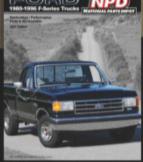
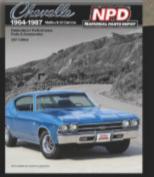
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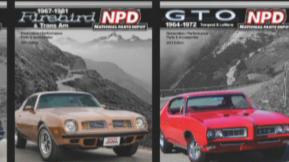


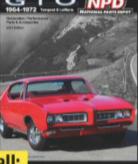


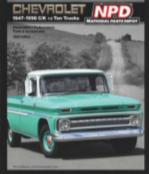












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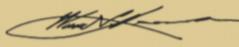


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PERSPECTIVE

- **Terry McGean**
- **Lost & Found** 10
- **International Underdogs** 14
- 16 **Recaps Letters**
- 18 **Matthew Litwin**
- Reminiscing 66
- 72 **Pat Foster**

FEATURES

- **News Reports** 8
- 1990 Saab 900 Turbo **Surface Friction Tester**
- **Driveable Dream:** 44 1931 Ford Model A
- driveReport: 1965 Chrysler Newport
- 1976 Oldsmobile **Cutlass Supreme**





MARKETPLACE

- 28 **Buyer's Guide:** 1964-'65 Ford Falcon 🧠
- Auction News & Highlights <
- HemmingsAuctions.com

TECH

- **Products & Parts** 12
- **Restoration Profile:** 20 1957 Ford Thunderbird establishment



28



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HEMMINGS CLASSIC CAR

ISSN# 1550-8730 • www.hemmings.com

Published monthly by Hemmings • 222 Main St., Bennington, VT 05201

TO SUBSCRIBE:

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E-mail: hmnsubs@hemmings.com Subscription rates in the US and Possessions; 12 issues for \$18.95. Canada \$30.95; (CDN price includes surface mail and GST tax). All other countries \$32.95 in US funds.

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POSTMASTER: send address changes to: Hemmings Classic Car, PO Box 196, Bennington, VT 05201 Hemmings Classic Car is a publication of

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everyone who

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get us here;

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glass to many

more issues

yet to come.

A Moment for a Milestone

s we began work on this issue, someone pointed out what we ought to have been anticipating at least several months ago: That this is the 200th issue of *HCC*. But it's been a frenetic and challenging year for everyone, the world over, with many adjustments and allowances to accommodate. So, as we pressed on with our efforts to keep Hemmings' publications rolling forth – occurring as each of us on the staff are still working from our respective homes – we overlooked the fact that the magazine's version of an odometer was about to click over another century mark.

But, once elements for the issue began to come together, that big 200 stared me in the face, and I had to take pause to look back at how we got here and where we're headed. *Hemmings Classic Car* launched in the fall of 2004, the result of then Editor-in-Chief Richard Lentinello's efforts to revitalize *Special Interest Autos* magazine, better known to many (and labelled on its covers by that time) as simply *SIA*.

Special Interest Autos had been launched all the way back in 1971 by automotive journalist Michael Lamm, who had worked with Hemmings' publisher Terry Ehrich to bring forth a publication dedicated to classic and vintage cars. Lamm set a high standard and included things like detailed specifications charts, extensive use of period factory photography and schematics, and interviews that brought the words of many original designers of the highlighted vehicles to the magazine's pages.

It was the right idea and the right time, and Hemmings was the perfect launching pad since *Hemmings Motor News* was already reaching so many vintage car enthusiasts. Circulation of *SIA* was by subscription only—there was no newsstand distribution of the title at that point—and yet it took off rapidly.

Years later, in the late 1990s, when Richard joined Hemmings, after working on automotive magazines for a number of years with other publishers, he pushed *SIA* ahead, maintaining standards, broadening the staff and the scope of regular contributors, and giving increased attention to graphic design.

Then, in 2004, the Hemmings staff launched *HCC* as a brand-new magazine, but one intended to take up where *SIA* left off. In that first issue of *Classic*, among the stated goals of the new publication was the desire to create a magazine for "the real hardcore car enthusiast," one that would be robust enough to motivate readers to not only subscribe, but to "collect every issue."



With that, *HCC* rolled out, maintaining many of the features that had made *SIA* popular, but with even greater focus on presentation, with large color spreads of feature cars, spec charts that inclued illustrations of the featured vehicle, and lots of artistic photographs to bring the pages to life. Automotive design continued to be a focal point, but so did classic car ownership and enjoyment. That first issue included a feature on the 93-year-old original owner of a 1929 Model A roadster, but also highlighted a 26-year-old woman who had fallen in love with the AMC Pacer and launched a website dedicated to the model.

The restoration and preservation of vintage cars has also been a highlight of *HCC* from its inception, and features chronicling the process and story of restoration projects have been part of the mix all along, as have Driveable Dream articles, relating the stories of unrestored cars that are still being enjoyed in original form.

I joined Hemmings in the summer of 2006, when *HCC* was still relatively young, but already operating with a full head of steam. The circulation had vaulted fairly quickly, aided in part by newsstand distribution that was favorable as well. I've served as Editor-in-Chief at Hemmings since 2014 and was honored to take over stewardship of *Classic* this past year when Richard retired from Hemmings. We're fortunate to have many of the same writers, editors, and contributors involved in this title—that's become a rarity in the publishing world, as magazines themselves have become scarce.

But, thanks to a tight team here and strong support from our readers, *Hemmings Classic Car* perseveres, continuing to serve both the hardcore vintage car enthusiast and the curious onlooker hoping to learn something about classics. Thanks to everyone who has helped get us here; let's raise a glass to many more issues yet to come.

Write to our editor-in-chief at tmcgean@hemmings.com.



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NEWSREPORTS

Coker to be Grand Marshal at Chattanooga Motorcar Festival

that Joseph "Corky" Coker has been named the Grand Marshal of the 2021 event. The festivities will take place October 15-17, 2021, in Chattanooga, Tennessee, with many activities for car fans currently in the planning stages. Corky's father, Harold, opened Coker Tire Company in Chattanooga in 1958. Later, Corky would assume the leadership role of the family's BFGoodrich tire dealership and Coker Tire would grow into the largest supplier of collector-vehicle tires and wheels in the world. Corky retired in 2014 and later sold the company to a group of its managers, led by Coker President and Chief Operating Officer Wade Kawasaki.

Concours Chairman Ken Gross said, "If there's one person who personifies the passion and goals of the Chattanooga Motorcar Festival, it's Corky Coker. He's been a positive force in the local community as well as in the car collector world.

He's a perfect choice to lead this year's second

Chattanooga Motorcar Festival."

Coker, who was recognized by the festival in 2019 as the show's "Honored Collector," said, "I am very honored to have been selected to be the Grand Marshal of this fabulous event in our great city of Chattanooga. I'm humbled to be following in the footsteps of a racing legend, Brian Redman. I look forward to working with Brian and the Chattanooga Motorcar Festival team to help elevate this second festival in the hearts and minds of car fans and families alike."

For more information about the show, visit chattanoogamotorcar.com.

"Roll Your Own" Exhibit at National Packard Museum

THE NATIONAL PACKARD MUSEUM HAS ANNOUNCED IT IS CURRENTLY SHOWING OFF

30 historic motorcycles, some restored to their original condition by owners and others assembled from a variety of parts. Among those displayed in the "Roll Your Own" exhibit include what is said to be the only remaining Sylvester & Jones motorcycle, a 1912 Douglas, and a 1913 NSU Special. Regional creations from near the Warren, Ohio, museum include a 1971 BSA A65 Lightning "bobber," built by Robert Bancroft of Kinsman, using, in his words, "too many parts to list." Another comes from Peter Grakauskas of Avon and was, "built piece by piece rebuilding old unused parts," according to Grakauskas.

"The purpose of the National Packard Museum's Annual Vintage Motorcycle Exhibit is to educate our visitors about the important and unique role motorcycles have played within the broader story of transportation history," said Mary Ann Porinchak, the museum's executive director. "Our annual exhibit also promotes the preservation, restoration, and collection of antique and vintage



motorcycles, so that audiences young and old may have the opportunity to learn about and appreciate motorcycle history's unique story."

The "Roll Your Own" exhibit will be on display until May 22. The Packard Museum is open Tuesday through Saturday from noon-5 p.m., and on Sundays from 1-5 p.m. Visit packardmuseum.org for more information.

MAY

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- **20-25 AACA Founders Tour •** Davis, West Virginia 717-534-1910 aaca.org
- **28-30 Springfield Swap Meet & Car Show** Springfield, Ohio 937-376-0111 ohioswapmeet.com

Please note that these events are active as of press time despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. We recommend you verify the status before making plans to attend.

Amelia Concours Pushed Back to May

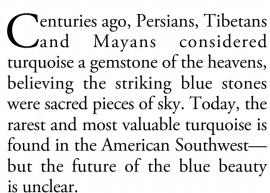
ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED FOR MARCH, THE AMELIA

Island Concours d'Elegance has been pushed to May 20-23 due to the ongoing pandemic. The announcement was made with the hope that wide administration of the vaccine would allow for increased safety at the Florida event. As a result of the delay, the auctions associated with Amelia Island have also made adjustments. The Bonhams sale will take place May 20 and RM Sotheby's May 22. All tickets sold for the March date will be honored in May. Special classes for the show will include Hispano-Suiza, Porsche 935, Ferrari 275 GTB, and "It's Electric," among others. For more updates, visit ameliaconcours.org.

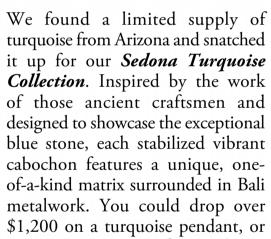
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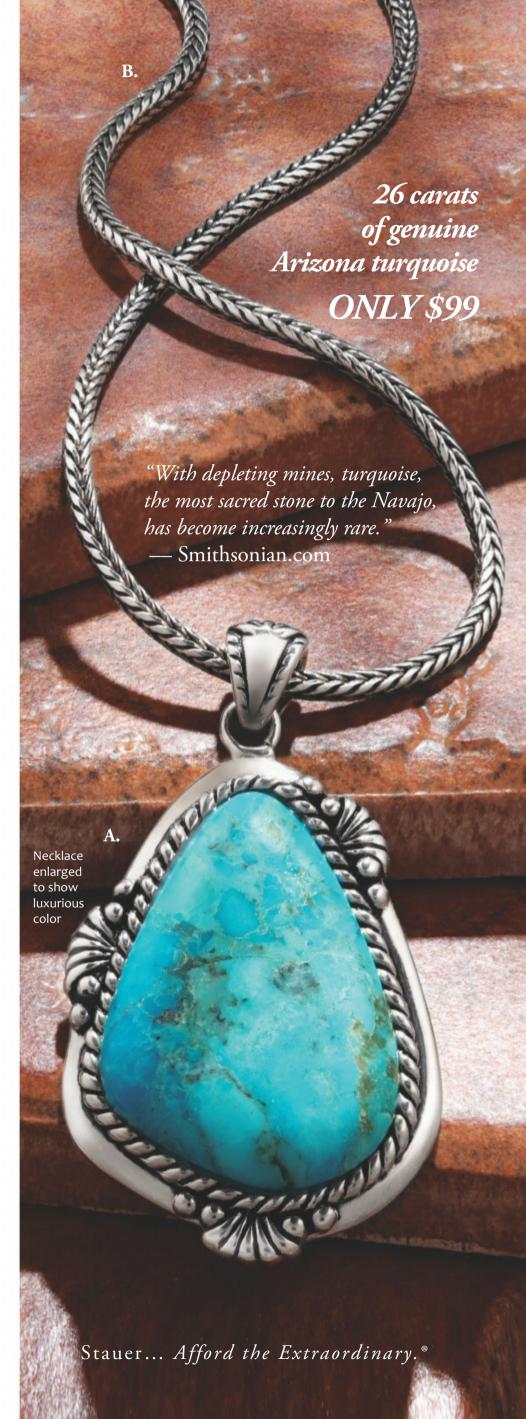
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LOST&FOUND









Avancier

IT'S EASY TO SEE HOW INFORMATION ABOUT INDIVIDUAL CARS CAN go missing over the course of several decades, but Mark Mundorff has known of his 1959 Thunderbird since 1967, and has yet to find out who customized it.

All that he and his father were told by the used car dealer in Omaha who sold it to them was that it was fast (180 mph fast), that it was one of two built that way, and that it was intended to be raced as a convertible. A quick look under the chassis revealed that it had been reinforced with double shock absorbers, a Panhard rod, and traction bars. Though the VIN said it came with an automatic transmission, it sported a T-85 three-speed manual with overdrive behind the big 430-cu.in. V-8. The only accessories fitted to the car, according to Mark, were the radio and heater.

Plenty of bodywork reinforced the idea that this was something special. It had fender vents, ribs added along the roof edge, cutouts at the rear, extra venting in the hood, and driving lamps fitted to the grille. And, strangely enough, somebody had lettered the sun visor with a single word: Avancier.

While Mark has seen some late-Fifties Ford renderings featuring some of the elements from the Avancier, there's no direct evidence that this was a Ford-modified vehicle.

What he does know is that the dealer wasn't kidding about the speed. "Standing the speedometer on end, at 140, was a piece of cake," Mark said. "At one time, on new, smooth asphalt on a country highway years later, I got it up to, my best guess, about 160 mph and it was steady!"

So who built the Avancier, and for what purpose?

Mr. Plow

ONE EXPECTS A CERTAIN SET OF VEHICLES TO SERVE AS SNOWplows here in the Northeast: old CJs, landscaping trucks, and quads, for example. One does not expect a mystery homebuilt RV, though that's just what Ron Vaughn spotted on a used car lot in Saugerties, New York.

The RV has bedeviled old car enthusiasts for at least 11 years as it has bounced around Upstate New York, its history progressively becoming dimmer and dimmer with the years. At one point, somebody claimed it sat on a Graham chassis with Chrysler power. Or maybe it was a Chrysler chassis with Chevrolet power. Its aluminum skin and steel body structure apparently kept it from disintegrating over the years, but at some point, nothing remained of the interior — not even a driver's seat.

Nowadays, as we can see from Ron's photos, it appears to not just sit atop an International Scout chassis, it

envelops the Scout's entire body structure, with a steering column poking through the trailing edge of the Scout's hood. There's a rudimentary interior, too, though probably just enough to get the thing to plow a parking lot.

One would think with more than a decade to identify it, there's no chance now of learning its history, but we always hold out hope.



Recently discovered a unique or noteworthy classic car? Let us know. Photographs, commentary, questions, and answers should be submitted to Lost & Found, c/o Hemmings Classic Car, P.O. Box 196, Bennington, Vermont 05201, or emailed to dstrohl@hemmings.com. For more Lost & Found, visit blog.hemmings.com/index.php/category/ lost-and-found.



