63635 67847 shown

LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 12/9/19*

BETTER MCGRAW

20 GALLON OIL-LUBE AIR COMPRESSOR

Customer Rating ★★★★★

135 PSI

2X LIFE*

25% QUIETER*

27% MORE RUN TIME*

SUPERIOR CONSTRUCTION OIL-LUBE MOTOR

\$174⁹⁹

SAVE \$75

COMPARE TO PORTER-CABLE \$249⁹⁹

MODEL: 1690725

ITEM 56241 64857 shown

LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 12/9/19*

drillmaster

4-1/2" ANGLE GRINDER

Customer Rating ★★★★★

SAVE 44%

COMPARE TO PERFORMAX \$17⁹⁹

MODEL: 2411-1

ITEM 69645/60625 shown

LIMIT 5 - Coupon valid through 12/9/19*

ZURICH

OBD2 CODE READER WITH ABS ZR11

Customer Rating ★★★★★

NOW \$119⁹⁹

\$139⁹⁹

ITEM 63807

COMPARE TO BOSCH \$169⁹⁹

MODEL: OBD1150

ITEM 63807

LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 12/9/19*

PITTSBURGH

18 PIECE SAE AND METRIC T-HANDLE BALL END HEX KEY SET

Customer Rating ★★★★★

NOW \$12⁹⁹

\$17⁹⁹

ITEM 63167/62476/63166/96645 shown

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NOW \$169⁹⁹

\$214⁹⁹

SAVE 62%

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MODEL: 74410

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\$139⁹⁹

COMPARE TO KOBALT \$199

MODEL: 86756

ITEM 64367/62664 shown

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Customer Rating ★★★★★

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SAVE 62%

COMPARE TO REESE TOWPOWER \$49⁹⁹

MODEL: 74410

ITEM 69780/41005 shown

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 12/9/19*

FRANKLIN

17 FT. TYPE IA MULTI-TASK LADDER

Customer Rating ★★★★★

Versatile - 24 configurations

Safe + Secure + Stable

Super Strong - Holds 300 lbs.

Weights 34 lbs.

\$139⁹⁹

COMPARE TO LITTLE GIANT \$298⁹⁹

MODEL: XE M17

ITEM 67646/62514/63418/63419/63417 shown

LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 12/9/19*

HaulMaster

30" x 18" HARDWOOD DOLLY

Customer Rating ★★★★★

1000 lb. capacity

NOW \$11⁹⁹

\$15⁹⁹

COMPARE TO MILWAUKEE \$19⁹⁷

MODEL: 33700

ITEM 92486/39757/60496/62398/61897/38970 shown

LIMIT 4 - Coupon valid through 12/9/19*

SUPER COUPON

17 FT. TYPE IA MULTI-TASK LADDER

Customer Rating ★★★★★

Versatile - 24 configurations

Safe + Secure + Stable

Super Strong - Holds 300 lbs.

Weights 34 lbs.

\$139⁹⁹

COMPARE TO LITTLE GIANT \$298⁹⁹

MODEL: XE M17

ITEM 67646/62514/63418/63419/63417 shown

LIMIT 1 - Coupon valid through 12/9/19*

SUPER COUPON

30" x 18" HARDWOOD DOLLY

Customer Rating ★★★★★

1000 lb. capacity

NOW \$11⁹⁹

\$15⁹⁹

COMPARE TO MILWAUKEE \$19⁹⁷

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Oscar Zerk

ODDS ARE, IF YOU'VE EVER DONE BASIC MAINTENANCE on your old car, you've used a grease gun to pump highly viscous petroleum lubricant into the various joints and bearings of the chassis and drivetrain — maybe even some of the hinge points in the body. Equally likely, you think of the fittings where the grease gun attaches as “Zerk fittings.” But have you ever stopped to ask yourself where they got that name?

The answer, as you have likely concluded, is from Oscar Zerk. He was a brilliant inventor born May 16, 1878, in Vienna, capital of what was then the Austro-Hungarian Empire. His father, Bernhard Zerkowitz, was in the business of textile manufacturing, and the family had been prominent and respected since the time of the Holy Roman Empire.

While still a teenager, the German-educated Zerk invented an electrically controlled loom that used punch cards to weave intricate brocade fabric. This early form of automation allowed one machine to do the work of a dozen people.

Remarkably, the clever young Zerk was initially rejected from pursuing higher education. It took the direct intervention of Emperor Franz Josef for Zerk to be admitted to engineering college in what is now Brno, Czech Republic.

After graduation, Zerk relocated to England to study British textile manufacturing and to refine his automated loom. After four years abroad, he returned to Austria at age 27. It was then that the emerging automobile industry caught his eye. Soon, he had designed both a six-cylinder engine and proposed a form of automatic transmission.


Apparently impressed by reports of the steam cars of the White Motor Company, in 1907 Zerk arranged to visit the United States to study one firsthand. He sailed for America aboard the *RMS Lusitania*, and it was during this voyage that he was inspired to improve the system of lubrication then in use on automobiles — grease cups and oilers.

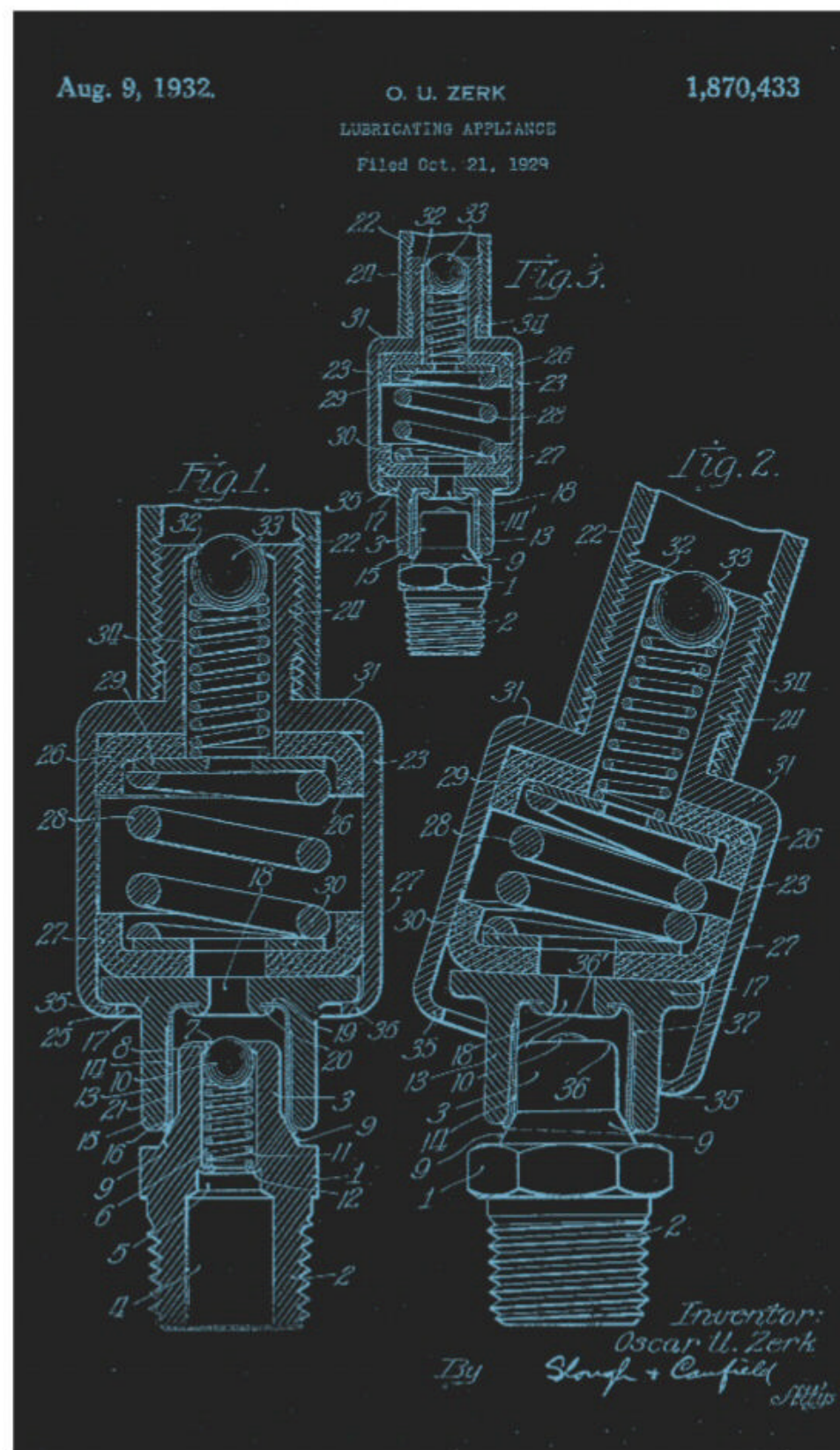
Zerk's trip to the U.S. turned from investigation to business, when he founded a company in Cleveland to produce an early version of what became the familiar Zerk fitting. While he was not the first to envision forcing grease under pressure into joints and bearings, his designs were very good. Unfortunately, Zerk's business acumen did not yet match his engineering prowess and in 1913, he was forced out by his investors.

The start of the Great War found Zerk visiting his home in Austria and he was compelled to join the fighting, mustering out in 1918 as a decorated army captain. He married a local girl and the pair returned to the United States, where he became involved in the Allyne-Zerk Company.

In 1924, Allyne-Zerk was purchased by Stewart-Warner, which also owned Alemite, a market leader in lubrication technology (“Alemite” actually became a verb meaning “to lubricate” for a while in the 1930s), and Zerk became a stockholder and consulting engineer. In 1929, Zerk created a refined version of his lubrication nipple and assigned the patent to Alemite. He also led a well-publicized “housecleaning” of Stewart-Warner management in 1934, forcing the company to concentrate on its core automotive business instead of diversifying.

Zerk pulled back from business somewhat in 1939, moving from the hustle and bustle of Chicago to Kenosha, Wisconsin, where he heavily remodeled a mansion. He dubbed his new residence “Dunmovin” and resided there until his death in 1968. Along the way, he registered many more patents (he had over 300 in his lifetime), which represented only a part of his prolific output of inventions.

Although he was married a total of four times, Zerk had no children, but his name lives on in the eponymous grease fitting. Something to think about next time you change your oil and lube the chassis. 





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freedom and fun*



The Zinger folds to a mere 10 inches.

“With my Zinger Chair, I can go anywhere and everywhere I want!”

More and more Americans are reaching the age where mobility is an everyday concern. Whether from an injury or from the aches and pains that come from getting older—getting around isn’t as easy as it used to be. You may have tried a power chair or a scooter. The **Zinger** is NOT a power chair or a scooter! The **Zinger** is quick and nimble, yet it is not prone to tipping like many scooters. Best of all, it weighs only 47.2 pounds and folds and unfolds with ease. You can take it almost anywhere, providing you with independence and freedom.

I can now go places and do things that I wasn’t able to go or do before. It has given me a new lease on life and I am so happy I found it!

—Dana S., Texas

Years of work by innovative engineers have resulted in a mobility device that’s truly unique. They created a battery that provides powerful energy at a fraction of the weight of most batteries. The **Zinger** features two steering levers, one on either side of the seat. The user pushes both levers down to go forward, pulls them both up to brake, and pushes one while pulling the other to turn to either side. This enables

great mobility, the ability to turn on a dime and to pull right up to tables or desks. The controls are right on the steering lever so it’s simple to operate and its exclusive footrest swings out of the way when you stand up or sit down. With its rugged yet lightweight aluminum frame, the **Zinger** is sturdy and durable yet convenient and comfortable! What’s more, it easily folds up for storage in a car seat or trunk— you can even gate-check it at the airport like a stroller. Think about it, you can take your **Zinger** almost anywhere, so you don’t have to let mobility issues rule your life. It folds in seconds without tools and is safe and reliable. It holds up to 275 pounds, and it goes up to 6 mph and operates for up to 8 hours on a single charge.

Why spend another day letting mobility issues hamper your independence and quality of life?

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Zinger is not intended for individuals fully restricted to a seated position. It is not a medical device nor a wheelchair. It is not covered by Medicare or Medicaid.

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GAZ Volga: Anyone See This?



THE FIRST TIME I SAW THIS MONTH'S

underdog, I couldn't get over the resemblance to another American car from the same era, inside and out. I would mention this to anyone within earshot, but much like the empty bottles of Wild Turkey bourbon we'd find in Granny's trash can every week, no one wanted to acknowledge it.

I've read many articles about the 1956-'70 GAZ Volga, and it is always mentioned how its styling was based on the Ford Custom. Really? It isn't even the same size. Volgas were more in tune with the American compacts of the early 1950s, such as Nash Rambler, Willys Aero, and Hudson Jet. I truly believe if some dealer had snuck a few Volgas into the United States and slapped on any American car company logo, he could have fooled anyone who didn't notice the Cyrillic on the dash.

I was finally vindicated in September

2017. I sold my 1954 Hudson Jet Liner. The shipping company the buyer hired sent a covered truck to pick up my favorite and most reliable car ever, and when the driver stepped out of the truck and took one look at the Jet, he said in a thick Russian accent, "Wow. A Volga! Good car! Strong car! I like this car!" He didn't believe me when I told him it was a Hudson, and he was even harder to convince when he looked at the interior, especially the layout of the dashboard and, in particular, the instrument cluster. "No, this is Volga."

I was never happier in my life. Finally, we could send Granny to rehab.

The GAZ Volga was born on October 10, 1956. It was powered by an L-head 148.4-cu.in. (2,432-cc) four-cylinder engine, mated to a three-speed, column-shifted transmission. The 65-horsepower Hudson Jet lookalike was also as overbuilt as its American cousin, and quickly earned a reputation for ruggedness and tank-like strength.

The Soviet Union promoted the Volgas with endurance runs across the country, and their drag coefficient was a reasonably efficient 0.42; Leo Emerius had styled them.

Early cars had three chrome horizontal bars with a five-point star in the middle for a grille, but this design presented a couple of issues. The bars weren't strong enough to support the front panels and were expensive to produce, and the star made the car look like a military vehicle, which would thwart the Russians' plans to export their latest car.

In 1958, a new fascia was unveiled with 16 vertical slits, sans the star logo. Behind the more attractive grille was an overhead-valve engine, measuring 149.2-cu.in. (2,445-cc) and generating about 70 horsepower. You could have one for 5,400 rubles. The 16-slit vertical grille earned the nickname "Shark." Also featured was a central lubrication





system that proved troublesome and was dropped in 1961.

Early on, about 32,000 Volgas were blessed with an automatic transmission, a first for a Soviet car, but the ability to service them and stock automatic transmission fluid was lacking in the country. By the end of 1960, the automatics were phased out.

Model designations were M-21 for the automatic-equipped base version. Taxicab models were M-21A and M-21B, with manual transmissions. The M-21V was the most common model. Export models were the M-21D (manual) and M-21E (automatic) with upgraded trim and 80-horsepower engines, achieved by an increased compression ratio of 7.2:1.

The deer mascot hood ornament was deleted in 1961, because it was a victim of theft, but more importantly, it caused water to splash directly into the windshield should an oncoming car run through a puddle. Another problem with the deer was its nasty habit of impaling pedestrians who had the misfortune of being hit by a Volga. How ironic, a deer hurting a human hit by a car.

In 1962, the grille slots doubled to 32. The bumper guards were deleted, making the car look more modern. Inside, the seats were covered in a new wool fabric, and there was imitation leather headliner. The engine gained 5 horsepower, and lever arm shocks were replaced with telescopic shock absorbers.

In 1965, a new floorpan directed warm air to the legs of the rear passengers, and base price increased to 6,455 rubles. Production for this version would end quietly on July 15, 1970, as the last one rolled off the assembly line, followed immediately by a very modern new generation Volga.

Interestingly, a station wagon/estate version debuted in 1962, but sales of the ultimate grocery getter were forbidden within the Soviet Union. However, it was not uncommon to see them used as ambulances and airport taxis. Due to their rarity, they are highly collectible today.

Proof of the Volga being a strong car are the number of which are available today. Have fun and drive a Soviet car to your next cruise-in. 🐇



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Masterfully Majestic

*Valve-in-Head power helped make the
1926 Buick Master Six a leader in its field*

BY TERRY SHEA

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MATTHEW LITWIN







For 1926, Buick leapfrogged Dodge, Hudson, and Willys-Overland in the sales race, going from sixth place the year before to third. Ford and Chevrolet were still in their own league, battling it out for the common man on a previously unprecedented scale. But in that next tier, Buick led the pack, its near-luxury appointments bolstered by the company's well-earned reputation for quality. The 1926 Master Six Coupe on these pages serves as a reminder of all that Buick did to earn its place on that ever-important sales chart.

For the 1925 model year, Buick did away with its four-cylinder line and introduced two different six-cylinder models, the Standard Six and the Master Six, each available in a variety of body styles, with the latter higher priced and laden with more distinctive features. The Master Six rode on a longer wheelbase than the Standard Six, at 120 or 128 inches—depending on body style—versus 114.4 inches. More than just additional size, Buick offered the Master Six in 10 body styles in total, versus just five for the Standard Six. Among the models only available on the Master Six line were a seven-passenger sedan—which surely made the best use of the longest wheelbase, a five-passenger Brougham Sedan, a four-passenger Sport Roadster, and a five-passenger Sport Touring.

The folks at Buick, the company that General Motors was born from, knew more than a thing or two about selling cars, having been successful at it for the better part of 20 years by the time the Master Six hit the production lines. So, when they advertised that “Power is the source of greatest satisfaction in a motor car,” they backed it up with an overhead-valve design that had done wonders to firmly establish the Buick name over its first two decades. Overhead-valve engines quickly proved to be more powerful per a given volume of displacement than other designs, and also capable of operating at higher rpm. It's no surprise that even as Buick found success in the showroom in its early years, it also proved a dominant force in the early days of racing and speed-record competitions.

At the heart of every 1926 Buick sat the marque's famed Valve-in-Head engine. While most other makers, particularly those mass producing vehicles, made do with L-head designs and other flathead configurations, Buick's overhead-valve engines remained ahead of their time, even decades after introduction. For the

Master Six, Buick installed the larger-displacement version of its signature powerplant.

With a 3.5-inch bore against a 4.75-inch stroke, the 274.2-cu.in. straight-six in the Master Six produced 75 horsepower and 178 lb-ft of torque. Every Buick six featured all-cast-iron construction of the block, cylinder head, and even the pistons. The drop-forged steel crankshaft rode on four main bearings with full oil pressurization. Buick advertised its engines in 1926 as “triple sealed,” owing to its use of an air-cleaning device (it used centrifugal force to extract dust from intake air, rather than a paper filter), an oil-filtration system, and a strainer for the gasoline. Another advantage of Buick's OHV design was the ability to quickly reach the valves for any required adjustments simply by removing the valve cover.

The three-speed transmission connected to the rear axle via a torque tube, another Buick feature designed to separate it from the rest of the mid-priced pack. Buick's chassis engineers designed a system that included cantilevered rear springs that worked with the torque-tube system and its strut rods to improve the car's ride and control. The front consisted of relatively conventional leaf springs on a solid front axle. Heavy-duty wooden artillery-type wheels rounded out the chassis.

Given the engine's output, Buick advertised that the Master Six was good for 75 mph and between 14 to 16 mpg, both decent performance numbers for the class. Buick included additional mechanical improvements in the 1926 model range, including

Zerk-type grease fittings for chassis lubrication, dual-beam headlamps, an improved multi-plate dry clutch, and other features. Cosmetic updates for 1926 included a more rounded radiator shell, double-belt moldings on the body, and hubcaps and a gas cap made from aluminum.

The Master Six line was distinguished not only by the additional displacement and power of its engine and the length of its wheelbase, but by other touches such as standard scuff plates, cigarette lighter, heater, and a clock. Of more than 266,000 Buicks sold in 1926—a then-record for the GM division, just 10,028 were Model 48 four-passenger coupes, which were built on the longest 128-inch wheelbase, giving the car an impressive scale for a mid-priced coupe. The Master Six Model 48 four-passenger





The elegant and beautifully appointed interior of the Buick Master Six Model 48 included this folding jump seat from the factory, which made for easier egress for rear-seat occupants in this four-passenger coupe. Beautiful mohair upholstery was the final job for a renowned expert who provided the vase for this Buick because he felt it was "a very special car."





“It’s a special car and I just want to enjoy it while I’m living.”

coupe pictured here has been a western New York-owned car since it was first delivered at a Buffalo dealership 83 years ago. The current owner, Joe Kurtz, of nearby Lockport, is just the fifth person to be able to call the car his own.

Also an owner of a 1980 Buick Regal turbo, Joe spotted this prewar beauty during a visit to his local Buick dealership in 1995. “I was looking for a part for my 1980 Regal,” Joe says. “I just happened to see, over in one of the bays, this car. And it had the big headlamps. I went over and said, ‘That’s a Buick!’ I went back to the guy and said, ‘Who owns that Buick?’ He said, ‘Well, it was taken in on a trade from a guy in our Buick club. It’s the dealership owner’s car now.’”

Joe approached the owner and, after asking him if the car was for sale, could only get a “maybe” out of him. He did get a chance to test drive the Buick along with a friend from the Buick Club of America who was better informed on the prewar cars. The clutch wasn’t great, but the car otherwise checked out. Still on the fence, Joe and his wife Patti went on a trip to Las Vegas, where a visit to the Imperial Palace Auto Collection (since closed) inspired Joe to take a chance on a prewar car. On his return, he made a deal with the Buick agency and became the owner of this 1926 Master Six Model 48 four-passenger coupe.

Though the Buick was complete and in fairly good shape, Joe recalls his goal when he bought it: “I wanted to bring it back to just the way it was in 1926.” Unfortunately, that job was not as simple as it seemed. On the drive home, which was a relatively short distance, Joe had to call a flatbed service, as there was a fueling problem from the tank. In fact, the flatbed took the car straight to Joe’s mechanic.

Fuel problem solved, Joe was back on the road, yet, “Everything just wasn’t rosy at the beginning,” he says. “I was driving down one of our main roads here and all of a sudden at about 50 mph, it just let loose and I just drove it over to the side.” The

culprit this time was a little more serious: the timing chain. The engine rebuild took some time, because Joe wanted it done right. Even then, other problems popped up, and as they did, Joe had them taken care of.

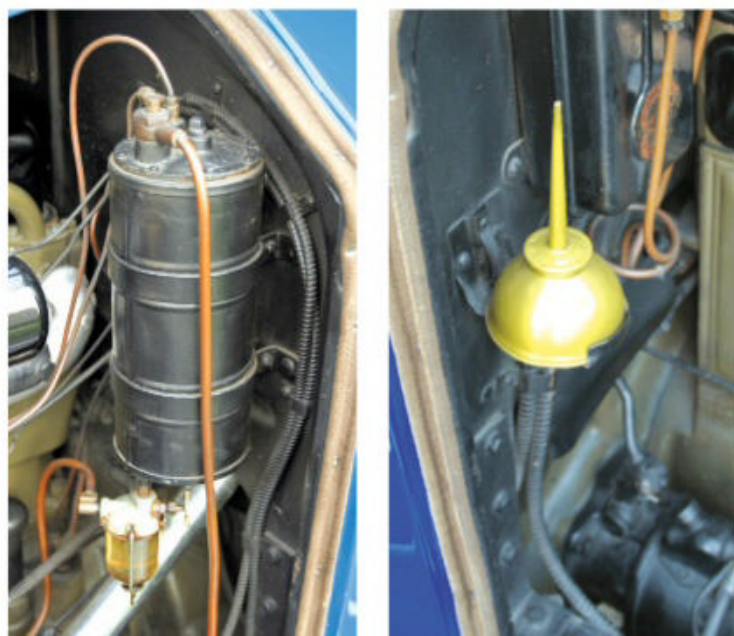
The radiator stopped cooling, so Joe shipped it off to Ohio and that shop sent part of it off to a vintage radiator specialist in the U.K. Why go to all the trouble to send off a radiator across the ocean? “I wanted to bring it back to exactly the way it was in 1926. I didn’t want to put a regular radiator in it,” Joe says. After the radiator was rebuilt, the mechanical problems were mostly sorted. He found a complete clutch assembly at Hershey to take care of the issue that had plagued him since that first test drive.

Joe was well into the car by now. In addition to having it painted in the two-tone blue body with black roof and fenders, he then rebuilt and/or restored the running boards, gas tank, and wheels. When it came time to do the mohair interior, he turned to Bill Stump, a well-known upholsterer from Latrobe, Pennsylvania. Bill did a spectacular job, but it’s a bittersweet memory for Joe since his car was Bill’s last before he passed away. Joe does relish the small vase that Bill gave him, an item the upholsterer had been saving for “a very special car.” Bill felt that Joe’s car was worthy of the long-held vase.

More than 24 years after he acquired the car, Joe remains enamored with it. “When I go out to my garage to look at it, I say, ‘I’m not going to see another one going down the road.’” But he doesn’t just keep it in the garage for himself. Of the many shows he takes it to, he says, “It’s nice to have the car, but I like to have people enjoy it, too.” Since the car was completed in 2003, Bill has collected a handful of trophies with it, including from the Hemmings Concours d’Elegance. His plans are about as simple as anyone could want with a vintage car: “It’s a special car and I just want to enjoy it while I’m living.” We couldn’t have put it better ourselves. 🏆



Buick’s venerable and trailblazing Valve-in-Head straight-six displaced 274.2-cu.in. and made 75 horsepower in the 1926 Master Six models. Its overhead valves allowed for more power and greater efficiency in a smaller displacement package than the typical L-head engines of the day.





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Combining luxury, style, and performance, the 1955 Packard Four Hundred was as contemporary as its competition

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID CONWILL

If the 1955 Chevrolet Bel Air represented rock and roll, perhaps in the form of Bill Haley and the Comets, then the 1955 Packard Four Hundred's soundtrack was something more like traditional pop from the likes of the McGuire Sisters or The Four Aces. Both are classics equally representative of the 1950s, but the Packard and pop represent the adult

side of the equation—the men and women in gray flannel that set the overall tone of that decade. That's not to say, however, that the Packard gives up anything to "The Hot Ones" from Chevrolet.

The 1955 Packards looked remarkably fresh, especially considering that their body shells dated back four years already. Thank Richard Teague for that, as it was his pen that redrew the



old “high pockets” 1951 styling into something very much in step with the times. Teague’s changes included a wraparound windshield, hooded headlamps, and (on senior Packards) cathedral taillamps. Creative use of decorative trim helped further differentiate the individual models.

Our feature car is a Four Hundred, which comprised one of three senior Packard models along with the Patrician four-door sedan and the Caribbean convertible. Four Hundred designated the hardtop body style. All three bodies were trimmed similarly, with the Patrician having a more conservative layout of trim than the other two, and the Caribbean treated to a flamboyant configuration that included twin scoops on the hood. The more adventurous could order their Patrician trimmed similarly to the Four Hundred.

Contemporary styling wasn’t the only thing the 1955 Packard had going for it, either. The old flathead straight-eight engine, a mainstay since the 1920s (albeit one continually updated), was gone. In its place was a new overhead-valve V-8. Clipper Deluxe and Super models — along with some Nash and Hudson cars, under a parts-swapping deal with American Motors — received a 320-cu.in. version.

The new engine was introduced by Packard with a recitation

of the company’s strong heritage of engine production, including the 1916 Twin Six, the Liberty aircraft engine of the First World War, the World War II Rolls-Royce Merlin, Packard’s various marine engines, and even the J-47 turbojet engine as found in the F-86 Sabrejet and the massive B-36 Pacemaker bomber.

Thanks to a larger bore, Clipper Customs and senior Packards received 352 cubic inches with up to 275 horsepower. The latter figure was in part possible thanks to dual-quad carburetion. A 275-hp, 352-cu.in. Packard V-8 would power the first Studebaker Golden Hawks in 1956 and the basic architecture is said to have been designed with up to 500 cubic inches possible for future, larger Packards. So good was the Packard V-8, legend has it that General Motors considered purchasing the Packard V-8 tooling as an alternative to enlarging the Chevrolet 348/409 W-engine beyond 427 cubic inches.

Regardless of what might have been, the 1955 Packard V-8 is a fine engine, as is the chassis below it. While the bodies may have been heavily restyled holdovers, the underpinnings were something new. Wheelbases remained the same, 122 inches for Clippers and 127 inches for senior Packards, but gone were the front coil springs and rear parallel leaves of 1954.





Brushed stainless and red make for a handsome, modern (for 1955) combination on the dash of the Four Hundred. Note that gear selection is made via a lever—pushbuttons would be an option the next year. Novi air conditioning controls are located below the steering column.

In place of conventional front and rear springs was the new Torsion-Level Suspension that used torsion bars interconnected via the “levelizer” system; it promised to bring your Packard “back to ideal ride level” in around seven seconds. The system also promised to prevent pitching and bouncing of passengers.

The 1955 Packard is a capable car indeed. Owner Amos Rolteau, of New Haven, Vermont, took us for a ride in our subject car—a 1955 Packard Four Hundred—and we can vouch for its “magic carpet” level of sensation. We did not encourage Amos to throw the car into the turns, but period road testers were equally enthusiastic about the handling torsion bars gave the big Packards. Likewise, the Twin-Ultramatic can be operated so as to engage low gear for quick starts, but even in the conventional range, the ample torque of the 352 V-8 propels the 4,250-pound Four Hundred from a stop quite effortlessly.

Speaking of stops, the Bendix Treadle Vac power brakes, consisting of vacuum-boosted four-wheel drums, haul the car

down from speed with ease—no discs needed here unless you’re worried about fading. In fact, Amos tells us that it’s critical when braking to leave your heel on the floor and actuate the pedal with the toes—lest you stab the brakes too hard and find yourself pitched off the broad, flat bench seat and into the steering wheel.

Perhaps the most surprising part of experiencing the Four Hundred in action is the exhaust note. While it’s no in-your-face muscle car sound, the burble from the pipes is exquisite, leaving no doubt that the power underhood is beyond adequate. Appropriately for a Packard, however, it is near silent inside when underway.

When he first saw this car in 1961, on the used-car lot of a Chevrolet dealer in Marysville, Kansas, not far from the Kansas State University campus in Manhattan, Amos knew he had to have it. “My second semester of my freshman year,” he recalls, “I hitched a ride home for Christmas. When I got back in January 1961, a roommate of mine who knew I was a Packard guy, told me about the car.”



Clock, ash trays, courtesy lamps, and radio were all comfort and convenience features that were not necessarily standard equipment in 1955. Highly effective Easamatic power brakes were optional even on the well-equipped Four Hundred.





The dual-quad, 275-hp, 352-cu.in. V-8 was standard on Caribbean convertibles and optional on other senior Packards. The original buyer of this car spared no expense when fitting it out and thus opted for the most-powerful engine as well. Note the “batwing” air cleaner.

