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OCTOBER 2023 #229

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On the Cover: Contributor Scotty Lachenauer captured this 1959 Alfa Romeo 2000 Spider in the picturesque Berkshire Mountains of Massachusetts.

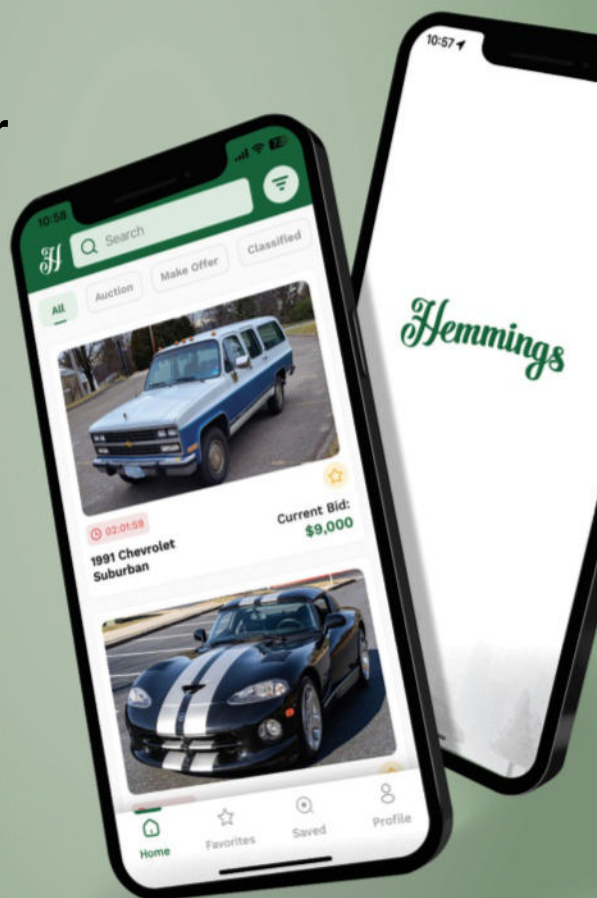


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Let's Go



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"The new four-door Olds was smaller than the old two-door LTD, the result of down-sizing throughout Detroit."

IT FINALLY happened. After 31 years, I relented and purchased a new vehicle, only the second such acquisition since obtaining my driver's license. Considering my dad's monumental track record of purchase-trade-purchase ownership, my record is, well, paltry. I'm unsure if that's because of my decades-long effort to squeeze every ounce of value out of a succession of hand-me-downs, or my unwillingness to part with hard-earned cash due to other necessities, such as home mortgage, repairs, and remodeling. Perhaps, it's a combination—it's not like I've never had a hankerin' for new wheels over the years.

Back in 1992, when I was the ripe age of 20-something and flush with first-full-time job cash, I was persuaded to put my beloved Datsun Maxima behind me (a car my dad had purchased new in 1983) and check out the latest offerings from Nissan. Admittedly, I was casting an eye towards Pontiac, which offered what I felt was a nicely styled Grand Prix. Then again, my dad's Nissan 300ZX had all the sports car flair I desired, too.

Like other 20-somethings, I learned that while I could afford the monthly payments to obtain a sports car, the insurance costs were exceedingly prohibitive. "Plan B" was a new Maxima—my old steed never failed me—but another cost conundrum hit: I could afford the insurance, but not the car payment. That's when the patient salesman suggested I consider a Stanza. It was the same size as my outgoing ride, had a five-speed manual and all the latest safety features, and I could afford both the payment and the insurance. Lucky me: The dealership was practically giving away the leftover '92 models; it was October, and the lot was full of new '93s. Rather than go through the joy of placing an order to pacify my taste for options, I grabbed a blue-on-blue edition with 12 miles on the odometer.

Interestingly, the inability to run my eyes over the option sheet didn't faze me. Thanks to my dad, I had "been there, done that" too many times to count. Some instances were rather memorable, such as the time he quickly tired of the 1976 Ford LTD that occupied a garage bay. Within two years, the 44 acres of dark-red paint slathered across the two-door, offset by a white-vinyl landau top, had worn out its welcome. There was nothing wrong with the car, save for the fact that with two boys in