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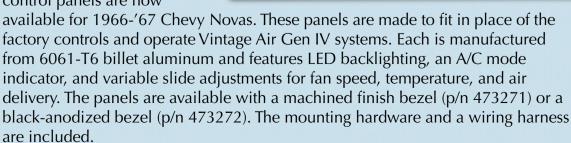
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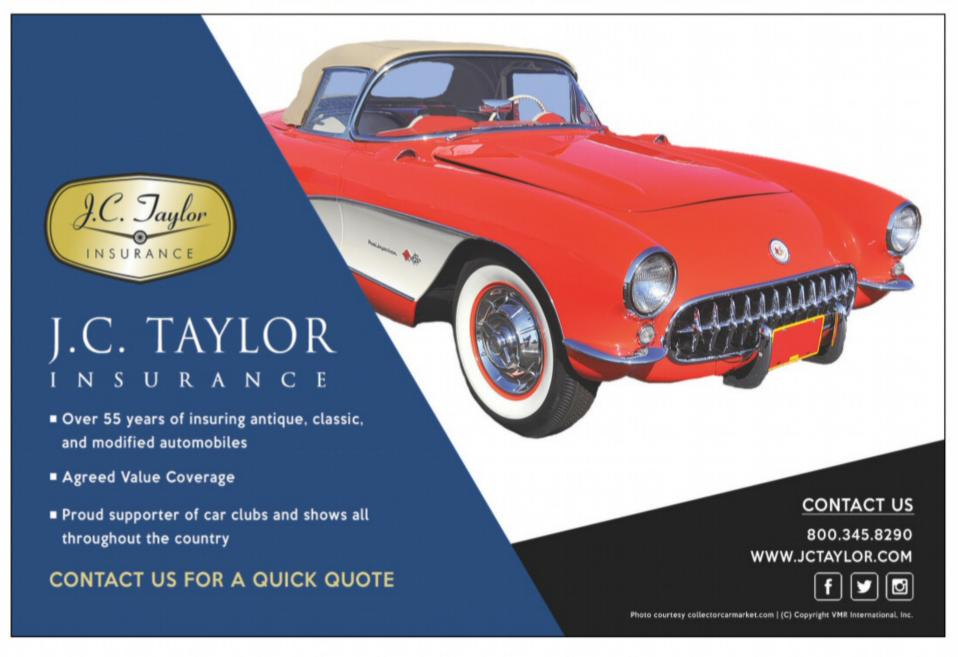


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INTERNATIONALUNDERDOGS

A Cavalier Attitude



RECENTLY, MY NEXT-DOOR NEIGHBOR

junked his 2000 Mercury Mountaineer, which he bought four years ago, for \$800, with more than 300,000 miles on the odometer. When he started it in the morning, it sounded as if he paid \$799.95 for it. The driver's-side window was stuck open, apparently since he took possession of it. He didn't even bother putting plastic wrap over it, so you can imagine what that SUV smelled like inside with all the rain we get in Florida.

Now, in its place is a 1995 Chevrolet Cavalier that he bought for... are you sitting down? \$400. I am not one to criticize, because in college I drove a 1964 Ford Falcon that I bought for \$25 from a stripper in a topless bar where my father worked. I drove that car for three

years and sold it for \$500 to a man on a road crew who wanted it for a parts car. I called it the Flintstone Mobile because the floorboards were almost nonexistent.

About the Cavalier: I give my neighbor credit. The car looks pretty clean. It is a red coupe with a black interior, and he is happy the driver's-side window works. It has more than 200,000 miles on it, and it is much quieter than the Mercury. There is one quirk he had to work out—it would only go in reverse. He found that out when he backed out of the driveway the first time and he couldn't move forward, even though the car was in drive. He proceeded to go in reverse around the block and return to the driveway. He fixed the problem, sort of. Now it goes forward, but sometimes when it is cold, it won't go into

reverse. When he comes home, he backs it in the driveway, so he is sure to get out to go to work. He's a nice guy and does all his own repairs, and I lend him tools and give him advice.

I never thought of highlighting the Cavalier because I didn't think it was eligible for historic plates. I keep forgetting that 1995 was 26 years ago. The '82 Cavalier and its J-platform siblings were introduced in 1981—one year after the X-cars. That was 40 years ago! Feel old?

I mention the next milestone at my peril. The following year, Cadillac introduced its own J-car, the Cimarron. When I wrote about the Cimarron (*HCC* #158, November 2017), many Cadillac enthusiasts showed up in my yard carrying torches. I stepped onto my porch and declared,



"I am not a monster." Then, I was chased into the woods and left the country for three years. Seriously.

The Cavalier competed in the market sector dominated, at the time, by a slew of front-wheel-drive compacts like the Aries/Reliant, Nissan Sentra, Toyota Corolla, and Honda Civic sedan. They would be joined shortly by the Renault Alliance and Tempo/Topaz twins. The Cavalier would outlive its American classmates, ending its run in 2005. In 2016, the Cavalier was revived in China.

Power was usually provided by a variety of four-cylinder and V-6 engines, mated to a four- or five-speed manual or an automatic. Body styles included coupe, hatchback, four-door sedan, a station wagon, and a convertible, depending on generation and model year. There was a sport version, the Z24. In its final domestic version, the Cavalier took on a Saturn-like appearance, losing a bit of its upright, compact profile.

The most interesting aspect of the Cavalier is that it has a large following. I remember stumbling upon a Cavalier Club with thousands of followers a few years ago. There is still a club and a good support network for parts for Cavaliers and the rest of the J-car family, including the one whose name we dare not speak.

Now, what should you pay for a Cavalier? As I told you, my neighbor paid \$400, but I am sure you wish to go both forward and in reverse in yours. From an online search of several sites, I can say that you shouldn't pay more than \$2,000. I saw quite a few for less than \$1,500. They all seemed to be in driveable shape, and parts are readily available.

You may ask why, and I'll tell you. If you feel that you have a good 20 years before you are looking at grass from the other side, you might want to consider picking up a Chevrolet Cavalier, preferably a convertible, station wagon, Z24, or even better, a Z24 convertible, because in 2045 you will get the same reaction at the Cars & Coffee as the guy who showed up today in a Vega.

I am going to leave you with a couple of last thoughts.

In 1981, I had the opportunity to buy a really nice 1972 Pinto for \$600. It was dark green with a green plaid interior and fully equipped—as far as a Pinto could be equipped—and it was in beautiful shape. However, I was talked out of it

because of the whole gas tank issue, so I passed it up. Today, similar Pintos are selling at auction for more than \$11,000. Someone shows up in a Pinto, and people flock to it.

At the same time, there was a black 1950 Buick Special with Dynaflow Drive that was for sale in a neighbor's yard for \$250. I drove it, and it ran fine, but I talked myself out of that one because I didn't think I would be able to find parts. Imagine if I had that car today? I still cry when I think about it. 3





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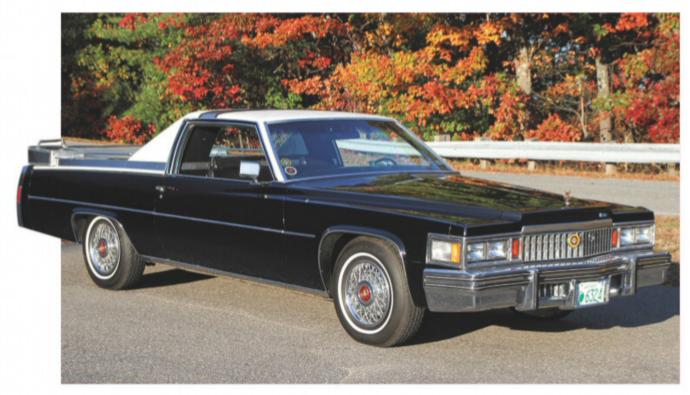
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RECAPS**LETTERS**



YOUR MARCH ARTICLE ABOUT THE

Cadillac flower car reminded me of one of my favorite blends of imagery and nomenclature: Superior Coach's Cadillac flower car, the Coupe de Fleur. It has become practically a generic term. Now model names are legendary among vintage car enthusiasts. Who can't name the hierarchy of Caprice/Impala/Bel Air/ Biscayne and hopefully remember to add Delray. Getting trickier, if I said Pacific, Panama, Mayfair, and Cavalier, many would recognize these as Packards.

But model names of professional cars are virtually unknown. Due to the clientele, they were understandably much more dignified. Up through 1970, you had hearses named Crown Royale, Memphian, Beau Monde, Knickerbocker, Kensington, Crestwood, Criterion, Park Row, Park Hill, Sovereign, Consort, Paramount, Tiara, Triune, and Olympian, plus Florentine and Embassy flower cars. Not a Fury, Wildcat, Rebel, Hornet, or Typhoon in the bunch. Mark John Astolfi

CAMPING TRAILERS HAVE ALWAYS

Danvers, Massachusetts

fascinated me and I have owned a few. So, I really enjoyed Patrick Foster's article "Vintage Campers and Trailers" from 1916-1961 (HCC #198). My first was a late-'50s or early-'60s Metzendorf. These were built in West Farmington, Ohio, by hired Amish workers. Small, to say the least—single axle, no toilet, but did manage to have a stove, sink, and refrigerator. I purchased it in 1974 from a friend who had bought a larger unit,

and I towed it with my 1974 Dodge Charger SE with the 318 engine.

That cute little Metzendorf and Charger tow vehicle took me on many a summer vacation. They saw miles racked up around the Circle Route (all five Great Lakes), Canadian Maritimes including Prince Edward Island, and Virginia, including the Skyline Drive, as well as nearby Finger Lakes in Upstate New York. All these trips were without any problems from either the trailer or the car! Just plain fun.

Of course, the lack of a toilet was an inconvenience, but after staying at a Canadian campground with only pit toilets, I managed to contract a nasty intestinal virus that made it far more than just an inconvenience! Anyway, aside from that, I only have fond memories of the little Metzendorf.

Now, nearing 72 years of age with some mobility issues, I think that my camping days are over. But I have very great memories of the places I've visited and the wonderful people I met. Campers are a rare breed of fantastically welcoming people!

Tom Kneebis Port Charlotte, Florida

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK BOB PALMA

for his excellent column in the March issue of HCC. He is correct regarding the experience of driving a collector vehicle. Once any significant part of the original is changed, then so is the experience one derives from operating that vehicle.

I would never deny any owner's right to keep or change his or her vehicle into whatever form they desire. They purchased their cars with their hearts. They have a vision and a hope, and their chosen collector vehicle will become something of great value to them. Instead, what I derived from that column is the questionable validity of the reasons some collectors have for modernizing their cars.

I have often heard something to the effect of, "I installed power disc brakes, a 2019 all-aluminum DOHC four-valve crate engine with fuel injection and tuned headers, 12- and 48-volt electrical systems, 21st-century-era front and rear suspensions, power heated and air conditioned leather seats, a surround-sound audio system, blind spot and lane following systems, and a full set of air bags because... you just can't drive in modern traffic without them."

When I was in high school (I graduated in 1974), my first car was a '63 Ford



Galaxie. It had a cast-iron OHV 352 with a two-barrel carb and less than 9:1 compression, it used a generator, had a steel fan, a copper radiator, single-speed wipers, four-wheel drum brakes, singlereservoir master cylinder, a solid rear axle on leaf springs, 15-inch bias-ply tires, highly overboosted power steering, and a suspension so soft that once you parked, the car would still be rocking as you were walking away. In the five years that car was my daily driver, it was as reliable as the day is long and drove just fine. Yes, if I still had that car today, I would have to allow more following distance. I also had to allow more distance when I had my '86 Jeep CJ-7, which had front disc brakes and was outstanding when off road. On road, I learned very quickly to drive it like a large truck because a Jeep of that vintage is just plain squirrelly (modifying it didn't help street manners). If you had to stand on the brakes at speed, you never knew what direction you would be facing once you stopped. So, you just compensated for the inherent characteristics. Truck and bus drivers do the same with their rigs.

I met a fellow who drove his 1929 Studebaker regularly. I asked him about his mechanical brakes, and he stated they were just fine provided you allowed room for stopping and kept them properly adjusted. Another fellow with a Jaguar XK-120 claimed that he had driven coast-to-coast on more than one occasion. Yes, both of them carried tools and spare parts. But these owners also had a mindset and character that allowed them to not just accept, but to enjoy their cars. Their time on the road was not so much a trip as it was a journey.

Many of the vehicles of yesteryear can be just as reliable today as they were when they were manufactured. If they could be driven daily then, they can be driven daily now. I will never tell anyone what they should or should not do with their collector vehicle. The modifications they choose to make are an indication of their mindset, their values, and their desires.

There are people who still like to cycle, hike, backpack, or ride horseback. Some people have boats that use only

sails, and others glide in airplanes without an engine. Perhaps it is this same kind of mindset that causes some of us in the collector car hobby to drive vehicles as outmoded as those choices of transport.

I am so very glad for anyone who is part of our collector-car hobby, who has chosen a vehicle as a part of their dreams. But, I am glad, too, that I am one of those who chooses to be taken back to a time less hurried, less isolated, less anesthetized. I hope the others in our hobby understand and respect my dreams and desires, even as I have and do respect theirs.

Kevan Lesch Carson City, Nevada

I WANTED TO LET YOU KNOW HOW

much I enjoyed the "Pontiac People" article in the February issue of HCC (#197). Those stories bring back many memories of times when we grew up with Pontiacs from an era we love. Those multiple stories were so enjoyable

Continued on page 19





matthewlitwin



What many

seem to

forget is that

luxury itself is

relative.

Ford Motor Company Luxury

hen people speak of domestic automotive luxury during the postwar era, or even a more contemporary timeframe, it's often assumed the conversation is about Cadillac's market prowess, or Lincoln's Continental. Perhaps Chrysler's Imperial. And then there were Packard's

final years, before those emblems were affixed to thinly disguised Studebakers. What many seem to forget is that luxury itself is relative: One doesn't have to have the best car, or most expensive, to experience the perception of luxury; just something better than they had prior can

be enough to satisfy the need.

Consider, for instance, Ford's famed LTD that, upon its 1965 introduction as a top trim level to the Galaxie 500, was billed as, "an all-new kind of Ford with luxury totally new to Ford's field." Like any good upscale model, the LTD was festooned with extra trim, more comfort features, and a more powerful drivetrain, all of which would have been optional on lesser Fords. The formula worked well enough to warrant the LTD becoming a stand-alone model for '66. Later, when the 1969 models were introduced, the LTD received its first major redesign. This was attractive enough to lure in 417,677 customers, my parents included.

The Ford was offered in three body styles and two station wagon variants. My parents were among the 111,565 buyers who opted for the two-door hardtop, giving up their well-tuned and remarkably thirsty 1968 Shelby G.T. 500 to help defer the cost. Having done the muscle car thing for a year – and with marriage and a house in the immediate future – Dad felt it was time for something different. He set his sights on Ford's most luxurious model, then piled almost every option on his LTD including the Brougham trim package. Air conditioning was a must after experiencing a summer in a big-block pony without climate control, and rather than suffer at the pumps yet again, he skipped the top-of-the-line 429 and sided with the also-available 390-cu.in. V-8.

When the LTD arrived, finished in Presidential Blue paint with a matching interior and black vinyl top, it had a 351-cu.in. engine due to a shortage of 390s. Dad still insists that the 351 offered a solid balance of fuel economy and

performance, and was probably faster than the 390. Regardless, they still owned the Ford when I bloomed from the Litwin family tree: The LTD became my first brush with a luxury car.

At the time, keeping a vehicle for four years was a stretch, and with me in the picture it was a perfect moment to trade in the Brougham for

a new set of reliable wheels. Dad, being a Ford guy since purchasing a used 1963 Ford Falcon Futura as a college commuter in '65, stuck with the familiar parent company. But rather than look at upscale 1973 Blue Ovals, he took the Ford-brass-envisioned leap into a

mid-priced Mercury. As with his prior purchase, the car wasn't going to be a base model. No, the Mercury had to be a sparkling new four-door Marquis Brougham – one of 46,624 made during the year.

The Mercury was loaded with options, including twin comfort lounge seats, JR78-15 steel belted tires, cornering lamps, automatic speed control, tilt steering, dual six-way power seats, automatic temperature control, AM/FM Multiplex radio, lock convenience group, and more. There was no charge for the four-barrel 429 or the vinyl top, but he did spend an extra \$37.86 for the Gold Glamour metallic paint.

Just like that, yours truly was snug as a bug in a new luxury car, until a distracted teen driving a Ford Mustang convertible went down the length of the Mercury. Despite Dad's attempts at evasive action, the Mercury was sent into an intersection sign head on. The impact pulled the sign out of the ground, along with an ample amount of anchor cement, which pushed the floor of the Mercury's trunk right up to the bottom of the decklid. Miraculously, the fuel tank wasn't punctured. Suffice it to say, the insurance company totaled the Mercury—a barely broken-in luxury car—with just 3,411 miles on the odometer.

Just a week after settling with the insurance company and the difficult bank that held the lien, Dad went to the local Ford dealership and purchased... a Maverick. So much for luxury in my young life, right? Except that the economical Ford was ordered with the "Luxury Decor Option" and a sprightlier 302 V-8. Luxury is relative, after all, even among volume-division base models.

ECAPS**LETTERS**



to read. Hope to see more articles like those in the future.

I also enjoy the "I Was There" stories in every issue, giving insight on jobs related to automobile production, and other related work.

Thanks again for those colorful articles that take us down memory lane. Bill Denton Birmingham, Alabama

I THOROUGHLY ENJOYED YOUR AR-

ticle on the 1967 Cadillac Eldorado in the most recent issue of Hemmings Classic Car (#198). The 1967-'70 is a design that has aged well over the years and is my favorite of the Eldorado line. The razor-edge styling was, and still is, unmatched today.