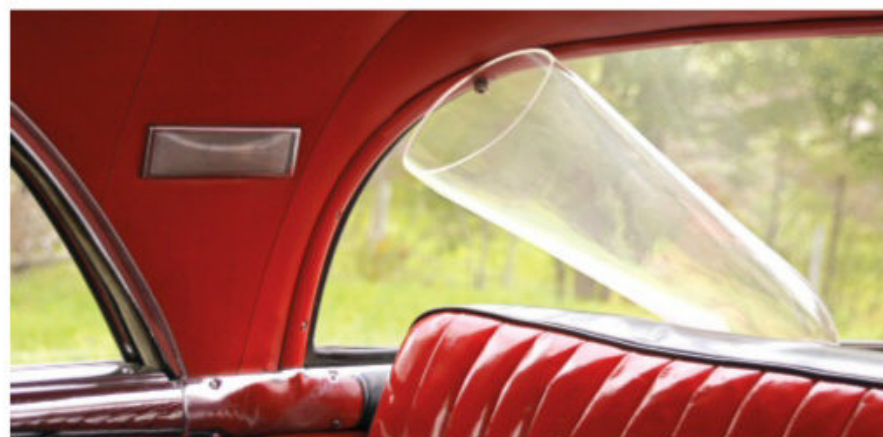
Amos’ “Packard guy” credentials were already well established by his freshman year of college. He had grown up in a Packard family and had already helped his father restore some vintage Packards as a teenager. “I learned to drive on my grandpa’s 1937 120 at age 12,” he says. “My parents had a ’41 and a ’48. My dad traded the ’48 Packard for a brand new ’51 model, then bought my mother a new Clipper in 1953. All we had was Packard.”

Amos’ roommate actually worked at the Chevrolet dealer in question. “He told me, ‘You ought to see the Packard we took in trade. Everything is chrome!’” Amos didn’t have to be told twice, he borrowed a friend’s car and a tow bar and went to take a look.

Packard had been gone only three years at that point, and Studebaker was still going (“Packard” remained in the corporate name until 1962), but orphans did not bring good money as used cars, no matter how excellent they were when new. Especially orphans with bad transmissions.

Looking the car over, he was taken with its wire wheels, air conditioning, red leather interior, black paint, and the dual-quad Caribbean V-8. Senior Packards also came standard with features like power brakes and the Twin-Ultramatic transmission—both of which were present on the Four Hundred in question. Equally important, the condition of the car was immaculate. “There was no rust,” a fact Amos credits to the lack of salt used on Kansas roads, “and it wasn’t dented. In fact, it was a lot like it looks today. The transmission was bad, but that didn’t deter me—when you’re 18, nothing does.”

The Twin-Ultramatic is well-understood and staunchly defended by Packard enthusiasts today, but at the time it was mysterious and viewed as trouble prone—which is why this car ended up on a used-car lot in Kansas. When the transmission got sick, the original owner called it quits and traded in on a new Impala. The dealer set it out for sale as-is, and luckily for Amos, it proved a tough sell.



Packard originated automobile air conditioning before World War II, so its presence here seems only natural. Like other systems of the era, the Novi air conditioner occupied a portion of the trunk and fed cool air to passengers via clear ducts on the package shelf.



I grew up in an era of a lot of fun times for automobiles. I tore this car apart in '67 to restore and it sat partially fixed until 2015. I had bought four or five cars while I was in high school. I started restoring cars at age 16 or 17—I did a '30 Auburn Convertible Coupe for a friend in 1958. I've owned over a hundred Packards over the years—after I opened my junkyard in 1967. But this one was different. It was way more money than I'd ever spent up to that time and it was the first car that I'd bought on my own. It was pretty important to me.

By the time he was informed of the car's presence in town, the dealer was getting desperate. This desperation matched well with Amos' situation as an out-of-state college student with appropriately limited financial resources. What he managed to scrape together was the \$400 his parents had given him for room and board that semester. "I had four \$100 bills. I set the money on the desk and the guy said 'That ain't very much,' but he took the money and I took the car."

Luckily for Amos, his landlord, an Army Reserve sergeant, was the tolerant type who didn't mind a disabled Packard up on blocks in the adjoining parking lot—or a transmission in the house. To feed himself and pay rent to his oh-so-forgiving landlord, Amos worked two on-campus jobs—something he says was no big deal to a young man straight off the farm in Vermont.

Amos' transmission rebuild was a success and he was soon driving the car, much to the surprise of his father, who had never been informed of the impending purchase until Amos

sent home for license plates. The combination of the high-output engine and heavy car did eventually cause a second transmission failure, but on undertaking that rebuild, Amos updated the vulnerable internals of the 1955 transmission with the more-robust parts of the 1956 design.

In 1967, Amos took the Four Hundred apart to restore. Although the Packard was still quite young, the decision made sense to Amos, given his emotional and financial investment in the car.

A good thing, as the restoration would take another 48 years. Amos started Packard of Vermont and began disassembling unsavable Packards and redistributing the parts among the enthusiast community. Many Packards and other unusual and desirable antique cars have passed through his hands since, but the Four Hundred has been a constant.

Today, Amos says the car looks "Exactly the way I bought it," right down to that rare batwing air cleaner and the correctly numbered carburetors. A large number of NOS parts were gathered over the years, giving the car an aura of authenticity.

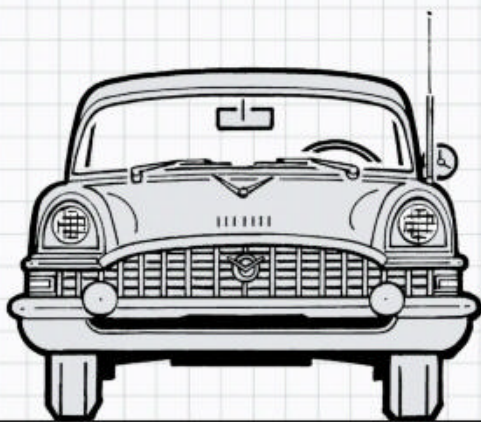
So, if you must Ask the Man Who Owns One just why he has held onto this particular car, the answer is fairly straightforward. "I've always sought out the weirdest stuff you've never seen." With only 7,206 Four Hundreds built for 1955 and most of those lacking features like factory air, wire wheels, and the dual-quad Caribbean engine, it's fairly unlikely you'll ever see this car's twin. 🐼

The inset photo shows the Four Hundred back in the 1960s, when it was still Amos' daily driver. Today, the Four Hundred looks "exactly the way I bought it." Maybe better.

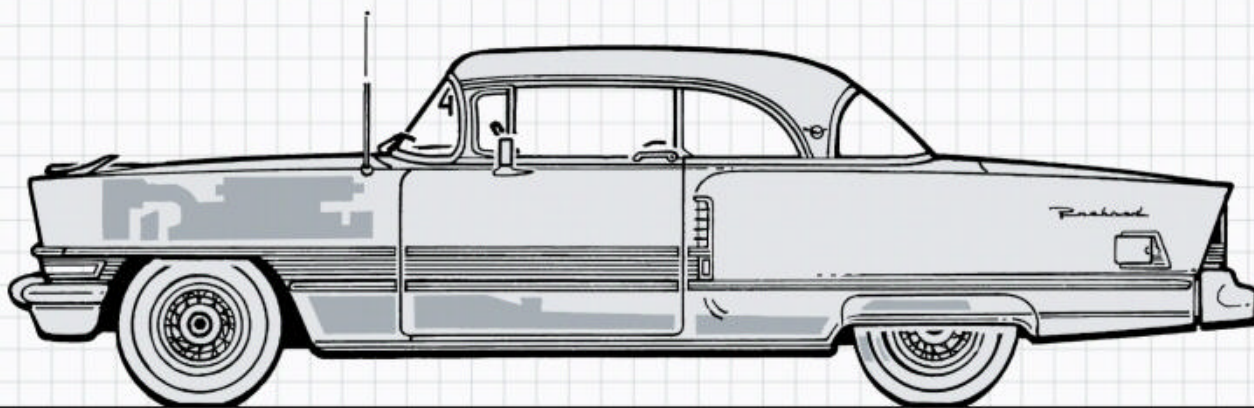


1955 PACKARD FOUR HUNDRED

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



60 inches



127 inches

SPECIFICATIONS

PRICE

BASE PRICE	\$4,080
OPTIONS	Radio; heater; power steering; power brakes; air conditioning; wire wheels; 275-hp Caribbean V-8

ENGINE

TYPE	OHV V-8; cast-iron block and cylinder heads
DISPLACEMENT	352-cu.in.
BORE X STROKE	4 x 3.5 in
COMPRESSION RATIO	8.5:1
HORSEPOWER @ RPM	275 @ 4,800
TORQUE @ RPM	355 lb-ft @ 2,400-3,200
VALVETRAIN	Hydraulic lifters
MAIN BEARINGS	5
FUEL SYSTEM	Dual Rochester 4GC four-barrel carburetors
LUBRICATION SYSTEM	Full-pressure, gear-driven pump
ELECTRICAL SYSTEM	12-volt, positive ground
EXHAUST SYSTEM	Dual, 2-in with cast-iron manifolds

TRANSMISSION

TYPE	Twin-Ultramatic automatic
RATIOS	1st 1.82:1 2nd 1:1 Reverse 1.63:1

DIFFERENTIAL

TYPE	Packard hypoid, semi-floating
GEAR RATIO	3.07:1

STEERING

TYPE	Packard-Gemmer worm-and-roller, power assist
RATIO OVERALL	22.5:1
TURNING CIRCLE	21.5 ft

BRAKES

TYPE	Four-wheel hydraulic drums
FRONT	12 x 2.25 in
REAR	12 x 2 in

CHASSIS & BODY

CONSTRUCTION	All steel
BODY STYLE	Hardtop
LAYOUT	Front engine/rear-wheel drive

SUSPENSION

FRONT/REAR	Full-length torsion-bars with automatic electric load compensator control and direct-acting shock absorbers
------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

WHEELS & TIRES

WHEELS	Chrome wire
FRONT/REAR	15 x 6 in
TIRES	Bias-ply
FRONT/REAR	8.20-15

WEIGHTS & MEASURES

WHEELBASE	127 in
OVERALL LENGTH	218.5 in
OVERALL WIDTH	78 in
OVERALL HEIGHT	62 in
FRONT TRACK	60 in
REAR TRACK	61 in
CURB WEIGHT	4,250 lb

CAPACITIES

CRANKCASE	5 qt
FUEL TANK	20 gal
TRANSMISSION	11 qt
DIFFERENTIAL	4.25 pt

CALCULATED DATA

BHP PER CU.IN.	0.78125
CURB WEIGHT PER BHP	15.45 lb
CURB WEIGHT PER CU.IN.	12.07 lb

PRODUCTION

1955	7,206
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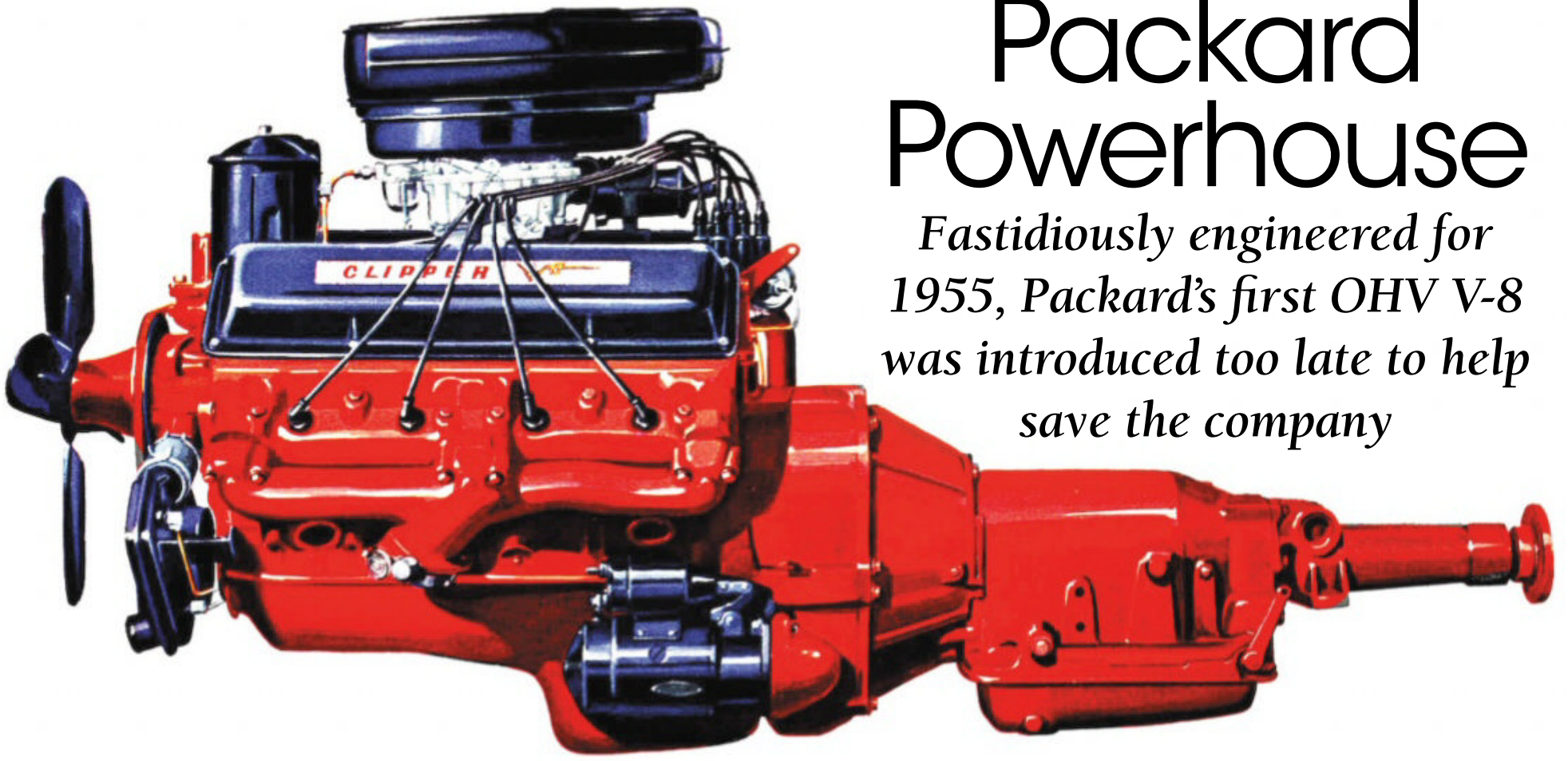
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Packard Powerhouse

Fastidiously engineered for 1955, Packard's first OHV V-8 was introduced too late to help save the company



BY THOMAS A. DeMAURO • ARTWORK COURTESY OF THE AUTOMOTIVE HISTORY PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Packard was rather late to the overhead-valve V-8 launch party with the debut of its 352- and 320-cu.in. engines for the 1955 model year. Though its history was steeped in prior engineering achievements, including the famed V-12 Twin Six four decades earlier and others since, Cadillac and Oldsmobile had already released their versions of the OHV V-8 for 1949. Then Chrysler, Studebaker, Lincoln, De Soto, Dodge, Buick, Ford, and Mercury all came to market with their designs before Packard did.

If that wasn't enough, the introduction would also have to share the press limelight with newly arriving OHV V-8s from Chevrolet, Pontiac, and Plymouth. And let's not forget that Packard's purchase of Studebaker in October of 1954, which formed the Studebaker-Packard Corporation, would also bring significant change.

According to the S.A.E. paper, "The New Packard V-8 Engine" by W.E. Schwieder, development began "shortly after World War II," and by the Fall of 1949 the OHV 90-degree V-8 configuration was selected. A long-term plan was developed. "Instead of being concerned about designing to meet minimum requirements, the contrary approach was taken to ensure that changing requirements could be satisfied without major retooling," Schwieder stated.

It was determined that an oversquare (large-bore/short-stroke) design OHV V-8 would provide better mechanical and thermal efficiency than the undersquare (small-bore/long-stroke) outgoing L-head straight-eights—the 212-hp 359-cu.in. version being the largest and most powerful. And the valve-in-head layout would improve volumetric efficiency. Accordingly, higher output could be achieved while also increasing fuel economy.

Among the factors that governed the size and weight of the engine were providing for future displacement increases and higher compression ratios, a straightforward design approach to allow for efficient manufacturing and assembly, and setting "a new standard" for durability.

The "high-grade alloy iron" 4.00-inch bore cylinder block featured wide 5-inch bore spacing for future growth. Five bulkheads added rigidity and supported the camshaft and crankshaft. Testing had determined that extending the block below the centerline of the crankshaft wasn't necessary. Large full-length water jackets around the

cylinders provided better cooling, and the upper bellhousing was cast integral with the block to reduce deflection in the driveline.

Following evaluations of crankshaft types, cast steel was chosen over forged steel, as it was deemed sufficiently strong, it saved weight, the counterweights could be optimally positioned, and balancing was easier. Its stroke was 3.5 inches, main bearing journals measured 2.499 inches, and the connecting rod journals 2.25 inches. The crankshaft was supported by two-bolt main bearing caps.

Drop-forged steel I-beam connecting rods attached to auto-thermic, aluminum alloy, slipper-type, flat-top pistons via full-floating pins. The pistons featured steel struts to control expansion and were fitted with alloy iron rings—chrome-plated top compression ring, Ferrox-coated second compression ring, and an open-slot, ventilated oil ring.

The hydraulic-lifter camshaft had 250 degrees of advertised duration and .375-inch lift on both the intake and exhaust.

Cylinder heads were retained by 15 bolts. The ports were described as "equal in cross-section throughout, possessing generous radii at all junctions, and are contoured to minimize restriction, control flow, and provide optimum turbulence as the charge enters the combustion chamber." Intake port openings were rectangular, and on the exhaust side, the center ports were paired and shared the same outlet to the cast-iron exhaust manifolds.

The large valves measured 1.937-inch intake and 1.687-inch exhaust, and were in integral valve guides, which reduced their operating temperatures. Single valve springs, shaft-mounted 1.60:1-ratio iron rocker arms, and $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch diameter steel tube pushrods were employed. Valve covers had seven fasteners to reduce the chance of oil seepage.

According to Packard, the machined, high turbulence, "elliptically shaped," wedge-type combustion chamber was ultimately chosen due to its favorable burn characteristics and adaptability for increasing compression ratios in the future. Though compression ratios up to 12:1 were evaluated in test engines, a conservative 8.5:1 was chosen based on the quality of the fuel available to the public and to ensure suitable operation even when chamber deposits were present.

Regarding the induction system, it was noted, "Extensive work was conducted to obtain equal distribution to all cylinders, to minimize restriction, and to promote turbulence only where desired for proper mixture of the charge...." The cast-iron intake manifold also had a heat crossover for quick warm up and for the automatic choke of the four-barrel carburetor. Since the cooling system didn't require a crossover in the intake manifold, and a separate upper valve tappet cover was employed under it, removal and reinstallation of the intake was easier.

The full-pressure lubrication system was fed by a gear-type oil pump with a floating pick-up in the oil pan. A partial-flow oil filter was mounted at the top front of the engine for easy access. A 12-volt electrical system met the requirements of the new V-8 engine. The cam-driven breaker-point distributor was at the top rear of the engine.

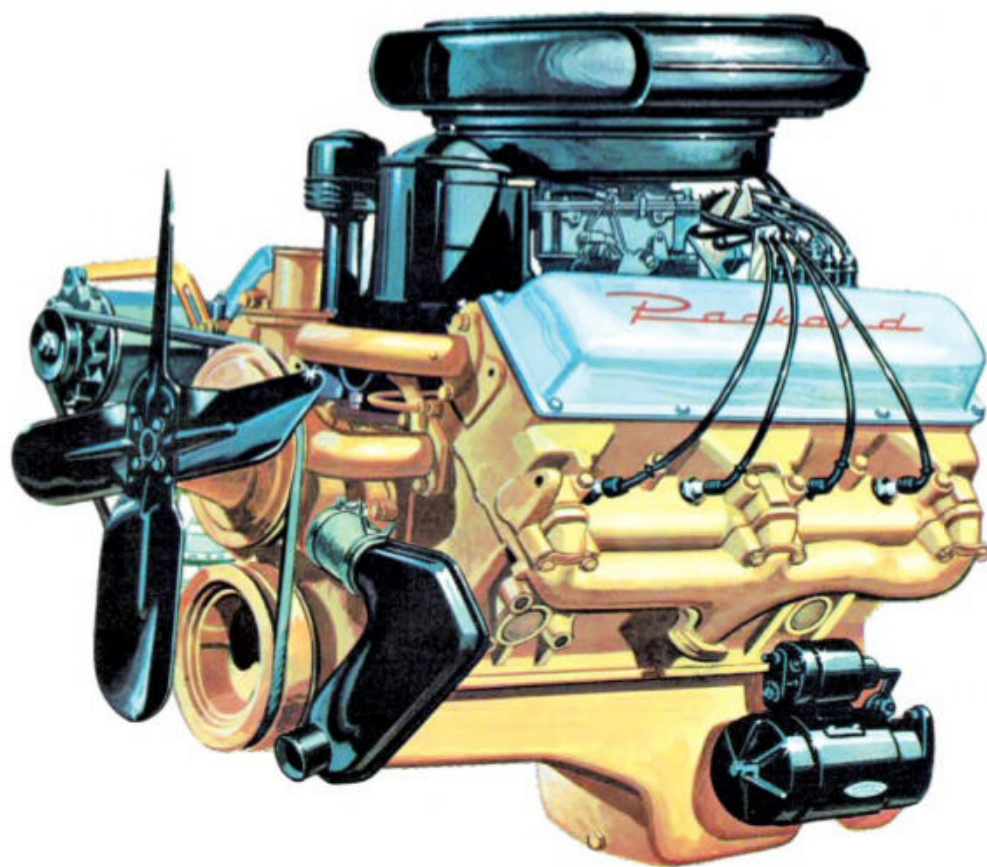
An assembled 352-cu.in. V-8 with accessories but sans air cleaner, had a dry weight of 698 pounds, versus 752 pounds of the previous straight-eight. The V-8 was also 1/2-inch lower and 8 1/2 inches shorter, but it was wider.

The AAA Contest Board supervised a 25,000-mile endurance run on the 2.5-mile track at the Packard Proving Grounds, where a prototype V-8 sedan posted an average speed of 104.737 mph including pitstops. The automaker stated that, "all previous stock car records were eclipsed."

Senior Packards consisted of the 127-inch-wheelbase Four-Hundred, Patrician, and Caribbean. On the engine dyno, the 352 V-8 produced 260 horsepower and 355 lb-ft of torque with a single Rochester 4GC (four-barrel) and was installed in the Four Hundred and Patrician. The Caribbean received a dual inline four-barrel version rated at 275 hp. All senior Packards used dual exhaust with reverse-flow mufflers and resonators.

Medium-priced 122-inch wheelbase Clippers were offered in three series. Clipper Customs received a 352 four-barrel rated at 245 hp. The Clipper Supers and the Deluxe employed the smaller 3.8125-inch bore 320-cu.in. engine equipped with a four-barrel Carter WCFB, single-exhaust, and an 8.5:1 compression ratio. It was rated at 225 hp and 325 lb-ft of torque. Machined chambers gave way to as-cast ones during the model year.

Packard's striking updated styling and modern OHV V-8 for



1955 were augmented by the new Twin Ultramatic transmission featuring two drive ranges, which was standard in the senior models and optional in Clippers. Innovative Torsion-Level Ride suspension also debuted for the Clipper Customs and higher-end Packards. Sales for the model year were 55,247.

Detuned 320-cu.in. engines backed with the Twin Ultramatic were also installed in 1955 Nash Ambassador and Hudson Hornet V-8s. Nash called it a "Jetfire V-8."

For 1956, subtle styling revisions were accompanied by underhood upgrades. An increase in bore size to 4.125 inches resulted in a 374-cu.in. engine. The compression ratio was a higher 10:1, cylinder heads were the same for 374s and 352s now with as-cast chambers and larger 2.00-inch intake valves, and the camshaft was more aggressive. Output soared to 310 hp for the dual four-barrel Caribbean and 290 hp for the single four-barrel Four-Hundred and Patrician. Torque increased to 405 lb-ft.

The Clippers now sported the 352-cu.in. engine with a higher 9.5:1 compression ratio. It was rated at 275 hp and 380 lb-ft of torque with a four-barrel and dual exhaust for the Customs, and 240 hp and 350 lb-ft of torque with a two-barrel for the Supers and Deluxe.

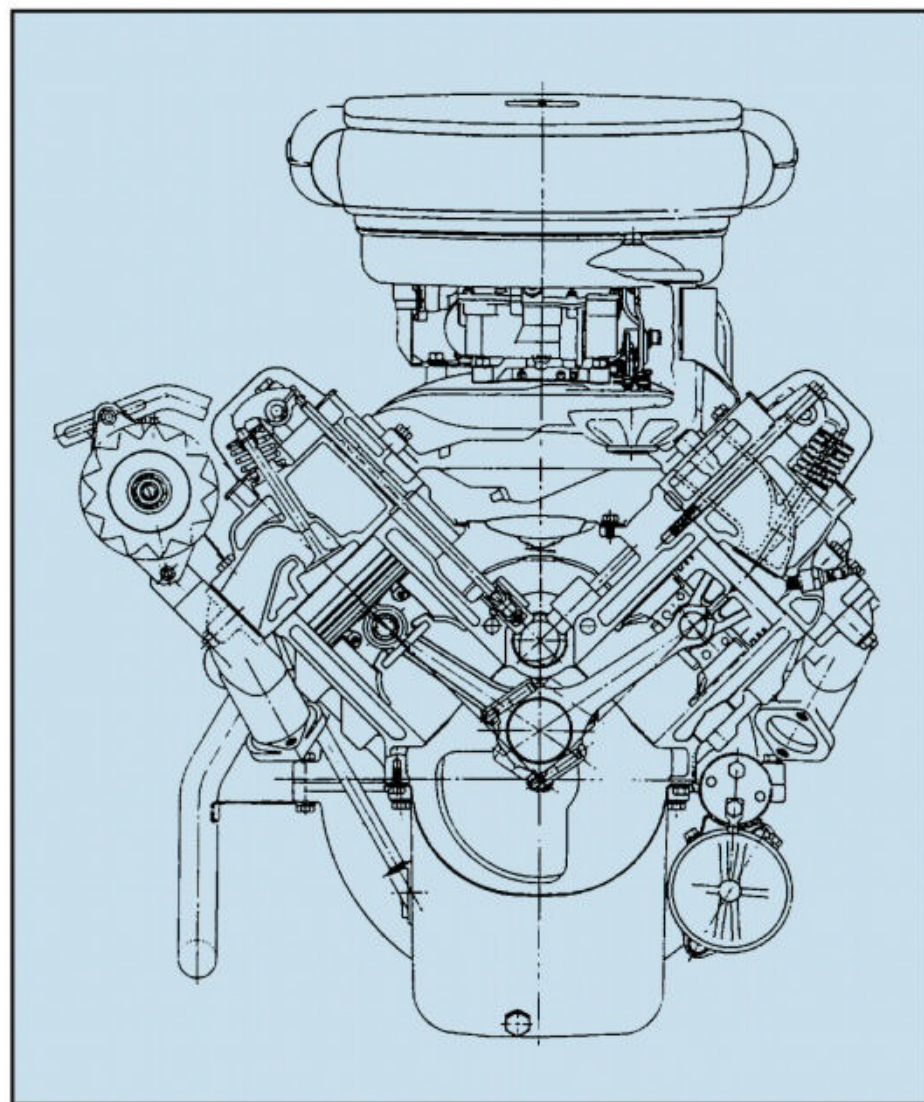
A new optional (standard in Caribbean) electronic push-button gear selector could accompany the Ultramatic. "All Clippers offer the new Torsion-Level Ride," said the dealer brochure, but it also stated, "Coil and leaf spring suspension available on Clipper Deluxe."

The Caribbean two-door hardtop was added for 1956, and in the Spring, the Executive series featuring many senior Packard styling cues arrived with the 122-inch wheelbase and 275-hp V-8 of the Clipper Customs.

The V-8-equipped Nash Ambassadors and Hudson Hornets featured the 352 rated at 220 hp and 320 lb-ft of torque for 1956. The 275-hp Packard 352 was also installed in the Studebaker Golden Hawk that year.

Production dropped to just 28,835 Packards for 1956. Mounting issues facing the corporation and the drastic steps taken to combat them meant that the stylish traditional Packard cars and their modern powerful V-8 engines wouldn't return for 1957. Instead, a small selection of Studebaker-based Packards emerged. The prestigious nameplate would be retired after the 1958 model year. 🐾

SPECIAL THANKS to Packard Expert Ross Miller for his assistance with this article.





Trying to sell

European

styling to

Americans

was a costly

lesson...



The Erskine Error

Several American Independent automakers tried offering a companion make, usually as a lower-priced alternative to their main sellers. Willys had its Whippet, Hudson had the Essex, Kaiser-Frazer its Henry J, Nash the Lafayette, and Studebaker had its Erskine.

The Erskine got its name from the man who first proposed it—Albert Russel Erskine, Studebaker's president since 1915. Once third in industry sales, Studebaker had fallen to sixth place by 1924. Erskine was determined to grow the company by entering new market segments. During a trip to Europe, he began to think about producing a small car that could sell in volume on the Continent—where Studebaker was quite popular—while also taking on low-price specialists Chevrolet, Ford, and Willys in the U.S.

With no hope of competing with Ford on price, Erskine decided to offer buyers a much nicer car at a reasonable price. He had the new car styled by Ray Dietrich, who created a sharp design with unusually low, sporty lines and neat touches like a European-style visor and fender-mounted tool and battery boxes. With sweeping fenders and a rounded rear, it was quite stylish for a small car.

It was also rather expensive: \$995 for the Custom sedan or coupe, and \$945 for a Tourer (touring car) or Business Coupe. In comparison, a Ford Fordor sedan was \$545, a touring car just \$380! Erskine wasn't even competitive with Chevrolet, which offered prices ranging from \$525 to \$745, or Willys, whose Whippet sedan sold for \$610, its roadster for \$525.

One reason for the price disparity was Studebaker's decision to market the Erskine as "The Little Aristocrat of Motordom," i.e., a small fine car with stylish interior fittings and trim. But a larger reason for the big price difference was that the Erskine was essentially an assembled car. Instead of producing a new engine, Studebaker bought them from Continental, while bodies were built by Budd. Everything came together in the old Studebaker plant on Piquette Avenue in Detroit, built in 1904 for the infant Ford Motor Company.

The new Erskine debuted in October 1926 in

France, where it was the hit of the Paris Auto Show. Its American debut came a few months later, in January 1927, at the National Automobile Show in New York.

The New York introduction drew a mixed reaction. Everyone agreed the Erskine was a sharp little car, but that price! \$995 for a small car? In America small invariably meant low-priced, so the average motorist had trouble accepting the idea of a pricey small car.

The Erskine's engine received criticism as well. European tax laws punished big engines, so to satisfy overseas customers the Erskine six-cylinder displaced just 146 cubic inches; Ford's upcoming Model A would use a 200.5-cu.in. four, with both rated at 40 hp. Acceleration was leisurely, to be kind, though Studebaker claimed its car could do 60 mph effortlessly. That was a stretch for a small engine and a 5.125:1 rear axle ratio, and folks who drove their Erskine at that speed for very long usually developed engine problems. The little engine was just plain overworked.