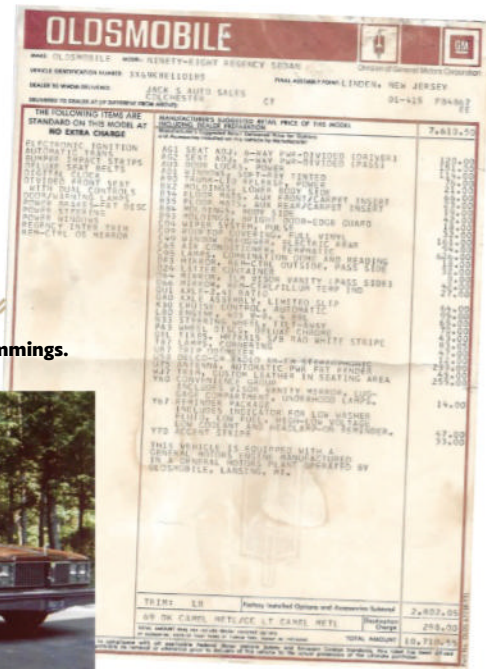


the household perhaps it was time to upgrade to a four-door sedan.

Call it kismet. One of my dad's coworkers, who was head-over-heels in love with the LTD, made a timely offer just as my parents sauntered into Jack's Chevrolet & Oldsmobile—then located in Colchester, Connecticut—to negotiate the special order of a 1978 Ninety-Eight Regency sedan. By the end of the session, the sedan's order was in; the car was bursting with \$2,802 worth of options (or roughly \$13,070 in today's currency) and all wrapped in Light Camel metallic paint with a full vinyl top and accent stripe.

Interesting to me then was that the new four-door Olds was smaller than the old two-door LTD, the result of downsizing throughout Detroit. While some GM divisions' efforts were met with a bit of skepticism, Olds was still setting sales records practically daily. All this was done in the name of fuel-economy concerns, something my dad knew well as his commute that consumed two hours of daylight. It was no wonder he waited in line to put his name on the very long list for a fuel-sipping 1977 Honda Accord. As each new example was offloaded from the carrier, the dealership would go down the list. It didn't matter if you wanted it in silver with a gray interior, radio, and an automatic...you took brown over tan with no tunes and a manual. When my dad got the call over dinner, we dropped forks and scooted to the dealer before our Honda was offered to the next in line. We got lucky: blue over blue with a manual and a radio.

That "as delivered" moment came rushing back to me when the local dealership called to say that five trucks had just been delivered; only one was not yet purchased. Asking if I wanted it, the salesman casually mentioned it would be at least another two months before a fresh delivery of vehicles arrived. Suffice it to say I dropped my fork and knife, looked at my family, and said the same words my dad did decades prior: "Let's go." Some say times have changed, but I beg to differ. 🚗





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Hemmings' 1932 Ford Model B

Parked 25 years ago, this former farm truck was last registered in 1962, and we intend to drive it

BY DOUGLAS GLAD
PHOTOGRAPHY BY HEMMINGS STAFF

HEMMINGS GARAGE – formerly known as the Hemmings Vehicle Display to visitors – has been a bevy of activity since the *Hemmings Classic Car* team revived our long-dormant 1940 Buick Century, part two of which appears on pages 56 to 62 of this issue. Expansion of our workspace has permitted us to tackle multiple projects simultaneously, including our 1932 Ford Model B pickup truck, parked 25 years ago.

Ford folks know that in March of 1932, the Model 18 was introduced with 221-inch V-8 that made 65 hp. The V-8 equipped Fords became known simply as Deuces, '32s, or Ford V-8s. That same year, the Model B was also introduced