You had mentioned that power windows were standard equipment, and they were most definitely for the front. I have seen several 1967 models with power windows in the front, but manual windows in the back. I always found this to be an oddity and wondered why a manufacturer would actually do this. I mean, what's the point? Has any other manufacturer ever done this? Please confirm I wasn't just seeing things. Thanks! Patrick Curran

Woodstock, Connecticut

We're not sure on this one, Patrick, but we're sure someone out in the readership will be able to let us know.

WHEN I WORKED AT GM TERNSTEDT

[Ternstedt Manufacturing, part of Fisher Body] in Elyria, Ohio, in the '60s, we made chromed parts for most GM cars. What was remarkable to me was how GM took more care inspecting Cadillac parts over the other GM model parts. It had stricter inspection with the Cadillac chrome, checking for any pits or stains, and each part would get its own cardboard tube before shipping inside a bin. The other brands would be put in the bin without being put in a cardboard tube. Joe Bors Via email

I ALWAYS ENJOY YOUR ARTICLES

and the magazine in general, but the article on the Rambler Rebel (HCC #194) hit home. When I was 15 or 16, a high school classmate's older brother bought one in about 1959 or '60. It had the Continental kit, too. I think the dealer in Fargo, North Dakota, couldn't sell it. Maybe it was a dealer demo; it was like new.

The older brother let my classmate take it to school during test day. That was a mistake. Anyway, he let me drive it, and I had no problem with the numbers on the acceleration; that thing had some serious power. I was just a farm kid in North Dakota and all I had driven prior was a 1954 Chevy.

My classmate's brother had to change the rod bearings in it six months later, and he only kept it two years at the most. I've never seen or driven another Rambler since that had more than 255 hp; I would have estimated the Rebel power closer to 300 to 320 hp. Anyway, it brought back memories from almost 60 years ago! Harry Klever

Fullerton, North Dakota



ROD PEARSON'S STORY ABOUT HIS

first car ("Reminiscing," issue, #198) prompted me to write about my first car, also a 1959 Chevrolet.

When I was 15, in 1965, my dad abandoned the family and took the family car with him, leaving my mom without wheels. This wasn't a big problem as Mom was a registered nurse who worked at the local hospital less than two blocks away. But it

was a problem for me when I turned 16.

I bought a 1959 Chevy Impala twodoor hardtop from a coworker at the local grocery store where I got a job right after turning 16. The Impala cost \$350. I paid for it and covered all the expenses with that part-time job. I thought it was pretty cool when Mom would ask me if she could borrow the car.

Thanks to family friends, I learned a lot about cars with this one, like wheel bearings, tune-ups, how to change oil, etc. That car developed too many mechanical problems, though, and I traded it in for a 1964 Pontiac Le Mans post sedan 10 months later and it carried me the rest of the way through high school and college.

Thank you for such a great magazine. Randy Mattson Forest Lake, Minnesota

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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F is for Forced Induction

Restoring this supercharged 1957 Ford Thunderbird was a personal quest for perfection — Part 1

BY DAVID CONWILL • PHOTOGRAPHY BY DINO PETROCELLI • RESTORATION PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY DON ANTILLA

magnum opus is an artist's most important work. It is the work that truly defines that artist's sensibilities and demonstrates his or her skill and craftsmanship at its best. This 1957 Ford Thunderbird F-code is Don Antilla's magnum opus. It may be the most perfectly restored '57 Thunderbird in existence.

Don, who lives in Southbury, Connecticut, is truly an artist. He has perfected his vision and craft for decades, with a string of immaculately restored Fords to show for it. For much of that time, Don's been holding on to this car, waiting for when he could do it justice.

It was not too distant (geographically and temporally) from the Three Mile Island incident, back in 1979, where and when Don acquired this car. It had already lived an

eventful life as a hot rod and harbored a Corvette 283 in the engine bay. Don knew his T-Birds, however, and recognized that the serial number, beginning with the letter F, indicated a car that had come from the factory equipped with the 300-hp, supercharged, 312-cu.in. Y-block V-8. (The other letters, incidentally, were C, for the base, 212-hp 292; D, for the 245-hp 312; and E, for the 270-hp, dual-quad 312. Ford also supplied racing kits for the E- and F-code engines, which would boost their power to 285 and 340 hp, respectively.)

That F in the serial number is actually how Don found the car to begin with. You see, back in those days, it was still possible to track down cars through various states' departments of motor vehicles. Don spent a lot of time doing

just that and, in the process, he says he also took the opportunity to document many F-code Thunderbirds "before they got taken apart for restoration."

Besides documenting surviving Thunderbirds,
Don also spent a lot of time stalking the cars that didn't quite make it, while they awaited disposal in junkyards.
Crawling over various defunct two-seaters

showed Don a lot about the way Ford put them together. Don also took the opportunity to salvage parts from those cars—oftentimes, that included seemingly minor things others would have overlooked, like the cardboard engine tags regularly left behind on the assembly line.

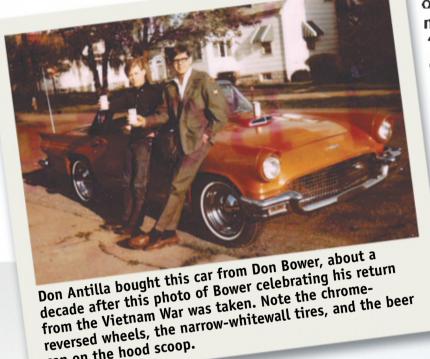
That intensive documentation of original cars would prove invaluable when Don began restoration on this F-code in 2015. The car he purchased in 1979 hadn't run in 10 or 15 years at that time, and its previous owners had made no attempt to preserve its originality. Yet, Don liked what he saw, and struck a deal to buy it. He was then faced with a decision: flat tow it home behind the Bronco he and his brother had driven to come look at it, or "be stupid and drive it."

"I chose stupid," Don says with a laugh.

The Corvette engine was coaxed back to life and the front brakes were restored to service by pinching off the line to the rears. The drive back was somewhat tense, thanks to jerky steering.

"I kept saying, 'I hope a wheel doesn't fall off!'" Don recalls, but, "the four-speed worked nice!"

After the restoration subject was home and stored away, Don began his favorite part of any project: research, research, and more research. Part of that learning curve involved another Thunderbird along the way, but this car is





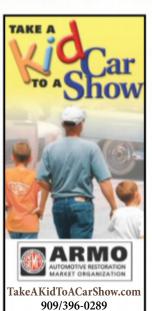




The supercharged engine is the core of what makes this car special. Because the original was missing, Don had to recreate it by seeking out everything, right down to the special rubber washer that helps seal the top of the blower bonnet.













extra special, and was reserved for a day when Don was satisfied that he could do it justice.

Why the reverence? Well, it helps that this is not only one of the approximately one percent of 1957s that came with a supercharger, but it's also one of only about two percent that were painted Thunderbird Bronze.

Thunderbird Bronze was also the color of Don's first two '57 Thunderbirds. He acquired his very first in 1961, when he still lived at home with his parents. At that time, he was riding a Triumph motorcycle, but what he really wanted was a Corvette. He worked multiple jobs and saved up his money with that goal in mind, but when he revealed the idea to his parents?

"They said, 'No way, you can't buy a Corvette!""

So, Don waited until they went out of town and then treated himself to a

Thunderbird instead. He liked it, and Don's parents realized he'd complied with the letter, if not the spirit, of their admonition and let him keep it. With his foot in the door, Don became a T-Bird enthusiast and set about improving his footing in that world, realizing almost immediately that the specifications of his 'Bird could be improved upon.

"It was an automatic, and it had been repainted," Don says. "It was okay, but I wanted a stick shift."

Fortune favored Don, as it happened, and he eventually spotted another '57, parked at the curb in front of a dress store. It was a twin to his, but with a manual transmission. After a brief search, he located the owners, "an elegant man and his wife," and upon looking over Don's well-maintained machine, they agreed that the cars were comparable and that they would be willing to make a trade.

one of Don's many new-old-stock finds from the '60s and '70s. The pursuit of perfection extends even to the hidden back of the dash, which was correctly sprayed with red primer, as per the factory.

The stick shift was a start, but the new Bronze car had a C-code 292, and Don was more into performance than originality at this point in time, so he didn't hesitate to track down and install a 312 from a '57 Ford passenger car.

"I started doing kid things," Don says, but it would be a pretty sophisticated kid these days who could pull off an engine swap — to say nothing of changing the factory's 3.56:1 ring-and-pinion for a 4.11:1 setup from a station wagon.

To keep his Thunderbird in good nick, Don acquired a parts car in a non-original shade of green. That started Don down a path of buying and selling old Ford parts, which expanded into an impressive hunt for good used and NOS parts across the country. That collecting habit has benefitted not just Don's projects, but the projects of Don's friends.

Not only does Don thoroughly enjoy the research, but the collaboration and















This is the Thunderbird's cockpit, pre-restoration. The previous owner had painted the engine compartment black, probably when he first installed the Corvette 283, but the original Thunderbird Bronze paint is still visible on the door structure.



"This was the dirtiest part of the restoration, but not too hard to do," Don says. Along with four muscular friends, Don lifted the body off by hand and moved it aside for later. Then the frame was treated to scraping, cleaning, and media blasting.



Before removal, Don documented every shim, measured them with a caliper, and stamped numbers on each. A sketch indicated the original location of each shim, permitting reinstallation a year later after they had been media blasted and cadmium plated.



The original Bendix Brakes master cylinders had a zinc cap that was prone to seizing on the threads of the cast-iron body. Don found the correct pieces for his car and spent days gently persuading the cap off using heat, leverage, and penetrants.



Starting in the '60s, Don spent years documenting how '57 Thunderbirds were built. One of his discoveries were these fiber tags, which showed how the Y-block V-8 engines were to be built up. He was determined to reproduce the proper tags for this project.

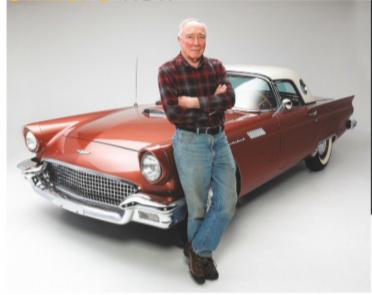


The engine compartment, exterior, and underside of the hood (but not the sound deadener in the trunk) were stripped and scraped by hand over the course of several "long and nasty" weeks. The hard work made it easier for the media blaster to avoid damaging the metal.



Final stripping on the frame and body were performed at American Dry Stripping in Milford, Connecticut. Don selected the shop because of its careful work and attention to detail. With that complete, it was time to start paint and reassembly, which we'll document in Part 2, next month.

owner's view



camaraderie of an enthusiast network that extracts pure enjoyment from the mere act of knowing a thing. Friends helping is a recurring theme throughout the story of this F-code and this car really embodies years of relationships built on early Thunderbirds.

It was at the wheel of his second hopped-up bronze '57 where Don first met his wife, Linda.

"This car is a twin, externally, for the car I was driving when I met Linda."

Don found himself cruising alone one Fourth of July weekend, "after midnight, but still too early to go home." At

met my wife while driving my second bronze Thunderbird, but I sold that car years later and wanted to replicate it. This one is pretty close, except it is supercharged. Work got ahead of me and restoration was a long time coming. It finally required five years of sustained effort due to the super-detailed work and the extreme deliberation on every single part whether you can see it or not. It was a process of forensics and I was like a crazy man. To get it right, I drew on my own knowledge of these cars, my knowledgeable friends, the judging guide, and its author. I also didn't want to make it over-restored and plasticized. — Don Antilla

a stoplight, he encountered a 1957 Oldsmobile—a hot car for 1957 and a worthy match for a Thunderbird.

"The windows were down," Don recalls. "A guy was driving, there was a girl in the middle, and a gorgeous blonde at the window."

An acceleration contest ensued at the change of the light, in which the Thunderbird prevailed. A second contest with an even more decisive outcome filled Don with enough moxie to invite young Linda to join him in his car. She did, and the rest is history. A history that includes Don transitioning, Bud Crayne-like, from driveway mechanic to a successful career at Sikorsky Aircraft. That career has cultivated an attention to detail without peer, one which has benefited every facet of this project.

We're breaking our coverage of this restoration into two parts. The story for next time is how Don's approach to restoration is highly exacting, but fun. It starts with reference books and the judging standards for the Classic Thunderbird Club International but goes far beyond. Don restored unjudged areas, hidden areas, and even revived the functionality on options simply for the sake of doing a thing right.

Even if you never intend to restore a car to this level, it is impossible to look at the efforts that went into this one and not be inspired. It's proof positive that with the right attitude and the right friends, you can accomplish anything.







1964-'65 Ford Falcon

What to consider when purchasing this stylish and affordable compact

BY THOMAS A. DeMAURO • PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF THE FORD MOTOR COMPANY ARCHIVES



ust because the Falcon was a low-priced economy car, that didn't mean that it wasn't satisfying to own. Ford referred to the redesigned 1964 and 1965 editions as its "Total Performance" compact. That philosophy also extended to the larger models and took into account styling, handling, roadability, acceleration, braking, efficiency, and more.

Sure, a buyer could've gone the bare-bones route in 1964 and become a fuel-savings connoisseur by driving a base Falcon two-door or four-door sedan, featuring the standard beige cloth-and-vinyl interior (more colors for 1965) with a full-width front seat, rubber floor mats, and 144-cu.in. straight-six (170-cu.in. for 1965). Yet, with the 1964 and 1965 Falcon lineups providing avenues for boosting image, power, and comfort, why stop there?

Stepping up in price, the 1964
Futura two- and four-door sedans added full carpeting, chromed horn ring on the steering wheel, courtesy lights, rear armrests and ash trays, lighter, and upgraded color-keyed upholstery choices and exterior trim.

The 1964 Futura hardtop and convertible also had the full-width front seat, but the sport coupe and sport convertible came with buckets and a console. A Thunderbird floating rearview mirror was included, and the droptop had a larger 170-cu.in. straight-six and a power top.

Upscale Sprint hardtops and convertibles featured a 260-cu.in. V-8 (289 for 1965), "sports-type" steering wheel, all-vinyl trim, and wire wheel

covers. Bucket seats, console, and tach were listed as standard in an early brochure, but optional in a later one. For 1965, the Sprint included bucket seats, and the convertible received a console, but the special steering wheel and wire wheel covers were dropped from it.

Though the Falcon line also had station wagons, a sedan delivery, the Ranchero, and even vans, they aren't included in this buyer's guide.

OPTIONS

A sampling of originally available options that can improve your driving experience, add style or comfort, and increase value include power steering and brakes, A/C, radio, rear-seat speaker, vinyl top, padded dash, electric clock, full disc or simulated wire wheel covers, simulated knockoff wheel covers (1965), tonneau cover for convertibles, rocker moldings, and a remote trunk lid release.

BODY

Ford designers sharpened their pencils and styling direction in modernizing the Falcon, which measured 181.6 inches long and 71.6 inches wide, and offered crisp new lines. Several Diamond Lustre Enamel solid colors were offered, as were two-tone combinations for certain body styles. An optional convenience package added distinctive body trim, bright drip moldings, a hood ornament, and a few interior items to the base model in both years. Futuras and Sprints sported bright side- and rear moldings, and the grille and body trim were revised for 1965.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Steve Springer and Dick Harrington have owned myriad Falcons since the 1960s and still do. They've also accrued decades of research and wrenching experience and served in various capacities in the Falcon Club of America (falconclub.com).

They agree that these compacts rust in many spots typical to other cars of the era—floors, lower rear quarter panels, trunk floors, rear frame rails, lower fenders, and doors, as well as the cowl and the battery-tray area.

Steve recommends checking that the doors on convertibles open and close



properly because if they don't, it may not be the door hinges that need attention. The culprit may instead be body sag from inner rocker panel rust.

In 1964, the body trim was anodized aluminum but, for 1965, it was stainless and more durable. Finding missing pieces can be a chore, so ensure all are included with the sale.