Sales were mediocre, so mid-year the company reduced prices and added a Sports Roadster model. In the end a tad under 25,000 Erskine's sold in America in 1927. For 1928, the company offered a larger 160-cu.in. 43-hp six-cylinder and lowered prices even further: The four-door sedan was now \$885, and a new two-door club sedan was \$795. Attempting to distance it from its European design, advertising referred to the revised cars as "The New American Edition of the Erskine Six." Sales dropped to just more than 22,000 for the year.

But with new styling and a 2-inch longer wheelbase for 1929 Erskine sales rose to over 25,000 units. Encouraged, Studebaker debuted an even larger Erskine for 1930. Powered by a 70-hp Studebaker straight-six, the Erskine finally became the car it should have been all along. However, by May of 1930, the company threw in the towel, deciding the Erskine would sell better as a Studebaker. So the Erskine became the Studebaker Six.

Trying to sell European styling to Americans was a costly lesson, but would have been worth it if Studebaker learned anything from it. But as 1953 would prove, the company hadn't. 🐼



HERE'S MY BEST ANSWER AS TO WHY

car companies other than General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler were called "independents." The "Big Three" consisted of several makes, while the independents, at least before the mergers, consisted of just a single make. For example, in the 1950s every car Hudson made was a Hudson: Hudson Commodore, Hudson Hornet, Hudson Jet, etc. Likewise, Studebaker President, Studebaker Commander, Studebaker Hawk, and so on.

On the other hand, there was no such thing as a Ford Mercury, Ford Lincoln, Chrysler Plymouth, or Chrysler Dodge. And no car was a General Motors anything.

Eventually AMC tried to differentiate their models as makes, as Rambler, Ambassador and American rather than Rambler, Rambler Ambassador and Rambler American, although the latter nomenclature was widely used by the public. And as much as Packard wanted the Clipper to be a separate make, it was always seen as just one model of the company's single make.

Mark John Astolfi

Danvers, Massachusetts

IN ANSWER TO TOM REINHEIMER'S

question in *HCC* #179 about why all car manufacturers except General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler are called independents, he guessed pretty accurately. The brands built under the GM, Ford, and Chrysler umbrellas are dependent on the direction and funding their corporate heads give them. They have changed some, but GM used to lead Cadillac, Buick, Oldsmobile, Pontiac, and Chevrolet; Ford lead Ford, Mercury, Lincoln, and Continental; Chrysler lead Plymouth, Dodge, De Soto, Chrysler, and Imperial.

However, Packard, Studebaker, Hudson, and Nash were under "independent" control for their design and funding until Studebaker and Packard combined to form Studebaker-Packard Corp., which didn't last long, and Packard was dropped. Nash and Hudson formed American Motors Corporation and very quickly dropped the Hudson and Nash names.

There were a couple more independents—International Harvester, which built pickup trucks and utility vehicles, and Checker Motors, which built mostly taxicabs.

Stanley Howey

Mt. Pleasant, Michigan

ENJOYED THE ARTICLE ON RAMBLERS

in *HCC* #179. It's my understanding that prior to the introduction of the Rogue, there was a contest of some sort among dealers for a name. The Rogue name was submitted by the Medford, Oregon, dealer, Paul Phillips. That's what was chosen. Medford is in the Rogue Valley named for the Rogue River. That's how I remember it.

Ron Brown

Gold Hill, Oregon

I ENJOYED YOUR ARTICLE ON CHEV-

rolet vs. Ford in *HCC* #179. This debate has lasted many decades, however one factor is always overlooked, and that is the cheapest bid. That factor covers all the low-priced cars purchased by the police, fire departments, post office (any government office), and rental car companies.

Craig Wood

Lenexa, Kansas

HCC #179 FEATURED NOT ONE, BUT

two cars I owned early in my driving history. My very first car was a 1964 Rambler American, purchased in 1975 for less than \$400. It was a very basic, three-on-the-tree four-door sedan—good gas mileage, super reliable, eminently practical, and it featured Rambler's famous (or, should I say, infamous) fully reclining front seats! It also had vacuum-operated windshield wipers that barely moved when accelerating up a hill, and went like crazy if you pushed in the clutch.

A few years later, I moved on to a 1971 Volkswagen Squareback. Talk about sensible and utilitarian! As your article mentioned, one could really pack up a Squareback, with its trunk in the front and its flat cargo area above the rear engine. Of course, getting up a slope of any precipitousness, with a full load, was something of a challenge. At least the wipers worked under those conditions! One other thing about that Squareback: I've never had a car, before or since, that totally ran out of gas the very second the fuel gauge hit empty. I learned that lesson the hard way.

Matthew Gage

Portland, Oregon

I REALLY ENJOYED MILTON STERN'S

article on the Ford Anglia, as I do remember those cars. In his article, he did briefly mention the Fords made in Germany. I have a much fonder memory of the German Ford variety, as I owned one back in 1964. It was a 1959 Taunus 17M with a

1,698-cc engine, and three-speed column shift; it looked like a miniature 1955 Fairlane, which I'm sure it took its styling cues from. Besides it being quite peppy for a foreign car, I was impressed by the rocker switches on the dashboard.

I, and I'm sure your other readers, would love to see an article on the German Fords. I hope you can make it happen.

Bob Testa

Lebanon, Connecticut

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 the transmission in my Dad's 1949 Lincoln. It also worked that way on my 1951 Pontiac. So far, I have never encountered a Hydra-Matic-equipped car that didn't have it. The only transmissions I have encountered that do not have a positive lock provision are the Fluid Drive Chrysler products and the two-speed automatic they built up until 1957.

Wylie Johnson

Knoxville, Tennessee

THE CADILLAC INNOVATIONS

written by Jeff Koch in *HCC* #177 includes the frequent reference to the creation of the electric starter, instigated by the death of Byron Carter trying to crank start a Cadillac. Most accounts mention 1910 when this incident was supposed to have happened and the date that "Boss" Kettering began his research into the self-starter. Jeff is correct in stating that Carter died in 1908, two years before most other accounts.

Dean Nelson, the author of *Byron J. Carter: The Ingenious Inventor Who Founded the Jackson Automobile and Cartercar Companies*, mindful of this legendary account, has been unable to substantiate it at all. Dean searched

Continued on page 39



Ever since the

automobile

was invented,

accessories

to personalize

it... have

been made

available for

car owners.



Parts by Mail

The pre-internet/computer era of getting a catalog in the mail, one that offered after-market parts and accessories for cars, is pretty much long gone. I recall growing up in the 1950s and '60s when a catalog with car stuff offered by J.C. Whitney and Warshawsky seemed to appear in the mailbox every month. I later learned that both companies were owned and operated by the same person.

Roy Warshawsky worked for, then inherited, both auto parts and accessories companies from his father, and did very well for himself. He also collected prewar classic cars and was a member of CCCA for many years, participating and exhibiting his collection at many events.

There were a fair number of discount auto supply companies in the USA, and several were well established by the WWI era. By 1914, Cut Price Auto Supply Co. of Boston had issued its second catalog of auto parts and accessories. It was a small, pocket-sized catalog of 100 pages and offered everything from lamps, bumpers, and horns, to entire tops. There was a full refund that included cost of shipping if you weren't pleased, and they also offered payment by COD (cash on delivery).

The Charles E. Miller Company had 15 stores in nine states whose motto was: "We either carry in stock—will get it—or it isn't made!" *Try Miller* was its tagline. It claimed to be the largest automobile supply house in America. If a vehicle had an engine (cars, cycles, boats, planes), Miller had parts for it. The annual catalog was 166 pages and had driving gloves, goggles, polish, tools, riding outfits, rims, wire wheels, exhaust whistles, oil, horns, radiators, and even the "ideal tourist shovel," so you could dig yourself out of a ditch after your car's wheel dropped into it! They claimed it was strong, durable, and efficient. The accessory instrument boards would "put your Ford in the Packard class." Miller's main store was located at 97 Reade Street in New York City.



Nil Melior was also an accessory store for motorcars made in the USA, as well as those automobiles imported from Europe. It was most active in the 1930s and sold luxury items and accessories, not repair parts. Nil Melior did offer a McCulloch supercharger for \$124.50 in the

1936-'40 era. French Marchal spotlamps, headlamps, and bulbs, Tru Fog fog lamps, and Trippie headlamps were available for \$17.50 each. The list was endless: backup lamps, Rolls-Royce-style full wheel discs, fishtail exhaust pipe tips, and accessory horns. Among the horns was one named Ki-Yi, the barking dog horn. There were nearly 40 different accessory mascots whose variety of subjects ranged from horses, dogs, birds, and elephants, to penguins and a kangaroo. Opera lamps were available to mount on the roof or rear quarter side panels. Humorous license plates were \$2.50 and custom "customers ideas" plates would also include words, not just numbers.

The Melior store was located in New York City, and its final location was in the South lobby of The Waldorf-Astoria Hotel on Park Avenue. Can you even imagine telling someone that the show-

rooms for your automobile accessory store were in one of the most famous hotels in New York?

Ever since the automobile was invented, accessories to personalize it—whether you drive a Chevrolet or a Ford, Isotta Fraschini or Packard—have been made available for car owners. Both the automobile manufacturers and automotive entrepreneurs looked to help owners accomplish that. I am positive that the readers of *Hemmings Classic Car* have more than once thought about how they can "make their car their own" with a few accessories that reflect their personality. This has been going on since our great-grandfathers first spotted brass self-generating headlamps they thought would look right at home on the front of their Locomobile or Stanley Steamer, or perhaps their De Dion-Bouton. 🐶

through more than 20 obituary accounts, and even the death certificate, which listed pneumonia as the cause of death, with long-term lung issues contributory factors, but no mention of a broken jaw or arm as a secondary cause.

Two early authors, Arthur Pound and Maurice Hendry, covered the incident but failed to list Byron Carter as the person fatally injured. So, where did Carter get injected into the story?

Louis Fourie
President, Society of Automotive
Historians
West Vancouver, British Columbia

ALWAYS GREAT TO SEE A "PLAIN-Jane" classic, as they are just so rare! 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 on the 1950 Pontiac Chieftain profiled in HCC #178?

Keep these kind of articles coming!
Ken Weber
Tampa, Florida

THE ACCOUNT OF "SAVING A

Sprite" in HCC #179 was a real boost to my sometimes flagging optimism. I love the little Austin-Healeys, and have a '62 model that is mechanically identical to your feature car. It pains me to see how both these models have almost vanished from the roads, the few remaining often being extensively modified from original. I've had mine for 51 years now.

After the restoration I did on mine, I ran into something that I think has bothered other owners of old cars with drum brakes: the less effective braking due to modern brake shoes' friction material. I'd started to notice this back in the 1980s when I couldn't get asbestos linings anymore, and more recently I could well understand why most of these cars have been converted to front discs.

Last year I started trying to figure out some treatment of the modern linings that would give them a better coefficient of friction against the drums. Well, it turned out there was a fine product already, only the manufacturers didn't know of it: belt dressing, by Cyclo. Not every brand

works, at least for beefing up brake shoes. However, when I sprayed a bit onto a clean modern test shoe I was using in a test setup with a spare brake drum, the increase in friction was promising.

I cleaned the brakes, first with one of the commercial acetone-based cleaners, then blotted on the belt dressing—onto the shoes only, not the drums—with a cloth. On the car, this has given dramatically improved stopping power and so far hasn't worn off in three months of in-town driving.

Fred Woodworth
Tucson, Arizona

I WAS FASCINATED BY THE FEATURE

in HCC #179 on Doble Steam Motors. Abner Doble and his cars have dogged me all my life and I would like to share some memories.

I grew up in Daly City, California, and it was at the Silverado Concours that my dad took me to as a child where I saw my first Doble; the same red roadster pictured

Continued on page 41



✓Yes



✓Yes



xNo



✓Yes



✓Yes



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Mind Richard's Rover

H yacinth Bucket (pronounced “Bouquet” or “boo-kei”) doesn’t have a driver’s license, but that doesn’t stop her from being a passenger-seat driver. “Mind the cows, Richard.” To which, he replies in a monotone voice, “Minding the cows.”

I do hope you are familiar with the British sitcom, *Keeping Up Appearances* (1990-’95), or this column will be pointless.

Aside from telling Richard how to drive, Hyacinth insists he keep their small, medium blue saloon (sedan in U.K.-speak) absolutely spotless.

“Richard, your car is immaculate,” declares next-door neighbor and nervous coffee drinker, Elizabeth.

“Hyacinth wouldn’t have it any other way,” replies Richard, the most patient husband on the planet.

The saloon is a 1986 Rover 216, which figures prominently in the entire run of the series. It looks much like a mid-1980s Honda Civic sedan, and there is a good reason for that.

Preceded by the Austin Maestro and succeeded by the MG 3, the Rover 200 and subsequent Rover 25 saloons, were built and sold by British automaker Rover from 1984 to 2005.

The first generation was based on the Honda Ballade, and the second generation was based on the Honda Concerto, which was built on the same assembly line in Longbridge as the Rover 200. The third generation was a Rover design. Before BMW sold Rover in 2000, the Rover 200 became the Rover 25. The later MG ZR was based on the Rover 25. The Rover name now belongs to Indian automaker, Tata Motors.

Confused yet? That’s the global automaker situation these days. You can buy an American car made in Mexico, a Japanese car made in America, and a French car made in Montenegro, all with parts from all four corners of the globe. Chances are the car you drive shares a platform from another manufacturer and is sold with a slightly different body and name in another country.

Produced from 1984 to ’89, Richard’s Rover 200 series was available as a four-door saloon and powered by a Honda 1.3-liter EV214 or 1.6-liter S-Series inline-four and mated to a five-speed Honda manual transmission. Available transmissions that the Buckets chose not to mark

on the build sheet, were a two-speed Honda automatic and a four-speed ZF automatic. There were 245 centimeters (96.5 inches) between the wheel centers.

Whenever I discover a four-door car with a wheelbase shorter than 100 inches, it reminds me of the development of the 1950 Nash Rambler and how the engineers said it was impossible to design a four-door car with a wheelbase of 100 inches. In 1960, they did.

Hyacinth would be pleased to know that the Rover 200 series was more upmarket than

the existing Maestro and Montego models, which were smaller and bigger, respectively. Unlike similar cars – the Volkswagen Jetta for example – the Rover 200 was not based on an existing hatchback body.

While based on the Honda Ballade, the design was a collaborative effort

between the two companies. The aforementioned Honda version was never sold in England.

The last of the Rover 200 series was built in late 1989, with leftover stocks sold as 1990 models. Here are some interesting facts: Exterior shots of the Buckets’ Rover 216 and around their house were taped in Binley Woods, Warwickshire, a village east of Coventry. Two cars were used. Early episodes had a car with license plate D541 EXL, followed by the second car with D541 EFL.

The Rover 200 series, and in particular the 216, are not highly collectible. In fact, they are not collectible at all. So, why would you want one? Seriously – why wouldn’t you? First off, you can find one easily for less than £1,700 (approximately \$2,130). And since it shares Honda mechanicals, it will be a breeze to maintain.

Second, of all the cars for which you could create an interesting display at a show, the 1984-’89 Rover 200 series would be the most fun. You will need a mannequin – or a full-figured friend – in a blue floral print dress and a large hat sitting in the passenger seat, with a picnic basket stocked with Royal Doulton China with “the hand-painted periwinkles” and plenty of Riparian delights. You, of course, will be dressed in a Lloyd’s of London blue blazer, gray slacks, white shirt, blue striped tie, and a driver’s cap. Tell everyone you are going to the river for an outdoor finger buffet with the Vicar, his wife, Elizabeth, and Emmet.

And when you show your Rover 216, mind the spectators! 🐮



I do hope you

are familiar

with the

British sitcom,

Keeping Up

Appearances

(1990-’95), or

this column will

be pointless.

on page 71, then owned by Barney Becker. Sometime later, that Doble passed by my house, and as a very young man, I came upon Mr. Becker and his Doble again in Walnut Creek. During a brief conversation, he invited me to his nearby home and shop, an invitation I accepted. Mr. Becker had worked for Doble as a mechanic, and in his garage were all the machine tools. He told me how he was the last Doble serviceman and had rebuilt F-30 three times.

I moved to Salt Lake City and became a chimney sweep. One of my clients, Mrs. Harris, found out I was a San Francisco German, and knew about San Francisco's past car industry. She asked me if I had heard of Abner Doble.

Turns out, she was his niece by marriage and told me some interesting things about Abner, like that he could have done better had he not had a troubled life with his wife, who was an alcoholic, and his personal eccentricities. Mrs. Harris sold me an Episcopalian Bible that had been presented to Abner's father, Abner Sr., by his father, Warren,

who had written on the front page a short testimony of the divinity of the Bible and its positive influence as an inspiration to the then-young Abner Sr., dated in the 1870s. It is one of my prized antiques.

Abner Doble had also been a consultant for Henschell Locomotive Works in Kassel, Germany, during the Third Reich, and helped produce a fleet of steam lorries, a steam speedboat, and a converted Mercedes staff car for Hermann Goering. From there, he went to England and acted as a consultant engineer for Sentinel Steam Lorries—one of, if not the last, producers of steam-powered trucks.

Jon Perry
West Valley City, Utah

YOUR PROFILE ON THE VANDERBILT Cup in HCC #179 brought back fond memories of my youth. In the mid-1970s, when I was 12, my family was friends with the artist Peter Helck. He would always talk with me and nurture my love of old cars. We were invited to his house to see his collection, and I was able to sit in "Old 16," the first American car to win

the Vanderbilt Cup. I remember it was a monster of a car and very cool. It now sits in The Henry Ford Museum.

Glenn Lyden
New York, New York

I GOT A KICK FROM THE OWNER

of the six-cylinder 1950 Pontiac Chieftain, and particularly so when he stated the Pontiac would outdo an Oldsmobile 88 in initial acceleration. I owned a 1951 Pontiac six-cylinder and a 1950 Oldsmobile 88. The Pontiac may have gotten a very brief "jump" on the Oldsmobile, but as soon as the initial slippage (not long) in the Hydra-Matic was overcome, it was game over.

Ted Shannon
Mokelumne Hills, California 🐾

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



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Classic Car Conference

*Three-day symposium
of insightful seminars
on automotive history
and restoration*

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD LENTINELLO

Tucker prototype, the “Tin Goose,” was the subject of a preservation seminar conducted by the Pennsylvania College of Technology.

Having celebrated its third such conference in as many years, the 2019 convention took place this past April in Allentown, Pennsylvania. Held on the spacious grounds of The NB Center for American Automotive Heritage, this year’s event was a special one as it was a joint effort by the Historic Vehicle Association and Society of Automotive Historians, which was celebrating its 50th anniversary.

For three days, the 137 attendees on hand were treated to a variety of seminars and presentations, and a very interesting tour of all the buildings that comprise The NB Center’s first-class restoration facility. Lead by curator Keith Flickinger, the “Workshop” seminar took place in the body restoration and paint building, where the discussion centered on the staff’s step-by-step approach to rebuilding a car to authentic concours condition. From details about the metalwork procedures and body preparation to the use of parts cars and every other facet of automobile restoration were discussed, including how interiors are recreated. Besides being highly informative, it was all very inspiring.

In all, there were 22 different seminars and presentations spread across the three days. Catered lunches and dinners brought everyone together in the relaxing atmosphere of a rebuilt Pennsylvania Dutch barn.

With the “Tin Goose” Tucker prototype and Preston Tucker’s great-grandsons on hand, “Preservation: The Tucker” was a seminar about how the prototype was resurrected; it was given by the students of the Pennsylvania College of Technology who did the actual work.

One of the more popular presentations was when Nicola Bulgari (of Italy’s famed Bulgari jewelry business, and founder of The NB Center), Ed Welburn (former General Motors V.P. of Global Design), and Fred Simeone (founder of the Simeone

Museum in Philadelphia) had a roundtable discussion called “Design, Engineering & Performance.” This was followed by “A Civil Rights Story,” given by HVA vice president Diane Parker, regarding why a 1966 Volkswagen Microbus was recently awarded National Historic Vehicle Register status, and how it was rescued from a South Carolina backyard. After an interesting talk by McKeel Hagerty, a cocktail reception followed.

With an emphasis on preservation and conservation, and documentation, the seminars had diverse topics, such as: interpreting automotive history, service manuals, history of Reuters Coachworks, futuristic technologies, the historical value of racing films, the Ford Model T, and preservation practices by the GM Heritage Center. SAH President Louis Fourie and I gave a seminar on publishing where we talked about self-publishing and how to become a freelance writer for car magazines. Oh, there was even a seminar on the history of automotive video games.

But, without question, everyone’s favorite event was the ride and drive session. A selection of cars from The NB Center’s impressive collection were made available for the attendees to drive, including a 1910 Packard 30 Roadster brought by noted restorer Steve Babinsky. Most of the cars were prewar examples, all of which were American makes. A special treat was when a Le Sabre Concept was brought out. It was on loan from the GM Heritage Center, for all who wanted to experience what this sensational show car felt like at speed. Talk about a rare chance of a lifetime!

The itinerary for the 2020 Driving History Conference has yet to be set, but, if you’re serious about automotive history, then you should consider attending. It may very well be the best car event you ever take part in. For details on joining either one of these prominent organizations, visit their websites — SAH at www.autohistory.org and HVA at www.historicvehicle.org.



HVA vice president Diane Parker gave an entertaining talk about the merits of this special 1966 VW Microbus and why it's been awarded HVA status.



Insight regarding The NB Center's restoration process was given by curator Keith Flickinger.



Access to the vast collection of The NB Center of American Automotive Heritage was available for everyone to enjoy; each car has been restored to original.



A roundtable discussion featured (left to right), Fred Simeone, Nicola Bulgari, and Ed Welburn.



The informative "Workshop" seminar showed all aspects of restoring American classics.



Part of the insider's tour included the maintenance building, a gold mine of sorts to inspect American classics up close.



Special thanks goes to the GM Heritage Center for providing once-in-a-lifetime rides in the sensational LeSabre Concept car.



MG for Four

Contemporary for its time, the 1947 YA was MG's primary saloon of the postwar era

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD LENTINELLO

One of the most popular British car brands in America has long been the MG. Ask any car enthusiast to state which MG they know best and invariably you'll

hear them mention the ever-popular MGB. The pint-size Midget of the 1960s and '70s also had universal appeal, as did the MGB's predecessor, the sleekly shaped MGA. And who can argue that the vintage-styled TD remains one of the single most popular sports cars ever created.

Unbeknownst to many, MG produced more than sports cars. In fact, some of the most striking saloons ever made had MG's signature Octagon badge on their radiator shroud. One such example is the stately YA.

During the days immediately following World War II, while Detroit began creating more modern-looking automotive designs featuring integrated fenders, headlamps, and radiators, and were about to introduce state-of-the-art overhead-valve engines, MG was still producing cars that looked just as if they had been built in the 1930s. Being a small manufacturer, and one with limited financial resources, MG had no choice but to maintain its traditional ways of building cars with upright radiators, separate fenders, freestanding headlamps, flat windshields, and rounded trunks. Outdated, perhaps, but they were chock-full of British charm.

MG's closed-car lineage harkens back to the 1920s with the 14/40 and 18/80 two-door saloons. Then came the striking K Magnettes of the early 1930s with their pillarless four-door bodies. In 1936, MG introduced a larger-than-usual-sized four-door car, and truly one of the most beautifully shaped automobiles of all time—the SA; the equally stunning VA saloon followed in 1937. Then shortly after the conclusion of WWII, MG introduced its first “modern” saloon: the 1947 YA.

Known as the MG Y-Type, the first iteration of this series quickly became known by car owners and enthusiasts as the YA shortly after the follow-up model, the YB, was introduced. It had also been referred to as the “1¼-litre saloon.”

At the time of its introduction, the YA was fairly advanced, as it was one of the first automobiles fitted with the then-new rack-and-pinion steering system that was so much quicker acting than previous steering systems. In fact, the Y-Type's chassis was so well engineered and strong that it formed the basis for the soon-to-be TD and TF sports cars. Its suspension was designed by Alex Issigonis, father of the Mini, which is perhaps why this stylish four-door MG rides and handles so well.

But because it was designed prior to the outbreak of World War II, the YA looks like a traditional prewar car, yet its underpinnings are distinctively way more modern. Instead of the time-honored method of constructing bodies atop a wood frame, the YA sports an all-steel body, and an independent front suspension system with unequal-length A-arms and softer sprung coil springs in place of the old-fashioned-style, hard-riding solid axle setup; leaf springs remained in the rear.

The Y-Type's other features, which were unique for cars in its price range, included an adjustable steering column, a sliding metal-panel sunroof, a windshield that opened with a hand crank, and privacy screens on the interior. Yet its most interesting standard feature was its Smiths Jackall System, an arrangement that contained four built-in hydraulic jacks, fitted to each corner of the chassis, which made changing flat tires a breeze. Oddly enough, the heater was optional.



The interior features extensive use of wood, adjustable steering wheel, upright leather-covered seats, and the MG's signature octagon-shaped instruments.





Inspired by his better performing MG race cars, George tweaked the YA's original XPAG OHV four-cylinder engine for added power. He installed a larger 1½-inch H4 SU carb, higher-lift Crane camshaft, an alternator, K&N air filter, and had the engine block bored out to 1,350-cc.

The four-cylinder engine of this 2,240 pound car is just about adequate enough to get the stately saloon up to speed, although it will take a while. Known as the XPAG engine, this overhead-valve unit originally displaced 1,250-cc, and with its fuel fed via a small SU carburetor, with its 7.2:1 compression ratio, it generated 46 horsepower at 4,800 rpm.

MG never sold its YA saloons Stateside, but thanks to the efforts of renowned MG historian and champion of the marque Richard Knudson, it was imported to his home in the upstate New York town of Oneonta. Years later, on New Year's Day in 1977, it was purchased by its current owner, George Pardee, a former Connecticut native who now resides in Clearwater, Florida.

"The car was well worn, but complete," George remembers. "Typical of British cars of that period, it had extensive body rust, covered by multiple layers of filler and paint, but it was a fine driver and all the original parts were present, which would be difficult to source had they been missing."

George competes in vintage racing events with other MGs, so it was all too easy and important for him to perform some upgrades to his YA saloon in his quest for more power, which would help it perform better and safer on today's crowded roads. After having the XPAG block bored to 1,350-cc, he had the cylinder head polished for better gas flow, installed a high-lift Crane camshaft, fitted a bigger SU H4 carburetor with a larger diameter 1½-inch bore, and replaced the stock exhaust with a larger diameter 1½-inch stainless steel system, along with adding a freer flowing K&N air filter. More important was the installation of a five-speed Datsun gearbox, which made a huge difference in dropping engine revs at highway speeds; George

purchased this from Skyhook Engineering, but this conversion kit is no longer available, as the company has closed down.

As to the way this elegant-looking MG performs, George told us: "This car is a blast. With its state-of-the-art 1947 suspension and brakes, a skillful driver can keep this MG on the ragged, hairy edge of adhesion provided by the 5.25 x 16 Avon Tourist bias-ply tires, which are mounted on 3-inch wide rims. It handles and steers in a predictable manner, with controllable oversteer; lifting the throttle slightly will calm everything down. The rack-and-pinion steering is almost too sensitive for the tiny contact patch of the tires, but it creates confidence with excellent road feel and response."

George continued his driving impressions by saying: "The original MOWOG gearbox was precise and easy to shift, but required deliberation; impatience would beat the synchros and clash the gears. However, the Datsun five-speed manual transmission shifts like butter, making smooth down/up shifts through sweeping bends a joy. We also upgraded the brakes to Alfin drums, as the original steel drums required a high-friction lining. They were adequate, but the Alfin brakes, with their radially finned alloy drums with iron liners, are the equal to modern brakes, although the pedal effort is higher.

"What we like most about this MG saloon is its style; it's also very comfortable and the performance is most enjoyable. This car has performed exactly as we expected, and done all that we have asked of her. Since we bought this YA back in 1977, we have driven her more than 95,000 miles; in fact, we still average 3,000 miles per year. She is an important part of our family, and the focus of many happy memories. Best of all, I love blowing off MG TDs." 🏁



*What we like most
about this MG saloon
is its style; it's also
very comfortable...*



Trafficators are part of the YA's prewar heritage; sliding metal sunroof was a standard yet desirable feature.



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Similar in style to prewar Bentleys and Rolls-Royces, the YA saloon has a trunk lid that is hinged on the bottom and folds flat when opened. The spare tire hides behind the oval panel upon which the license plate and taillamps are fitted.



SPECIAL SECTION: CHRYSLER CLASSICS



Pioneering Achievements

Forward thinking and top-notch engineering underscore Chrysler as one of America's enduring marques

BY JEFF KOCH

If you're going to name a car after yourself, it had better be something pretty special. And Walter P. Chrysler, whose career as a journeyman railroad machinist and mechanic had taken him throughout the West and Midwest, put that knowledge to use building cars.

The original 1924 Chrysler B-70 bristled with innovation: aluminum pistons, a counterweighted crankshaft with seven main bearings, full-pressure engine lubrication, air cleaner, oil filter with removable element, tubular front axle, hydraulic shock absorbers, four-wheel hydraulic brakes (developed in conjunction with Lockheed), and more. Priced to compete with the Buick Six, it offered more power, higher compression, and weighed a whopping 700 pounds less.

This engineering-led philosophy continued for decades: By 1928, Chrysler employed more than 500 engineers. This philosophy led to some of the most driveable cars of the era. It also led to one of the great flops: the Chrysler (and De Soto) Airflow. Carl Breer, Director of Research at Chrysler in the early 1930s, dreamed of a car in harmony with itself—all parts designed specifically for the goal of advancing driver and passenger comfort and efficiency. Wondering why aircraft had evolved so radically and rapidly when cars had not, Breer set to

work. The form of the car itself, to that point more a compilation of parts than a unified whole, would need to change. Streamlining, it turned out, was only part of the story: That aero-slick, Streamline Moderne-masterpiece body hid longer springs for a better ride, and an engine pushed forward to both allow more cabin room and improve ride. Typical metal-skin-on-wooden-frame construction was eschewed for a hybrid structural concept, which made a framework of metal beams with crisscrossed trusses for strength. Body panels were welded to the frame, so body and chassis were essentially a single unit, offering superior strength over conventional body-on-frame techniques at a weight savings.

Poor sales scared Chrysler back to a semblance of normality, although the marque built a series of cars in the 1930s that are recognized today as Full Classics by the CCCA: 1926-'32 Imperial and Series 80, including Series CG, CH, CL; 1929 Chrysler, six-cylinder, Model 77; 1932-'39 Custom Imperial Series—CL, CX, CW, C-3, C-11, C-15, C-20, C-24; 1934-'37 Airflow Imperial Eight models CV, C2, C10, C17. Select post-WWII models are also Full Classics.

Postwar, the race was on to develop new OHV V-8 power. GM may have been first, but Chrysler came up with an engine name that resonates to this date: the Hemi. Chrysler used data gained from

50
CHRYSLER
INNOVATIONS

54
1955-'65 300
"LETTER CAR"

60
1977-'79
LeBARON

NEXT MONTH'S
SPECIAL SECTION:
BARN FINDS



its stillborn wartime work with the P47 Thunderbolt and adapted it to its line of postwar cars. With a two-barrel carburetor, the 331-cu.in. Hemi put out 180 horsepower, except in the dual-four-barrel 300, where it made (surprise!) a roaring 300 horses. The 300-series luxury performance coupes remain standouts of their era. Later, Chrysler found as much power in its street wedge engines thanks to outboard carburetors and long, shaped ram tubes before a new generation of Hemi blew everyone's minds with 425 horsepower on tap.