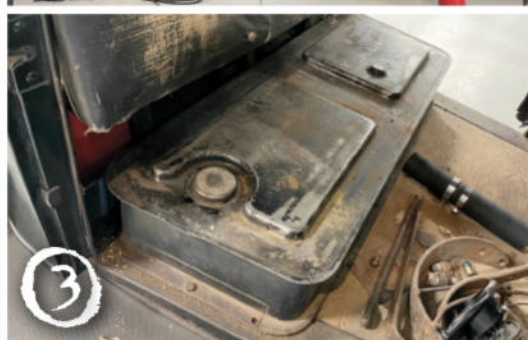
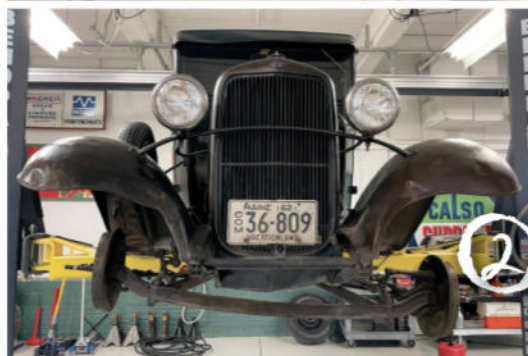
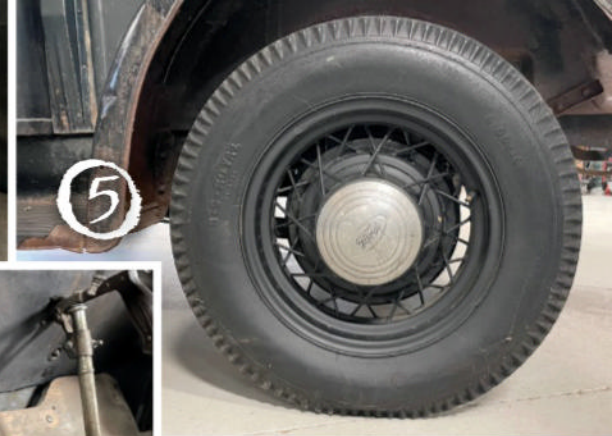
with the 200-cu.in. four-cylinder that made 50 hp. Both the B and the Deuce shared the same basic body, front and rear transverse leaf-spring suspension, and four-wheel mechanical brakes.

Our '32 has long been considered a survivor as it appears to have its original drivetrain, interior, paint, and plenty of dents and scratches accumulated on the farm it came from. Our records indicate it was donated to Hemmings in the 1990s and pushed into a corner. The inspection sticker and the plates suggest it last saw the road in 1961 or '62, begging the question, will it run? The battery was missing, and no one here had



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What's Inside:

1. Our Shop Foreman Junior Nevison found that the brake linkage was frozen, and the grease was "concrete." After lubing the parts, the brakes are relatively safe.
2. The I-beam axle was bent and the cross-member was broken into six pieces. This nearly stalled the project within hours of starting.
3. The stock fuel tank was full of rust, so we bypassed it for our initial test-fire with a gas can and added a temporary fuel filter and fuel line.
4. Junior also found that the kingpins, radiator, and fuel pump needed to be rebuilt.
5. As was the case with nearly all our vehicles, the intent with the Model B is to drive it. The tires will be replaced before the odometer registers another mile.

ever heard it start. We decided it was the perfect vehicle for several episodes of *Hemmings Garage presented by POR-15*.

GETTING THE 1932 FORD MODEL B TRUCK RUNNING

The upside to only having 4.6:1 compression is that the engine turns over easily. While grabbing the belt, we spun it through the four strokes and didn't hear anything scary. We removed the distributor cap and turned the engine over to check for spark—after we found a set of reversed wires behind the ignition switch, we had it. With fuel (refer caption 3), compression, and spark,

the engine started and ran for about 30 seconds before we noticed several issues. An inspection of the cylinder head revealed an entire quench area was missing. The damage explained why there were exhaust fumes in the radiator and water in the cylinders. Despite this, the engine ran and idled, prompting us to continue moving forward with our plans.

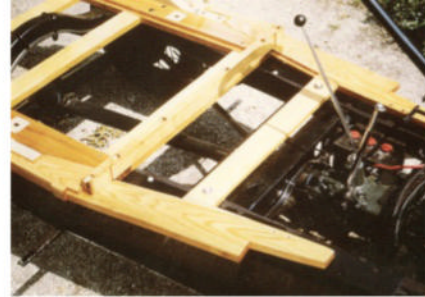
Since then, a considerable amount of work has been completed, all of which can be seen via our Hemmings YouTube channel ([hemmingsmotornews](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmHmHmHmHmHmHmHmHmHmHmH)). As of this writing, we're pleased to announce the Model B is being prepared for its first journey in six decades. 🚚