ENGINES

The 1964 offerings sipped regular fuel with compression ratios of 8.7:1 and 8.8:1. Engine choices included the 85-hp 144-cu.in. Falcon Six, standard in the base model and Futura hardtop and sedans; the 101-hp 170-cu.in. Special Six, standard in the Futura convertible, optional in others; the extra-cost 116-hp 200-cu.in. Special

Six; and the optional 164-hp 260-cu.in. two-barrel Challenger V-8. The same 260 with engine dress-up items and "powertoned" air cleaner and muffler was the only offering for the Sprint. All V-8 Falcons employed a larger radiator.

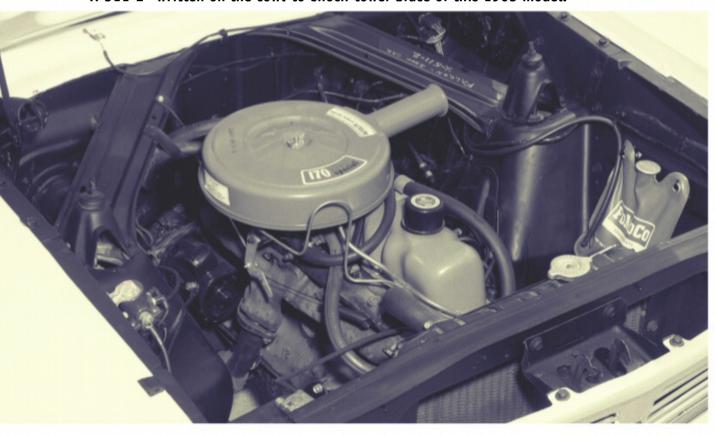
For 1965, engine output increased via top-end breathing improvements and slightly higher compression ratios for the sixes and the V-8, which also gained displacement. Alternators replaced generators, and fuel tank capacity increased to 16 gallons from 14. The 105-hp 170-cu.in. Falcon Six was standard, the optional 120-hp 200-cu.in. Fairlane Six was upgraded to a seven main bearing bottom end, and the big news was the arrival of the 200-hp 289-cu.in. two-barrel-topped Challenger V-8, which replaced the 260.







ABOVE: The 260 Sprint engine for 1964 featured chromed accents, but in the production models the chromed tops of the shock mounts shown in this factory photo were painted, the air cleaner was different, and the battery was on the opposite side. BELOW: The 170-cu.in. straight-six engine was rated at 101 hp in 1964 and 105 hp in 1965. Note "Falcon Show Car X-511-2" written on the cowl-to-shock-tower brace of this 1965 model.



It came in the Sprint, but without the engine dress-up items and special air cleaner and muffler of the previous year. The 289 was also optional in other models.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

The engines and running gear have proven reliable. According to Steve and Dick, cooling systems in the V-8 Falcons can sometimes get overtaxed in harsh conditions. Otherwise, checking for fluid leaks, odd noises, rough running, smoke, poorly done repairs, and lax maintenance should suffice.

DRIVETRAIN

An 8.5-inch clutch was paired with sixcylinder engines and the standard threespeed transmission was synchronized in second and third gears. A 10-inch clutch was behind the V-8s, and its three-speed was synchronized in all forward gears. A floor-shifted Borg-Warner T10 four-speed (a few cars had Toploaders) was optional for the V-8. The two-speed Ford-O-Matic was offered at extra cost for all engines, except the 144 six, but was mandatory with the 200 Special Six. It was replaced by the optional Cruise-O-Matic, C4 threespeed automatic for 1965.

Ford's 71/4-inch Salisbury-type rear axle was used with six-cylinder models, and a larger-diameter driveshaft and an 8-inch Hotchkiss-type axle backed the V-8. Various rear gear selections were matched to the powertrains and options. The ratios were reduced for 1965, and a limited-slip differential option debuted.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Generally, the manual and automatic transmissions and the rear axles are durable. However, Dick says that the optional Dagenham four-speed used in 1964 behind the 170 six-cylinder engine was weak, and replacement parts aren't readily available to fix it.





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TOP: Seats, steering wheel, and controls were repositioned for 1964 for a roomier feeling according to Ford. Cloth-and-vinyl and allvinyl upholstery (as was used in the Sprint) were offered for both years, and applications depended upon the model. RIGHT: A "sportstype" steering wheel was standard in the 1964 Sprint, and bucket seats, console, tachometer, four-speed, and radio are shown. The 1963-style interior door and window handles, which were updated for 1964, are in this photo and the previous one. BELOW: The dash trim used in Futuras and Sprints was subtly revised for 1965, as were other interior items.











CHASSIS

The 109.5-inch-wheelbase Falcon featured single unit-body/frame construction. Torque boxes and thicker metal in key underbody areas came with the V-8. Convertibles employed so much more stiffening that the floor revisions required differences in the front seats and their tracks compared to the closed-roof models.

Ball joint-equipped front suspension had coil springs and shocks mounted on the upper control arms, strut-stabilized lower control arms, and an anti-roll bar. Asymmetrical leaf springs and diagonally mounted shocks were in the rear.

The V-8 chassis' springs and steering systems were beefier than those with the sixes, drum brakes were 10 inches versus 9 inches, and the wheels were retained with five lug nuts instead of four. Slightly wider tires were used on the 13-inch wheels for V-8s and convertibles, and

14-inch wheels were introduced at some point.

Recirculating-ball-type steering provided 5 turns lock-to-lock with manual or optional power assist in 1964. For 1965, the system for the V-8 was revamped with different parts and improved geometry to increase durability and reduce effort, as well as noise transfer to the cabin. Power assist now employed a quicker ratio, for 3.5 turns lock-to-lock.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Try to get the car you're considering inspected by a mechanic and/or Falcon expert and raised on a lift for a better view of the undercarriage. Check for significant rust, leaks, excessive wear of the suspension parts and bushings, uneven tire wear, evidence of a collision, and anything that looks unsafe. If a V-8-equipped Falcon you're examining used to be a six-cylinder

car, ensure that all of the factory upgrades (or even stronger mods) were also installed during the swap.

VIN AND DATA PLATE

The first digit of the VIN is the last number of the model year, the second is the assembly plant, third and fourth denote the body serial code, the fifth is the engine, and the rest comprise the consecutive unit number. A data plate on the driver's-side door provides codes for the body style, color, trim, build date, rear axle, and transmission, as well as a district sales office item number and the vehicle warranty number. Though space doesn't permit decoding of the VIN or data plate here, various other sources are available to do it. The engine codes are F = 260 (1964); C = 289 (1965); S = 144(1964); U = 170; and T = 200, so now you can at least decipher which one the Falcon you're considering was manufactured with.



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TEST DRIVE

Like any car, the proper operation of the powertrain and all onboard systems and options should be checked when examining and test driving a prospect, as should fluid levels and condition. When considering a T-10 four-speed Falcon, Dick also says to see if the shifter pops out of third gear on deceleration. Steve relates that the C4 automatic for 1965 can leak if the car sits for a long time.

REPLACEMENT PARTS

Used body parts can still be found, but reproductions of the hood, fenders, floorpans, shock tower assemblies, radiator support, battery tray, trunk floor, rocker panels, decklid filler panel, quarter panel skins and patches, wheelhouses, taillamp panel, bumpers, and more are available, as are convertible tops. Frame rail sections aren't reproduced, however.

Most mechanical items for the powertrain, suspension, brakes, and fuel system remain available, aided by the Falcon's kinship to the Mustang, Comet, and Fairlane of the era, and some driveline parts of the Maverick, Granada, and Monarch that came later.

New glass and weatherstripping can be had, but the backlite can still be a challenge to find. Many interior items are reproduced and more are coming, but Steve says, "Bucket seat frames aren't." Additional parts that he says are increasingly difficult to locate in good used condition include the grille, console, bucket seats, dash-panel trim, 1964 Futura and Sprint tail panel ornamentation, and 1965 "Sprint" exterior emblems and decklid trim.

DRIVEABILITY UPGRADES

Several mild modifications can improve your Falcon's driving experience and safety and/or reduce maintenance. Steve suggests installing radial tires, electronic ignition, a dual master cylinder, front disc brakes, three-point seat belts, intermittent wipers, halogen headlamps, aftermarket stereo, and an alternator to replace the generator (in 1964 models). Dick adds that since new

REPRODUCTION PARTS PRICES

1964 dashboard wiring harness \$560 Console lid	
(complete assembly)	

13-inch tires aren't easily obtained anymore, you may want to upgrade to 14-inch rolling stock.

CONCLUSION

Steve and Dick suggest you join a Falcon club even before purchasing one, so you can begin to benefit from the camaraderie and knowledge base it offers to help you make a more informed decision. Dick warns, "Before you buy a car, decide how you plan to enjoy it, so you don't end up with one that's not suited to your needs."

Since Falcons are fairly basic in design and engineering, they're easy to work on, offering those with even a modicum of mechanical ability the satisfaction of completing a variety of maintenance and repair tasks on their own if they so choose.

Sprint convertibles (4,278 built for 1964 and 300 for 1965) and hardtops (13,830 for 1964 and 2,806 for 1965) are still affordable when compared to other collector cars of the day, but command the higher prices within the Falcon line. Fortunately, with hundreds of thousands of 1964 and 1965 Futuras and base Falcons built, there are still plenty of bargains out there.

Though ultimately overshadowed by the Mustang, the Falcon's design and engineering simplicity, light weight, and small-displacement engine choices still make it a stylish vintage ride that will draw attention today, yet remain economical to buy and drive. 3

WHAT TO PAY

	Low	Average	High
1964 Futura 170, two-door hardtop	\$8,000	\$11,000	\$22,000
1964 Sprint 260, two-door convertible	\$15,000	\$24,000	\$43,000
1964 Sprint 260, two-door hardtop	\$10,000	\$19,000	\$34,000
1965 Falcon 170, two-door sedan	\$4,000	\$7,000	\$16,000
1965 Futura 170, four-door sedan	\$4,000	\$6,000	\$17,000
1965 Sprint 289, two-door hardtop	\$10,000	\$15,000	\$31,000



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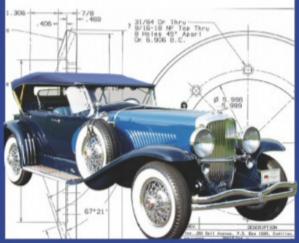
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Runway Model

Saab's pioneering Friction Tester technology put this 1990 900 Turbo to work

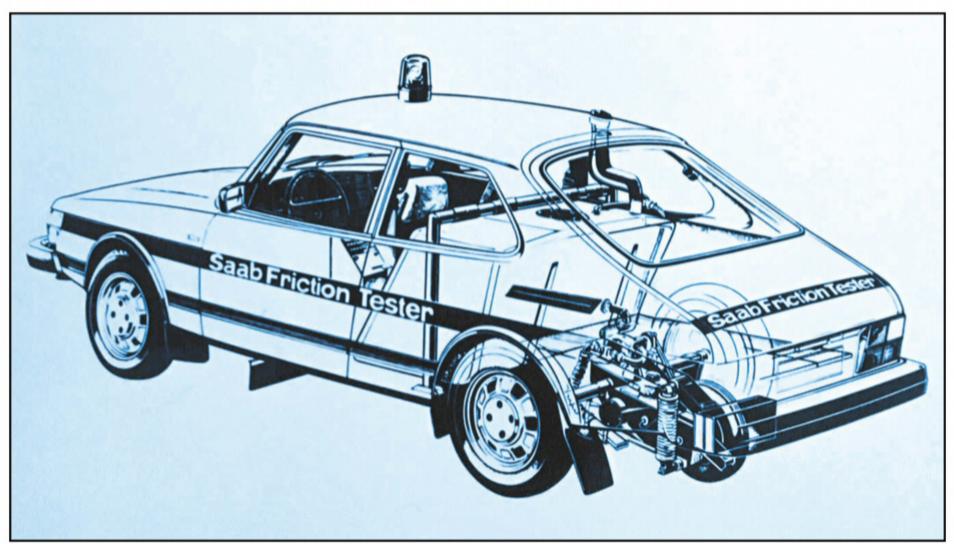
WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARK J. McCOURT • ADDITIONAL IMAGES COURTESY OF BENJAMIN HINKLE AND HENRIK ZAAR

orn From Jets" may have been marketing hyperbole, but there was a grain of truth in Saab's circa-2005 advertising campaign. While by that time it shared nothing more than its name with the Swedish aerospace firm, the automaker had verifiable aeronautical roots that included building cars for special airport use. In conjunction with the National Swedish Traffic Research Institute and National Aeronautical Research Institute of Sweden, Saab's automotive and aviation engineers had developed—and, for more than a decade, built in-house—a self-contained surface-friction testing platform that remains in use around the world today. The unrestored, complete, and fully functioning 1990 900 Turbo on these pages is a rare example of Saab's Friction Tester that was retired from official duty and is now in private hands.

What is a Friction Tester, and why would it be needed, you may ask? Well, think about the times you've traveled by airplane. Chances are, you have taken off or landed in some form of inclement (raining, snowing, icy) weather, which means the traction available to the tires on your aircraft's landing gear was reduced, compared to tires on a dry runway surface. Even the buildup of rubber on dry arrival runways, deposited by momentarily locked wheels, seriously limits grip. Most aviation acci-

dents happen as a plane is leaving or returning to the ground, so pilots need to know the conditions in which they'll be operating, potentially compensating for longer take-off or stopping distances. "You typically wouldn't want to go 140 mph in a packed bus on a snowy highway," muses Saab Friction Tester historian Benjamin Hinkle. "The purpose of the car was to decide whether it is safe for a packed airliner to do so."

And that's how this light-bar-laden, Chrome Yellow 1990 900 Turbo earned its keep, starting at Chicago Midway International Airport, followed by a stint at the Zurich International Airport in Switzerland, and finally ending its career after a period of service at Washington Dulles International Airport (watch it work at hmn.com/DullesSaab). Bearing the serial number 244, the two-door hatchback—now owned by noted 900 collector Arte Levy—was among the last examples built in-house at the Saab Car Division of Saab-Scania in Nyköping, before General Motors purchased a 50-percent interest in the company and closed the Friction Tester department. Development and production of this technology was subsequently adopted in May 1991 by the Swedish company Airport Surface Friction Tester AB, now called SARSYS-ASFT, which remains among the world's most respected in its field of product expertise. At one point during



Saab's Friction Tester differed from other Continuous Friction Measurement Equipment by being self-contained, with the testing fifth wheel carried at the rear of the vehicle. An optional water tank situated behind the front seats allowed for simulated wet measurements.



its overseas tenure, our feature car spent time at ASFT, where it was updated with the latest equipment and received that firm's red, white, and blue decals, replacing the original black Saab Friction Tester striping.

If you'd walked into your local Saab dealership in 1990 and purchased a 900 Turbo hatchback with the optional BorgWarner three-speed automatic transmission, you would have paid \$26,075. This two-pedal 900 Turbo cost Midway around \$100,000 more, for an inflation-adjusted equivalent total of \$252,300 in today's money. What did that breathtaking price buy? The latest in Continuous Friction Measurement Equipment, packaged within a famously sure-footed front-wheel-drive sport sedan.