Innovations large and small continued. Chrysler and Philco announced the world's first transistorized car radio in mid-1955. Under the swoopy and stylish exteriors of the 1957 "Forward Look" Chryslers, the company introduced Torsion-Aire, its famed torsion-bar front suspension system that would underpin every car Chrysler built for decades; it reduced unsprung weight, and shifted the car's center of gravity lower and rearward for improved ride and handling. And starting in 1960, all passenger cars (save for Imperial) rode a unit-body platform, offering safety and handling advantages. In an era when car companies dreamed of running cars on everything from red wine to nuclear fission, Chrysler was serious enough that it actually made 50 working alternative-powered prototypes. The Chrysler Turbine Car, built by Ghia in 1962, was placed in the public's hands for testing.

Chryslers were some of the best-engineered cars of their day. They had to be, they had Walter P.'s name on them. 🏎️

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Chrysler Innovations

From the beginning, progressive engineering ruled the day at Chrysler

BY TERRY SHEA • IMAGES FROM HEMMINGS ARCHIVES AND AS CREDITED

A master of business as much as he was of things mechanical, Walter P. Chrysler was the consummate engineer, so it should have come as no surprise that the company that bore his name was focused on innovative engineering solutions from the very beginning. After stints at Buick and Willys-Overland, Chrysler took over the Maxwell Motor Company in the early 1920s. One of his first tasks was to assemble an engineering crew par excellence.

Frederick Zeder, Owen Skelton, and Carl Breer had years of experience, their collective resumes including stints at Allison-Chalmers, Tourist, Pope-Toledo, Packard, E-M-F, and Studebaker, the latter where the trio formed such a

juggernaut of engineering prowess that they gained the nickname "The Three Musketeers." Chrysler hired them at Willys-Overland, where the trio developed the "Chrysler Six," a car intended to be the basis of a new Willys division. When funds dried up and Willys was again in financial dire straits, Chrysler left, ultimately acquired Maxwell, and then hired The Three Musketeers, who would lead Chrysler engineering for years to come.

The ZSB team, as they were also known, had improved upon their work at Willys, ultimately designing the Chrysler Six, introduced in 1924. It was a car that many believe ushered in an era of modernity to an industry still dominated by the far simpler Ford Model T. Early Chrysler advertisements included bold

statements such as "Chrysler Six is undoubtedly the most modern and efficient motor car in America."

With more than 50,000 sold the first year, the Chrysler Six was an immediate success. Its four-wheel hydraulic brakes, high-compression engine, and other features proving strong selling points and helping give Chrysler the additional capital he needed to form the company that bore his name, a company whose reputation stood on its solid engineering and innovations for decades.

IMPROVED HYDRAULIC BRAKES

Chrysler wasn't the first manufacturer to use four-wheel hydraulic brakes; that distinction belonged to Duesenberg, which used them

Engineering—Traditionally the Finest... Exclusively Yours

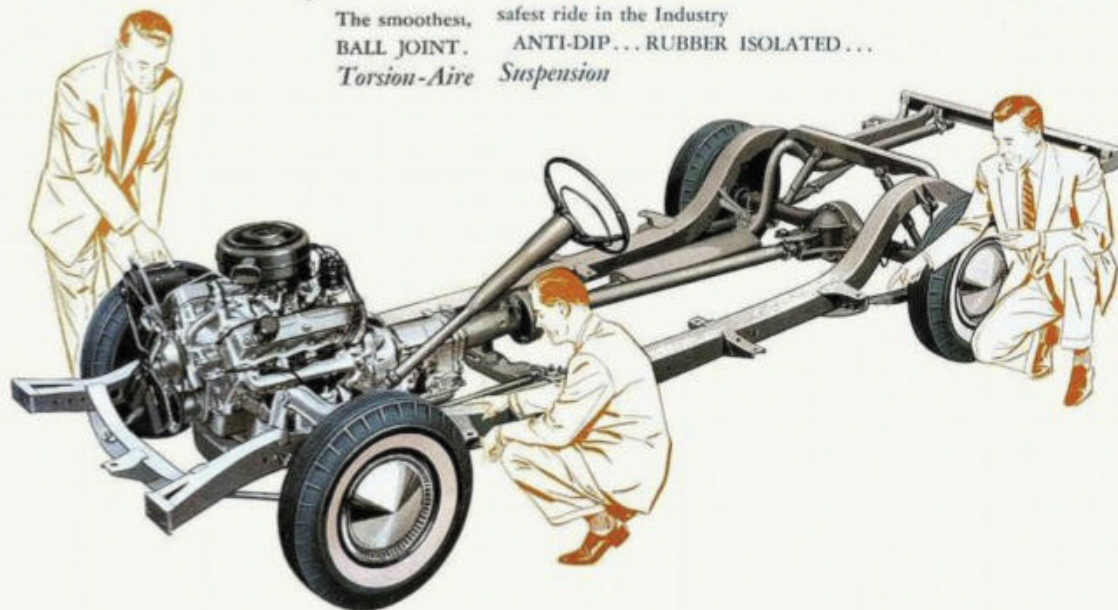
The smoothest, safest ride in the Industry
BALL JOINT. ANTI-DIP... RUBBER ISOLATED...
Torsion-Aire Suspension

Chrysler Corporation, traditionally the industry leader in automotive engineering advancements... incorporates in the new '57's the most sweeping changes ever introduced by the Company in a single year.

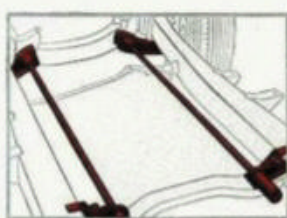
New TORSION-AIRE RIDE is engineered on entirely new design principles. Riding and handling qualities are unprecedented. A unique suspension system makes steering easier and surer than ever before. Cornering characteristics rival those of even the finest custom-built sports cars. And in the new Chrysler and Plymouth your ride is safely cushioned in steel.

The best ideas from years of engineering design and research have been carefully blended together in these new models. New V-8 engines are bigger and mightier. They are the most rugged passenger car power plants ever built. Look at all these new features: Bigger displacement, a new, quieter camshaft, new, jet-flow carburetor, new, paper-clothes air filter—dirt cannot enter engine, improved Push-Button Steering, and the dependable "4", easy to maintain, is more powerful and more economical. Available for added comfort... a remarkable new air conditioner, completely under the hood, assures refreshing temperature inside regardless of the weather outside.

Here, in a completely new car—from the road up, designed to give you the most wonderful riding comfort and driving ease you have ever experienced.

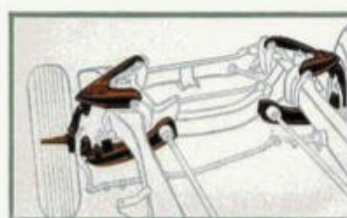
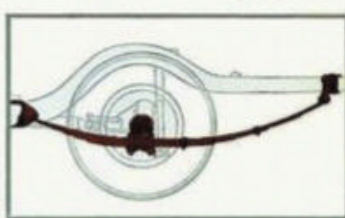


- New Torsion-Bar Front Springs
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- New Center-Plane Brakes
- New Straight-Side Frames
- New Rubber Isolation Mountings
- New Engines—Greater Torque
- New 3-Speed Automatic Transmission
- New Cooling System Pressure



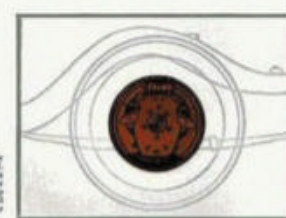
New Torsion-Bar Front Springs are engineered to absorb bumps, absorb shocks and smoothly to keep the car level and steady. They are a complete, self-contained unit and require no adjustment. Riding ease is improved. Now, you will find it the best ride ever!

New Rear Springs are longer, wider, and more robust. They are engineered to keep the car level and steady. They are a complete, self-contained unit and require no adjustment. Riding ease is improved. Now, you will find it the best ride ever!



New Ball-Joint Suspension. You ride in comfort, level over any road. Front wheel action follows steering, without excess ball-joint action. There is no lag or jerk on the car body—more positive steering is experienced.

New Center-Plane Brakes. All new the best brakes engineered. These independent brakes take hold with a sure, steady grip over the whole surface area. You stop faster with less wear on the pads. Brakes last longer and are better.



on its Model A from 1921, followed by Maxwell-Chalmers, at a time when Walter Chrysler was running Maxwell. A full year and a half before the Chrysler Corporation was formed, Maxwell began making a car called the Chrysler, powered by a six-cylinder, high-compression engine, and using a re-engineered version of the original Lockheed hydraulic drum brakes.

Where Lockheed had used leather seals, which were prone to leaking, the redesigned Chrysler setup used rubber seals and a different type of fluid. Chrysler worked out a deal with Lockheed where the latter charged no royalties for its patents used by Chrysler, while the newly minted automaker would allow Lockheed to use the improved design. Even as other automakers slowly began adopting hydraulic brakes, it would be almost a decade and a half before the Ford became the last American automaker to begin installing them on all of its cars.

TORSION-BAR SUSPENSION

For most of the automobile industry, front-end suspension pretty much followed the course of hard axles with leaf springs making way for independent setups with coil springs. But not Chrysler. As always, Chrysler followed its own path to an independent front end when it adopted a torsion-bar front end in 1957, using it across its entire passenger car lineup, from compacts to the biggest Imperials, for decades.

Again, not a Chrysler invention, and coming on the heels of Packard's own innovative, but short-lived four-wheel torsion-

bar setup that ended with that storied company, Chrysler's Torsion-Aire suspension used long, chrome-steel rods that were connected at the lower control arm in front, ran parallel to the subframe rails, and terminated with a fixed connection at the frame. As the control arms moved over bumps or when cornering, the torsion bars resisted the wheels movement and acted to keep the tire's contact patch on the pavement as well as fighting body roll. There was no actual air involved in the Torsion-Aire suspension at all, but it made for great marketing.

REPLACEABLE OIL FILTER

Ernest Sweetland and George Greenhalgh are credited with inventing the first automotive oil filtration system in 1923, and the duo's "Purolator" invention was later granted a patent in 1929. In the meantime, Chrysler adopted it on the first Chrysler automobile,

which came from the Maxwell factory.

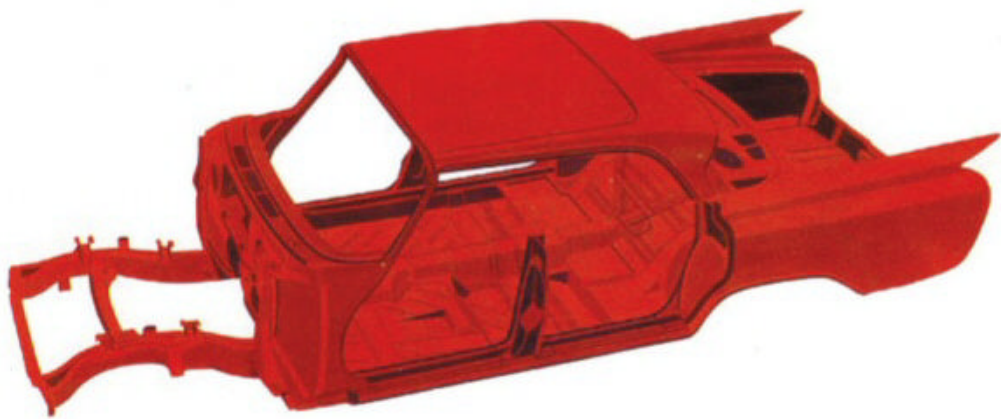
The replaceable filter is not the spin-on type we think of today, integrated into the full-pressure system, but rather an element that was downstream of the pump, before the pressurized fluid reached the bearings. Despite not being as effective as later, more modern filters, it was a far cry from simple screens before the pumps that could only be cleaned with major maintenance.

AERODYNAMIC BODY

Before the Chrysler Airflow, automobile designs were just that—designs; any streamlining was purely a stylistic flourish and not grounded in any aerodynamic principles. With the Airflow, Chrysler bet the farm on the advancements offered by the car's wind tunnel proving lines. To say it was a groundbreaking change would be an understatement.



Chrysler's all-new **UNIBODY** combines frame and body in one, surrounds you with a solid shield of carefree comfort!



Stronger, roomier, quieter, more enduring . . . that's Chrysler 1960! The reason? UNIBODY . . . a daring new kind of single-unit body construction that's immensely strong. Resistance to twisting and bending is as much as 150% greater than the frame-body designs still used in most other cars. And UNIBODY has almost twice the life span of similar competitive designs thanks to Chrysler's unique rust-proof paint dipping process.



Roominess: Unibody does away with space-stealing frame members. Result—higher seats, flatter floor. Slimmer posts permit easiest entry.



Weather Proofing: Each Unibody is dipped in a series of rust-resistant paints that protect vital panel areas inside and out for years.



Durability: Special stress machines prove Unibody 100% more resistant to twisting, 40% more resistant to bending than conventional designs.



Silence: Solid Unibody construction has no bolts to loosen up and rattle. With no frame to rub against the body, squeaks and shakes disappear.

SPECIFICATIONS

BODY STYLES—Windsor and New Yorker: 4-Door Sedan, 4-Door Hardtop, 2-Door Hardtop, Convertible, Town & Country Wagon. Saratoga: 4-Door Hardtop and Sedan, 2-Door Hardtop.

ENGINE—Golden Lion V-8, 90-degree lateral OHV. Bore-Stroke: Windsor and Saratoga—4.03 x 3.75, 383-cubic-inch displacement; New

Yorker—4.18 x 3.75, 413 cubic inches. Compression ratio: 10.1 to 1. Horsepower: 305 (Windsor), 325 (Saratoga), 350 (New Yorker). Dual Exhaust: New Yorker—optional on Saratoga—not available for Windsor.

TRANSMISSION—Pushbutton TorqueFlite, fully automatic torque converter with 3-speed gear set, standard on Windsor, Saratoga and New Yorker.

SUSPENSION—Time-tested Torsion-Aire suspension, standard. Ball joint pivots (front) with Oriflow shock absorbers.

FUEL SYSTEM—Carburetors: dual downdraft on Windsor, four-barrel downdraft on Saratoga and New Yorker. Automatic intake manifold heat control, automatic choke, dual filtration units. Fuel capacity—23 gallons, 22 gallons for Town & Country Wagons.

ELECTRICAL SYSTEM—Battery: 12-volt, 78-plate with 70-amp-hr. Generator: 35-amp. Waterproofignition. Electric windshield wipers and directional signals. Handbrake warning lights, back-up lights, standard on New Yorker and Saratoga, available on Windsor. Dual headlights, standard.

Unfortunately for Chrysler, the look of the Airflow polarized the public. It was truly a love-it-or-hate-it design. There were plenty of people clamoring to buy the new car, but production delays soured even some of those enthusiastic customers. Though Chrysler abandoned the aerodynamic look, automotive stylists in the coming years adopted some of the Airflow's characteristics, such as headlamps fully enclosed in the fenders.

UNIBODY

All American passenger cars today feature unit-body construction, with the body, chassis, and frame a single combined structure for rigidity and light weight. Chrysler first experimented with a type of unibody on the 1934 Airflow, where the body was welded to the frame for strength. Other American manufacturers had also introduced unit-body automobile chassis, most notably Nash in 1941, but Chrysler went all-in for

1960. Except for the Imperial, all Chrysler models in the 1960s had the unitized body and chassis. Even though today the term "unibody" has become a common word, it was Chrysler's trademark name for the construction type at the time.

"FLOATING POWER" ENGINE MOUNTS

Before Chrysler developed its Floating Power mounting system, engines rigidly mounted to the frame would transmit vibrations throughout the chassis, particularly four-cylinder models. Introduced in 1932, Floating Power reduced the mounting points from three or more rigid ones to just two with rubber components: one high and at the front of the engine, and the other low and at the rear of the engine at the transmission, and both in line with the center of the powerplant. With Floating Power, the engine didn't so much as "float" between the rails, but the less rigid mounting allowed the engine to "rock slightly," according to Chrysler literature of the day.

HIGH-COMPRESSION ENGINE

The first Chrysler Six was one of the first mass-produced cars to take advantage of the improvements in knock resistance that the engineers at GM has discovered in tetraethyl lead. The engine in the Chrysler Six produced 68 horsepower from just 201-cu.in. of displacement, owing a great deal to its 4.8:1 compression ratio. Its seven main bearings certainly helped the Chrysler Six's durability and reliability in the long run. Chrysler gave its initial model the "70"

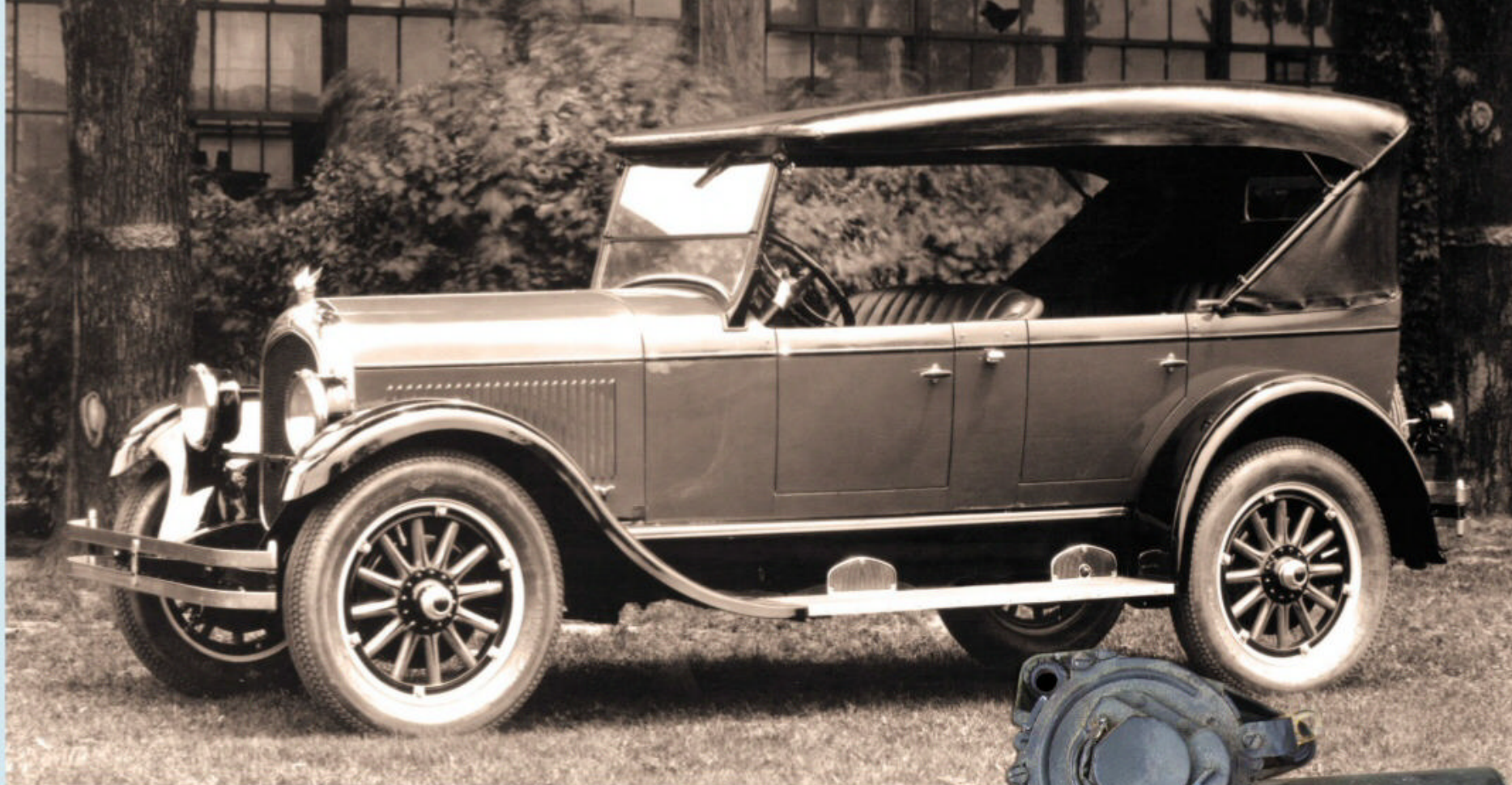
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Plymouth engine mountings are formed of rubber bonded to steel plates which in turn fasten, one to the frame cross member and the other to the power plant assembly. Many low price cars use rubber engine mountings; Plymouth is the only low price car using FLOATING POWER mountings.

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designation for its name, because of the ability of its engine to propel the car to a top speed of 70 mph or more.

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wipers for many years before Chrysler pioneered the more reliable electric wipers beginning in 1939, with Autolite providing the electric motors. Two-speed motors arrived for 1951 and then variable-speed motors from 1954 to the mid-1960s, when single-speed motors returned. 🏎️



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Gentleman's Express

Chrysler's 1955-'65 300 "Letter Car" series may have had the best American all-around performance cars of the era

BY JEFF KOCH • PHOTOGRAPHY FROM HEMMINGS ARCHIVES

It looks like your grandpa's New Yorker at first blush, but the noises coming from under that long hood are strictly Super Stock.

The 300 "Letter Car" had the American motoring press, and its growing preference for spindly little European sports cars, in a lather for nearly a decade; the notion that a car so large

could handle with the power and precision they desired seemed anathema to Detroit, yet here was a machine that proved that someone really understood.

And the power! Massive gobs of torque, which no little four- or six-cylinder could possibly manage, the luxury feel of a larger European sedan, and cornering that nothing else made in America

(barring a Corvette) could approach. The Chrysler 300 was a one-man-band of automotive enthusiasm, all wrapped up in one premium-priced package.

It's tempting to call the Chrysler 300 the forebearer of the muscle car, but this is not quite true. No one will doubt the power available at the driver's right foot—its numerical nomenclature stemmed from



1960 300F

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1955 300

its initial power rating, and things only went up from there. But muscle cars, traditionally, have been midsize cars with fullsize powerplants—and there's nothing midsize about a Chrysler 300.

We see it more in the British high-end saloon tradition: fullsize body and chassis, big engine ticking away effortlessly under the hood, with proper back seats, cornering ability that belies both its size and the tire technology of its day, and all of the comfort and convenience features you could want, making it capable of gobbling up vast tracts of tarmac without stopping for anything but fuel. Europe has a long history of building machines like these: recall the Mercedes 450 SEL 6.9 of the late 1970s, or the 300 SEL 6.3 a decade before it; consider the original Maserati Quattroporte; think about the V-12-powered Jaguar sedans of the '70s. Sedan bodies, big power, and long legs, with the gumption to surprise rivals and pretenders alike on the open road.

The 300 was born in the fiery furnace of competition—on track, in such far-flung locales as Indianapolis, Mexico, and France, and in the showrooms of America. Its development not only benefitted from Chrysler's worldwide racing efforts, but it went on to make some of its own racing history as well. It also led the charge to revive interest in moribund Mopar styling, which had seen all of Chrysler Corporation's marques in a sales slide.

The first versions of Chrysler's vaunted Hemi—the company's first OHV V-8—launched in varying displacements across its Dodge, De Soto, and Chrysler divisions in 1951. Chrysler's effort was rated at 180 horsepower. Drawing from aircraft technology, as well as fuel-combustion experiments that dated to the prewar era and before, Chrysler engineers saw the advantage of the efficiency (and power) of such a system. While the early Hemi was conservatively tuned for the streets, and

offered all of the power that a contemporary luxury-car buyer could possibly want, the performance car and hop-up crowd had also taken notice: It was quickly becoming the engine of choice in the newly emerging world of drag racing, and Briggs Cunningham had successfully used Hemi power in several of his Le Mans racers in the early 1950s.

Yet that sporting image didn't square with the Chrysler-badged machines that the world then associated with the marque. Recall that into the 1950s, pillow-soft comfort, in an effort to separate you from the tarmac below, had come to define the American luxury car. Cushy seats, power options, sound deadening, soft suspensions on tall tires to absorb even more of the bumpy road rolling beneath your tread—all of these were expected and demanded of premium-priced automobiles in those days. Bodies were proportioned so that you need not

remove your hat while driving. They were the polar opposite of all of those sporty European cars, so small and bare that they couldn't help but demand you become one with the road.

Chief Engineer Robert MacGregor Rodger, just 37 years old then and one of those who had developed the original Hemi, saw the disconnect. He imagined a blending of Chrysler style with enough power to make the world stand up and take notice. He had also figured that he could squeeze a then-unheard-of 300 hp out of a stock 331-cu.in. Chrysler Hemi using one of Cunningham's solid-lifter cams, dual four-barrel carburetors, and a streetable 8.5:1 compression ratio. He pitched it to Chrysler management, and they bit: Some parts-bin rummaging grafted an Imperial nose and Windsor rear-quarter panels onto a basic Newport two-door hardtop body.

Chief designer Virgil Exner tweaked a couple of details (i.e., switching out the Imperial's front bumper for a base Chrysler piece), a heavy-duty suspension was added to cope with the Hemi's prodigious output, some bucket seats and a console to help communicate its sporting intent to the driver, and the 300 was born. That first 300, called C-300, looked the business—the first Hemi-powered Chrysler that looked like it had the potential to deliver on the Hemi's promises.

At a starting price of \$4,109 (nearly double the cost of a 1955 Chevrolet V-8 two-door hardtop), it wasn't cheap. But

1957 300C



soon the 300 won publicity you couldn't buy at any price: Mercury Outboard founder Carl Kiekhaefer campaigned a team of C-300s driven by Tim, Fonty, and Bob Flock, and ran roughshod over the NASCAR competition. Tim won 18 of 38 races outright, finished in the top five no less than 32 times, and walked away with the drivers' championship; brother Fonty won another three races. This was from the era when stock cars were, save for some modest safety equipment, actually stock. And the brothers did it without a single dollar of support from Chrysler.

The 300 possesses a degree of firmness that was otherwise absent from American cars of the day. Hurry it through the turns, and there is a blessed absence of body roll — anyone expecting a car of this size to roll over and ask for its belly scratched while in sight of a curve will be disappointed.

And that package continued to improve: just a year after its debut, the near-identical 300B packed 340 horsepower from 354 cubic inches. (Starting in 1956, Chrysler adopted letter suffixes to delineate model years of the 300, hence the Letter Series name.) The 1957 300C was part of Exner's sensational new longer-lower-wider "Suddenly it's 1960" Forward Look push, and the now-392-cu.in. Chrysler Hemi (advertised as "America's Most Powerful Car") was rated at a whopping 375 hp. A year later, engineers found another 5 hp for the 300D; 1958 also saw an optional electronic fuel injection system

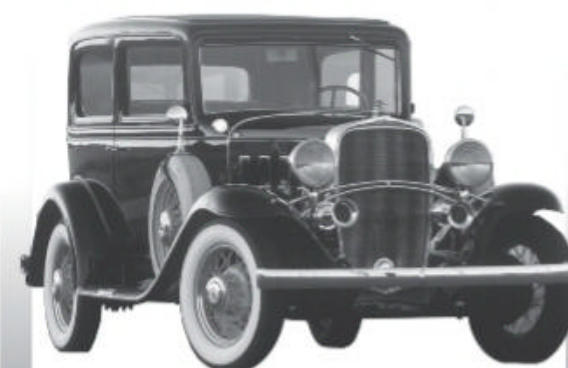
1958 300D

(rated at 390 hp) developed with Bendix both introduced and recalled.

This was also the last year for the original Chrysler Hemi: the costs of machining the correct combustion chambers were considered wasteful by



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1961 300G

the Chrysler's bean-counters. Accountants pointed to the competition's high-powered efforts and told the engineers, "See? Chevy and Ford can do wedge-style performance cylinder heads. Why can't you?" And so the original Hemi died at the end of the 1958 model year. But the 300 lived on, using a Chrysler derivative of the "Golden Lion" V-8 (known as the B-block) developed for the rest of Mother Mopar's divisions: the 413-cu.in. V-8 in the 300E retained a 380-hp rating for 1959.

Model-year 1960 saw plenty of change: The 300F was restyled with more pronounced fins and a trapezoidal grille, it now sat on Chrysler's advanced unit-body platform, and the carburetors moved from between the cylinder banks to residing atop a pair of uncompromising ram-tuned intake manifolds. Uncompromising? Yes: The brake booster had to be moved to the inner fenderwell to make room for those extraordinary runners, carburetor, and air cleaner. (There was also a special-order 400-hp version, featuring shorter intake runners and other changes.)

The 300G for 1961 was a carry-over year mechanically, though it introduced the now-legendary canted headlight treatment that followed the line of the inverted trapezoid grille; Letter Car production resided at 1,617 units for the year. The 1962 300H was again largely similar save for the clipped rear-quarter fins that had fallen out of fashion.

Now, 1962 was slightly chaotic over at Chrysler. With De Soto recently

buried, Chrysler's lineup was expanded to help regain some of the ground that the departed marque had covered. The division wanted to rename its Windsor series, and rather than come up with a new name, they adapted one that already had some cache with the public: "300." More

correctly, it was the 300 Sport Series, different from the 300 Letter Cars. The Sport Series used the 300 moniker, but left out some of the Letter Car's content, although most of it was still available on the order sheet. You could even get, heaven forfend, a four-door 300 starting in 1962.



Production of the 1962 models expanded wildly: no less than 25,578 300s were built. That's a 15-fold increase in a single year. And yet comparing apples to apples, Letter Car production softened to 558 units for the 1962 model year—a 70 percent drop from the previous season's Letter Car. The alarm bells that would ordinarily go off when a high-profile model slows up by more than two-thirds were muted in the face of the expanded line's sales success, and everything was due for a style refresh in 1963 anyway.

The newly styled 1963 300J had the most powerful standard engine ever fitted to a Letter Car: the 390-hp 413-cu.in. V-8 with dual four-barrel carbs on those dramatic long cross-ram intakes. The crisp folds of the body panels avoided any memory of the tailfins that were so five years ago. And Chrysler sold just 400 of them, between coupe and convertible versions.

The 300K for 1964 was essentially a carryover year, with the 390-hp cross-ram engine an option atop the 360-hp four-barrel 413 V-8. A further redesign in 1965,



1962 300H

following designer Virgil Exner's departure from Chrysler, formalized the one-year-only 300L's body. Horsepower dropped to 360, with the cross-ram option excised from the option sheet: sales jumped into the 2,000+ range, but it was too late. After the 1965 model year wrapped, the Letter Car series 300 was no more.

Just 16,857 were built from 1955 to 1965, with no more than 2,700 sold in its best year. Even so, few can argue

the importance of the original Chrysler 300 Letter Cars on the automotive landscape. They didn't start the postwar high-performance car movement, but the bar was certainly set. If you wanted a car that could do it all—scoot, stop, corner, and cosset your tender bum in power options, leather seating, and tasteful opulence all the while—then on the American road, from 1955 to '65, Chrysler's 300 was the way to go. 🏁



1963 300J

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Cultured Chrysler

LeBaron coupes of 1977-'79 tastefully unified luxury appointments with a trimmer package

BY THOMAS A. DeMAURO • PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF FCA HISTORICAL SERVICES

LeBaron is a highly styled automobile, which offers comfort and road-ability usually associated with larger, more expensive cars, but in a smaller, more fuel-efficient package,

declared Chrysler.