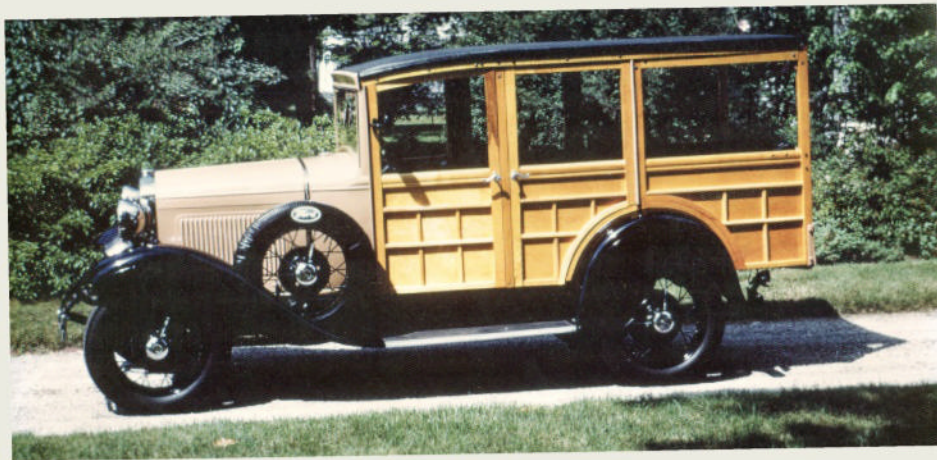
Reminiscing

Value of the Old Car Hobby

RICK MacCORNACK
TACOMA, WASHINGTON



Time, patience, and attention to detail were instrumental in correctly restoring the Ford Model A, including the sourcing of Ford-correct wood.



door handles that were unique to wagons, the correct wood used by the original builders, the middle and back seat parts that were missing, and numerous rubber and metal items unique to the woody and to the model year. Because of that, I learned that nearly every problem can be solved with time and persistence. What you don't know you can learn, and you can learn it from people who may not have anything else in common with you except an interest in the task at hand. I also learned something about patience, which is not an easy lesson when you are 17.

With long hours on weeknights and weekends—while trying to keep things afloat at school and with a girlfriend in the mix—the whole project finally came together in late July 1965. My sister was getting married in August, so it was natural for the Model A to be used to drive the newlyweds away after the reception. It was a perfect moment that provided a unique memory for everyone.

That same month, the telephone rang just before midnight. I was surprised when the caller turned out to be Fred Page's sidekick, Woody, who was down on Long Island scouring the countryside for Model A parts. He had gotten wind of the tons of parts I had gathered while restoring the wagon. Woody was intent on coming over to check out the stash early the next morning, and he showed up in a very tired 1940's dually stake body that was already piled high with parts. Old-time New Hampshire folks are masters of the poker face, and they can be shrewd bargainers.

I took him out to the shed and after watching him ponder the parts with no expression, I admitted that I also had a woody wagon in the garage that he might like to see. When I opened the garage door, I heard a barely audible "Jeezum crow!" I could feel his suppressed excitement. Then he said flatly, "I need to talk to my boss, and I'll get back to you on the parts."

He took off for New Hampshire and evidently drove straight through to Haverhill—12 hours in those days in a truck like his. About 11:30 that night I

IN LATE 1962 I turned 16 and was already on my eighth contemporary car rebuild. It was also the year I started a subscription to *Hemmings Motor News*, which fueled my antique car interests, particularly a desire to find and restore a Ford Model A. After weeks of unsuccessfully searching the length of Long Island—where I lived at the time—I was heading home and something behind a garage caught my eye. It was a 1931 Model A woody wagon. All the wood was intact but also full of dry rot. The metal bodywork was dented but rust-free and easily restorable. So, too, was the stainless hardware, nearly all of which was with the Ford. The mechanical systems were in crates. I talked to the owner, who told me he purchased the car and had planned to convert it into a beach buggy to use on Fire Island. Fortunately, he was in the mood to sell, so we negotiated a price of \$70, or \$565 in today's money.

One of my former junior high school teachers was an old Ford enthusiast, so I called him to see if he might be interested in going in on the car's restoration as a joint venture. I wanted his guidance and experience in rebuilding the Model A. He was interested, so we set out in his mint 1948 Cadillac to haul the woody wagon home. My plan was to borrow my parents' garage and use most of my college savings to restore the Ford. I had about 24 months to make good on the plan, including selling the car when it was done.

The project was an incredible experience that allowed me to develop ac-

quaintances with car hobbyists across the country and in South America. Our search for parts through *Hemmings* evolved into a wide network of Model A enthusiasts who helped guide our restoration. My project partner led the work in rebuilding the drivetrain, and I took on the responsibility of managing the metal and woodwork, painting, getting the plating and upholstery done, and doing the finish work and assembly. We had some help, though. A friend who was a cabinetmaker created the difficult curved tongue-and-groove wood pieces. An incredibly skilled 80-year-old German bodyman straightened out deep fender dents with a hammer and dolly, and the fender beads were laser straight when he was finished. Not an ounce of lead or plastic was used anywhere.