The 900 Turbo was a smart choice for high-speed work thanks to the near-130-mph capability of its longitudinally mounted DOHC 16-valve engine. A water-cooled turbocharger and intercooler boosted that fuel-injected 2.0-liter (121-cu.in.) four-cylinder's output to 160 hp at 5,500 rpm and 188 lb-ft of torque at 3,000 rpm,

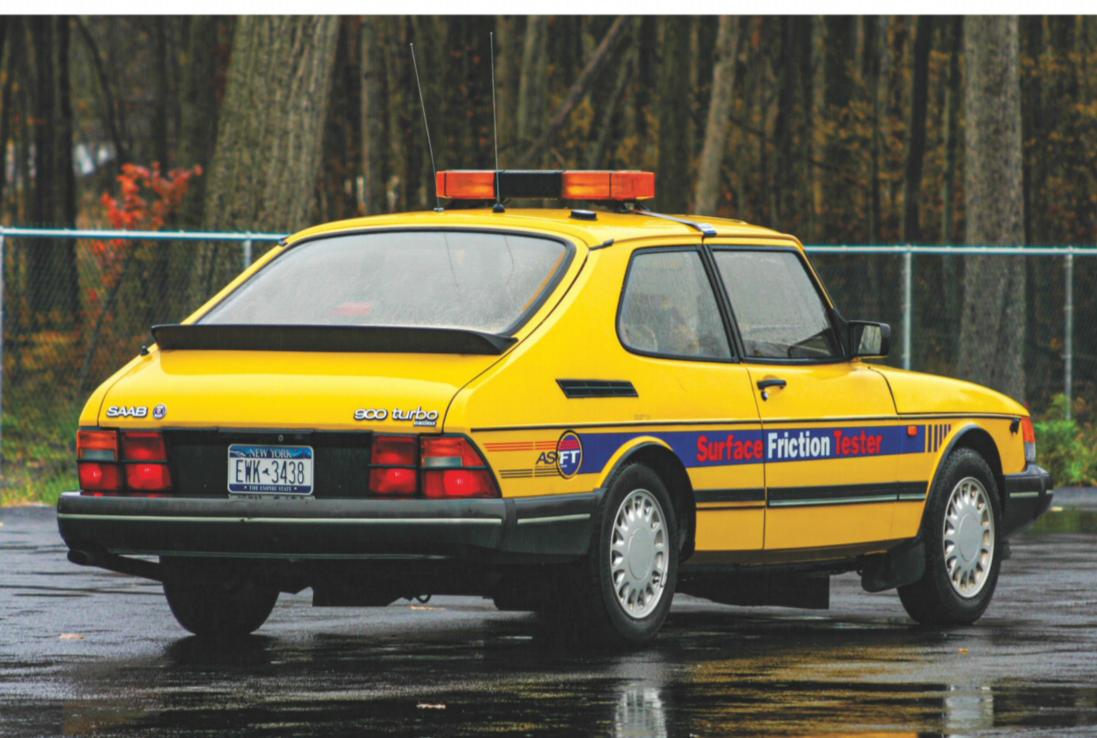
while four-wheel discs with new-for-'90 antilock offered strong stopping power. Selecting the automatic transmission over the manual meant the operator could focus on acquiring the necessary friction readings. The car could also be safely driven by a wider variety of people, a bonus when it was tasked with general airport duties. The hatchback body style proved most practical because of the access it provided to the special equipment behind the driver's compartment.





Before Saab engineers developed the Friction Tester, airports primarily relied on tow-behind CFME rigs like the "Skiddometer" and "Mu-Meter" for data. Those devices were developed in the late 1950s/early 1960s in Sweden and the U.K., respectively, and looked like small, three-wheeled trailers. The Saab Friction Tester, introduced in the 99 model in 1977 and continued in production through the 1979-'93 lifetime of the "classic" 900 hatchback, differed in being integral with the car, and was made possible through a clever bit of parts-bin sharing. In addition to swapping the full-size fuel tank for a smaller, repositioned unit, the standard 99/900 beam rear axle, located by five links and a Panhard rod, was exchanged for the independent, coil-sprung upper/lower wishbones that had supported the front of the smaller 96 and 95 models. Those coil springs could contain inflatable air bladders to support the additional weight brought by an optional 105-gallon plastic water tank that mounted where the rear seat normally was.

Under the sloping liftgate, the trunk floor contained a hatch panel that covered a chain-driven, friction-measuring wheel that could be hydraulically lowered and raised. This wheel, shod with a tube-equipped 4.00-8-inch tire sporting a rubber composition and tread akin to those on airplanes, was geared to rotate at a constant percentage of slip—usually 10 to 30 percent—relative to the car's steady speed. That speed typically ranged from 40 to 60 mph, although this assessment could be performed at up







This car was meant to go straight down runways, so it doesn't corner like a regular 900; the modified rear suspension makes it feel a little loose and bouncy.

Many 900 Friction Testers were automatic-equipped Turbos easily capable of triple-digit runway speeds. After its service at Chicago Midway, this car was refitted by ASFT in Sweden with thencurrent computers, and the LCD screen and digital paperspool printer that display runway numbers and average friction readings. It remains programmed with Dulles runway information.



to 100 mph. A torque sensor read the resistance against the chain drive, and fed this information to an onboard computer that transmitted in real time to Air Traffic Control, which in turn relayed runway condition codes — 0 to 6, with 6 being dry and good braking—to incoming and outgoing pilots.

And that available onboard water tank could be used in surface-maintenance testing to simulate wet conditions via a regulated constant-rate spray of water ahead of the measuring wheel. It could lay down a layer of water whose specific depth was controlled by the operator, allowing him or her to assess the runway surface, as well as the rubber buildup in areas where airplane tires leave deposits, with the objective of reducing hydroplaning. Our feature 900 was so optioned, although when Arte purchased the 900 in 2009 through a Dulles surplus auction, the external cap for the rooftop filler neck was missing, and nobody he contacted—including ASFT in Sweden—could offer a replacement. "I thought the thread looked like that of a gas cap, but I couldn't be certain. I looked at a Friction Tester photo, and thought, where have I seen that? It took me a long time to realize that Saab used the gas cap from a 99! I bought a NOS cap still in its package from a local source, and put it on that same day."

This 900 Turbo Friction Tester was one of the first in America known to be sold into a private collection, because they remain useful, even decades after their construction. "They tended to move around," Arte explains. "They were leased, or airports traded or sold them to each other, so as mine had, it was common for Friction Testers to work at different airfields in their life. In fact, after I'd signed the paperwork to buy mine, I was contacted by Dulles asking if I was still interested in the car, because an airport in South America was willing to pay multiple times what I did for it! Mine is still programmed to the runways at Dulles; you





SFT #244 was built with the optional water tank and rear suspension air shocks, the latter of which would be inflated to 30 psi/2.1 bar. The right-side floor hatch hides a jack storage compartment and measurement computer, while the left hatch reveals the friction-testing fifth wheel assembly. This unit raises and lowers hydraulically, and its 8-inch wheel is fitted with an aircraft-type tube tire with a specific rubber compound.





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turn on the computer and see the runway numbers, it tells you where to start on the runway and where to drop the wheel."

He went on to guesstimate there are fewer than a dozen in private ownership, and some were sold without all their unique equipment. Among the known examples are #78 and #211: The former is a naturally aspirated five-speed manual 1983 900 that tested runways at New York's Buffalo Niagara International Airport before being restored for the General Motors Saab Heritage fleet, and is now a popular display at Tom Donney's Saab Heritage Car Museum USA (saabmuseumusa.com) in Sturgis, South Dakota; the latter, an automatic 1987 900 Turbo belonging to Benjamin Hinkle, first served at Boston Logan International Airport and cost the Massachusetts Port Authority \$86,981 (the equivalent of \$205,400 today). Number 211 was ultimately retired from the Albany (New York) International Airport, and is being restored.

It wasn't just snow-belt Northeastern runways these Saab Friction Testers covered — SFTs were found in U.S. cities as diverse as Atlanta, Georgia; Moline, Illinois; Detroit, Michigan; and Seattle, Washington. In addition to examples used in Scandinavian countries, these rolling computers were used in Italy, Germany, Poland, Greece, Malaysia, and Japan. And many descendants of the 900 remain in use today, as SARSYS-ASFT built Saab car-based CFMEs out of 9000s and 9-5s through 2009; its current lineup of Airport Surface Friction Testers includes the Volvo XC40, XC60, and V90.

While he's put fewer than 1,000 miles on it over the past 12 years, Arte tells us his yellow three-door gets tons of attention when he takes it out, and it drives quite differently than the other Saabs in his collection. "This car was meant to go straight down runways, so it doesn't corner like a regular 900; the modified rear suspension makes it feel a little loose and bouncy. And even though its turbocharged, it feels sluggish with the automatic,



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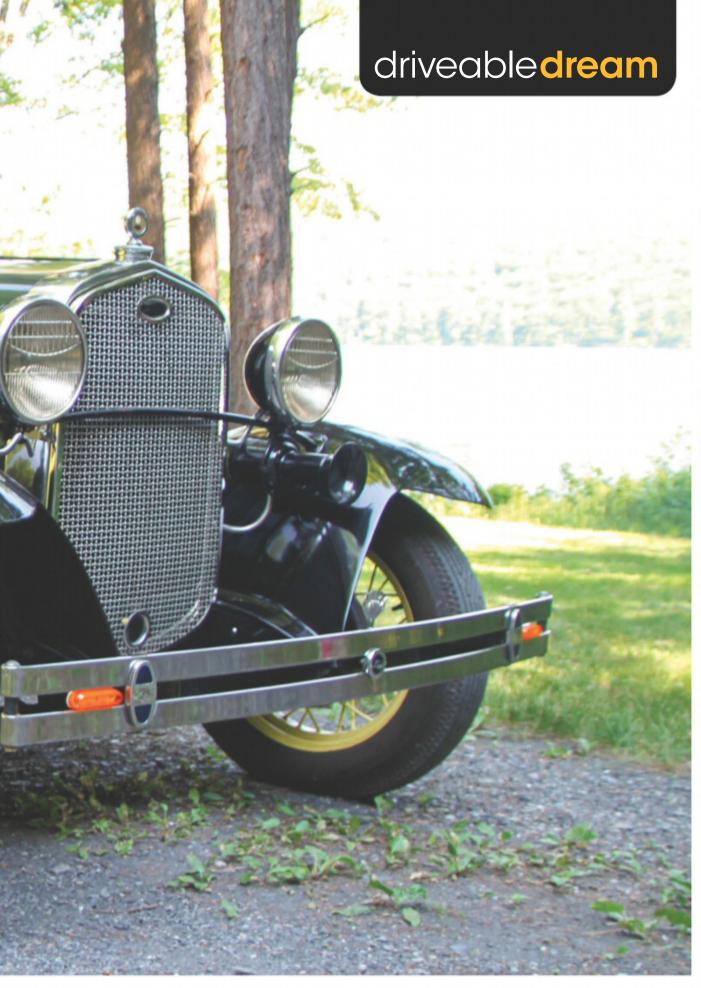
This 1931 Ford Model A has been a lakeside fixer-upper

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY MATTHEW LITWIN

njoying retirement at a lakeside "camp" nestled in the mountains of northern New England can't possibly be any more idyllic, right? Imagine: Tranquil sunrises with a cup of coffee, hours of boating and fishing, long colorful sunsets while on the dock with early evening libations and, at

times, a group of friends. Still, one needs to get to town to restock supplies, and haul the refuse to the local waste transfer station from time to time, so why not do that in a vintage vehicle? That was the logic behind Jamie Longtin's decision to purchase the 1931 Ford Model A pickup featured here.

The story begins on the calming shores of the aptly named Sunset Lake in Benson, Vermont, where Jamie has long maintained a cozy summer cabin away from the hustle and bustle of his winter home in Arizona. Having already purchased and become acquainted with a 1929 Ford Model A Fordor and a





Ford still used a gravity-fed fuel system in 1931, so the tank was still hidden below the top of the cowl. The Model A pickup's cabin is best described as utilitarian, decorated with only a few necessary gauges. An aftermarket turn signal system was added in the name of safety.



because he had put a new muffler on, but didn't put the gasket in. Being as loud as it was, I assumed that to be the case; he gave me the gasket and my brother felt that the four-cylinder engine sounded strong."

The Model A pickup was purchased in October, just prior to departing for the annual winter retreat, so the Ford was carefully placed in winter storage on the lakeside property. Upon Jamie's return, the first thing on his automotive to-do list for the Ford was, in theory, a simple exhaust gasket job, as he explained.

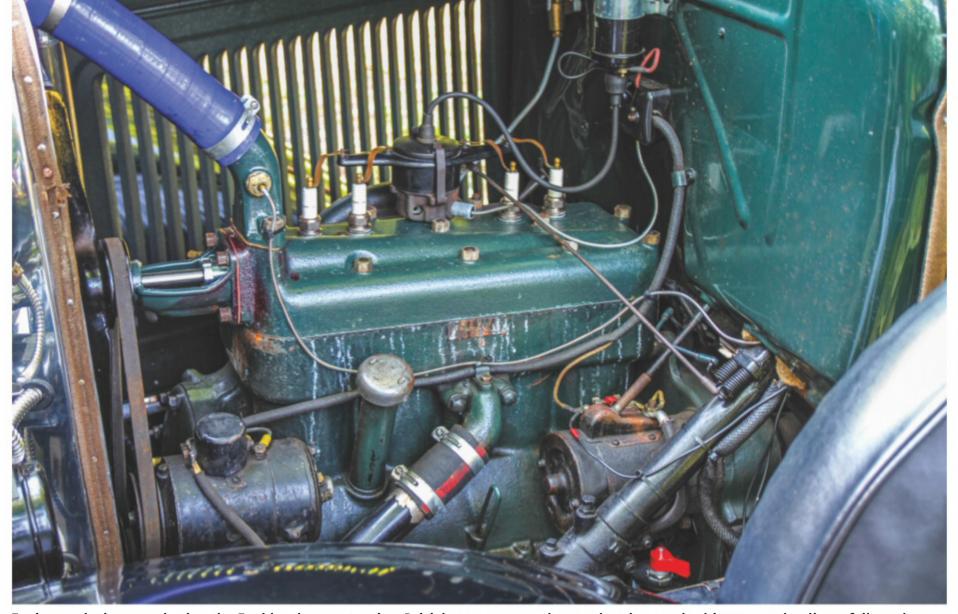
"The gasket wasn't the problem with the exhaust leak. If anything, it was a little louder after I added it. I'm familiar enough with Model A's to know what's right and what's wrong, and after doing some investigating, I found that the issue was a warped exhaust manifold. I thought, okay, no problem, until I removed it and discovered that the intake manifold was cracked. In minutes, I went from a missing exhaust gasket to having to swap out the intake and exhaust manifolds. While the parts were on order, I thought I might as

1930 Ford Model A roadster—the latter of which remains at his Arizona residence for "enjoyable winter use"—a Model A pickup seemed the perfect choice as a vehicle he could, "bang around camp in." "Something I could run into town with, and haul the trash to the dump in," Jamie says. "I didn't want another show car, just a mechanically sound, fun vehicle that, if it got scratched, wouldn't cause heartache. Basically, a turn-key-and-go, yet easy-tomaintain truck."

Jamie's search didn't begin in earnest until the summer of 2018, and he eventually responded to a promising ad for a Model A pickup. The Ford was in southern Maine, however, and without a trailer at

his immediate disposal, Jamie needed to work out a few details before making the trek to inspect it. Joining Jamie was his brother, a mechanic by trade who offered to lend his opinion prior to purchase.

According to Jamie: "The seller of the Ford was an older gentleman who told me that he'd owned it for about 15 years. Apparently, he didn't use it much. He just used it to give his grandkids rides on the beach whenever they visited. At first glance it looked solid, so I made a comment about it looking like an older restoration, but all he said was that the prior owner had possibly done the work. It was running, but the Ford clearly had an exhaust leak. The seller told me it was



Engine work since purchasing the Ford has been extensive. Initial attempts to solve overheating resulted in a second radiator failure that caused the cylinder head atop the 205.5-cu.in. four-cylinder to crack; leaking coolant left behind tell-tale stains on the block.

well add aftermarket turn signals in the name of safety, even up here in a quiet corner of Vermont.

"When I got it all back together, my brother and his wife came to the camp for a visit, so I thought it was a perfect time for a maiden voyage. My sister-in-law wanted to join me, so I told my brother to keep his phone handy as I checked the fuel tank; it looked to have enough to get me to nearby Orwell to top it off. Well, I didn't get very far before it started to overheat, and of course we never made it to the gas station—it ran out before we got close to it and my brother had to come to the rescue. If that weren't enough, the Ford overheated on the way back and, after further investigating, we determined that the radiator needed to be rebuilt.

"That repaired radiator lasted half of one trip—it overheated again on the way to the dump. I could smell antifreeze as I was driving, but I didn't see a temperature spike on the Moto Meter atop the radiator. I simply assumed the smell was because—having just topped it off—I might have simply overfilled it. Not until I got to a stop sign at the main road did I see smoke billowing around me from all directions. It turns out antifreeze was run-

ning out of the bottom end of the radiator where it had been repaired, so I inadvertently cracked the cylinder head when it overheated. Some nice guy helped me push it into the gas station parking lot at the corner. It was a 90-plus-degree day, and there I was with no wallet, no money, a cell phone with no service, and a dump sticker, waiting almost two hours for AAA to tow me back home. I couldn't even buy a bottle of water. The dump is 3 miles away from camp and not once did I think I wouldn't be able to make it back. So, I named the pickup 'Christine' because I swear it's possessed," laughed Jamie.