The “new-size” personal luxury car took its name from the revered LeBaron-

bodied Imperials of the 1930s and the high-end Imperials of the 1950s to 1970s.

1977

Arriving in the Spring of 1977 with its sibling, the Dodge Diplomat, the Chrysler was offered in the LeBaron and Medallion series, both comprised of two-door coupes (featured in this article) and four-door sedans.

The body styling of the 204-inch-long and 73.5-inch wide LeBaron two-door differed somewhat from the four-door models even beyond the obvious required roofline variations. Whereas the four-doors featured a modern boxy design, the coupes blended many of those elements with a few well-placed classic curves and angles on the bodysides and its decklid suggested a boattail motif.

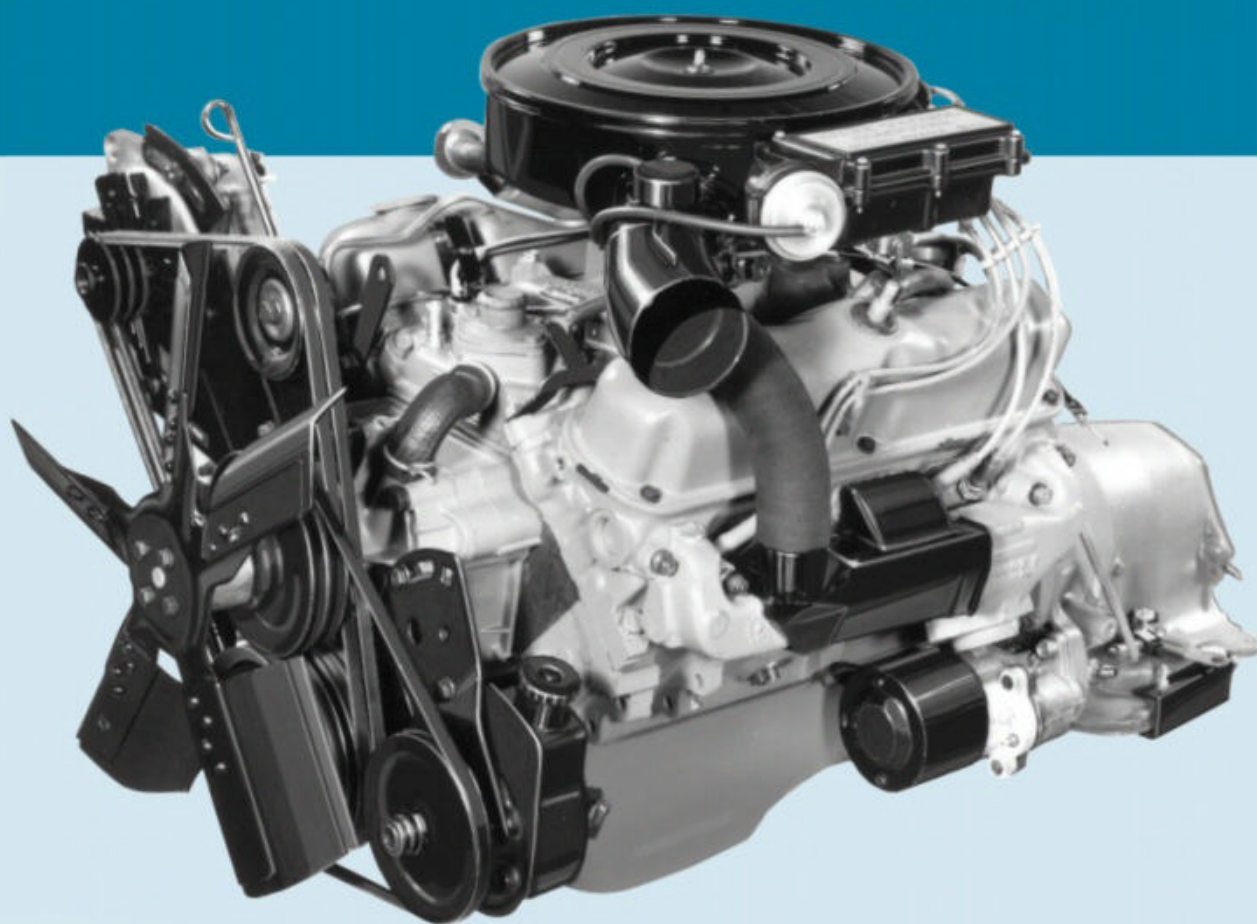
Its front view was dominated by the

24 rectangles that made up the grille, quad headlamps, and parking, side marker, and cornering lamp lenses. All were brightly trimmed and rode above a 5-mph bumper with dual rub strips. The glass area, slope of the roof, broad taillamps with LeBaron eagles, and the rear bumper with rub strip were also contemporary in design. Bright exterior moldings were used liberally, a chromed eagle hood ornament was added, and opera lamps adorned the fixed B-pillars.

The LeBaron featured unit-body construction and was basically an F-body (Aspen/Volare) twin underneath, albeit on the F's longer 112.7-inch four-door wheelbase. Its transverse torsion-bar front suspension with a 1-inch-diameter anti-roll bar was paired with a multi-leaf rear spring layout and shocks all around. The suspension and the K-member that



1977



cradled the engine were isolated from the body with rubber bushings to provide nearly big-car ride comfort and handling. Power steering and power front disc brakes with 10.8-inch rotors and 10-inch rear drums, and FR78 x 15 blackwall tires on 5.5-inch steel wheels with deluxe wheel covers, were standard.

A 318-cu.in. two-barrel V-8 was the

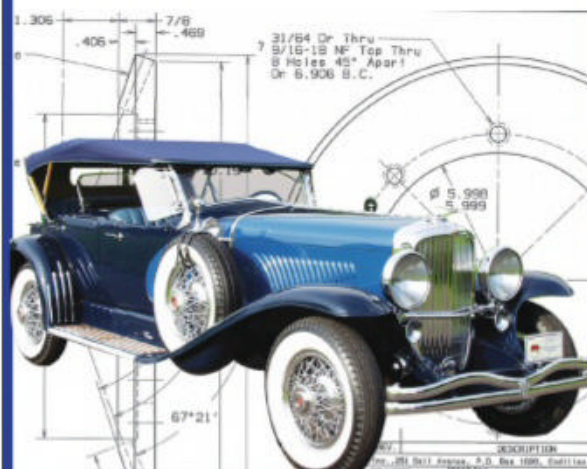
only offering. Rated at 145 horsepower, it used the Electronic Lean-Burn system that employed a second-generation computer for improved performance and durability. The three-speed TorqueFlite automatic transmission featured a new low-slip torque converter and a 2.7:1 economy rear gear ratio was used, but high-altitude areas got a 3.2:1 ratio.

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1978

Upscale Medallions featured a distinctive silver eagle insignia and dual stripes on the quarter window glass, bodyside stripes, left-hand remote control mirror, premium wheel covers, 60/40-split bench-seat-with-folding-center-armrest and upgraded upholstery, center pillar assist handles, door courtesy lamps, map reading lamps, lower driver's-side instrument panel courtesy lamp, bright pedal trim, special sound insulation, deep pile carpeting, and trunk dress-up items. The result was just over 100 additional pounds in curb weight, at 3,718 pounds, and a \$370 premium over the base LeBaron.

A leather-grain finish dash pad housed a cockpit-styled instrument panel that featured Brazilian rosewood wood-tone trim, and the layout included two large round bezels for the speedometer and fuel gauge with smaller round gauges for alternator and temperature and warning lamps for oil pressure and the brake system. A printed circuit board behind the cluster eased servicing.

LeBaron offered a standard bench seat interior with Cortez cloth and vinyl, or optional all-vinyl trim. Standard Verdi

velour cloth or optional "glove-soft leather" and vinyl trim was available for the Medallion's 60/40-split bench-seat-with-folding-center-armrest. Windshield header reading lamps and a two-spoke steering wheel were standard in both models.

A few interesting options beyond the usual power assists and A/C included a choice of two power-operated sunroofs—one tinted-glass and the other steel; landau vinyl roof (with decklid striping on Medallion); 15 x 6-inch forged aluminum road wheels; wire wheel covers; Light Package that also included LED warning lights in the alternator, temperature, and fuel gauges; digital clock; cornering lamps; a three-spoke steering wheel; AM/FM stereo with 8-track among other sound system choices; Deluxe Insulation Package; heavy-duty suspension; Sure-Grip differential; and a tilt column. The optional fuel pacer system was supposed to make you a more efficient driver by illuminating the driver's-side fender-mounted turn signal indicator whenever you got aggressive with the gas pedal.

It appears that luxury was in fact in high demand among LeBaron buyers for 1977, as the \$5,066 base price two-door sold 7,280 units and the \$5,436 base

price Medallion two-door nearly doubled that number at 14,444.

1978

The Town & Country wagon was added to the lineup for 1978, as was a LeBaron S with less trim and a lower price than what had been the base LeBaron. Chrysler referred to a few of its competitors, the Grand Prix, Monte Carlo, and Cutlass, by name in television ads.

Styling and the chassis design were carried over for 1978, but weight reduction measures were taken to improve fuel economy.

The 110-hp 225-cu.in. Super Six was now the standard Federal engine, and the 140-hp 318 V-8 and 155-hp 360 and 360 HD were optional. All had two-barrel carburetors. For California, the 90-hp 225 Slant Six one-barrel was standard, a 155-hp 318, 160-hp 360 HD, and 170-hp 360—all four-barrels—were optional. High-attitude engines included the 225 one-barrel standard, with the 318 two-barrel and 360 four-barrel optional. The Electronic Lean-Burn system was included with the V-8s, but not on 360 four-barrel engines. The A36 Heavy-Duty Package (trailer-assist) was required to order the 360 HD engines.



1978

A manual transmission with a 1:1 ratio third gear and a .71:1 overdrive fourth gear was standard for 1978 behind the Federal Slant Six and 318. Yes, a floor-shifted manual transmission in a luxury car! All others required the TorqueFlite, which received a lockup converter to improve fuel mileage in all but high-altitude models, those with the A36 Package, or with the six-cylinder engine. Rear axle ratios ranged from 2.4 to 3.2:1 with application restrictions.

The optional all-vinyl bench seat in the LeBaron was upgraded to the folding-center-armrest style for 1978.

Interesting options included a new T-Bar roof, a 40-channel CB transceiver integral with an AM radio or the AM/FM stereo, and an AM/FM stereo with electronic search tuner, digital display, direct station frequency selection, and 10 station presets.

1979

The revised lineup for 1979 coupes and sedans included the base LeBaron, a new middle-of-the-road LeBaron Salon, and the top-shelf Medallion. The Town & Country wagon also returned.

To create the Salon, the LeBaron was mildly de-contented, losing its Deluxe wheel covers, front fender sill molding extensions, and second horn to the new model. This meant that the LeBaron, a

luxury car, now came with hubcaps. The hood silencer pad and opera lamps that had been standard on the LeBaron were now extra-cost and only included on the Medallion.

Newly placed bodyside accent stripes adorned the Salon and Medallion, and the latter also received revised color-coordinated rear stripes, remote left outside mirror, and premium wheel covers.

A new grille with fewer rectangular boxes arrived for 1979, and the tail-lamps were sectioned to look like three segments. The landau top option now featured rectangular opera windows to further differentiate its appearance.

The base engine became the 100-hp one-barrel Slant Six and the 110-hp two-barrel Super Six was optional, as were the 135-hp 318 and 150-hp 360 two-barrel V-8s. Now at 195 hp, thanks to revised exhaust featuring dual pipes, catalytic converters, and mufflers that merged into a large single tailpipe, the 360 HD four-barrel could only be had with the HD Trailer-Assist Package.

California engines included the standard one-barrel Slant Six at 90 hp, and optional four-barrel V-8s including the 155-hp 318, 170-hp 360, and 190-hp 360 HD. The Electronic Spark Control System was on the 318 four-barrel and

the 360s. Specific high-altitude engines weren't listed for 1979.

A diagnostic connector was added in the engine compartment for use with Chrysler's Electronic Engine Performance Analyzer. Transmission and rear axle ratio choices mostly carried over.

Bucket seats were offered optionally for the first time in the Salon. They featured cloth and vinyl upholstery and had a center cushion and fold-down armrest.

Halogen high-beam headlamps were optional. Styled Sport outside mirrors in chrome or body color were new, and were also available in a new Sport Appearance Package along with the Three-Spoke Luxury steering wheel, and Styled Road Wheels.

CONCLUSION

LeBarons were updated for 1980 and the coupes received boxier sheetmetal like the four-door, a formal roofline, and a 4-inch-shorter wheelbase. The nameplate returned for 1981 on the M-body, but for 1982 it was instead affixed to the new front-wheel-drive K-car. The M-body four-door soldiered on at Chrysler (sans the LeBaron name) and also at Dodge and Plymouth in the 1980s. Today, the 1977-'79 LeBaron coupes can offer high-style time travel to the Carter era for a relatively low price. 🏠



Northern Exposure

Chrysler's Canadian-market 1964 Valiant Signet 200 combined Dodge and Plymouth styling in one!

BY MARK J. McCOURT

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD LENTINELLO

Even if you're a classic-Mopar enthusiast who knows your 1960s Chrysler products, you might do a double-take upon encountering this convertible. To American eyes, it's a curiosity that combines Plymouth and Dodge styling, but isn't badged as either of those brands. It's an unusual import, hailing from Canada, and this largely original 1964 Valiant Signet 200 illustrates the alternate automotive reality that once existed above the 49th Parallel.

It took a pair of retired Chrysler employees to seek this car out and bring it down to America. Williamson, Michigan, residents Dick and Connie Roth were looking to add a convertible to their old-car collection, and were particularly keen to find one built by their honored former longtime employer. The red-over-black Valiant on these pages had jumped out at Dick, when he spotted it for sale in *Hemmings Motor News*.

"Canada has a different and unique culture. We lived most of our lives in the Detroit area, and were frequent visitors," he tells us. "Connie also lived in Québec and Ontario for several years, and loves all things Canadian. I have always appreciated the Canadian-built vehicles made specifically for the 'hometown' market, because of their changes. We once owned a 1928 Ford Model A that was built there, and had unique characteristics. In the *Hemmings* ad, I could see this Valiant had a Dodge Dart

rear, and that's one of the major reasons why I was interested in it."

It was the dead of winter in February 2016 when the Roths traveled to Peterborough, Ontario, roughly an hour-and-a-half north of Toronto, to inspect the car. "It was being sold because the owner was more of a General Motors man, and he was already negotiating to buy a Chevelle convertible; he needed the money and the space to make that happen," Dick recalls. "We looked at the car in his garage, but were not allowed to drive it due to snow on the ground. We were given a sheet of cardboard, so we could look underneath. It did start, but the top could not be lowered due to the temperature."

It may not have been a warm introduction, but this Mopar compact proved to be everything Dick and Connie were looking for. It was a rare example of the Valiant that was, in 1963 and 1964, unique to this northern market. This nameplate was introduced in 1959 for the 1960 model year to battle Ford's conventional Falcon and Chevrolet's unorthodox Corvair. It was initially sold in America without Chrysler, Dodge, or Plymouth badging; while the Valiant was built by the Dodge division and sold through Plymouth dealers, it was a standalone marque. In the U.S., Plymouth marketing adopted the Valiant for 1961, while Dodge rolled out the Lancer; the latter wasn't sold in Canada,





Where Plymouth and Dodge nameplates and emblems decorated U.S.-market Valiants and Darts, this hybrid Canadian model has "Valiant" and "Signet two hundred" badges.





and the Valiant remained on its own, sold through both Plymouth and Dodge dealers. In 1963, when our Lancer was redesigned into the Dodge Dart, and the Plymouth Valiant was similarly updated, new-car shoppers in Canada encountered a curious compromise.

Rolling out of Chrysler's Windsor Assembly plant, across the river from Detroit, the new Valiant used a Dodge Dart chassis with a 111-inch wheelbase, a 5-inch-farther stretch than the U.S.-spec Plymouth's. Indeed, from the cowl to the back bumper, this car was basically a Dart, while ahead of the cowl, it used Valiant body panels, along with a Valiant instrument panel. Canada's car neatly split the size and weight differences between America's Valiant and Dart, measuring 192.8 inches in length and 2,555 pounds in four-door sedan form. For 1964, a Signet 200 convertible—roughly akin to a U.S. Dart GT—joined the two-door hardtop at the top of the Valiant line, and this proved a one-year-only body style representing the sportiest version, alongside the new fastback Valiant (!) Barracuda.

That aforementioned blend of Plymouth and Dodge styling elements actually worked as a cohesive whole. While the Valiant dash and hubcaps are familiar to many, this top-of-the-line model got unique bright trim accenting the wheel arches and lower body. Special Valiant-script badges and emblems stood in for the various Plymouth or Dodge pieces fitted to those on cars heading south of the border.

The Roths' new Mopar had originally been sold in Edmonton, Alberta, and its purchaser must have been a driving enthusiast. While it didn't have the Bar-

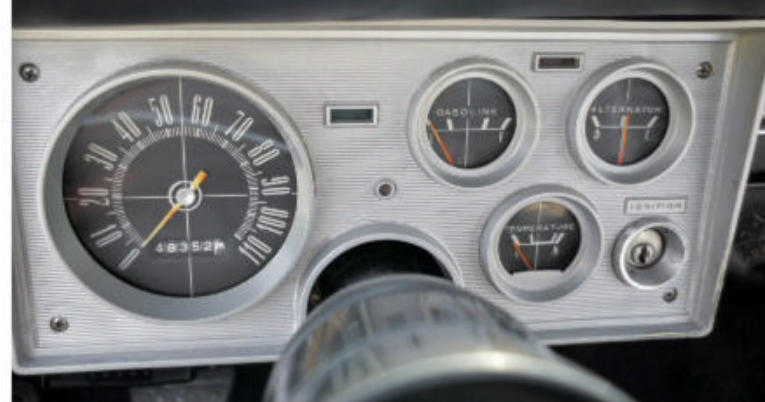
racuda's available 273-cu.in. V-8 making 180 or an exciting 235 horsepower, it was more-than-adequately motivated by the optional big-displacement Slant Six. This well engineered 225-cu.in. OHV engine was topped with a Carter one-barrel BBS carburetor, and with an 8.2:1 compression ratio, made 145 hp at 4,000 rpm and 215 lb-ft of torque at 2,400 rpm. It sent this power to the rear wheels through the premium-priced floor-shift four-speed manual transmission with a Hurst shift linkage. A controlled, yet comfortable ride was ensured by Chrysler's trademark torsion bar/control arm/ball joint front suspension, working in tandem with the semi-elliptic leaf spring/solid axle rear suspension. Four-wheel drum brakes hid behind 13-inch steel wheels wearing full wheel covers. While a transistorized AM radio was optioned, no performance-robbing weight had been wasted on power assist systems for the worm and ball nut steering, those brakes, or for raising and folding the convertible roof.

That white vinyl soft-top, now patched and showing its age, had been replaced at some point in the car's life; Dick and Connie surmised that may have been around the same time this Valiant received its carefully applied new coat of red paint, which covered the factory-applied turquoise hue that later revealed itself through small chips in the trunk. The original black vinyl interior, plus the matching folded top boot, were still present and in good shape. The capacious engine bay and tidy inline-six had been freshened with new blue paint and matching plug wires. A critical eye might fixate on some bubbling paint, crazing plastic emblems, wear around the gauge cluster, and areas of pitted bright metal trim, but the car presented nicely on the whole.

It hasn't taken much to bring it up to this fine-looking and -driving state; Dick tells us his talented mechanic and friend, the recently retired 88-year-old Bill Mally, adjusted the formerly clunky four-speed's linkage to smooth out the

*I have always
appreciated the
Canadian-built vehicles
made specifically for the
'hometown' market.*





The sporty, factory-installed four-speed manual with a Hurst floor shifter between bucket front seats is one of this convertible's special features. It shares instrumentation with the U.S.-market Valiant, which was a smaller car with a shorter wheelbase.



shifting. "And when we purchased the car, it had radial tires, and steered like a truck," he remembers. Those modern-style tires were replaced with skinny, original-type U.S. Royal Safety 800 bias-plies from Coker; "They not only look great, with the proper size whitewall, but the car steers and handles so much better, as it was designed to!"

"Our Valiant starts out swiftly until about 35 to 40 mph, then loses some of its initial pep. It will cruise comfortably at 60—any more than that, and it tends to wander," Dick continues. "The brakes stop the car, but not as efficiently as modern discs. With the top down on the highway, I must use sign language to speak to Connie!" She laughs, concurring, "It's enjoyable to drive—especially with the top down, as it is, most of the time. And I like shifting the standard transmission."

Fewer than 48,500 miles register on the 55-year-old odometer today, and those numbers add up slowly, to the tune of around 500 each driving season. The Roths have proven their Valiant is good for touring; its reliable Slant Six, comfortable bucket seats, and large trunk have made long drives with Iowa AACA friends pleasant and uneventful.

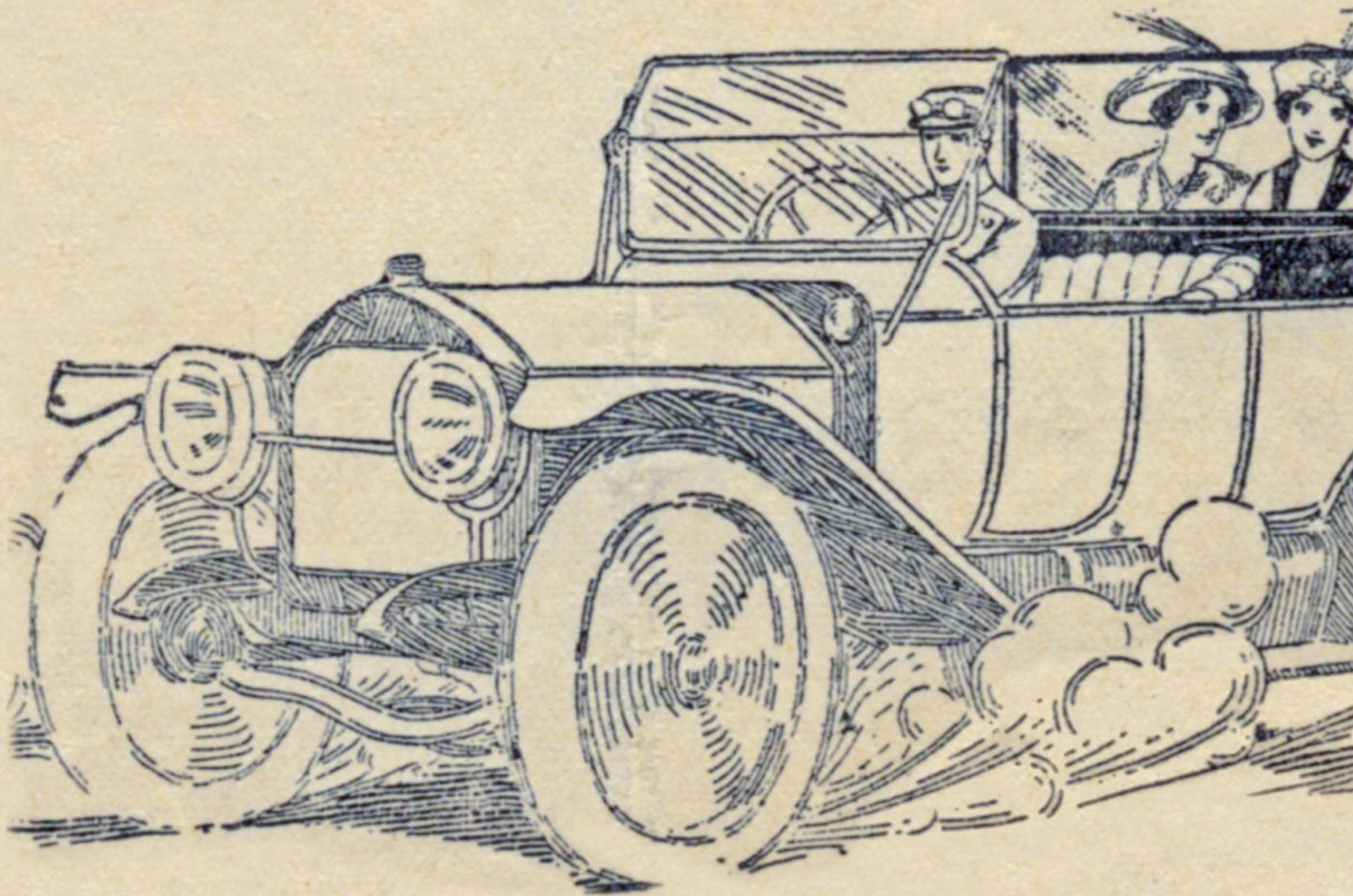
Dick performs the routine maintenance himself, doing annual oil changes with 10W-30, and the couple keep their Valiant looking good with PPC Perfect Detail Spray Polish. This product was one of many called in to clean the car after recent parking mishap saw the car get stuck in a wet, muddy field; that experience was an anomaly, as they make a point to avoid driving the convertible in inclement weather, like the car's previous caretaker did. They've discussed ditching the tired white convertible top for a new black one that matches the up-

holstery, and while Connie admits she'd like the car even better if it was back in its original paint color, they've decided to stick with the cheerful, sporty red.

When pressed for their favorite aspects of owning this imported Chrysler, they respond quickly. "It's the uniqueness," Dick says. "I enjoy explaining why it's different, and pointing out the special trim. Supposedly only 344 convertibles were made, and who knows how many had the Hurst four-speed option. There must have been a low survival rate, especially up in Canada, where winters are hard and there's so much possibility for cars to rust out." Connie concurs, adding, "We happened just upon it, but it's been neat with our Canadian connection. I know our kids really like it. Of all the cars in our collection, that's the one they'd want, I think because it's a convertible and it's red and it's fun." 🐾



The factory-installed vinyl upholstery this Signet 200 remains in very good condition after 55 years, a testament to its quality.



Windbreakers

Tonneau windshields designed to block the wind

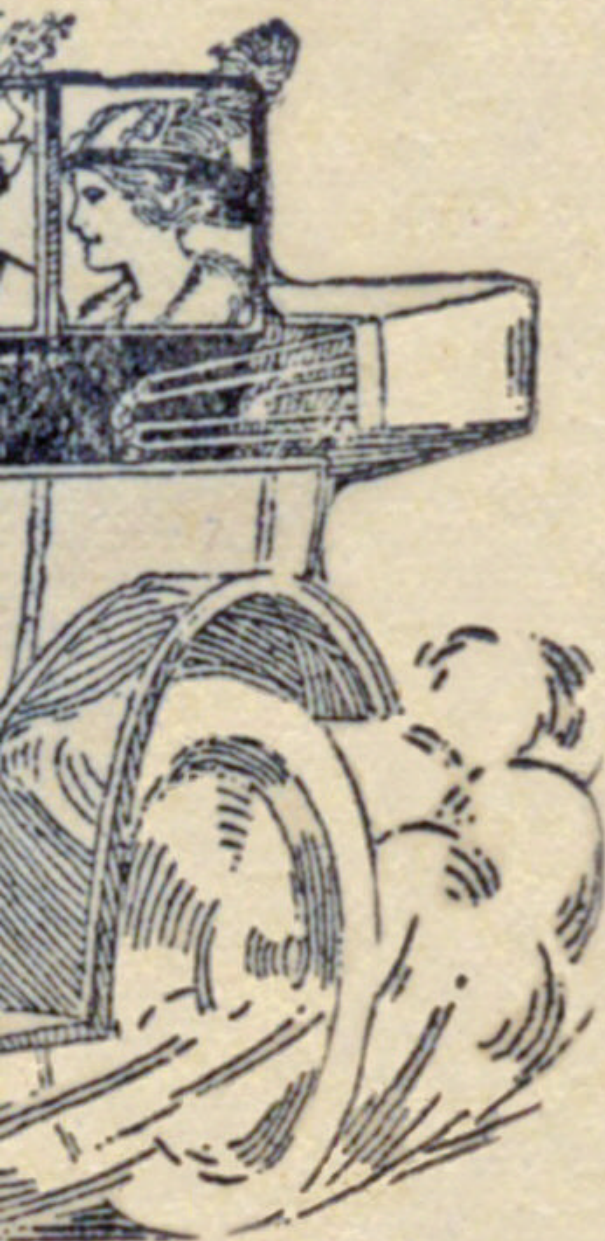
BY WALT GOSDEN • ILLUSTRATIONS COURTESY OF THE WALT GOSDEN COLLECTION

“Folding, extending, adjustable”

is how the Fryer-Auster Company of Providence, Rhode Island, described its accessory tonneau windshield in a 1916 letter to automobile body shops and coachbuilders. The Auster Extending Tonneau Shield was an inspiration from

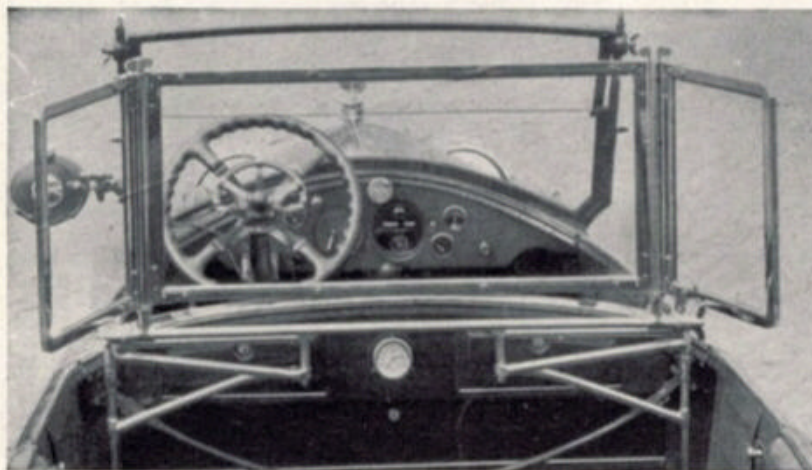
Europe, and was a windshield that bolted to the rear of the front seat in a touring car to protect the rear seat passengers from the often extreme wind and drafts that blew into the car while it was in motion. With no windows in the doors to roll up,

the tonneau shield was the only thing viable to protect the passengers without the side curtains in place. Although most often associated with touring cars, this type of windscreen was being fitted to rumble seats at their front edge to protect



The first major use of tonneau windshields in the USA started in 1909, and Charles Fryer held United States patents for an English invention that would see application and use for more than 30 years.

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The Perkins Tonneau Windshield

WHEN installed, the air currents which ordinarily sweep the tonneau are deflected upward and to the sides so that the tonneau becomes a sheltered nook, where men may smoke without inconvenience, ladies travel in comfort, and where quiet conversation is possible.

Perkins Tonneau Windshield may be purchased through high-class dealers in every part of the world, including sixty-one Packard Service Stations—or direct from manufacturers.