One of the people who became part of my Model A network was an interesting fellow named Fred Page. Fred ran a business in Haverhill, New Hampshire, called Page's Model A. I had known about Fred as a young kid because his garage was 30 miles from my grandparents' house in Franconia. He began grabbing up old Ford cars and parts in the late 1940s and stored them in barns around the countryside. His hobby provided a livelihood for several young men in the area over the years. One of them was Herb Griffin (*HCC*, October 2004) who started his career in the prewar Ford restoration business at Page's.

Restoring a Model A woody in 1964 was inefficient, simply because not too many of them had been restored correctly. I spent countless hours locating original



got another call, this time from Fred Page. I was nervous, knowing that Fred was a seasoned, tough negotiator. For him, this was just another business deal. The market for a well-restored woody in 1965 was still soft, so Fred was in a good negotiating position. I also knew that he was aware I was going to college in a few days and probably assumed my parents didn't want the Ford lingering. We ended up with a deal after many long, uncomfortable silences. He got five tons of parts thrown in with my Model A, and my partner and I made an acceptable profit. It took Woody and another guy half a day to load everything.

Two years later I worked at Page's Model A during the summer. For three months I learned a lot about listening, educating customers, and the fundamentals of running a business, in addition

to just about everything prewar Ford. I worked seven days a week and we started each day with Fred telling us stories over donuts and coffee about his favorite customers, many from New York. One was a fellow named Pepper, a name memorable enough that it stuck in my head.

I again worked for Fred during the summer of 1969, helping to build a customer base at the Haverhill garage before I went to teach school. My woody had finally sold—at a handsome price—to a fellow who lived outside Chicago.

During the 1970s I was in graduate school in New York City, supporting myself with odd jobs and research assistantships. Although my teenage obsession now seemed like another lifetime, my past kept creeping into my new life without effort. I became good friends with an older woman who took some of the same classes I did. She was married to a guy named Pepper. One day I was invited over to their house and the conversation got around to some of Pepper's interests outside his work as a corporate attorney. The name Fred Page came up, the dots quickly snapped into line, and a story unfolded.

It was through this friendship that I began knitting together the connections between my teenage obsession and my emerging adult life. It slowly dawned on me that the old car hobby had been a vehicle for defining who I was and how I would develop, no matter what I ended up doing. I had learned to appreciate the hard work it took to run a successful business, as well as project management. I also learned that gearheads from all over the world with tremendously varied abilities, interests, beliefs, and values could easily connect through their interest in preserving functional, industrial art—even improving on it through experimentation and learning. Also, the value of “community” fostered by common interests, and the importance of passion, hard work, persistence, learning from mistakes, solving hard problems, and believing in the ability to achieve a goal without prior evidence of success. These were the important life lessons I was slow to realize earlier. Looking back, I am indebted to the dozens of old car enthusiasts who took an interest in our project and encouraged me to push for things I thought might be unattainable. 🚗



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I AM A SUBSCRIBER to *Hemmings Motor News*. When I saw that *Hemmings Classic Car* was going to have a feature on the Lotus Elan Sprint, I had to buy a copy. It was the first time that I bought the magazine. The Lotus Elan Sprint is one of my favorite cars. I came close to buying one several times but never pulled the trigger. I appreciate all the work completed by Larry Carbonetti. This was the same Lotus that was at the Hemmings Cruise-In. Mark McCourt wrote an excellent article detailing the restoration process. The article described all the phases of restoration, and the pictures displayed the complete restoration. The article did not disappoint. As a result, I plan on buying *Hemmings Classic Car* in the future. Please continue your foreign and exotic classic car coverage.

PAUL PELLERIN

Avon, Connecticut

I AGREE WHOLEHEARTEDLY that the Sixties Corvette Jim Richardson talks about (May 2023) is only good for a museum. I too love over-restored cars, but I also like restomods — although without blowers through the hood, please — and lowering the car with airbags is great, but not flat on the ground making it undriveable. Also, in all cases except museum pieces, seatbelts, dual master cylinder brakes, and radial tires should be mandatory. Making the cars safer should be rewarded, not punished. Jim does a great job and I love his articles. My so-called classic is a 1950 Packard Club Sedan with modern front suspension and a 460-cu.in. Ford engine, C6 transmission, 9-inch Ford differential, and a tasteful rake. I love it and many others do too, but I love cars, especially old ones, in general. Love your magazine.