He was able to quickly locate a replacement cylinder head online, thanks to the Model A's large support community. The head was Magnafluxed—a procedure used to uncover minute, hidden damage — before it was installed on the engine block. Jamie also swapped out the stock taillamps for LED replacement units because, as he laughed, "When you break down a lot, you want the other cars to see you."

Despite the litany of mechanical tribulations, not once has Jamie been dissuaded from the thought of purchasing another Model A Ford. As he explained, "I have two other Model A's that are very roadworthy. This is just one of those 'you get when you pay for' cars. I didn't pay a lot for this pickup at all, and really, despite







The original taillamps were recently replaced with factory-appearing LEDs; the brighter illumination makes the Model A easier to spot by approaching drivers. A small decal on the tailgate issuing a warning that parts may fall off was also added in jest. The owner added that overall Ford's Model A was a sturdy, well-built vehicle that usually handles backcountry road conditions with ease.



I named the pickup 'Christine' because I swear it's possessed...







what it sounds like, I think I have about \$1,000 in parts in this thing. If anything, this has been the source of a lot of funny stories if you look at it in the right context. Model A's are such fun vehicles — car or pickup, because they are essentially the same below the bodywork—and they are quite easy to maintain. Just about everything is available for them, so parts are as plentiful as resources are accessible, to step you through things when they do go wrong.

"For instance, after I figured out the cooling and exhaust system problems, the pickup ran smoothly for a few months. It was really enjoyable, just as I hoped. Next on my list for the 2021 season is a complete brake job; after really driving it around it occurred to me what kind of horrible condition they were in, but then, as I was making one last short dump run, the darn Ford stopped running again. From experience, my gut told me that a fried condenser was the culprit this time, which was a bit of a common failure item because of where it's mounted near the engine. You get into the habit of having a couple spares handy.

"A lot of the kinks have been worked out of this one. Like the doors, for instance, which wouldn't shut right. Whoever did the backyard restoration on this installed the door hinges backwards. Turning them around fixed the problem. The paint looks okay, but it's a solid 30-foot job, which means I don't have to worry about trimming the branches back from my camp access road before doing a dump run. What's one more scratch?"

Jamie adds, "I really wanted something I can jump in and drive without too many worries. Whenever I go out in this thing it's always an adventure, if not on the way out, then on the way back. Under its own power or not. In all my other cars I carry a small bag with pieces and parts ignition parts, head gasket, and stuff like that—in this case I carry a couple of plastic buckets in the back with tools, parts, and water, and I'm only going 3 miles. You never know. But the Model A is a blast to drive, it always gets looks at the dump, and it's a good conversation piece."



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DRIVEN BY NOSTALGIA

First-car memories fueled the revival of this 1965 Chrysler Newport words and photography by matthew litwin

o you remember *Susie, the Little Blue Coupe?* As the title hints, it was an animated short about a cute sporty car that flirted its way out of a dealership window and into the hands of its first, proud owner. During the 8-minute flick, produced by Walt Disney and originally released in June 1952 by RKO Radio Pictures,



Susie's care eventually slipped, and her owner reluctantly sold the rough-running coupe. A cigar-chomping, gruff-looking chap became Susie's next owner, though his lackadaisical attitude eventually left her painfully disheveled in a cold and scary scrapyard. That is, until she was rescued by a young lad with a dream, a touch of know-how, and a boatload of ambition.

It's pure coincidence, but the basic elements of *Susie*'s thought-provoking yet lighthearted automotive tale parallel the real-life adventure of the 1965 Chrysler Newport two-door hardtop gracing these pages. This entry-level luxury car was sold new through a New Haven, Connecticut, dealership, after which it lived many years of pavement tranquility in nearby Branford. But, by the end of 1985, the Newport silently fell into a stagnant existence that left it in complete disrepair.

According to its current owner and Lee, Massachusetts, resident Tim Schaefer, who purchased the Newport in September

2012, "It was basically a parts car. It had weeds growing off the floor in the back. The grille areas at the top of the cowl were filled with decomposing leaves, sticks, and dirt — all of which held water that slowly leaked into the interior that, after a quick glance, you wouldn't even want to get in. It was just roached beyond belief. The headliner was hanging out of it and there was a wheel thrown on the back seat wearing a rotted tire. Really, the car was just a mess, but I bought it. Somebody had to save it."

What could possibly persuade a person to consider purchasing a car in such dire straits—a car that rightfully should have been stripped of anything salvageable before it was unceremoniously turned into scrap metal? In a word: nostalgia.

"My first car was a 1965 Chrysler Newport two-door hardtop, except it was painted blue. It had been purchased new by one of my relatives and it passed through the hands of my two older brothers before I got it when I was in high school. It was







In 1965, base Newports were powered by a 383-cu.in. "Firebolt 270" V-8 rated for 270 hp. This one has not been rebuilt, but the cooling and fuel delivery systems were refurbished.

about 16 years old then, so it didn't really suffer from its age a whole lot at that point. I kept it roughly 10 years, and being the stupid 20-something year old I was at the time, I sold it for cheap money. I always regretted that decision because it was a fantastic car to me," recalls Tim.

The Newport wasn't the only car from Chrysler Corporation that Tim has held title to. In the years afterward, he had a 1958 Chrysler Saratoga that he states was, "the fastest car I'd ever owned; it was a beast." After parting ways with the Saratoga, he briefly tried to resurrect a '62 Imperial before transitioning to a '61 De Soto four-door hardtop that—at the time—had logged just 18,000 miles. It, too, has moved on, and despite the diversity of Tim's Mopars, his fond memories of the Newport never wavered.

"After regretting getting rid of my first Newport, I decided, you know what, if I can find another one of these things that'll be great," Tim says. "So, I just began to look online when I had some free time. I knew it had to be the same model I had—I didn't want a four-door or a wagon, but I kept finding those, as well as several New Yorkers and a couple 300s. In the summer of 2012, I finally spotted this white paint, red interior two-door Newport hardtop for sale in Connecticut, looking like it was in pretty rough shape. After debating it a bit, I kind of backed out at the last minute and then I quickly regretted that decision, too. I thought, you fool, where will you find another car close by that was exactly what you wanted? A few months went by and, just for the sake of it, I went online and saw a listing in New York. While I was listening to the seller describe the condition of his Newport, I realized it was the same car. So, I found the thing twice."

When Tim got the car home, he hooked up a battery to see if anything worked. The only thing that responded was the trunk light.

"Everything else was just wasted, so taking the interior out bothered me less," he says. "The car had to have sat under a tree. I was pulling muck out of that thing for weeks so that I could dry it out and see what the floor looked like. It was desperate. Next on my list was to see if the original 383-cu.in. engine would run, so I ran a temporary fuel line from a portable gas can to the pump, bypassing what I knew had to be a horrendous fuel tank. I was surprised that it started fairly easily and didn't even smoke.

It fired up and ran, but it was rough: the carburetor, fuel pump, and even the water pump were all struggling. So, rebuilding the fuel and cooling systems went right to the top of the list, as well as installing new brakes and solving a transmission leak."

A mechanic friend agreed to let Tim use a bay at his shop, so that Tim could start working on things when he had the time and budget. It was that friend—and a few other guys—who were instrumental in getting the Newport back on the road.

"I'm more of a detail, cosmetic, interior kind of guy as far as restoring a car. I can do little things like change the alternator and such, but for anything major I had someone else do the work," Tim says.

When not searching for clean, used and new-old-stock replacement parts, Tim spent hours wet sanding the Newport's white paint (which was determined to be a respray over the original, softer hue of French Ivory), while portions of the floorpan were replaced with reproduction patch panels. Extensive cowl repairs came next, after which the left quarter panel was straightened while the passenger door was replaced. Both panels, along with the hood and the tops of both fenders, were then repainted to match the car's current stark white hue.

Meanwhile, Tim's work on the interior began to take shape when the restored instrument cluster was reunited with its corresponding panel. A factory-correct AM/FM radio, found in a local junkyard, replaced the Newport's original, nonfunctional AM radio. Reproduction upholstery arrived from SMS Auto Fabrics, along with a new headliner and floor carpet. The door panels were salvaged, but Tim reports that new units are being made by SMS. With interior and exterior trim replaced, after five years of budget-conscious work, Tim's Newport was ready for a return to the tarmac.

"It was completed to a point that it looked respectable to me," Tim says, adding that there are more changes planned for the Newport shortly, including a power brake booster and a dual-circuit master cylinder. "I run it around town, so that's a safety concern for me. I've not taken any big trips with it because I've never had the engine apart; I don't know how long it's going to last. It's remarkable that it's still going. That doesn't stop me from driving it to work, and it's fun to take grocery shopping—it messes with people in the parking lot. I run errands in it. I drive it as a car, as it should be, while I save the funds to perform

owner's view



think if anyone else had purchased the car it would have been cut up for parts. I remember the seller telling me that people were calling him looking for bits — one guy wanted the engine — but the seller was happy I wanted the car, not the parts. Sure, if I had been able to save more money, I could have found a better example in California, or from some other dry location, but this one was right in front of me, twice, and it was in such a sorry state of affairs that I had to bail the old thing out. So, I did. Could I have done things differently? Probably, but I had a small budget and a goal. It was a total labor of love. Someday I will give it a proper restoration, but right now I'm enjoying every opportunity to drive it. — Tim Schaefer

a proper, comprehensive restoration down the road."

Although Tim admits to having more on the Newport's to-do list in the near future, such as replacing the decklid, more quarter panel work, and replacing the suspension's springs, we took the opportunity to see what it was like to drive Chrysler's entry-level luxury car.

A slight twist of the key ignited the smooth 270-hp 383, and as we settled into the firm-yet-comfortable bench seat, ready to shift the TorqueFlite automatic into gear, it became apparent that designers took visibility seriously. There's nary a blind spot in any corner of the coupe, and the elevation of the bench seat in relation to the floor afforded a perfect line of sight over the hood, fenders and rear decklid alike.

The drivetrain was essentially untouched — save the bolt-on parts — and it seemed like the transfer of power from front-to-rear was graceful; slight pressure on

the throttle got you on your way with little effort. The Newport's power-steering system was light, yet responsive, and the division's renowned "Torsion-Aire" suspension swallowed inconsistencies on the road surface with ease. New Monroe shocks helped it float down the street, a trait typical of many big cars of the '60s. Planning stops seemed like a good idea, considering the car's unassisted hydraulic brakes, issued as standard equip-



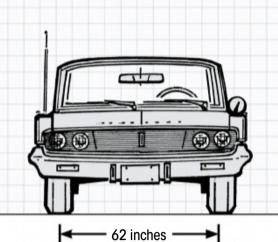
Though it was an entry-level model, this Newport was ordered with what factory literature called "Jacquard fabric" featuring "a distinctive fleur-de-lis pattern," that was replicated during the interior restoration. The gauge cluster and clock were also rebuilt.

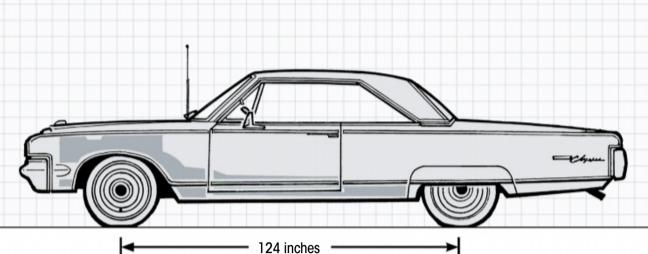
ment from Chrysler. Regardless, the drums performed admirably on our mild-mannered pleasure cruise around town, one that had us thinking that, perhaps, just enough work had been performed to resurrect this treasured car. Though the Newport was the division's base model, it was no less stylish and graceful or quiet, yet sporty: all these traits shined as brightly as the chrome trim and white paint it wore. 59



1965 CHRYSLER NEWPORT HARDTOP

ILLUSTRATIONS BY RUSSELL VON SAUERS, THE GRAPHIC AUTOMOBILE STUDIO © 2021 HEMMINGS CLASSIC CAR





SPECIFICATIONS

WHAT TO PAY

LOW \$3,500 - \$6,000 AVERAGE \$7,000 - \$12,000 HIGH \$13,000 - \$20,000

PRICE

BASE PRICE \$3,028

OPTIONS TorqueFlite automatic transmission;

Constant-Control power steering;

AM radio; whitewall tires; luggage and utility lamp

ENGINE

TYPE OHV V-8; cast-iron block and cylinder heads

DISPLACEMENT 383-cu.in.

BORE X STROKE 4.25 x 3.375 inches

COMPRESSION RATIO 9.2:1
HORSEPOWER @ RPM 270 @ 4,400
TORQUE @ RPM 390 lb-ft @ 2,800
VALVETRAIN Hydraulic lifters

MAIN BEARINGS Five

FUEL SYSTEM Single Stromberg two-barrel carburetor, mechanical pump

LUBRICATION SYSTEM Full pressure ELECTRICAL SYSTEM 12-volt

EXHAUST SYSTEM Dual manifolds; single muffler and outlet

TRANSMISSION

TYPE TorqueFlite three-speed automatic

RATIOS 1st/2.45:1 2nd/1.45:1

3rd/1.00:1 Reverse/2.20:1

DIFFERENTIAL

TYPE Semi-floating, hypoid drive gears

GEAR RATIO 2.76:1 standard

STEERING

TYPE Recirculating ball, hydraulic power assist

RATIO OVERALL 19.2:1 overall TURNING CIRCLE 44 feet

BRAKES

TYPE Hydraulic, cast-iron drums

FRONT 11 x 2.75-inch REAR 11 x 2.00-inch

CHASSIS & BODY

CONSTRUCTION Unit-body construction with front, bolt-on subframe

BODY STYLE Two-door, five-passenger hardtop LAYOUT Front engine, rear-wheel drive

SUSPENSION

REAR

FRONT Independent; torsion bars with control arms,

anti-roll bar, hydraulic shock absorbers Live axle; semi-elliptical leaf springs,

hydraulic shock absorbers

WHEELS & TIRES

WHEELS Stamped steel FRONT/REAR 14 x 5.50 inches

TIRES White-sidewall bias-ply (currently: Diamond Back

Classic Auburn whitewall radial)

FRONT/REAR: 8.25 x 14 (currently: HR78-14)

WEIGHTS & MEASURES

WHEELBASE
OVERALL LENGTH
OVERALL WIDTH
OVERALL HEIGHT
FRONT TRACK
REAR TRACK
SHIPPING WEIGHT

124 inches
218.2 inches
79.5 inches
65.7 inches
62 inches
60.7 inches
3,985 pounds

CAPACITIES

CRANKCASE 5 quarts (with filter)

COOLING SYSTEM 17 quarts
FUEL TANK 25 gallons
TRANSMISSION 9 quarts
DIFFERENTIAL 4 pints

CALCULATED DATA

BHP PER CU.IN. 0.69

WEIGHT PER BHP 14.76 pounds WEIGHT PER CU.IN. 10.41 pounds

PRODUCTION

206,189 units, of which 125,795 carried the "Newport" emblem, including station wagons. Of those, 23,655 were hardtop coupes.

PERFORMANCE*

0-60 MPH 10.3 seconds 17.6 @ 78 mph

*June 1964 *Motor Trend* road test of a 1964 Chrysler Newport four-door sedan equipped with a 265-hp 361-cu.in. engine, three-speed manual transmission, and a 3.23:1 final drive ratio.