Exhibited at the National Auto Shows—New York, spaces 215-216; Chicago, spaces 10-11.

MEET US AT THE SHOW

PERKINS TONNEAU WINDSHIELD CO.
(Incorporated)
1931 BROADWAY NEW YORK CITY

The Perkins Tonneau Windshield Co. touted the shields “may be purchased through high-class dealers in every port of the world, including sixty-one Packard Service Stations.” Perkins exhibited at the New York Salon held in the Hotel Commodore in 1920.

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CABLE ADDRESS
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Fryer-Auster Company

MANUFACTURERS OF

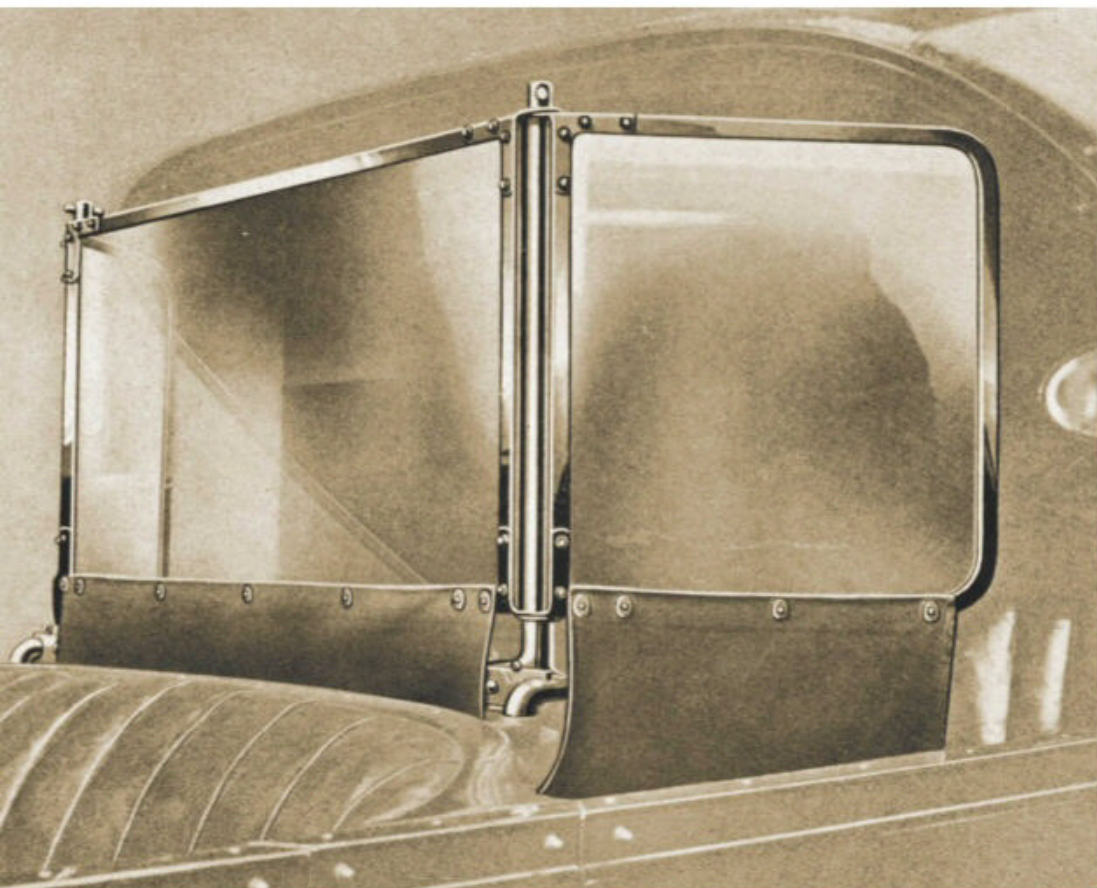
The Auster { Folding-Extending Adjustable } Tonneau Shield

U. S. Patents July 1909, 1911, 1912, 1916.

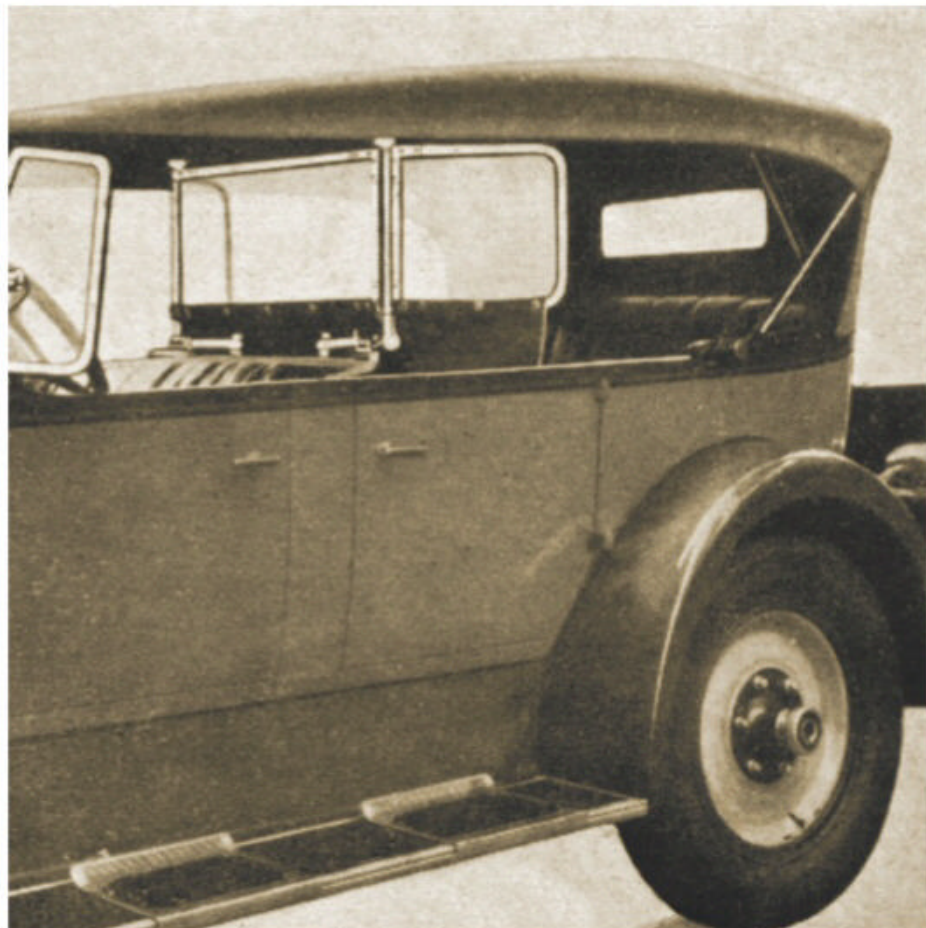
NEW YORK OFFICE
1733 BROADWAY

Factory and Main Offices,
19 Pine Street, Providence, R. I.

The Fryer-Auster Company of Providence, Rhode Island, was the representative in the USA for the British Auster Tonneau Shield. It started to heavily promote these Auster shields in 1916 with direct-contact promotional letters to autobody and repair shops. In England they were called Auster screens.



By 1924, Packard featured a "Deluxe type, all nickel" tonneau windshield in its accessory catalog. Note the "water proof apron" attached to the lower edge.



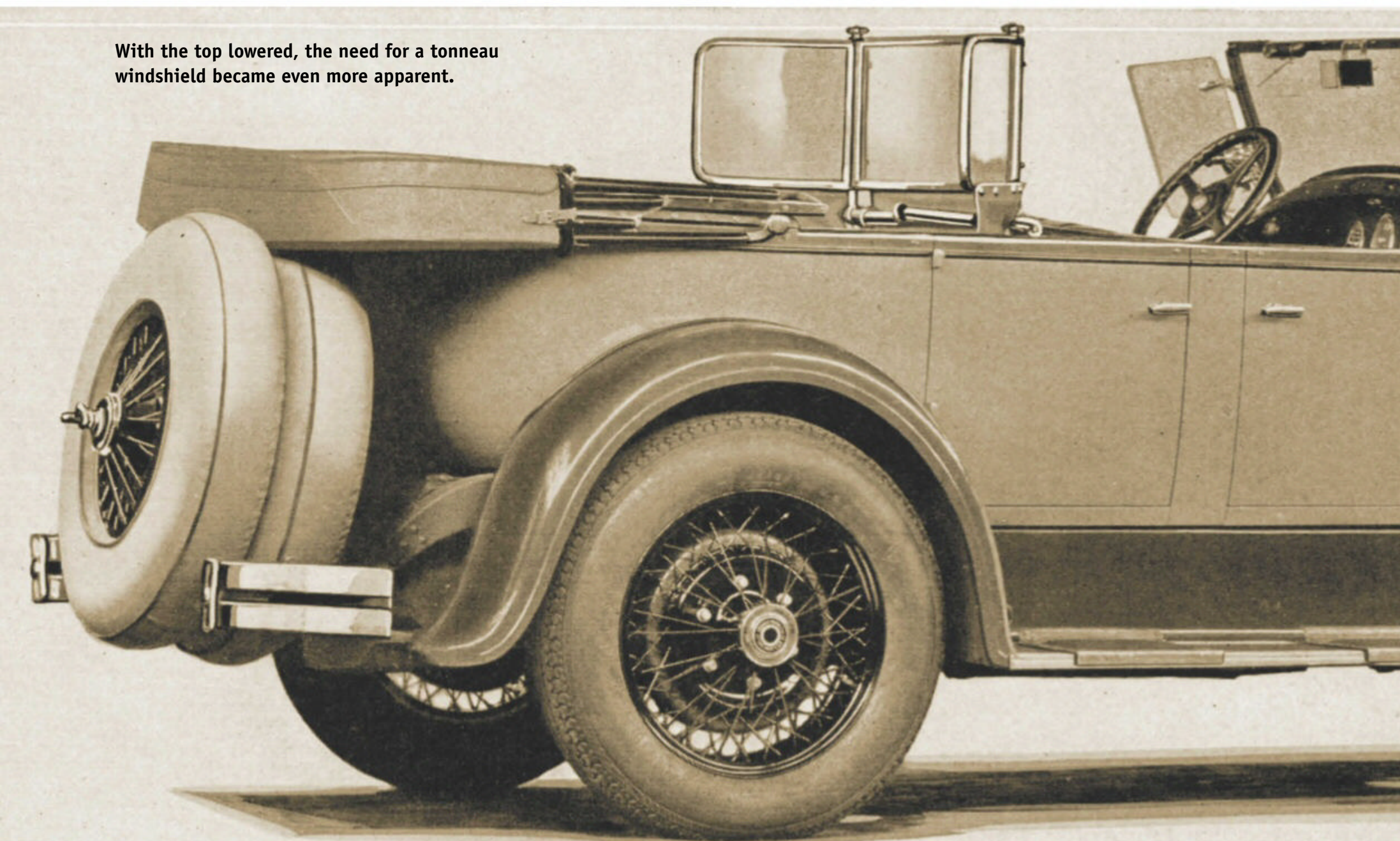
By 1928, the tonneau shields were available in black and nickel-plated trimmings that fit neatly under the raised roof of a touring car.

the passengers sitting there, as well, by the late 1920s. If you have never ridden in the rear of a touring car or a rumble seat at speed, you would be surprised as to what the wind conditions can be like. It can literally take your breath away. Often

tonneau windshields were fitted with wind wings (as was the fixed windshield above the dashboard) to help provide a less windy and thus more comfortable ride. The dual-cowl phaeton, and dual-windshields phaetons, was another but

more costly way to keep the wind out of the faces of the passengers in the back of a touring car. It was also more work to get passengers in and out of the back of a dual-cowl phaeton, as the metal panel that was hinged at the back of the front

With the top lowered, the need for a tonneau windshield became even more apparent.





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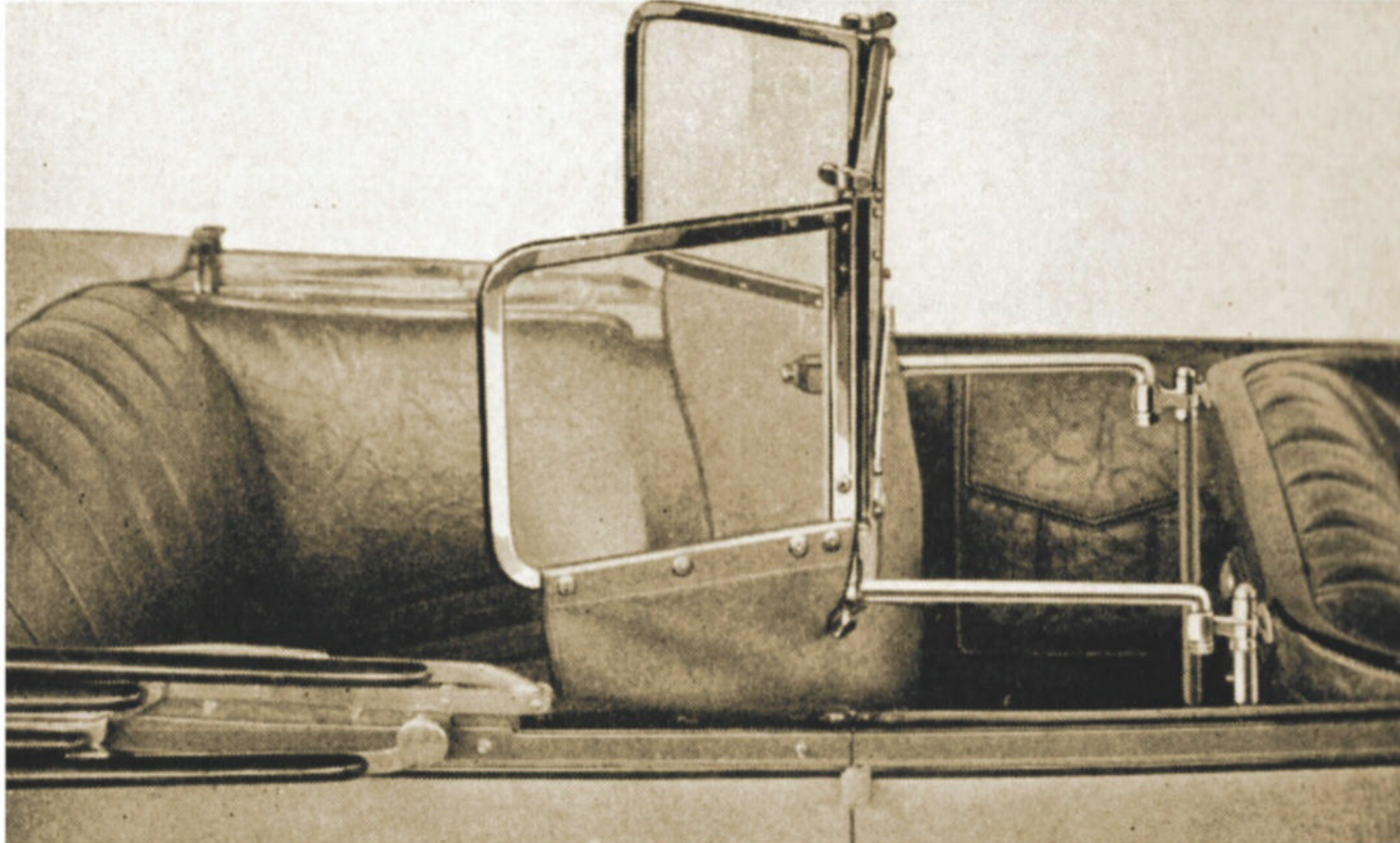


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In 1929, to get the tonneau windshield closer to the rear seat passengers, the arms that supported the whole unit to the back of the front seat could be extended and then tightened to remain in place.

seat, which fit to the top of the doors, took an added effort to maneuver about.

There were patents filed for the Auster Tonneau Shield in the USA in July 1909, 1911, 1912, and 1916. Charles Fryer of Rhode Island was the primary source of the Auster Tonneau Shield in 1916 when he became the U.S. agent for the British Auster Company that had produced them. In England, they were known as Auster screens or shields.

In a letter to automobile accessory suppliers, Fryer noted that the tonneau shield "Fills a long felt want" and that "many of your customers doubtless lay their cars up in the Fall," and with a tonneau shield installed "you can insure their keeping their cars in commission all the year round."

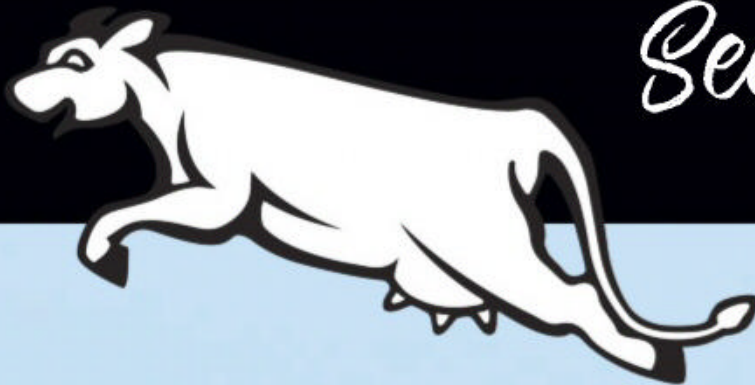
The Auster shield was supplied on a 15-day trial basis so customers could see it work as promised. A canvas or leather cover could be attached to the bottom of the tonneau windshield and the other end would be snapped into place on the rear of the front seat back, as well as the area just below the top of the rear doors.

The Fryer-Auster Company had two offices: one in New York City at 1733 Broadway, and another at its home location and factory at 19 Pine Street in Providence, Rhode Island. By the mid-1920s, a number of automobile manufacturers were offering tonneau windshields in their accessory catalogs and folders as it



Windshields were available for rumble seat passengers as well and would have stopped the wind, but entrance and egress would have been an involved process, to say the least.

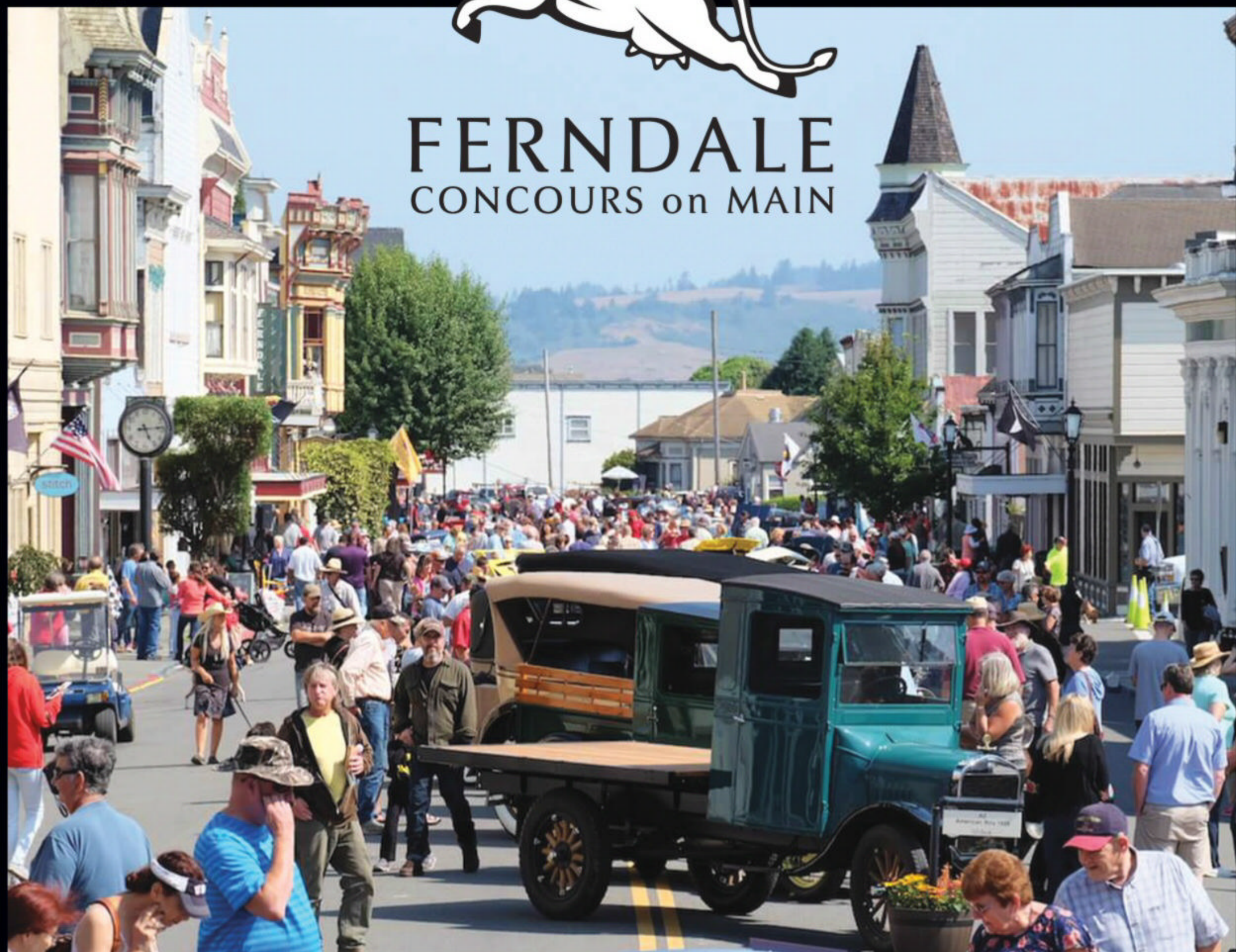
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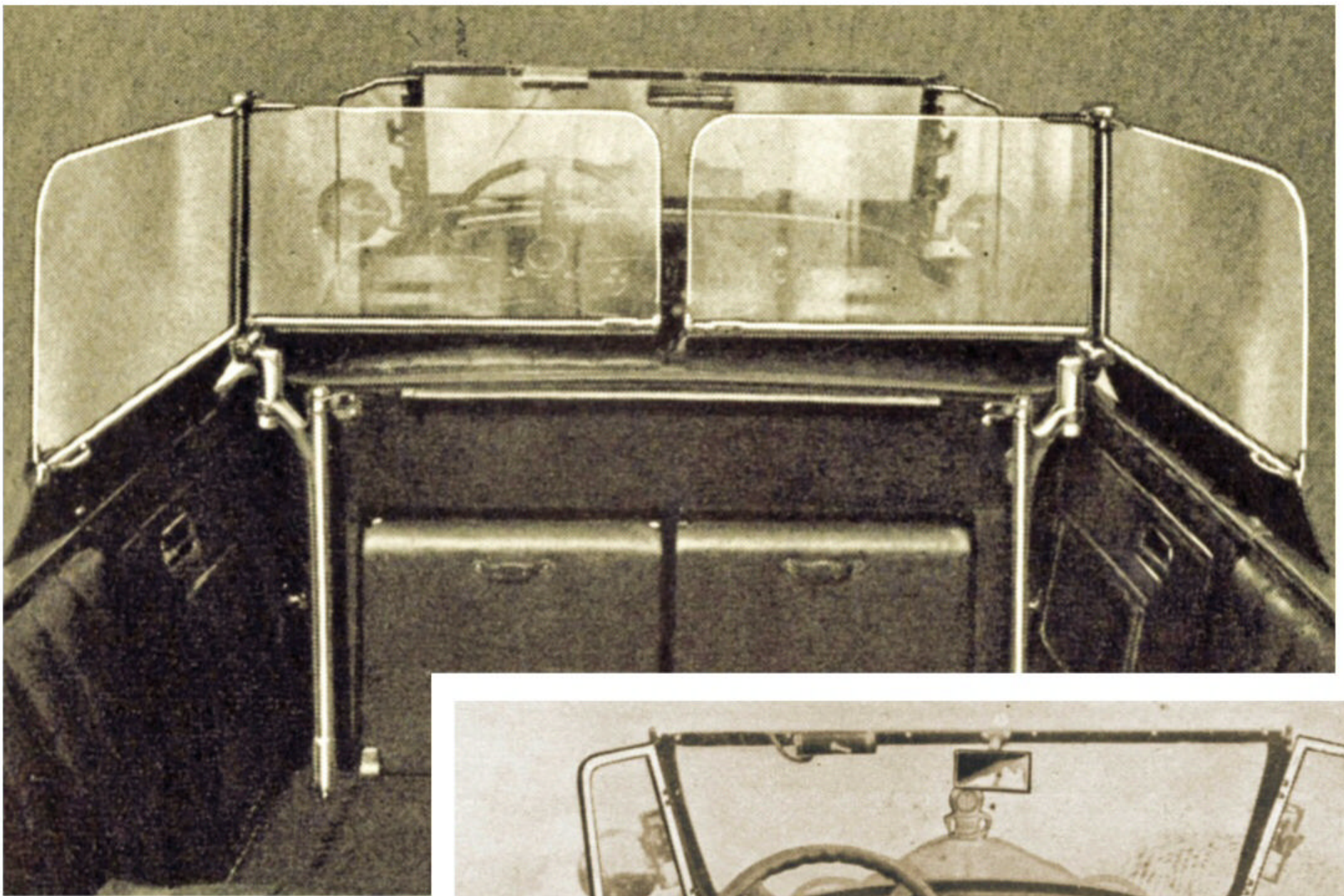
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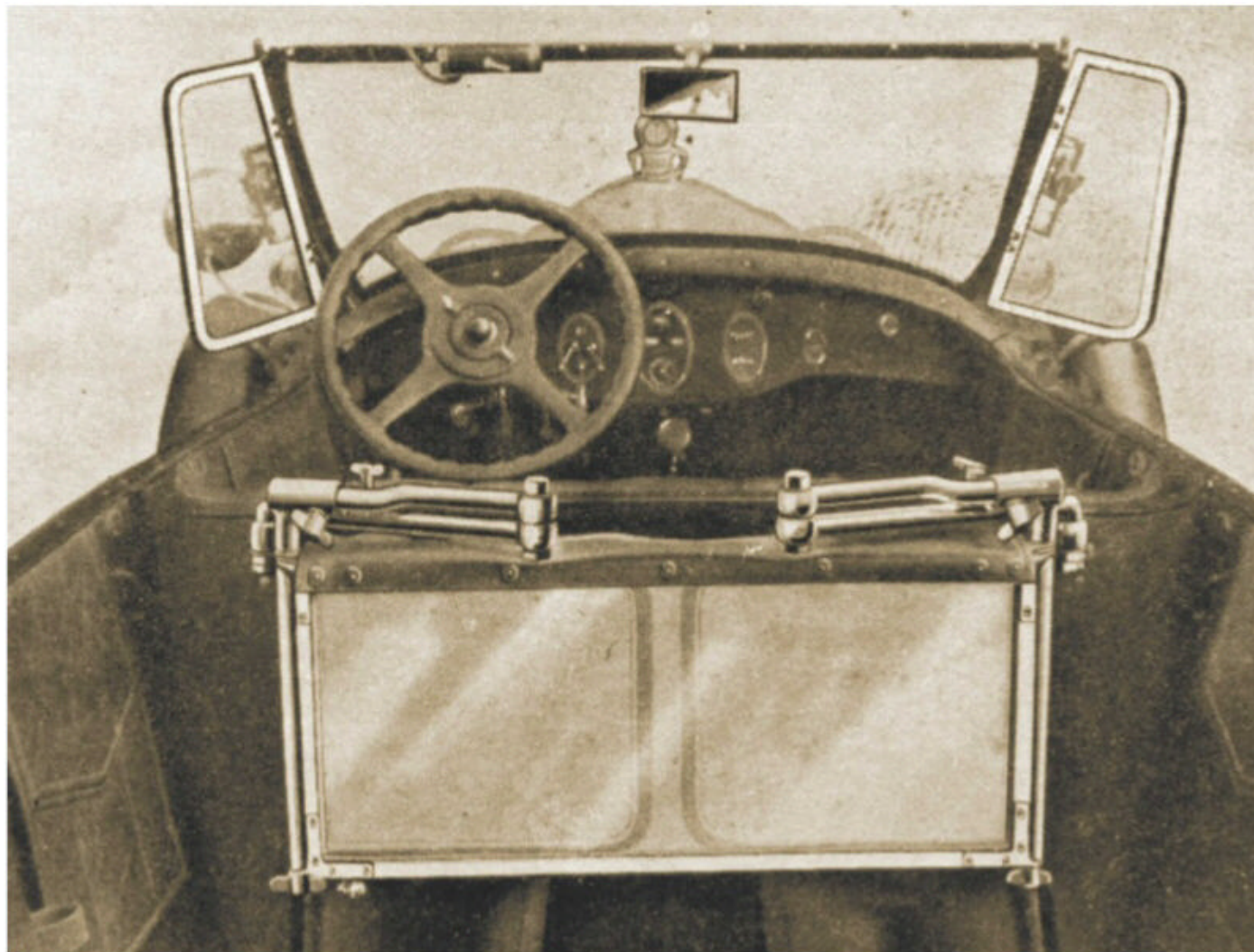
By 1932, several types of tonneau windshields were offered. This type did not have a solid one-piece center section.

provided a service and was also a good profit for the car dealer.

Packard offered its "American Auster" tonneau shield and Packard custom-made "J.H." front shield wind deflectors (wind wings). By the mid-1920s, the tonneau windshield, although still attached to the back of the front seat, could be extended closer to the passengers in the rear, and "when extended by means of the patented folding arms (working on the lazytron idea) gives complete protection."

Packard didn't explain what the "lazytron" idea was. When not in use, the whole unit could be folded down against the back of the front seat. It was stated that it "takes up about as much room as a robe." The robe that they referred to was a heavy accessory blanket that was draped over the rail bolted to the top of the back of the front seat. Robes were necessary to use for warmth in that era when heaters for cars — front or rear — had yet to find a wide acceptance and use.

What was not noted in the accessory material was that, if it was a seven-passenger touring car equipped with a tonneau windshield and the extra seats



Tonneau windshields folded flat out of the way against the back of the front seat where they were mounted; different types were used for five- or seven-passenger cars.

were needed to accommodate extra passengers, the windshield, when folded down, would be somewhat problematic to loosen and get out of the way, then back into place. But this was the way cars were then, and a little extra effort for comfort had to be accommodated.

The tonneau windshield continued to be reasonably popular and was still seen as an accessory as long as the

touring car body was still being offered by manufacturers in their sales catalogs. By 1937, the touring car's popularity was nearly over. Car buyers who wanted an open four-door body style were buying convertible sedans. The convenience of roll-up windows in the doors just made more sense and became more popular with all brands of automobiles. The era of fitting steel rods into the top of the door

and body edge, then fitting side curtains that had to be snapped into place on the body and top to function, had come to an end. Side curtains were a holdover from the horse-drawn carriage and buggy days.

Some convertible sedans even had a division window as a stock feature; this was especially true with Cadillac and Packard. By the late 1930s, the convertible coupe eliminated the rumble seat and instead, a bench seat, located behind the front seat, became standard equipment. This change would lead to the demise of the Convertible Victoria model. The convertible sedans were losing popularity because of the change in the seating configuration of the convertible coupe, and post-WWII very few convertible sedans were built and offered as a stock body style.