AL MUMM

Waterloo, Nebraska

WHEN I RECEIVE MY NEW *HCC* issue, and after reading Matthew Litwin's column that usually prefaces its contents, I turn to the last page to read what's on Jim Richardson's mind. In the May issue he considered what constitutes a proper restoration. At the end of the article, he asked for opinions. Most people tell me to mind my own business, so I will take this opportunity to express how I feel.

My car buddies and I have reached the point where we go to cruises and enjoy the labors of other car guys. But, the eternal question rises every time: If a car was available, if it was affordable, if you could still wrench without pain, how would you restore the car?

Some time ago, I purchased a year's subscription to *HCC* for one buddy who had relocated to Connecticut when he got married. He's hooked now and also appreciates Jim's columns. He, and all my other car chums, said they would upgrade the brakes, suspension, and other parts that have improved over the years so the cars would be safer and keep up with modern traffic. I retorted that we all drove these vehicles with confidence when they were in their prime and didn't give it much concern. I prefer to remember the driving experience. Besides, I wouldn't be taking a vintage car out onto the interstate. I have a modern vehicle for that purpose. I would rather cruise city streets and back roads to get my enjoyment from a vintage car.

I started giving that some thought, though. I never left one of my cars the way I bought it. I added, customized, or replaced body parts, mechanical hardware, and audio equipment — whatever I liked. So, I've changed my mind. When you buy a car, it's yours. You should make it what you

want. Thanks for the memories, Jim. Keep them coming.

TOM REINHEIMER

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

I ENJOYED AND AGREED with Jim Richardson's thoughts on automotive restoration in the May issue. Viewing meticulously restored vehicles is interesting and fun, but a car or truck that the owner uses regularly, maintains, and keeps clean and looking good is my favorite to admire and own. Many years ago, I worked at an Esso station and had my 1968 Pontiac Firebird 400 on a lift, ensuring all was mechanically sound and clean. A customer wandered in and for several minutes was looking at the Pontiac's undercarriage. He then looked at me and gave me a compliment I remember to this day: "Son, the bottom of your car is cleaner than the top of mine."

He smiled and walked away. The feeling of accomplishment and pride I felt has never diminished. That gentleman, who was and remains unknown to me, most likely contributed to my above-stated preference.

MARK PORCARO

Palmer, Pennsylvania

I JUST FINISHED READING the Restoration Profile of the 1951 Studebaker convertible in the June issue. It reminded me of the photo I have (above) of four girls celebrating their selection to the academic American Legion Auxiliary CA Girls State. On their entry to their high school senior year, they are invited to a special civics session of state legislation, thus the upscale clothes that they were wearing as they surrounded a new 1950 Studebaker convertible. I had to look closely at the trunk handle shape and the white '50 license tab to

recognize the '50 vintage. The sweetheart on the left became my wife a couple of years later. Gosh...that was 73 years ago. I'm sure those girls outlasted that convertible...but that fine article by David Conwill showed other possibilities.

CHUCK HONODEL

Brentwood, California

THE JUNE ISSUE WAS GREAT, as usual. My only comment is for Jim Richardson. I enjoyed his column, as it relates so well to my own experiences. I was born in 1935, and I've been interested in cars since '41. In about 1949, I partnered with a neighbor to buy a '29 Chevy truck to play with. I learned a lot about adjusting bearings and overhead valves, besides having to figure out how to make an updraft carburetor work correctly. This led to lots of adventures and more than 70 cars and trucks since then. I am appalled that some people don't know how to shift gears. I first learned how during the double-clutch era, which trains your brain, and you never forget. When I bought a 1938 Buick in '98, I automatically double clutched as I had not owned a prewar car for some time. We did engine swaps and lots of other things, and I still appreciate the simplicity of cars prior to the electronic revolution. Yes, modern cars last longer, and usually with fewer problems, but a good number of them are not repairable. I used to do it all, and that left lots of wonderful memories.

PAT JACOBS

Redmond, Washington



I REALLY ENJOY YOUR NEW format with lots of restoration and technical articles. I will never restore an older car, as those days are long gone for me, but I love reading about what others are doing and musing about restoring a vintage XK-series Jaguar or T-series MG—until my wife brings me back to reality!