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- Seller of a 1980 Triumph TR8



DEDICATED TO THE DRIVE"

Ford Classics

n any discussion about classic cars, there will always be a point where Ford will take over the conversation. Afterall, the Ford Model T has been said to be the most important car ever built because of its versatility and availability to the masses. But the story doesn't end there. The Model A replaced the Model T in 1928 and was an instant success, becoming a popular collector car decades later. Of course, the '32 Ford V-8 ignited the desire

for more power and in the late '40s became the catalyst for the hot rod culture. The Thunderbird came along in the '50s and was an instant classic with its sports car feel and V-8 power and it is still one of the most popular collector cars today. Around the same time Ford also had a hit with the Crown Victoria Skyliner. The detailed body with signature features in the front and rear created a timeless style. The 1957-59

Ford Fairlane Skyliner featured those undeniable tail fins and a magnificent retractable hardtop. And then there came the Mustang. Ushering in the muscle car era, the Mustang has stayed at the forefront of classic cars for well over 50 years. Affordable models are still available today to enjoy the classic ride or if

you're able, some of those rarer, more powerful models are out there for the taking. No matter which Ford is your favorite, it is clear that when it comes to classics, Ford has plenty to share. We didn't even get to the trucks!

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im Ross, of Latrobe, Pennsylvania, worked for a paving company that was assigned a driveway-resealing job in town. The owner of a '70 Chevelle, Jim's tastes ran toward Chevrolets and high-performance but, in 1994, he was looking to add another older car to the family fleet. Jim wanted something he could drive during the endless, sloppy Pennsylvania winters and the slushy roads that followed the plow and the salt. He wasn't particularly looking for an Oldsmobile, an A-body, a Cutlass, or an emissions-era machine—he wanted something cheap and reliable that would get him to work and back. But at the job site, he locked eyes on an immaculate 1976 Oldsmobile Cutlass Supreme two-door—everything he wasn't looking for. It was all snug and protected in a covered garage, looking brand new, and the owner allowed as how it was for sale. "He was selling this car to buy a truck," Jim recalls, "and while this wasn't really what I was looking for, I wasn't about to pass it up."

In 1976, America's best-selling car was the Oldsmobile Cutlass. Just over half a million sold, and 56 percent of all Oldsmobiles for the year were some flavor of Cutlass. Within Oldsmobile's myriad midsize Cutlass body styles and trim levels (S! Salon! 442! Supreme Brougham!), one version stood above all others: the Cutlass Supreme two-door Colonnade hardtop coupe. The two-door Supreme, the model that's represented in this photo spread, sold more than 186,000 copies for the year—that's roughly 510 sold every day of 1976,

making up 37 percent of all Cutlass production for the year. The Supreme coupe sold better than the next two versions (the new, upmarket Cutlass Supreme Brougham coupe and the entry-level Cutlass S coupe), so this is the most-popular version of America's most-popular car that year.

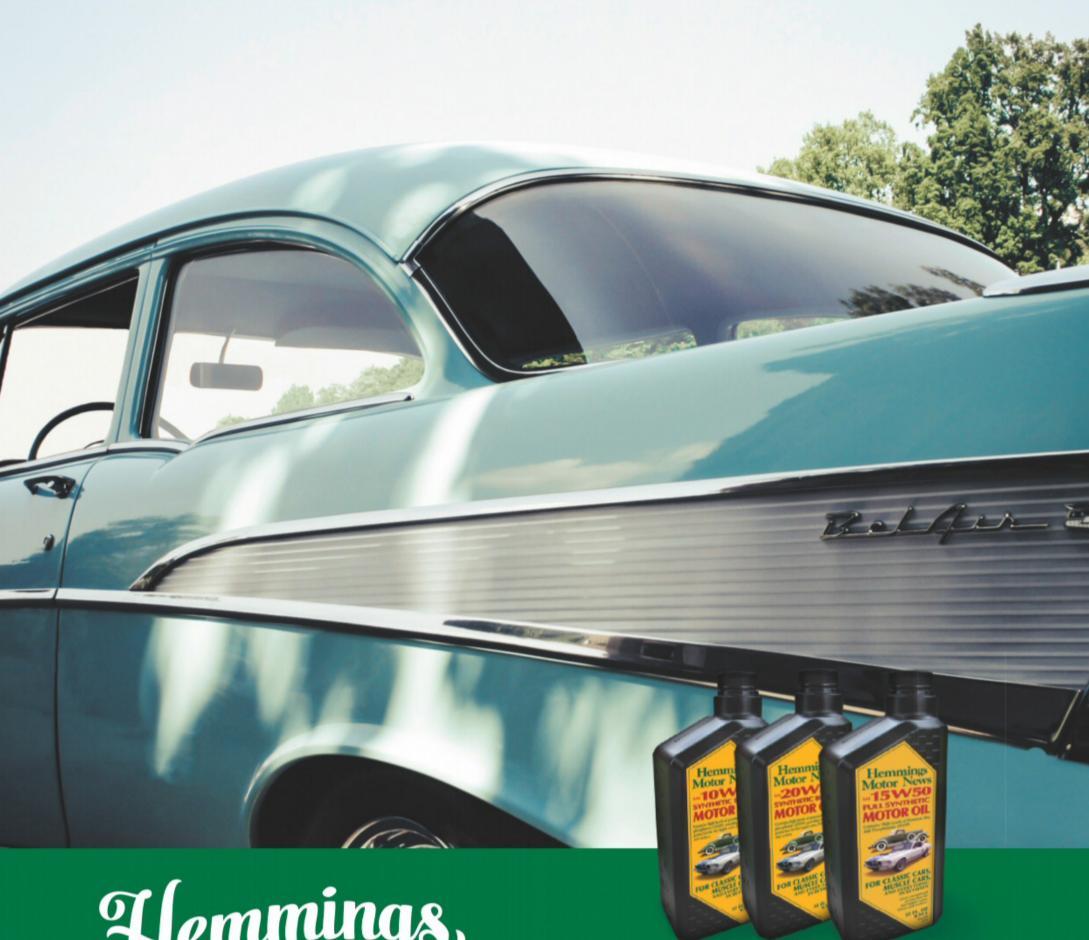
The Spirit of '76 (well, 1976 anyway) wasn't one of revolution; America had gotten much of that out of its system in the late '60s and early '70s. Social tumult was reflected in the machinery of the day. Detroit made hard cars for hard times in the late '60s: clenched fists in psychedelic-striped gloves, their drivers exhibiting devil-may-care attitudes about power and safety. Big engines, bright colors, strutting and strident and shouty, daring all comers to battle from light to light. As the '70s wore on, the government legislated all the fun out of cars. Big bumpers added weight and compromised style, unleaded gas helped clear our air but stifled compression ratios, and insurance rates on anything with more than 200 net horsepower were nigh on unaffordable. Following the dribbling ends of the Vietnam War and Watergate, the nation needed to collectively take a deep breath, decompress, and figure out what was next; we were simply tired of hurting. With 200 years of independence in the rearview mirror, the future — indeed the world was uncertain.

Cars continued to be our literal and figurative escape machines—but now time behind the wheel would cushion the outside world's blows, rather than amp up the high-revving



Oldsmobile's four-barrel 350 (the Rocket name was retired by then) was rated at 170 net horsepower for 1976, and could only be mated to a Turbo 350 automatic transmission. Air conditioning was an option. This 35,000-mile original is untouched save for hoses and fluids.

FOR CLASSIC CARS, MUSCLE CARS, AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN



Hemmings, Motor Oil

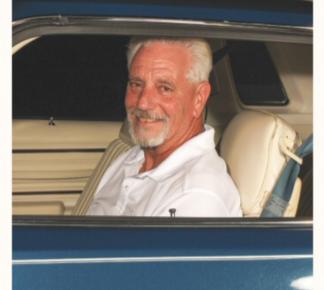
3 SAE Choices Available

SAE 10W30 Synthetic Blend \$53.95 (six pack)
SAE 20W50 Synthetic Blend \$53.95 (six pack)
SAE 15W50 Full Synthetic \$69.95 (six pack)
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rhetoric. Peaked fender tops and long hoods with spring-loaded ornaments pointed the way forward. Vinyl roof treatments reshaped rear quarter windows to prevent the outside from seeing in. Five-mph bumpers that could take vast quantities of abuse without the driver ever realizing, became mandatory. Interiors cosseted occupants in bunny-fur-soft throw-pillow seating, while triple-thickness sound deadener killed road noise so you could better hear your yacht-rock 8-tracks. Suspensions were softened to seemingly ride on teddy bears instead of springs. Stick shifts evaporated in favor of column-shift automatics. Power-assisted or -activated toys were suddenly everywhere — steering, brakes, windows, locks, seats, trunk—and everything was color-coordinated. The car became a mobile cocoon, a safe space with torque. Nothing from the outside could make its way in without a fight.

It's the sort of mood that Oldsmobile was well placed to take advantage of — wasn't about wasn't



I loved the blue paint
and white vinyl. And at
the price I was offered, I
wasn't about to let it go.

lic's attention. A Cutlass Supreme coupe greeted you on the opening spread of the '76 Olds brochure—a strong sign that it was the model that Olds was pushing for the year.

This Dark Blue Metallic example came well equipped from the Lansing factory. The big-money options were the \$476 air conditioning; the \$262 Turbo Hydra-Matic 350 automatic transmission that was mandatory with the \$195, 170-net-hp four-barrel Olds 350; the \$142 pushbutton AM/FM radio (plus another \$20 for a rear speaker); and the \$109 landau roof. The \$71 console mandated no-extra-charge bucket seats. Stir in everything from Soft-Ray tinted glass, tilt wheel, and rear window defogger to floor mats and a full brace of Convenience Group illumination, and the asking price was just under \$6,217—making nearly a third of this Cutlass' sticker price optional equipment.

This Cutlass was also equipped with the \$15 FE2 rally suspension package, which deserves special mention. Standard on 442 and Cutlass Salon, but available across the entire Cutlass line, FE2 included stiffer springs and shocks,

a stiffening insert inside the rear control arms, a 1-inch front anti-roll bar, a rear anti-roll bar, and mandatory 15 x 7-inch wheels (in our photo example's case, a set of Super Stock IIIs with body-colored centers for an additional \$89, and GR78-15 whitewall Uniroyal Tiger Paws for \$37). So really, FE2 was a \$141 option—about the same money as the radio. In lieu of



straight-line performance, a select few marques forwarded the notion that there was fun to be had hustling through the bends at speed—a driver would feel more connected to the road, even in a coupe that weighed about 2 tons with driver. With FE2, a keen mid-'70s owner could break out of the sensorydeprivation-tank mold and achieve respectable handling without resorting to something as obvious as, say, a Trans Am.

Jim's low-mileage delight was delivered new to Jon's Oldsmobile-Cadillac in Latrobe; its first owner took care of it for 18 years and lavished attention upon it. He ensured that it was always garaged and had never seen snow; the harsh, salted roads of a Pennsylvania winter; or industrial-induced, factory-adjacent acid rain; and drove it for a scant 24,000 miles in that dozen-and-a-half-year stretch. The spare tire was mounted new on a matching blue SSIII wheel, and has never been on the ground.

Recall that Jim told us, "while this isn't really what I was looking for, I wasn't about to pass it up." Things have changed today, but the "nothing-good-built-after-1972" brigade was out in full force in the '90s, so even clean cars built in the "wrong" era were undervalued. Today, new generations making their voices heard are balancing out these once-unimpeachable opinions: They crave the peace, simplicity and sheer acreage of a clean '70s machine like this one. Its originality, its doted-upon history, and the very idea that it's survived is what makes it special four-and-a-half decades on. A younger generation remembers riding around in the back seat of cars like this, and it becomes part of their nostalgia. Consider also: In its day, a 1976 Oldsmobile Cutlass Supreme two-door was not a particularly rare car. Forty-five years later, where did they go?





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Contrasting white seats and door panels stand out from an otherwise blue interior; they work well with the white landau top and white-stripe tires. Floor-shifted automatic and console required bucket seats, a no-cost option.





But in 1994, when Jim took possession, the Colonnade models weren't yet looked upon as collector cars, and as Jim mentioned previously, this Oldsmobile wasn't quite what he had pictured for himself. A combination of factors changed his mind and sealed the deal. "It had a four-barrel 350 and automatic," he says. "I loved the blue paint and white vinyl. And at the price I was offered, I wasn't about to let it go." Such are the joys of finding pampered cars for sale before they hit their collector-car sweet spot.

Since Jim's purchase, he has only freshened up the fluids, battery, belts, hoses, and tires. He's a little surprised that no one is reproducing a GR78-15 whitewall Uniroyal Tiger Paw to match the original in his trunk, but other than careful mainte-

nance and choosing when he's going to take it out to drive, Jim has left well enough alone. Jim has put barely 11,000 miles on it in the quarter-century-plus he's owned it and the odometer only recently turned to 35,000 miles.

"The original tires were shot, and I wasn't going to run it like that," he tells us. "Since I've owned it, I've gotten caught in the rain with it, but never in snow. These cars rusted from the inside out, and around here the bumpers were the first things to go. I've talked with people who run body shops, and they're shocked that the bumpers on my car weren't rusted out. That's what happens when you don't drive 'em in the snow."

And that winter sled? "I bought an old Jeep instead," Jim says. ••



Curious what our customers are saying?



1967 Chevrolet Corvair Monza Sport Coupe

"Just a quick note to say how delighted I am with the auction sale of my 1967 Corvair. Hemmings carefully guided me through the entire process and it was a pleasure dealing with them."

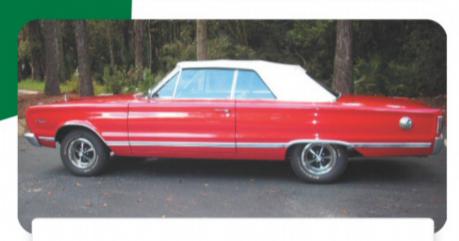
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1966 Ford Mustang Hardtop

"My 1966 Mustang was picked up last week and is on its way to California. Thanks for all of the help selling it. I am so glad Hemmings was recommended to me."

Sold for \$10,500



1967 Plymouth Satellite Convertible

"Thank you so much! The last hour of the auction took off. The buyer will be very happy with it--they're getting a nice car and I'm finally going to get my garage back!"

Sold for \$30,975



1937 Buick Limited Series 90

"I am very glad that I used Hemmings Auction to sell the car, and my dealings with the buyer were very positive. From my experience, the auction process eliminated a substantial amount of time that would have been required to deal with multiple interested parties via a regular sales process, and the auction platform provided me with a fair and headache free end result. All in all, I had a very good experience with Hemmings Auction process and resulting sale, and I would recommend same to other car sellers."

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REMINISCING

The Saga of a True Car Nut



IT ALL STARTED WHEN I WAS 13.

I built a soapbox-derby car and won the Charleston, West Virginia, race, but then wanted something with an engine. A homemade wooden go-kart, powered by a sideways-mounted Briggs and Stratton engine, nearly killed me when I flipped it over. But I wanted more. My father, who liked big, comfortable Chryslers and didn't know the difference between a connecting rod and a camshaft, thought I was crazy when we went to the town of Wolf Pen, just outside of Charleston, and bought a '62 Corvair for \$100. He let me pilot it home without a driver's license. The generator was held on by a coat hanger, and promptly fell on the floor as I pulled into the center of our two-car garage.

After buying a shop manual and parts from J.C. Whitney, I rebuilt the engine. I dropped both axles off the unit-body and fixed them. My dad would come into the garage, swear at me for tying up both stalls, and ask questions like, "Is that a crankshaft?" His Chrysler sat outside all winter.

About then, I decided I did not want a Corvair, and Dad hit the ceiling. The car was all apart, and I needed to put it back together. I wanted a dune buggy, so I found a fiberglass body, learned to weld a frame with some neighborly help, and made that Corvair into an extremely dangerous vehicle. It was too light, with too many horses. Finally, I got a driver's license.

I went on to a small men's college in Virginia, with the dune buggy. The side curtains and exposed engine did not fair well through the winter. I got in a lot of trouble driving it on the golf course at a nearby women's college. So I bought a Pinto, with that dreaded, poorly oiled overhead-cam engine. One Friday, on campus behind the frat house, I threw a big rope over a tree limb and pulled the engine out. I rebuilt it and had it back together by Sunday night. The dean of the college had me in his office Monday afternoon, saying I could not do mechanical work on campus. But then he smiled and asked, "Does it run?"