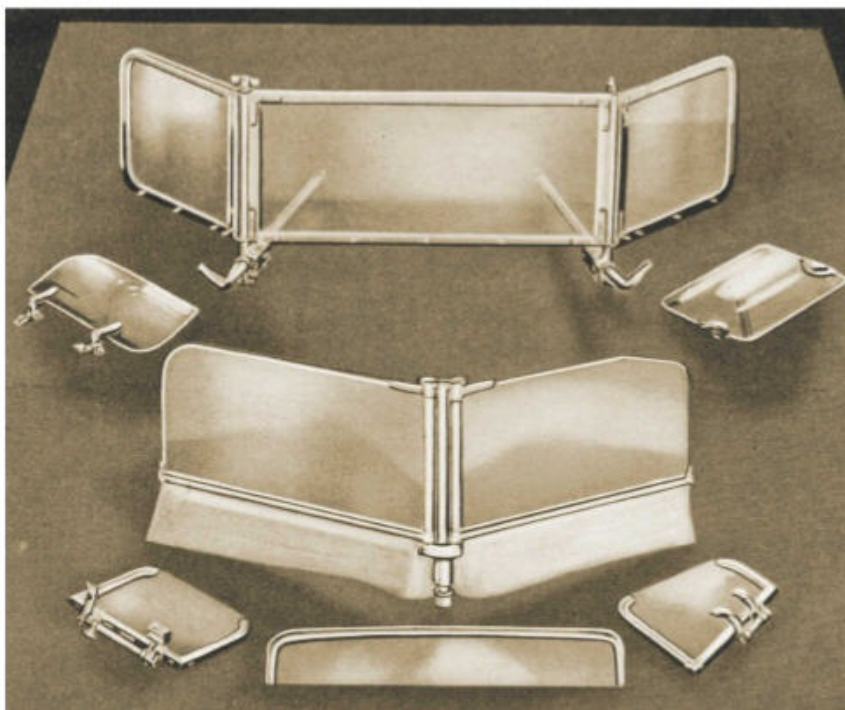
There were still a few custom coachwork firms in existence in the late 1930s and early '40s that would build whatever you desired; open touring cars would be built on rare occasions, but almost exclusively on luxury car chassis. For a brief time immediately postwar, a tonneau windshield was offered for convertible coupes. It was two separate units, not one unit like those from the

1920s. The "glass" partition was clear plastic. The windshields were made by the Armstrong-Felger Company of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and called the Win-shield. They cost \$29.95 with "prices slightly higher west of the Rockies," according to the promotional flyers.

The clear plastic windows were not mounted in metal frames, but had their mounting brackets directly attached to

the bottom edge, and were mounted to the backrest area of the folding front seat. These units were noted as being "useful as a table too!" Advertising mentioned that they eliminated "back-of-the-neck drafts," and there would be "no more wind roar."

The tonneau shields had nearly a 30-year span of popularity, and indeed served a very necessary purpose while also being attractive. 🐼



Left: In 1932, the Packard accessory catalog offered a variety of different tonneau windshields and wind wings.

Below: By the early 1950s, tonneau windshields were made of thick plastic and were available for convertibles. Unlike the pre-WWII tonneau windshields, no metal frame surrounded the plastic windows that could also be used as tables for the back seat!

An advertisement for Win-Shield featuring a car interior with a tonneau windshield installed, a smaller inset image of the same setup, and a logo with the text "ENJOY CLOSED CAR COMFORT WITH WIN-SHIELD".

ENJOY CLOSED CAR COMFORT WITH
WIN-SHIELD

Auburn Cord Duesenberg Automobile Museum

Honoring America's Classics in Auburn's original Art Deco masterpiece



BY MATTHEW LITWIN • PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD LENTINELLO

Detroit may be considered the home of American automobile production, but a sizeable epicenter of the industry was positioned inside the borders of Indiana.

Consider this: The 2½-mile Indianapolis Motor Speedway was long respected as one of the most demanding proving grounds the industry relied upon during the prewar era, accompanied by 249 other motorsports facilities within the Hoosier State. Joining these colosseums of speed were no fewer than 357 manufactures, 82 of which were located inside Indianapolis alone.

Hoosier natives included Blackhawk, Overland, and Stutz; Waverley, Anderson, and Elcar. Many were mere meager attempts on paper. Most have been nearly forgotten. Others, like Studebaker, are both fondly remembered and critiqued back into hypothetical existence. Then there were the few manufacturers that are

truly world renowned: Auburn, Cord, and Duesenberg.

Coveted by many, owned by few, the trio often represent the pinnacle of American styling and engineering among countless enthusiasts. Spoken of in reverence, their stars shined brightly during the Art Deco era and a troubled fiscal environment.

There was more to the story beyond the obvious, and that history has been ceaselessly conveyed and celebrated at the Auburn Cord Duesenberg Automobile Museum. Based in northern Indiana, in the town of Auburn since its founding in 1900, the facility is far from a contemporary, purpose-built memorial. Advertised as the “Home of the Classics,” the campus includes three structures that are a story unto themselves, beginning with a Service and New Parts Department building constructed by 1923. The latest structure housed an inventory of new parts and a

distribution center on the basement level, while the ground floor served as workspace for the construction and testing of experimental cars.

Within the year, Errett Lobban Cord was hired as Auburn’s general manager to reverse the company’s foundering fortunes. Cord’s contract carried a cost beyond his modest income: first refusal to purchase controlling interest if successful. By the close of 1925 production, Auburn output had nearly doubled—to 4,044 units—and, by 1927, it had risen beyond 14,500 cars. Now in control of Auburn, Cord launched his expansion plan with the construction of another edifice in 1928. Aptly named the Cord L-29 building, it coincided with the front-wheel-drive’s creation and introduction for 1929. The ground floor was utilized for the final preparation and shipment of new L-29s while the basement became another space for experimental development. After pur-



This one-of-a-kind 1937 Cord 812 Coupe was commissioned by Robert Stranahan, cofounder of Champion.



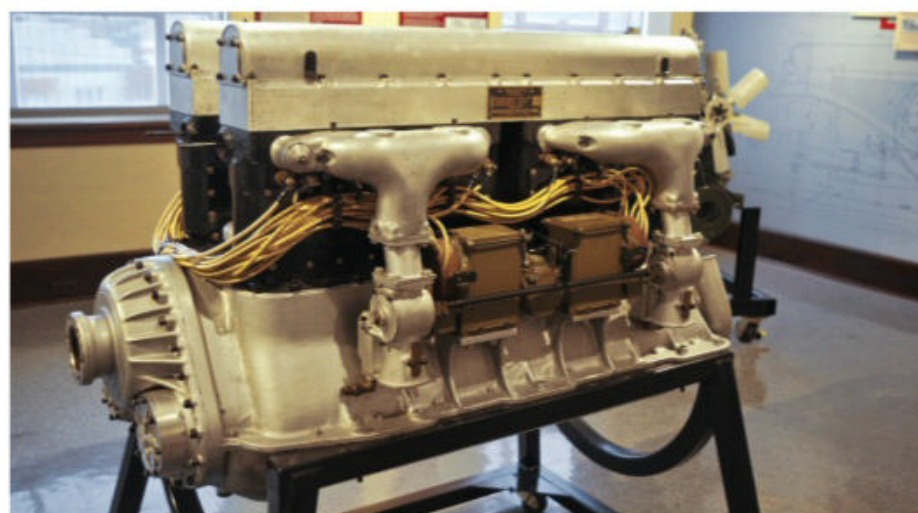
The second floor houses many rare and highly interesting automobiles, including this gorgeous recreation of the 1931 Cord L-29 Speedster; fate of the original car is unknown.

chasing Indianapolis-based Duesenberg, the division used the same area for testing. With workspace now at a premium, Cord needed a facility for the management and display of vehicles.

Auburn's new Showroom and Administration building was designed in the late Twenties by architect Alvin Strauss, of nearby Fort Wayne; his earlier works included the Lincoln Bank Tower, and the Embassy Theater and Indiana Hotel. Strauss' plan called for a two-story U-shaped facility featuring a stylistic brick and limestone façade. Passing through the main entrance, guests were welcomed by a mezzanine, supported by ornate columns, overlooking a geometric patterned tri-tone terrazzo floor. Immense windows—adorned with the names of Auburn, Cord, and Duesenberg—provided ample natural light around the perimeter, while nearly two dozen triple-tiered opalescent glass chandeliers hung from ornate fixtures, in addition to 27 column-mounted sconces. The 12,000-square-foot showroom perfectly complemented the opulence of the three makes.

The first floor's north wing was office space for the switchboard, timekeeper, mailroom, and factory superintendent, while both floors of the south wing were occupied by the experimental engineering department. Attention to detail was extended here as well, and that included a dead-level terrazzo floor that allowed the engineering team to make precise, quality-control measurements of completed cars. This level also included a dynamometer room. The remaining space on the second floor was configured with the offices of E.L. Cord, a design studio, restrooms, and the accounting, advertising, export, and purchasing departments.

Built in 1929 along South Wayne Street on the southern edge of the down-



Body-less chassis is that of a 1926 Duesenberg Model A, featuring a 90-hp, 260-cu.in. overhead-cam straight-eight. Engine (left) is a 12-cylinder Duesenberg-built Bugatti engine with twin upright cylinder heads.

town, the Auburn Automobile Company officially moved into the 66,000-square-foot facility on September 13, 1930. The offices witnessed a rise in production, the cancellation and rebirth of the Cord automobile, and eventually the long-term effects of a struggling economy, plus an investigation by the Securities and Exchange Commission, which ultimately shuttered company doors in 1937.

Cleveland, Ohio, businessman Dallas Winslow purchased the assets, including the Auburn complex and remaining parts



Highly decorative artwork is actually samples of all the different speedometer and multi-gauge instrument faces that were proposed.

inventory—a habit of the entrepreneur, who also had purchased Hupmobile and Graham-Paige—and used the facility as a parts and restoration center as the Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg Company. In 1960, Winslow sold the campus to the Marshall Clothing Company, concurrent to the sale of his A-C-D interests to Stanley Lindell of Auburn. During 1966, Marshall's assets were liquidated via bankruptcy sale; Ohio scrap iron dealer Sam Jacobs now held title to a complex that was ebbing into the realm of ill repair. Industrial warehousing,



With its two-tone green coachwork and white top this handsome coupe is a V-12-powered 1932 Auburn 12-160A, one of four known to exist.



One of the more striking cars on display is this bright blue 1927 Duesenberg Model X boat-tail speedster. The clay buck model is of a Cord, surrounded with personal notes by designer Gordon Buehrig describing the model.



machine shops, and other storage malady had damaged the interior of the main building, while the older structures had been altered to varying degrees.

Simmering in the undertow of disregard for Auburn's automotive past, a group of local citizens and community leaders nurtured the vision of a permanent institution dedicated to its automotive legacy. Formed in 1973, the not-for-profit Auburn Automotive Heritage set into motion a plan to preserve its past. The timing was fortuitous.

The annual Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg festival had welcomed a dramatic increase in profit and attendance with the addition of Kruse collector-car auctions in 1971. Mindful of Jacobs' offer to sell the property for \$130,000, the Heritage group began to aggressively raise funds. In May 1973, a fire decimated a wooden addition — fitted to the main building after Auburn went out of business — which led to a reduced \$105,000 purchase price. Architectural historians were on site in January 1974 to assess the buildings and

formulate projected restoration costs; the same month, the campus was purchased, led by Heritage members Dennis Kruse and Mike Wagner. Another \$108,000 was quickly raised to restore the main showroom using as many of the original materials and fixtures as possible. On July 6, 1974, the doors to Auburn's restored showcase building formally opened to the public, now as the Auburn Cord Duesenberg Automobile Museum.

Today, the Service and New Parts Department building, along with the Cord L-29 building, while still part of the A-C-D Museum complex, are home to the National Automotive and Truck Museum of the United States. Alvin Strauss' Art Deco showroom and office building is as much a centerpiece of the museum as the cars and history it conveys through both permanent and rotating displays, educational seminars, and other events hosted on a regular basis. More than just the products of A-C-D, the museum dips into the realm of Indiana's heritage, and the industry that surrounded it.

A crowning achievement for the Heritage's tireless work came in 1992 when it was designated an Indiana State Historic Site, and then as a National Historic Landmark by the National Parks Service in 2005. It has been visited by millions since opening its doors. To this day, its vision has stayed true to its founding: "To preserve for centuries the Auburn Automobile Company headquarters building, Auburns, Cords, Duesenbergs and other fine automobiles and artifacts relevant to documenting and sharing their historical significance." 🐾

CONTACT:
Auburn Cord Duesenberg
Automobile Museum
 260-925-1444
www.automobilemuseum.org

Middle Ground

Ford's 1957-'60 F-100 was a postwar truck designed for the future

BY MIKE McNESSOR • PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF KOCH

Like any pickup truck, a 1957-'60 Ford F-100 can haul you and your stuff from place to place. But as a piece of rolling history, these evolutionary rigs illustrate how light-truck design got from there to here.

Dearborn's upright and boxy third-generation F-series was a transitional model that built a bridge from yesterday's rounded cabs, bulging fenders and running boards to today's squared-off, slab-sided trucks with aggressively styled front ends.

Technologically these trucks had a lot in common with their ancestors, but a cosmetic overhaul of the new-for-1957 Fords made them a drastic departure from all previous series. The hood was a wide clamshell that capped the front fenders — rather than fitting narrowly between them. A pair of steps mounted inside the cab aided ingress and served as a stopgap for the running boards that had been a mainstay on Ford light trucks until 1957. In the rear, Ford introduced its new higher-capacity Styleside box with a steel floor and smooth sides (available in 6.5- or 8-foot lengths). The traditional Flareside with its bolted-on fenders and wood floor was still available for traditionalists, but the more modern Styleside was standard rather than an extra-cost option.

Inside, suspended brake and clutch pedals swung over a beefier floorpan stamped from 18-gauge steel. This new deck formed the foundation for what Ford claimed was the "...strongest, sturdiest Light Duty Cab ever to wear Ford badges."

The F-100's base offerings consisted of dual windshield wipers, hubcaps, one taillamp mounted on the left side, an interior rearview mirror, horn, spare tire, and jack, as well as a driver's-side sunvisor. If a buyer stepped up to the Custom Cab F-100 he got a matched set of sunvisors, an insulated headliner, dome lamp, pair of door-mounted armrests, interior sound







replaced later in the model year with the 186-hp 292-cu.in. V-8.

For 1959, a new hood design with a mesh air intake led the charge. There was also a beefed-up interior cab step, new upholstery, and a dome lamp. The F-100's rear crossmembers were also strengthened, and factory-installed four-wheel drive was available for the first time on the 1959 F-100.

For the final production before the 1961 redesign, the 1960 F-100 sported a new grille, and the parking lamps were integrated into the surround. A pair of slotted nostrils were punched into the front edge of the hood, and the Ford gear-and-lightning insignia replaced the Ford letters. Subtle changes included revised door locks, improved weatherstripping, interior coat hooks, new seat upholstery, and a more powerful optional cab heater.

Under the hoods of the 1960 F-100s, the 223-cu.in. straight-six and 292-cu.in. V-8 engines were outfitted with rocker covers and gaskets said to be less prone to leaking, improved cooling systems and better rear main seals. The 292 engine also benefited from a new rotor-type oil pump that could provide greater oil pressure at idle and in the mid-to-upper rpm range. The 292's cylinder heads incorporated revised combustion chambers that relocated the spark plug and increased the chamber's squish area in an effort to make the engine more tolerant of cheaper grades of gasoline. This engine also used new piston rings to reduce oil consumption. Four-wheel-drive F-100s were bolstered with additional cab reinforcement and beefier front and rear springs.

Ford's 1957-'60 vintage F-Series trucks have a strong following, but they never really went mainstream among collectors

insulation, and foam-padded seats. The Custom Cab also boasted bright exterior trim and special Custom Cab badging as well as exterior door locks on both the driver and passenger sides. Among the options was a wraparound rear window for better rearward visibility, an in-dash transistor radio, chrome bumpers, a heater and windshield defroster, windshield washers, turn signals, a cigar lighter, or a side-mounted spare tire.

The 1957 F-100 could be powered by Ford's 223-cu.in. straight-six rated at 139 horsepower and 207 lb-ft of torque, or the 272-cu.in. V-8 rated at 171 hp and 260 lb-ft of torque. Once buyers selected an engine, they could choose among four manual transmissions, as well as the Ford-O-Matic automatic.

For 1958, the F-100 was updated with a new grille and quad headlamps, as well as revised hubcaps and badging. The 272-cu.in. V-8 was given a horsepower boost to 180, then





and hot-rodders, so they make a great alternative to their more popular cousins. Because these are Ford pickups, parts and information sources are plentiful.

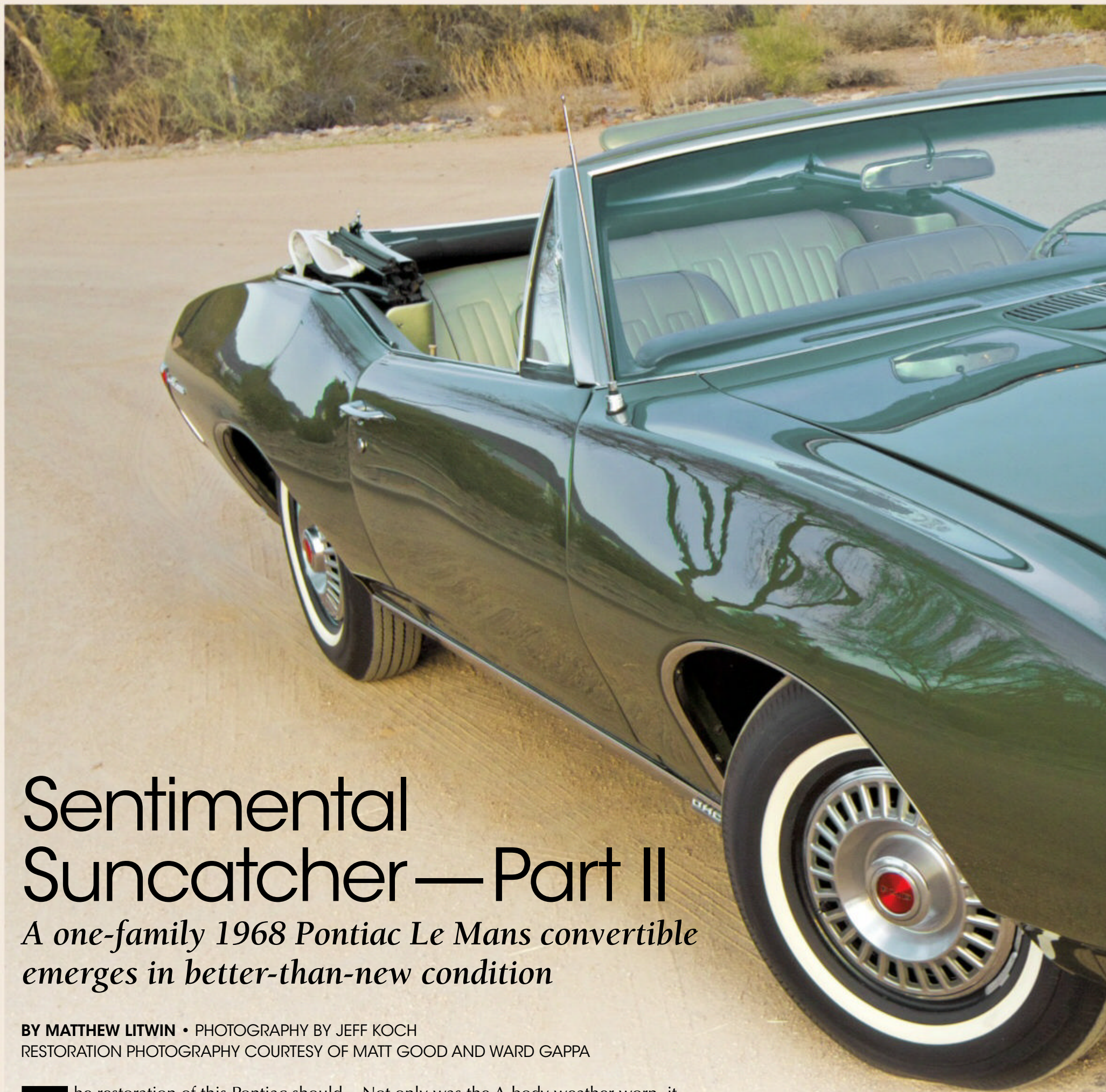
This month's 1960 F-100 Styleside feature truck belongs to Rich Fairservis of Chandler, Arizona. Rich, a prolific collector of postwar cars and pickups, bought the truck in 2009 as a project. "I purchased it from a Natrona County, Wyoming, man along with several other vehicles he had on his property," Rich said. "Of the four that I bought from him, this was in the best condition, so I decided to restore it."

The original 292 V-8 was overhauled, as was the transmission. The body was treated to a two-tone color combination of Sky Mist Blue and Corinthian White. Inside, the soft parts were upholstered in blue and white leather to match the exterior. The restoration was completed in 2011, and today the truck performs as good as it looks.

"It still has the original

carburetor—with a rebuild of course—but you can pull out the choke and it will start on first turn each time!" Rich said. Aside from its too-nice-to-let-go condition, the truck brought back some memories that helped move Rich to rebuild it. "My wife's late grandfather had a similar, but later model Ford pickup in the same colors that he purchased new from Fremont Motors in Lander, Wyoming. I was always fond of those colors and this body style—I will never part with it during my lifetime." 🐾





Sentimental Suncatcher—Part II

A one-family 1968 Pontiac Le Mans convertible emerges in better-than-new condition

BY MATTHEW LITWIN • PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF KOCH
RESTORATION PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF MATT GOOD AND WARD GAPPA

The restoration of this Pontiac should not have happened. The Le Mans convertible, though completely original, was visually tired by 2012. Purchased new in 1968, it had been driven daily through Pennsylvania's sun, rain, and snow, where any citizen of the Keystone state can tell you salt is also a winter reality.

Not only was the A-body weather-worn, it had been saturated with corrosion. Coupled with the fact that it contained a straight-six engine and an automatic transmission, it's reasonable to assume that some within the collector-car community would view the pedestrian Pontiac as a potential parts car for the restoration of, say, a GTO.

Conversely, this Le Mans—effectively a well-appointed, upscale Tempest—was far from the utilitarian commuter some would suggest it to be. The Pontiac may not have had a high-output engine and a four-speed gearbox in base form, but it did share much of the GTO's new styling



and chassis architecture. Its base engine unapologetically didn't set performance records, but that wasn't its intent. The six-cylinder engine was a rather revolutionary alternative of the era: A 250-cu.in. overhead-cam powerplant that, with a one-barrel carburetor, was rated for 175 horsepower and 216 lb-ft of torque. The "cammer," slang used by gearheads for the engine, provided just enough power to move 3,400 pounds of metal, plastic, and

fabric, which kept fuel costs low and drop-top driving pleasure high.

The combination of sleek looks, economical power, and \$3,015 base price was enough to attract 8,820 buyers during the year, or 6.47 percent of the total 136,297-unit Le Mans production run. An argument could be made that this convertible was somewhat rare, and therefore deserved to be saved from a scrapper's future. But for those none the wiser, there was another factor working in its favor: sentimental value.

Recalling part one of this saga, which appeared in last month's issue, this

1968 Le Mans had been gifted to Vickie Needles Good in June 1968 upon her high school graduation. Her parents ordered the convertible through S&H Pontiac in Harrisburg, optioned with a Super Turbine 200 two-speed automatic transmission, undercoating, power steering, radio, center console, front floor mats, interior Décor group, door edge guards, and whitewall tires. Finished in Verdoro Green, with a white top and two-tone Morrokide green interior, this car had a price line reading \$3,679.73 before taxes, fees, and discounts were calculated.

The Pontiac served Vickie daily, save for a brief period just two months into ownership when the original engine suffered a mechanical failure and was replaced under warranty. In the years that followed, the Le Mans was an integral part of Vickie's life, including her marriage, the birth of her only child, Matt, and the



With the main body shell secured to the frame, final reassembly began in stages, including the restored convertible top frame. If installed out-of-square, the top could bind during operation, which could result in damage to the frame.



The shop workers did multiple aspects of the restoration in unison to help expedite the process, including the rebuilding of the Pontiac's taillamp subassemblies that were now fitted with new light sockets, wiring, and weather seals.



The taillamp assemblies are installed in their respective positions within the rear bumper. Rechromed earlier, the bumper is secured to the convertible as a completed subassembly. Note the blue tape protecting the new PPG paint finish.



At the forward end of the Pontiac, the radiator and its support frame is installed. Much of the forward wiring harness has also been installed, along with the air-conditioning and fuel-delivery systems. The hydraulic master cylinder is still required.



Before floor carpeting and kick panels are installed, the rest of the convertible's electrical system needs to be fitted. This includes the fuse panel below the dashboard and remaining wiring connections associated with the car's instruments.



Concurrent to adding the fuse panel, the Pontiac's gauges and auxiliary controls are installed. Though the simulated walnut panels are on the dash, the top padding, glovebox door, radio, and air conditioning ducts are still needed.

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At this stage, the side glass and corresponding regulators are in place. Also seen here is part of the electrically powered top mechanism. Further replicating the factory build process, paint overspray is visible against the red oxide primer.



Another part of the Le Mans that was addressed as a subassembly was the right-front fender. The electric antenna and its wiring are installed, as is the fender's brightwork, just visible along the crown's back edge.



Little details are still plentiful: final touches to the windshield frame include new top Morrokide trim material along the length of the aft edge, and freshly polished brightwork that conceals the windshield's new weather seals.



By March 2016, the dashboard's reassembly is complete, including trim and a restored steering wheel. Sun visors are installed, along with the transmission's shift linkage and the remaining control pedals. The cabin is now ready for upholstery.



One of areas that did not receive the subassembly method of reassembly is the Pontiac's front fascia, including the lower valance. Running lamps, grilles, and headlamps would soon follow. Note that standard front brake drums are retained.



Aside from finite details that need to be addressed, one of the last stages of the Le Mans restoration is the installation of new reproduction floor carpet and bench seat upholstery. The side panels are original to the car, re-dyed as needed using PPG products.

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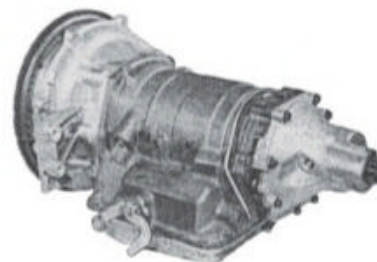
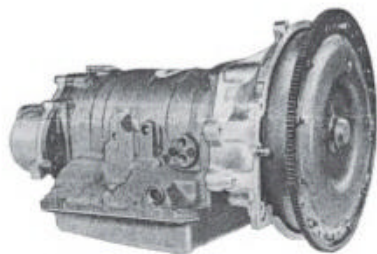


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progression of her career, until cancer claimed her life in 1979. Matt's father then drove the Le Mans briefly before he transferred ownership to his in-laws. Upon their subsequent passing in 2011 and '12, Matt became the rightful steward of the Le Mans. Having earlier relocated to the Scottsdale region of Arizona, he set into motion a path for the Pontiac's future when he paid a visit to Ward Gappa, proprietor of Quality Muscle Car Restorations, the following March.

After two visits, the second of which involved a detailed examination of the Pontiac, Ward outlined an extensive plan that would painstakingly resurrect the family heirloom to its former glory. Despite the undercoating, a vast amount of metal had been afflicted with rot, so

the decision was made that a donor car would be the most efficient way to help expedite metal repairs. Fully supported by Matt's enthusiasm and a deep understanding of the costs it would entail, the Pontiac was officially delivered to the shop in November 2013.

Ward and his staff began to disassemble the convertible while taking meticulous notes pertaining to unexpected discoveries, such as the structural damage that had weakened the rear section of the main body shell. Though it was known that the floorpan seams had fractured due to rot, the remaining metal was dangerously thin. A same-year Tempest coupe, which had laid dormant for 40 years and whose metal had been spared, all but surface rust on the hood

and roof due to the high desert climate, was found in Tuba City, Arizona.

While the bodies of the two Pontiacs were being disassembled, and usable and unusable components were separated, Greg Greulich, of Greulich Engine Machining in Phoenix, oversaw the engine's rebuild. Using the scant reproduction components available on the market, in conjunction with cleaned original parts, the OHC Six was rebuilt to factory specifications.

According to Ward, "When they tested the engine, a multitude of problems arose immediately. Greg called and said, 'What were they thinking when they designed this thing?' He went on to explain that when he rebuilt it to spec, it leaked everywhere, the compression



Though the Le Mans was an upscale model, the AM pushbutton radio was still optional equipment. At the time of our photoshoot, the original mileage read just shy of 62,000.



was way short because the geometry was wrong with the original components, and the quality control was terrible. Greg had to take the whole top end apart again and fabricate new parts to make it right.

“When the original transmission was first inspected, we were told it looked like sewage inside, adding that the casing would leak after it was rebuilt. It was more cost-effective to rebuild the two-speed automatic out of the donor car. The donor also had factory air conditioning. We robbed it to install in the convertible for Matt—the only deviation from its order sheet—which meant we had to rebuild and install the differential from the donor as well; it had the proper gear ratio within the housing. This car was not going to be a show pony—it had to work. It was a lot more work for the team, but at least it was going to be more than a paperweight.”

By April 2014, the engine was given a clean bill of health after a second test, just as the disassembly of both cars had been completed. The entire project hinged on the convertible’s fully boxed frame, which was now completely exposed. After removing the suspension and brake systems, the body structure was media blasted to bare metal. Much to everyone’s relief, the frame exhibited only small pitting, which was sealed under a skim coat of filler, epoxy primer, and finally a correct hue of chassis black paint. The coupe’s suspension control arms, springs, and steering linkage were cleaned and powdercoated.

Not forgotten were the extensive metal repairs that were ongoing. This included not only the welding of the coupe’s floorpan into the convertible shell, but also structural repairs at critical section joints—including rocker panels—and vast sections of the rear quarter panels, the



latter made difficult by the obvious design difference between body styles. As each section was completed, the panels were sealed in self-etching primer, followed by red oxide primer, the latter replicating the factory build process.

As the calendar flipped to August 2015, the Le Mans was photographed with its chassis completed, including the entire drivetrain and new brake lines, and its restored body shell finished in the correct shade of Verdoro Green, key points of which we’ve outlined here. This included the convertible top, wiring, the entire interior, and a lengthy list of body and trim items throughout. By the spring of 2016 the Le Mans was presented to a jubilant and grateful owner.

During our recent conversation with Ward, we were informed that Matt drives his old Pontiac a few times a month,

perhaps adding 300 miles to its odometer a year after its appearance at the Muscle Car and Corvette Nationals meet in Chicago, Illinois, in November. He added, “This was an incredibly big project for us. At one point we were cutting up two cars at the time to facilitate the repairs. Making it more difficult was the fact that there’s a 2 percent difference in everything between a coupe and a convertible from the same model year; you can’t direct-swap any of the body panels, except the hood; we saved the original. My friend, Steve Dunn, did a masterful job of blending the two cars together while Joe Reece ensured that the interior matched the factory build sheet. We fed off Matt’s understanding of the costs, time, and his deep sentimental attachment to the Le Mans. To bring it back to life for him and see his emotional reaction was rewarding.” 🐞



Show Star

Built for display, this unique 1971 280 SL demonstrated Mercedes-Benz's finest engineering

BY MARK J. McCOURT

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF KOCH

There were indications this SL wasn't a run-of-the-mill example, but it took a trained eye to see them. Since the 280 SL's 1968 debut, Mercedes-Benz employees had built each one of the firm's touring sports cars with care. But the well-equipped car from the final year of production was something special, and its marque-expert caretaker would uncover its extraordinary past while ensuring its preservation into the future.