Shortly after reading your June issue I visited the Gasoline Alley Museum in Calgary's Heritage Park

and was delighted to find a Cord L-29 among its many exhibits (above). Almost 90 percent of the exhibit of antique cars, trucks, and gas pumps was donated by Ron Carey, the founder of oilfield supply company J&L Supply. (Unfortunately a texting truck driver ran into the back of Ron's car a few years ago while he was competing in the London-to-Brighton rally and killed Ron and seriously injured his wife.)

Even though my era is the '50s and '60s, and most of the cars and trucks in the collection are from the Teens, '20s, and '30s, I would love to have this magnificent Cord in my collection, as well as the V-12 Auburn parked beside it. If any fellow readers are ever in Calgary, I recommend going to Heritage Park and you will easily spend half a day in the Gasoline Alley Museum.

MARCIS ESMITS

Calgary, Alberta, Canada

HERE IS SOME INFORMATION

for you regarding Tom Comerro's "Lost & Found" story in the June issue, as it caught my eye because of the mention of Van Wert, Ohio. My mom grew up in Van Wert; it's a small farming community in northwestern region of the state. I still have tons of relatives who live in the county, so I called my Uncle Kenny, who is closing in on 90 years old. He had heard of Eisenhower but had

no details about the trucks.

I learned that Eisenhower Manufacturing is in business today (eisenhauermfg.com). They are a metal stamping company that provides for electrical and automotive applications. I talked with Allen Rager, the company controller, and he sent me a link to an article from *The Drive* that has a fairly detailed analysis of the Eisenhower trucks (thedrive.com/news/42635/this-twin-engine-six-wheel-steer-truck-was-supposed-to-replace-semis-after-wwii). In the final analysis it seems no one knows what happened to the remains of any of these trucks. Kind of sad. All the best to you and team Hemmings.

GREG DAVIS

via email



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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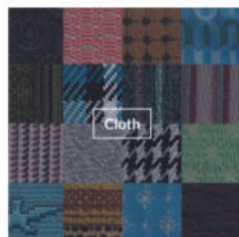
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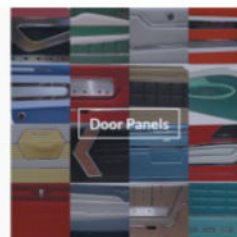
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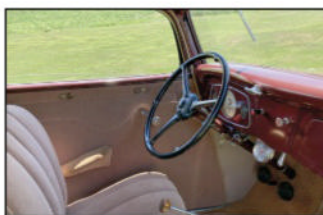
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1933 FORD DE LUXE



Even the most practical and common body type Ford offered for 1933 was beautifully styled in the popular Streamline Moderne vein. This upmarket, De Luxe-trimmed Tudor Sedan owed its attractive presentation to a “first class” body-off restoration that included the use of a rebuilt, 1940-vintage 85-hp 221-cu.in. V-8 mated to a three-speed manual. The accommodating coachwork was repainted in 2010 and no flaws were reported; the grille, bumpers, and other chrome looked nice. A LeBaron Bonney interior kit was fitted and called “excellent.” This Ford’s undercarriage was virtually spotless. Its Make Offer sale figure at the bottom of this model’s market range represented a genuine bargain.

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1963 CHEVROLET CORVAIR MONZA SPYDER



Automotive turbocharging was in its infancy in the 1960s for regular production cars, and Chevrolet’s unorthodox Corvair was a pioneer. This 1963 Monza two-door was optioned with the 150 hp turbocharged, air-cooled flat-six that brought the Spyder designation. Its seller promised to have completed a refurbishment to custom specifications, having rebuilt the engine with numerous performance enhancements. The chassis was similarly upgraded with a front anti-roll bar and 16-inch alloy wheels wrapped in sticky tires. All body rust was removed before the car was repainted, and the interior received an after-market steering wheel and old-look modern stereo. This Corvair more than doubled its reserve.

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Scintillating Second Spider

A 1959 Alfa Romeo 2000 rekindles memories of a family's past

What's the default image of an Alfa Romeo for an enthusiast of automotive history? Perhaps it's Tazio Nuvolari doggedly assaulting the Mille Miglia course while team manager Enzo Ferrari fumes impatiently in the pits. Or it's a Tipo 33 scissoring up the Little Madonie circuit around Sicily during the tortures of the Targa Florio. It could be a beautifully turned out GTV, or even the Stelvio in your driveway.