I finished college and opted for medical school next, as I liked science and wanted to practice orthopedics. When interviewing with an ortho program, the panel asked me what else I did. I explained that during medical school, I had taken apart and rebuilt a '47 Chrysler, outside, under a canopy, and that earned my acceptance. Slowly, the Windsor was moved into the spare bedroom during med school, and I restored each part as I went along. I worked on her for about an hour a day, and had her put back together

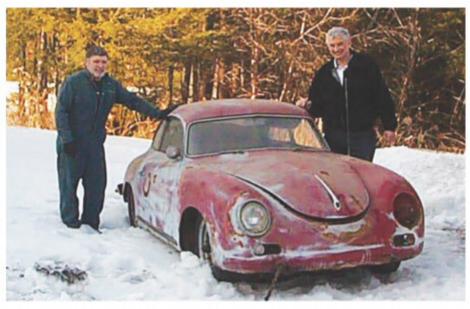
by the end of my second year. Working on Gertrude was a relief during studying, and I still have her.

That brings us to today. After having blood on my gloved hands for many years, I reverted (back) to grease. Through the years, I would buy an old car for several thousand dollars, fix it up, drive it, and then park it in one of several rented buildings. I'm retired now, and bought an old body shop, where I store the 50 or so cars I have collected over time.

All those cars are now slowly getting refreshed, and it's fun to see a '61 Lincoln Continental convertible running again. My '66 Chrysler 300 is now purring, as is a '62 Chevy Stepside pickup with a straightsix. Having rebuilt six or so engines in my life, I now farm that heavy work out, but still do brake jobs and change tires. My '55 Porsche 356 Continental is probably my pride and joy, as it has nearly all its original parts, and was purchased about 15 years ago, in milk crates, for \$4,000. The '67 Firebird 400 and '70 Volvo 1800E are nice, too. A '41 Dodge "doctor's coupe" is on the lift now.

So, you never know what life holds. I tell my wife that had I not gone to medical school, I would have been an auto mechanic. At 68 years old, I am now going back to school to get my safety inspection certification for Pennsylvania. Life is good.

I'm not Jay Leno, and most of my cars are much less valuable. But, being a motorhead and enjoying the cars I've worked on over my life has been a pleasure. My wife says I need to sell some. 🔊







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BY MATTHEW LITWIN AND TOM COMERRO

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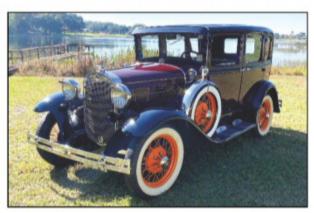
Mecum Auctions, Kissimmee Sale

Annual event rings in the new year with a \$122.8 million sale

MECUM AUCTIONS KICKED OFF ITS 2021 SEASON IN TRADITIONAL

fashion on January 7-16, when the Wisconsin-based company set up camp at the Osceola Heritage Park in Kissimmee, Florida. If you've not heard, this yearly gathering has become the largest collector-car auction in North America by regularly offering more than 3,500 vintage vehicles of all stripes, including a healthy smattering of contemporary performance cars, exotics, and boulevardsmooth cruisers for good measure. Despite the then-resurging COVID-19 conditions, Mecum's catalog maintained the staggering car count for both in-person attendees — who had to adhere to social-distancing mandates — and phone/online bidders.

Ongoing safety measures did little to deter bidder enthusiasm, as demonstrated by the sale of Carroll Shelby's personal 1965 427 Cobra that realized \$5.94 million (all listed results include a buyer's premium). A 1967 Chevrolet Corvette roadster, the first equipped with the L88 engine option, and a car that was campaigned by racer Tony DeLorenzo, landed second on the sales list having sold for \$2.5 million. Mecum's total take set an event record—\$122.8 million—much of which was comprised of five-figure results, such as the iconic Fords we present here. For a complete list of results from the Kissimmee sale, and an up-todate 2021 Mecum event calendar, visit mecum.com.



1930 FORD MODEL A DE LUXE

Reserve: Undisclosed Selling Price: \$28,600

Avg. Market Range: \$15,000-\$25,000

Featuring two-tone maroon-and-black paint along with a tan interior, this De Luxe sedan was said to have been part of the New Hampshire Village Antique and Classic Car Model A Collection, though for how long was unknown. The Ford had been restored, though, replete with a new radiator, a new cylinder head bolted to the 201-cu.in. four-cylinder engine, a new heat gauge, and a 6-volt alternator upgrade, probably in the name of driveability. A few accessories were present, such as dual sidemount spares, a clock mirror, dual exterior mirrors, and a trunk atop the rear luggage rack, while a full complement of whitewall tires adorned the steel-spoke wheels.



1966 FORD MUSTANG GT

Reserve: Undisclosed Selling Price: \$49,500

Avg. Market Range: \$43,000-\$53,000

Details relating to this 1966 Mustang GT were scant; the placard stated that a newer coat of Sunlight Yellow paint had been applied at an undisclosed date. Having traveled 98,641 miles at the time it was consigned, the fastback may have also received a new black vinyl interior. Of note was the fact that the Mustang had the A-code 225-hp 289-cu.in. smallblock V-8, which was accompanied by a standard three-speed manual transmission. All the GT equipment and trim seemed to be present, though the BFG radial tires stood out against a stocklooking refurbishment—not a bad choice if more driving is in its future.



1976 FORD BRONCO

Reserve: Undisclosed **Selling price:** \$63,250

Avg. Market Range: \$55,000-\$68,000

It's possible to corral unbelievable deals in the first day or two of a week-long sale... that is until something like this 1976 Bronco crosses the auction block. Touting a ground-up restoration, the off-road icon was listed with a 302-cu.in. engine, automatic transmission, and a new steel body over the original frame. There were a few goodies included, such as power front disc brakes, Vintage Air air conditioning, a suspension lift, modern wiring and fuse box, Holley Sniper fuel injection, tinted rear windows, and a new custom interior. The mix of new and old sent this to the top of the sales list at the conclusion of the event's first day of gavel action.

LEGEND

Reserve: Minimum price owner will accept **Selling Price:** What the vehicle sold for (including the buyer's premium) Average Market Range: Values coincide with current market trends for vehicles rated from condition #2- to #1, respectively



RM SOTHEBY'S SEASON OPENED WITH ITS 22ND ARIZONA EVENT, HELD AT THE OTTO CAR

Club in Scottsdale in January. The limited, by-appointment auction, saw total sales of more than \$35 million with 90 percent of the consignments changing hands. The top American prewar classic to sell was this 1932 Cadillac V-16 convertible coupe by Fisher. This Cadillac, thought to be one of 14 made and only four remaining, still wore its original stainless-steel wire wheels, single rear-mounted spare, and Heron radiator mascot. It appeared in the "American Classic 16 Cylinder 1930-1937" class at Pebble Beach in 1995, winning best in class. It also received the Claude Nolan Cadillac Award for Most Elegant Cadillac at Amelia Island in 2018. The rare and stunning V-16 Caddy sold for an impressive \$1,022,500. Another Full Classic to sell was a 1933 Packard Twelve Individual Custom Convertible Sedan by Dietrich. It is believed to be only one of two completely numbers-matching examples remaining. The distinctive "Vee-windshield Dietrich" Packard brought in \$819,000. Full results from the Scottsdale sale are now available at rmsothebys.com.

Up Next

A QUIET MONTH IS IN STORE WITH ALL OF THE UNCERTAINTY AROUND THE COVID-19

pandemic. The delay of the Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance pushes back the Bonhams and RM Sotheby's auctions. It is possible Gooding & Company will move its online auction back to May to coincide with the event, but there has been no declaration as of press time.

Mecum will continue with its annual Indianapolis auction on May 14-22. It's expected that 2,500 cars will cross the block. Last year's event was pushed pack to July, but it still raked in more than \$74 million in total sales with a 78-percent sell-through. The top prewar sale was a 1911 Pierce Four motorcycle that brought \$220,000, and the top car to sell was a 1939 Packard Super Eight Derham, which raked in \$165,000.

MAY

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Please note that these events are active as of press time despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. We recommend you verify the status before making plans to attend.

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AS TIME ROLLS ON, THE CARS AND TRUCKS WE FIND OURSELVES MOST

drawn to — perhaps those that populated the roads when we were impressionable children, or those we aspired to when we came of driving age — get older along with us. There's a group of vehicles that have, for more than 70 years, fallen into a single classification, though, and they are the ones built before World War II. Despite the model-year constraints imposed by that common vehicle categorization, the breadth those vehicles represent is huge and fascinating, and they remain a perennial bright spot in the collector-car marketplace.

"The term 'classic car' means a lot of different things to the people who read this magazine," according to Auctions Edition Terry Shea, "but just about everyone can agree that prewar cars qualify for that moniker. In a category that has long been popular with the Hemmings Nation and which Hemmings Motor News was founded to serve, prewar cars continue to not only catch our attention, but that of bidders on Hemmings Auctions. There are plenty of options for collectors, with prewar cars at many price points. Tastes change, but even as newer cars are considered 'classics,' there still seems to be plenty of attraction for prewar cars on Hemmings Auctions."

Below are highlights of some pre-WWII vehicles that recently crossed the block. Alternately, if your tastes run more modern, you may appreciate the 1968 AMC AMX that brought \$88,200, the 1971 Jaguar E-type Series 3 2+2 that sold for \$51,975, the 1979 Lincoln Town Car that received a record 62 bids before hammering for \$17,220, or the V-12-powered 1995 Mercedes-Benz SL 600 that found a new home for \$33,600.



1937 LINCOLN MODEL K

Reserve: \$70,000 **Recent Market Range:** Selling Price: \$84,000 \$127,520-\$185,450

Model K Lincolns were among the crème de la crème of the prestige market, sharing the highest esteem with Cadillacs, Packards, and more. Some examples received custom coachwork that increased their exclusivity, like this restored, one-of-12 LeBaron convertible sedan with a divider window. The 414-cu.in. flathead V-12 under its hood was said to run well and enjoyed regular servicing, while the coachwork presented beautifully, in kind with the exquisitely finished interior. Proceeds from this Lincoln's auction went to the Cruise 4 Kids charity, and eager bidders dug deep to get a fine car for a good cause.



1939 BUICK CENTURY

Reserve: \$35,000 **Recent Market Range:** Selling Price: \$33,600 \$33,550-\$51,350

Buick's styling of its "banker's hot rod" Century for 1939 was masterful, and this model year has long been a favorite of prewar fine-car fans. It was a treat to have this example of the glamorous convertible coupe cross the virtual block. The exterior presented well despite minor use-related flaws; while its heater was claimed non-operational, the maroon convertible top and matching reupholstered interior looked very nice. The OHV 320.2-cu.in. straight-eight was a newer, more powerful version from a 1948 Roadmaster. This car sold as a premium classified, with a final offer \$5,000 more than the highest bid.

LEGEND

Reserve: Minimum price owner will accept **Selling Price*:** What the vehicle sold for, inclusive of buyer's 5-percent fee (*sold as a Premium Classified following the live auction)

Recent Market Range: The low-to-high value range for the vehicle based on published results of similar vehicles sold at auction over the previous 18 months

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1928 FORD MODEL AA

Reserve: \$30,000 Selling Price: \$45,150 **Recent Market Range:** \$32,140-\$47,260

A rare surviving example of a hard-working fire apparatus, this first-year Ford AA was converted to a Type R light pumper by Ohio's Prospect Fire Engine Company in period, and sold through Hemmings Motor News in 2016. Fully restored to a high standard of factory stock, the truck was said to run well with no leaks, and came well equipped with hoses, ladders, a vintage copper and brass fire extinguisher, sirens, and more. A video showed the engine running while photography included undercarriage details, and the seller responded to numerous questions. It took an impressive 48 bids to send this fire Ford to its next appreciative owner.



1937 BUICK 46C SPECIAL

Reserve: \$10,500 Selling Price: \$21,525 **Recent Market Range:** \$9,520-\$14,550

The business coupe is a body type very much of the prewar era, and few were as imposingly handsome as the Streamline Moderne-styled 1937 Buick Special. This refurbished example sported a rebuilt 248-cu.in. straight-eight with minor fluid leaks, operated from a retrimmed cabin. The black paint showed years of wear, leading to questions of the date of its application, and some corrosion could be found under the running boards and chassis. Tires, estimated at 30 years old, required replacement for safety's sake. This Buick more than doubled its reserve, making a great day for the seller and a thrilling win for the buyer.

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Introduced

for 1948, the

step-down

Hudson was

one of those

landmark

The Low-Down on the Step-Down

t's a memory from my childhood: My mother talking about one of her brothers and mentioning the make of car he owned as a way to explain his personality. "He drove," she said, "a low-down Hudson." It was said with a wry smile because she realized she was murdering the car's real nickname: the step-down.

I first read about the step-down Hudsons in the pages of our predecessor magazine, Special Interest Autos. A feature article explained how radical an idea Hudson had, to in essence weld the car's floor panel to the underside of the frame rails, rather than the top. Doing so allowed the roofline of the car to be lowered significantly without

losing headroom. It also meant you actually stepped down into the car upon entering, thus the step-down nickname. It was a completely new experience for people.

Introduced for 1948, the step-down Hudson was one of those landmark cars that, over a period of time, changed the way cars were designed and built. By 1964, only Studebaker lacked the feature, and that was because its cars were still based on what was essentially 1953 tooling.

If all the step-down achieved was a lower roofline, that alone would have been enough, because it gave the car a more modern appearance while also reducing wind noise and resistance. But the really big benefit was in the handling department. Simply put, the step-down Hudsons outhandled every other full-size American sedan by a significant margin. Road testers of the day noticed it immediately and heaped praise on the new line, which for 1948 consisted of the Super Six, Commodore Six, Super Eight, and Commodore Eight.

Production of new Hudson cars climbed with the introduction of the new step-downs; people really liked them. The company had built about 95,000 cars for 1947, but in 1949, the second year of the step-down, it produced 159,100 Hudsons. And these were fairly expensive, upper-medium-priced cars.

But the growing postwar competition caused Hudson model-year production to drop in 1950, despite the addition of a lower-priced series called the Pacemaker. To try to counter the downward

trend, Hudson decided to introduce a highperformance model for 1951. Dubbed the Hornet, it carried a lot of sting in its new 308-cu.in. inline sixcylinder engine. Pumping out 145 hp at 3,800 rpm and a whopping 275 lb-ft of torque at 1,800 rpm, it made more horsepower than even the Hudson straight-eight or Oldsmobile V-8. The L-head

(flathead) Hudson 308 was a very potent engine for its time.

Early on, stock car driver Marshall Teague realized the step-down's potential and began racing them. Needing a source for some parts, he turned to Hudson for help and ended up getting cars to race, as well as parts support, because of his wins. Teague is generally considered

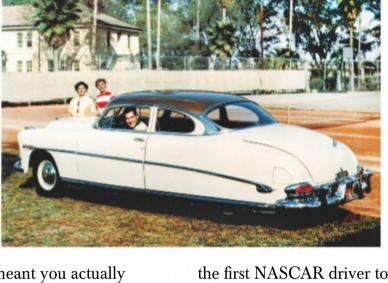
the first NASCAR driver to receive factory backing.

Teague and other racers brought Hudson's name to the forefront of NASCAR racing. From 1951 to 1954, the Hudson Hornet was the car to beat. A late start in 1951 gave Hudson just third place in the standings, but in the 1952 and 1953 seasons Hudson was nearly unbeatable, coming in first in 27 out of 34 NASCAR Grand National races during that period. In 1954, competition became a lot tougher, but Hudson managed to win a good share of the races.

Hudson expert Jack Miller once explained to me that it wasn't the engine that made the most difference. He said in some races the Oldsmobiles would pull ahead of the Hornets on the straights, only to fall behind in the corners. Hudsons could take the corners and hang onto them better than other cars. It's an excellent point because after all, by 1952 the Oldsmobile V-8 was offered in 145-hp and 160-hp versions, and the 1953 Olds models offered 150-170 hp. So the real difference was the step-down's advanced design.

Not that Hudson sat on its hands. For 1953, it offered three versions of the 308 six: 145, 160, and 170 hp in the limited-build 7X engine. But that seems to have been about the limit for its beloved flathead-six.

Sadly, when Hudson switched to the big Nash body shell for 1955, it marked the end of Hudson's handling advantage—and its domination of NASCAR racing. That's too bad, but the legend will always live on. 🔊



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