By 1971, the SL was established as a legendary model in a line of sporting postwar two-seaters. Having originated with the racing-derived, "Gullwing" door-equipped 1954 300 SL coupe and its image-conscious contemporary counterpart, the open-top four-cylinder 190 SL, that duo had evolved into the singular 230 SL of 1963. This thoroughly modern and civilized convertible split the difference in character between the exotic 300 and tepid 190, offering spirited performance along with the comfort and safety expected of a modern Mercedes-Benz. In a quest for more torque, the 230 evolved into the larger-displacement 250, and ultimately became the 280 on these pages.

Philip Lutfy was no stranger to "W113"—chassis SLs, as this generation of removable roof Benzes was internally designated by the automaker. *Hemmings Sports & Exotic Car* readers will remember the retired physician from the 2015 feature ("Mercedes Family Album," issue #120) celebrating his parents' 1959 220 S coupe and 1963 300 SL roadster. This Phoenix, Arizona, resident has owned 20 examples of the "Pagoda" SL, representing a significant portion of the 100-plus Mercedes cars he's bought and sold, restored and collected through the decades.

"The Gullwings were noisy, and hot inside in the summer—the roadsters were better since you could drop the top—but the W113s were not so obnoxious. The 230, 250, and 280 were quieter, and much cooler inside, even with the hardtop on," Philip tells us. "They have good visibility from windows all around, and they're lighter; with power brakes and power steering, they're more delicate, and easier to drive."

Better passenger accommodations were designed into this

generation of SL from the start. While it shared the 94.5-inch wheelbase of earlier models, it was now based on a shortened 220 SE "Fintail" platform. The steel unit-body, with aluminum doors, hood, and trunklid, incorporated crumple zones for occupant protection, and its crisp, fresh styling was primarily attributed to future head of BMW design, Paul Bracq. The removable hardtop that added comfort and safety gave the car its





Pagoda nickname, for the high-sided roof had a sunken central section that added strength and made it visually slimmer.

The mechanical package was similarly sedan-derived, but this was no detriment to the sports car. By the time the 280 SL supplanted the 250, its SOHC inline-six displaced 2,778-cc (169.5-cu.in.) through an 86.5 x 78.8-mm (3.4 x 3.1-inch) bore and stroke. With a 9.5:1 compression ratio, the Bosch mechani-

cal fuel injection-equipped engine made 180 hp at 5,700 rpm and 193 lb-ft of torque at 4,500 rpm. A four-speed manual transmission was standard, with a four-speed automatic or five-speed manual available at extra cost. Behind 14 x 6-inch steel wheels mounting 185 HR 14 radials and new full wheel covers were four-wheel disc brakes. These were insulated from the body through an unequal-length double wishbone suspension



with coil springs and an anti-roll bar in front, plus an independent rear comprised of single-joint low-pivot swing axles, trailing arms, and a transverse compensating spring.

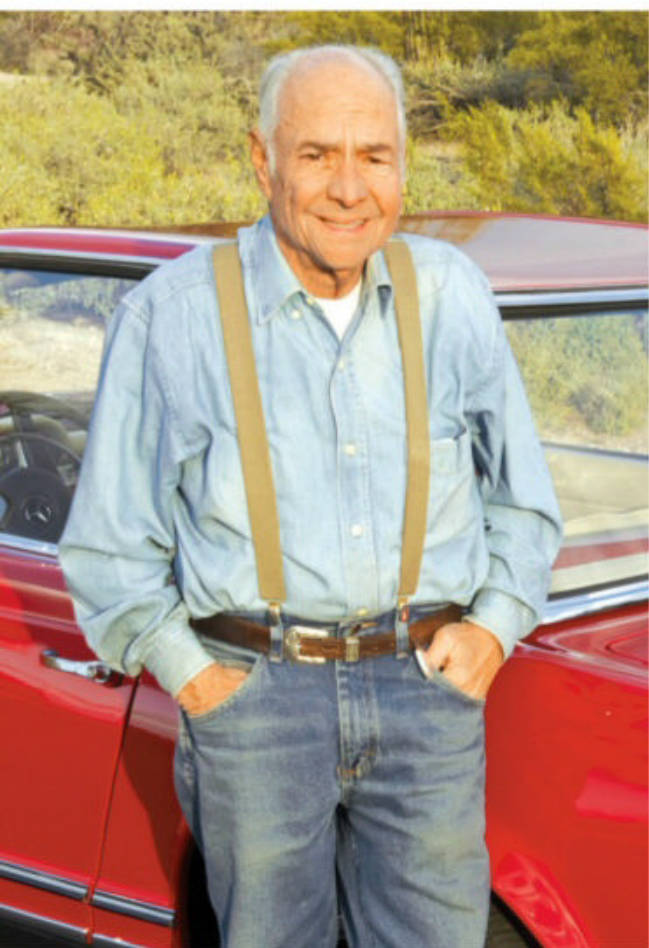
While the interior's bright metal and body-color-painted dash trimmings dated the car to the 1960s, the final 830 280 SLs built for 1971 — total production for this model was 23,885 — still offered a modern driving experience. Mercedes-Benz was already preparing the V-8-powered "R107" — chassis 350 SL for its Spring '71 debut, though, and that generation would be even more popular and longer-lived than its predecessor.

So what was it about the Signal Red-over-Parchment-MB-Tex car on these pages that caught Philip's eye? This French-market 280 SL, bearing that country's characteristic yellow headlamps, had been presented to him in photos by a broker friend in Belgium. Aside from a quality repaint performed at some point in the car's history, it was untouched, and appeared in excellent condition. It wasn't just the exceedingly rare ZF-sourced five-speed transmission, the early add-on Becker cassette deck that

completed the Europa AM/FM radio, and the fitted luggage set in the trunk that made this noted Mercedes enthusiast jump into action.

"Look at the fenderwells. When regular cars were built, they had spot welds along the fender line by the firewall. The tops of the fenders were welded to the panels inside the engine compartment, and whenever a fender is replaced, it's too much trouble to recreate the spot welds, so they're filled in — but these were the original fenders. That was the first thing I noticed — those welds were filled in," he explains. This car also had flat metal plates screwed into the cowl, in the door jambs, covering a row of typically exposed spot welds that anchored the fender, below the windshield.

Philip continues; "Under the hood, the valve cover was painted semi-gloss black, instead of the usual aluminum finish. The intake manifold and lower heat shields were polished, and the linkages and fuel lines were chrome plated. They didn't want any flaws to show on this car — they wanted to make it



*They didn't
want any flaws
to show on
this car —
they wanted to
make it stand
out as special.*



This 280 SL reveals its French-market origin through the yellow bulbs in its Euro-market vertical single-lens headlamp/turn signal/fog lamp units, along with not having U.S.-mandated seat headrests. Opening the trunk reveals a three-piece set of fitted luggage.





Carefully finished jambs hide factory spot welds; painted, polished, and chromed engine components show this car was built for display.

stand out as special. These were things that I caught, but my broker friend had missed."

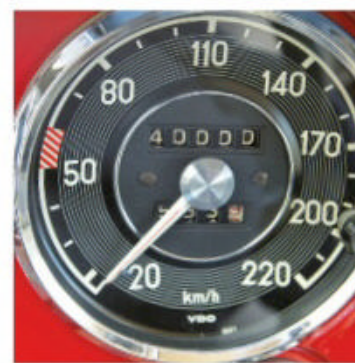
He immediately began researching this hardtop-equipped SL, and its paperwork offered a glimpse into its provenance. The original title was in French, like all the other documents that came with it, and which Philip was careful not to disturb. The first owner had been Claude Lelouch, the famous French actor responsible for 1976's thrilling race-through-Paris short film, *Rendezvous*. The Irvine, California-based Mercedes-Benz Classic Center interpreted the 280's data card, and confirmed that option code 997 indicated it had been built as a "stationary car for use on exhibition."

A German-language document noted this SL's scheduled August 1970 delivery to the Paris-based Royal-Élysées, France's exclusive Mercedes-Benz importer. Michael Kunz, Classic Center manager, wrote, "There are clear remarks on the sheet indicating 'Display—Vehicle' with the following specific

equipment: 'License plate holder front and rear; Installation of model type plate on front license plate holder; Plastic sheet covers for front seats; Shock absorbers with limited travel; send 1 set of car keys to Display Department Wangen, attn.: Mr. Korell; Phoenix tires.'"

"Looking at the details, and the literature—it all fit into place, being a factory display car. I once owned a Gullwing that had been a factory show car, so I recognized the way it was prepared," Philip explains. While he drives this 40,000-kilometer (around 25,000-mile) SL sparingly in consideration of its provenance, he's quick to praise its manners. "The five-speed makes it more exciting to drive; you can reach higher highway speeds, and the gearing makes it more relaxed, with lower revs than the four-speed."

"This car is special, but I love all of the W113 cars," he admits. "Once you drive one, you really appreciate what they have to offer." 🐾



MB Tex vinyl is less prestigious than leather, but more durable; this material is 48 years old. Stereo and five-speed are desirable.

Gary Buehler

Production Control Department
Rochester Products Division

I WAS A COLLEGE STUDENT AND

worked for General Motors in various jobs and positions at the Rochester Products Division (RPD) in Rochester, New York, from 1961 to 1966. At the time, RPD supplied GM with steel tubing for gas and brake lines for a variety of its cars and trucks. It also manufactured the locks, keys, and carburetors for the entire line of its vehicles, including Corvette fuel injection units.

I applied for an hourly position and, since the Division was hiring, I was offered a job immediately; the officer asked if I could begin on Monday. My hourly wage was much more than my other college friends were making in their part-time jobs, so I was delighted to be able to attend college during the day and work either the second or third shift. I had married at a young age, and we had a child before I realized I had to get serious about school, obtaining a degree, and pursuing the career that I desired. My wife took a full-time job as I began attending college so we could survive. It wasn't long before we both realized our young daughter needed a stay-at-home mom, hence the reason I sought employment with GM.

Being a dues-paying member of the United Automotive Workers labor union was all new for me. My first night on the job, I was assigned to washing and drying steel parts. The parts were delivered in steel tubs directly from the punch press area and were covered in oil. My job was to load a large, mesh-sided, round, steel pail-like container with the parts, put the pail into a heated caustic solution for several minutes, remove the pail, and then place it in a machine to dry the cleaned parts.

This drying machine spun the pail inside a closed container that was heated with steam. Between the centrifugal force of spinning and the steam applied, the parts would dry. It was important to have the parts dry thoroughly so they would not rust, hence the drying time varied, but usually it took 15 minutes or so, which gave me, the operator, some "down time."

Time dragged on while waiting to check the parts to see if they were dry and



GM ROCHESTER OPERATIONS

I was bored. Because I had three drying machines available, I simply ran all three of them instead of just the one machine I was assigned, as it made the time go quickly by. It was at this point, at the end of the shift, where I had stacked all the clean parts up on a skid, that a couple of the "old guys" came over to talk to me. They told me I was doing too much, to slow down, to only run one dryer at a time, because I was making other guys doing this job "look bad."


I did not heed their advice, and soon no one was willing to talk to me. When I came to work the next evening, the tow motor operators had buried me in parts to be cleaned, and I could hardly move around and had no place to stack the parts I had cleaned. Within a short period of time, I was told by my foreman to report to the front office.

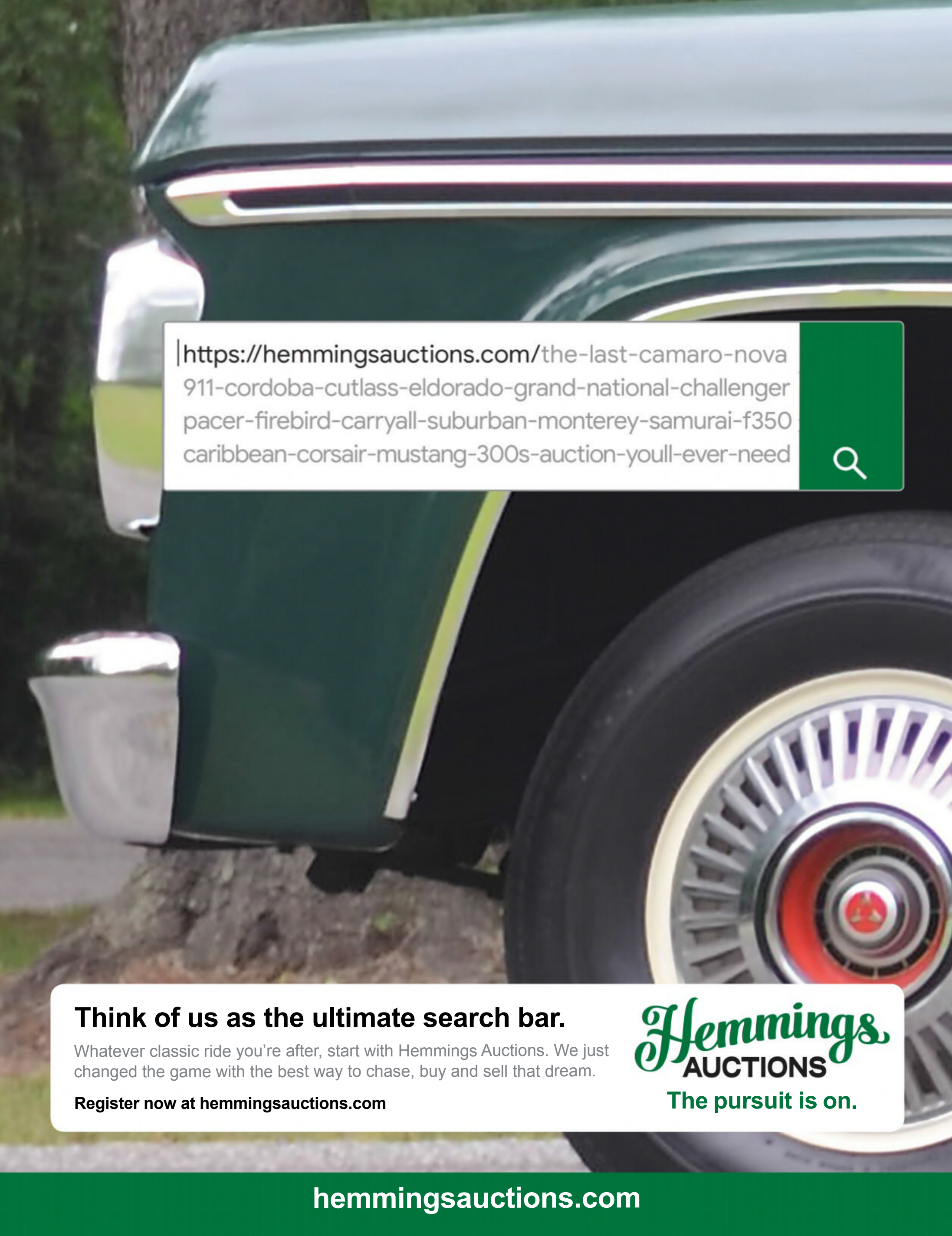
In the employment office, I was quizzed about my work on the night shift, my college program, and future plans by a senior staff member. As I remember that meeting ended with something like this being said, "How would you like to have a salaried position?" I asked where and what would I be doing. I was told I would be working in the Production Control Department and I would have to wear a white dress shirt to work. My new assigned task consisted of checking the production schedules for all sections of the plant, inventorying, and ordering the cardboard packing and shipping materials and containers for the three shifts of manufacturing. I still was able to work the night shift, and was assigned the use of an electric scooter so I could cover all sections of the plant.

I worked in an air-conditioned office that was in the center of the manufacturing area. The top section of each wall consisted of glass windows, so as I sat at my desk figuring out what the plant needed and ordered material, I could easily be seen by anyone looking in or walking by in the aisle. The "old guys" who gave me advice that first night usually walked by on their way to the cafeteria at lunch time, and I always wondered what they might be thinking, but I was afraid to ask.

I appreciated the opportunity I had to work for General Motors. I completed my degree with the assistance of GM's tuition reimbursement benefit/program. My goal was to become a teacher, and when I turned in my letter of notification to leave for a teaching position, I was pleased that my boss asked me to reconsider, indicating that maybe there would be a place for me at GM in Flint. It's funny how things work out when you are not sure about what the future holds.

Looking back, I am pleased I made the right decision for me. I taught for several years, became an administrator, and then spent the last 20 years of my career as a Superintendent of Schools leading four Districts in New York State. And yes, I do drive a GM vehicle! 🚗

 **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.



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Welcome Back

I LIVE IN RA'ANANA, A SMALL town near Tel Aviv, and own a little red 1960 Ford Falcon; I also have a 1963 Squire and 1966 Mustang.

I was born in the year of 1948 and grew up near the Mediterranean Sea within the State of Israel. Israel in the 1950s was a young, poor country, trying to absorb hundreds of thousands of new emigrants, most of whom were Holocaust survivors. There were few cars on the narrow dusty roads, most of them commercial vehicles and buses that had been the main means of transportation. Few people could afford new cars.

The cars were primarily British, French, and American. Kaiser-Frazer of Israel produced most of the American cars, while Chevrolets, Plymouths, and Fords were available but sold in far less numbers; each brand sold some dozen cars per year.

My parents were fortunate to afford a car, and my childhood had passed inside a Kaiser, a Ford "shoebox," a Packard,



and even a little Renault Dauphine. My parents also got *Time* and *LIFE* magazines from the USA, and when each issue arrived, I ripped out the car advertisements. I also got car model kits and have a nice collection of sales folders.

And then came 1960. Among the big and somewhat brutal American cars, she (not "it") suddenly emerged: the Ford Falcon. It was love at first glance.

For a 12-year-old boy, she was prettier than the girls in the neighborhood or in my class. The Falcon was round, and soft like a woman—I fell in love.

In those years, when new car models came to the remote Holy Land, first came the advertisements, then the folders, and only some months later, the actual cars. One day when I went to school, I saw a Falcon for the first time. It was running on the highway—she was brand new, red, and shining in the Middle Eastern sun. My breath stopped and my heart banged. She was prettier than in the papers and brochures. I could say only one word: "Falcon." I looked at the car when she continued on her way to Tel Aviv. I looked at the big rounded taillamps until she vanished, and left a boy in love.

From that moment on, only that red Falcon was in my head. In school it was not "King David rode on a horse" but "rode on a red Falcon." I imagined myself driving a Falcon, washing a Falcon, etc.... Poor Noga, the neighbor's daughter—she always thought I was looking at her, but I was actually looking at her parents' Falcon.

My parents did not want to hear about Falcons. When they went to the Ford dealer and bought another Ford, I was sad it wasn't a Falcon. But the dealer said, "Do you want a Falcon? Have one," and he gave me a sales folder, which I still own even today. I swore that one day in the future I would have a red 1960 Falcon.

Time passed and I grew up, raised a family, and had a Studebaker Lark, a Mustang, etc. In the 1980s, you couldn't find '60 Falcons in Israel anymore, so I lost hope of fulfilling my



dream of owning a red 1960 Falcon like the one I saw for only a few seconds that day back in my childhood. I had to wait till I was 60; that's when I heard of a 1960 Falcon somewhere in the south of Israel. I went and indeed it was true. In a remote and neglected garage stood a dusty and dirty and half-dismantled 1960 yellow/pink Falcon. When I looked at its beloved grille, it brought me back to when I was a 12-year-old boy. Its license plate bore the numbers 83-615.

When registering a car in Israel, a new car receives a license plate that is with it forever, even after the car is no longer around; the plate is numeric. Until 1962, automobile plates had five digits (like 83-615). Then it expanded to six digits, and today they have eight digits. And the license document also bears the car's color. When I looked at the document of this yellow/pink Falcon, it was written "red," so I told the owner (who was a car painter) that I would buy the car but only if it was red. I did not tell him that a red Falcon had been my dream car.

Weeks passed, and when he called me to come down and see the now-red Falcon, I again felt like a 12-year-old boy. Not since that one car that I saw some 50 years earlier had I seen another red 1960 Falcon. My dream finally came true. You never know what is waiting for you around the corner, especially in the Holy Land.

Ten years have passed with my restored little red Falcon, and last year I managed to obtain a copy of the government's list of all Falcons that had been imported to Israel in 1960; there were 58 of them. The list consisted of the number plates, the date of landing here, some more details, and the original paint color.

And I nearly fainted. Only one imported red car, and it was 83-615!

It means that the red Falcon, which this once 12-year-old boy saw for some few seconds back in 1960 and fell in love with, is the same car that this 70-year-old man possesses today. During those years she had no less than 13 owners and was repainted in at least two different colors. Now she's red again and is nestled deep in my heart. Actually, she never went out of my heart.

Red 83-615 is restored back to her times of glory as I saw her in 1960. Only 140 vehicles of all types still bear the five-digits plate that is now very prestigious. And every morning, when I go to the garage and before I sit in my new Japanese car, I lift the cover and give 83-615 a kiss on behalf of 12-year-old Benni. 🐶

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CHAMPIONS

Daytona 500	Richard Petty
	(154.334 mph)
Indianapolis 500.....	A.J. Foyt
	(147.350 mph)
Formula One.....	John Surtees
	(40 points)



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Chevrolet Corvette.....	\$4,037-\$4,252
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Ford.....	\$1,985-\$3,484
Ford Thunderbird.....	\$4,486-\$4,853
Lincoln.....	\$6,292-\$6,938
Mercury	\$2,126-\$3,549
Oldsmobile.....	\$2,332-\$4,742
Plymouth Valiant	\$1,921-\$3,095
Pontiac.....	\$2,313-\$3,633
Rambler.....	\$1,907-\$2,653

EXPENDITURES

(per capita)

New car purchase.....	\$93.57
Auto parts	\$16.68
Auto usage	\$256.39
Gas and oil	\$70.87
Intercity transport	\$8.86
Local transport	\$10.42

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(total model-year production)

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3. Pontiac.....	715,261
4. Plymouth Valiant.....	548,321
5. Oldsmobile	546,112
6. Buick	511,666
7. Dodge	505,094
8. Rambler.....	388,651
9. Mercury	299,431
10. Cadillac.....	165,959



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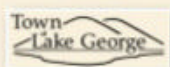
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9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Registration at the Festival Commons, Lake George, New York.

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• 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. **Limited seating, order early!**

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 15th

• CONCOURS d'ELEGANCE – TROPHIES TO BE AWARDED

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

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*Open to cars that have never been shown.



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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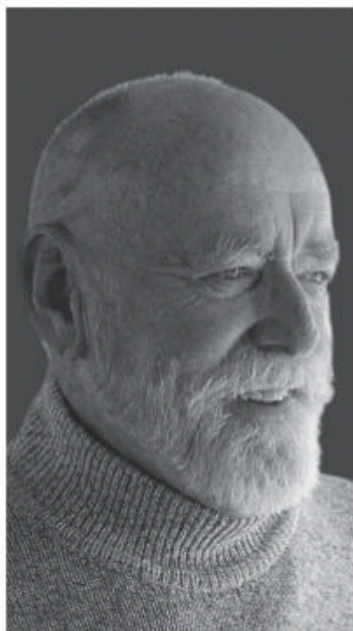
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Old and Simple

My hipster neighbor Jason, who is in his early 20s, came over to show me his newly acquired 1961 Comet a few days ago. It is a black four-door sedan with the 144-cu.in. Thrift Power Six and a standard three-speed. It's a nice driver, and that is why Jason wanted it. And to be sure, it fits his image as an unconventional, alternative, hip guy. But that wasn't the main reason he grabbed it.

You see, as it turns out, he grew up working on cars with his father, and he knows full well that his new ride will cost much less to own and operate than any modern car. He is aware, for example, that if his fuel pump gives out, he can call a local auto supply that I have been going to since I was his age, and it will have a rebuilt pump waiting for him the next day for about \$35. And he knows he can install it in half an hour with a couple of combination wrenches. Consider how that problem might be if he had a modern car. Yes, the store would have the pump he needed, but it would cost much more, and most likely it would be located in the gas tank, which would have to be drained and dropped in order to get the old pump out. On the other hand, even if Jason had to remove the fuel tank in his Comet, it doubles as the floor of the trunk, so there is nothing to it.

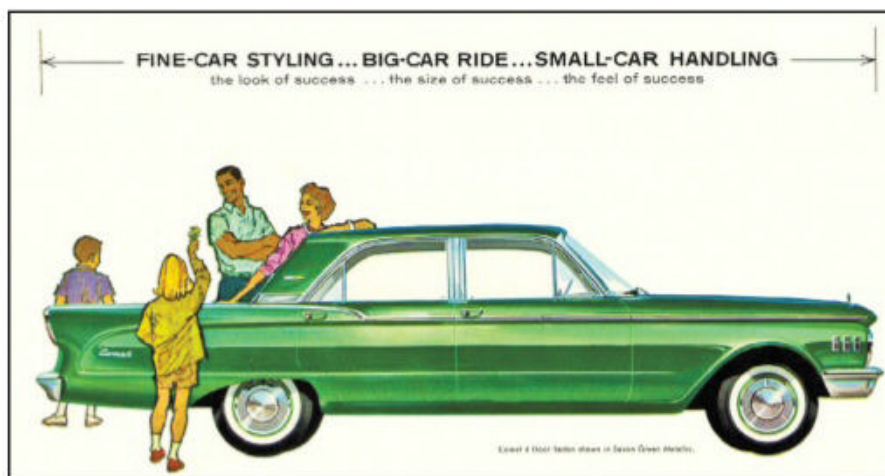
On top of that, Jason's Comet will get 20-plus miles to the gallon all day long. So, he gets a cool car for a few thousand dollars that is easy and inexpensive to maintain, is economical, and is comfortable and dependable. Sure, a 1961 Comet four-door with the little six-cylinder is not everybody's dream car, but it won't go down in value if he takes care of it.

And as it turns out, Jason is not unique. I visited a friend's auto repair shop recently, and in his lube bay was a 1964 Dart. There was an early '60s Falcon waiting for service, too. My friend told me that savvy young people are seeking out Sixties-era compacts for the same reasons Jason did. They want affordable, dependable, and cool transportation, and these cars fit the bill.

In my youth, I remember a couple of guys who drove Model A Fords back and forth to school and work. Such cars were already being restored by

then and were even coveted by the late 1950s and early '60s. They were also popular because of their simplicity and durability, and because they were cheap cars to drive on a daily basis.

Today, the Model A is too slow to be practical except for trips around town on surface streets, but 50 years ago, speed wasn't as much of a problem. These days, a 1960s Rambler, Chevy II, Tempest, or Valiant would be great for inexpensive transportation, and you could take pride in not being one of



the flock of sheep who pay a premium to have a current flashy electronic nightmare that can only be fixed by a factory-trained technician.

Do you need air conditioning? There are plenty of aftermarket kits available if your car doesn't have it, but if you are patient you can still find early '60s compacts so equipped. How about GPS, you say? Well, your mobile phone is great for that, and if you want a GPS to mount on the dash, they are available, inexpensive, and will run off of your Falcon or Dart's cigarette lighter.

Need Bluetooth for your phone? There are aftermarket in-dash radios that will give you AM and FM as well as Bluetooth. And as for CD players and the like, there are plenty of them available that you can mount in your glovebox, if you want to keep the car looking original.

If you want to drive a sportier classic, may I recommend a mid-'60s Mustang with a straight-six? Unlike the V-8-powered offerings, the six-cylinder models' parts are cheap and plentiful, and the cars are economical to own. But best of all, you can find a nice driver for not much money, because most collectors want a V-8.

The little six-cylinder is not a hot rod, but you won't be holding up traffic either. In fact, you could literally build a new, '60s Mustang today using only aftermarket components.

When I see Jason drive by in his Comet, I get the urge to find a '60s compact for myself. I could dust off the old pork pie hat that I still have from the days when they were called stingy brims, and I could start listening to alternative music. I would stop at the ring in my ear and the tattoos, though. 🐼

These days, a 1960s Rambler, Chevy II, Tempest, or Valiant would be great for inexpensive transportation...



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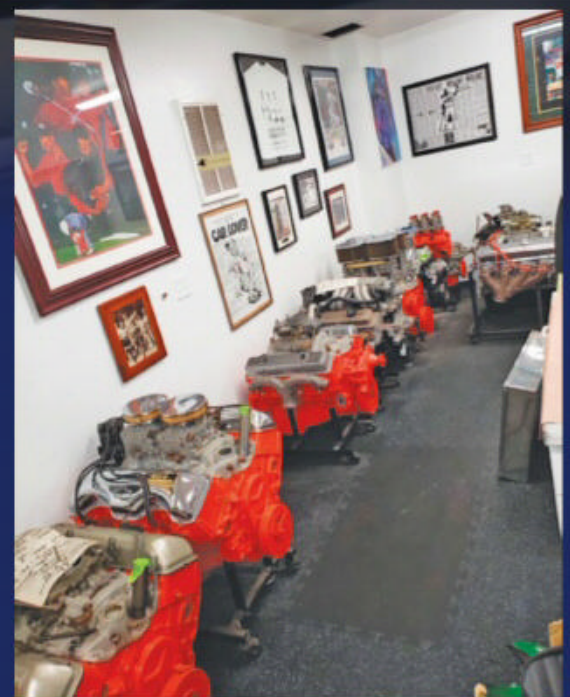
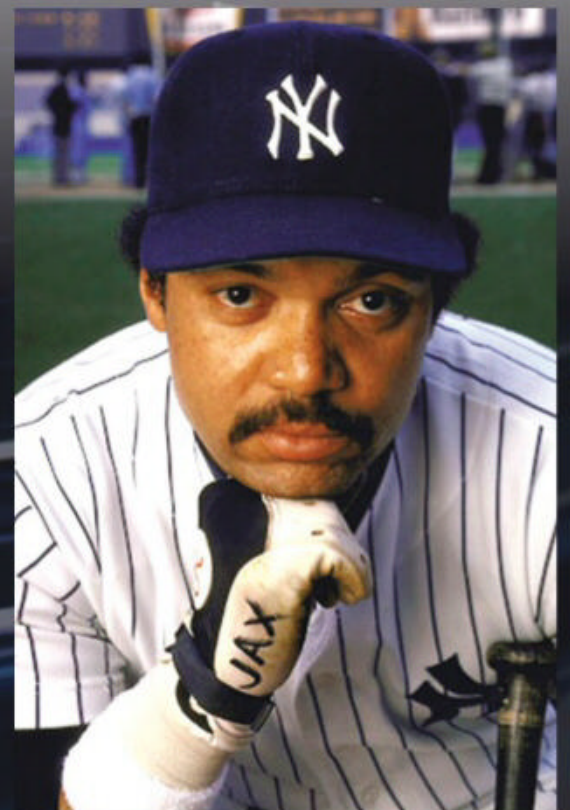


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