Rarely, however, does an Alfa Romeo memory involve hauling a family of four, two of them very young kids, on errands around New York City in an ever-rustier car. Yet it's just that variety of pleasant recollections that led a Massachusetts man to invest in an Alfa Romeo that's become very attractive to collectors only within the past decade or so. That's because this 1959 Alfa Romeo 2000 Spider is a decided departure from the sporting cars from Milano that came before it, and after. First of all, the 2000 Spider had a tough act preceding it, as it followed the fabled Alfa Romeo 1900 series, which was designed by Orazio Satta and was the first Alfa built on an actual production line during its run from 1950 through 1959.

BY JIM DONNELLY
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SCOTTY LACHENAUER







Young Jeff Greenfield and his sister strike poses in their father's 1961 Alfa Romeo 2000.



Second, unlike most sporting Alfas of yore, the 2000 Spider was produced as a 2+2 luxury roadster. It was bigger, heavier, and less powerful than most of the cars Alfa produced at that time. As a result, the 2000 Spider, with specialist open coachwork by Touring, was built to the tune of just 3,443 units over its lifespan, which lasted from very late 1958 through 1961, when it was succeeded by the six-cylinder Alfa Romeo 2600. And it's only relatively recently that they've been considered truly collectible by the *alifisti*.

To the Greenfield family, on the other hand, the 2000 Spider evokes all the nostalgia that some people get from a well-worn Ford Country Squire, or maybe something like a workaday Volvo 122. The first 2000 Spider that the family owned was a transportation benchmark, even if it didn't stay in the family very long.

"My dad bought one of these cars new, in 1961, from a dealer in Fort Lee, New Jersey, right off the showroom floor," Jeff Greenfield, who lives today in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, says. "It was his daily driver for close to 10 years. It was the family car. That was the car in which my mother was driven to the hospital to have me when I was born, and the car that I came home in from the hospital. And my mother told me that my first three words were 'Mama,' 'Dada' and 'Alfa.'"





"My first three words were 'Mama,' 'Dada' and 'Alfa.'"

Though this 2000 Spider is essentially a stock example, veteran Alfa Romeo enthusiasts will notice that the wheel covers are from another model year.



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Jeff drives his Alfa Romeo with regularity throughout the summer months, so he swapped the original Solex carburetors for Webers. It's a somewhat common upgrade.



Actually, that story needs a little massaging about how Jeff's father, Karl, now 91, "bought" the 2000 Spider in New Jersey, but we'll get to that. An architect by profession who now lives in Manhattan, Karl Greenfield is a lifelong enthusiast of sporting automobiles, especially from Alfa Romeo, but also extending to include the products of Mercedes-Benz, Lancia, and more recently, Range Rover. But the 2000 Spider caught his fancy earlier because of its gilt Alfa pedigree and capability of carting his newly arrived youngsters around as a 2+2.

Which was just one of the 2000 Spider's attributes. It's another design achievement of Satta, whose career at Alfa began when he supercharged the legendary Tipo 158 Grand Prix car in 1946 and lasted all the way into the 1970s, when he bossed the creation of the aforementioned Tipo 33 endurance racer. The 2000 used new-to-Alfa unitized construction but still had an old-school combo of a cast-iron engine block and twin-cam aluminum cylinder head, which Jeff said recalls early postwar Alfa practice before all-aluminum engines were adopted en masse. The 2000 Spider's engine displaces 1,975-cc, and, as stock, produced 133 SAE horsepower, aided by hemispherical combustion chambers.

That was enabled, in part, by the engine's use of two often-troublesome

Solex sidedraft carburetors. This rosso 2000 Spider, the subject of this feature, was retrofitted by a previous owner with a pair of Weber DCOE 40 units. Jeff explains, "The Weber is just a better carburetor. It's like having four individual carburetors because each Weber barrel is its own throat." The standard transmission is a five-speed, all-synchromesh gearbox.

Suspension consists of independent double wishbones up front, with a live rear axle at the rear, located by triangular thrust rods above and dual trailing arms below. The brakes are 12-inch finned aluminum drums, reminiscent of a late-Fifties Buick Roadmaster, only "probably scaled up. They're like the Buick brakes, massive," Jeff says. Curb weight came to a slightly porky 2,469 pounds.

When Karl Greenfield was living in Brooklyn in 1961 and working as an architect, he acquired his 2000 Spider from the New Jersey dealership by trading, straight up, a Mercedes-Benz 220S that he'd purchased through European delivery, and which since had suffered a door dent. "I paid not one cent for that Alfa," Karl recalls today. He used the 2000 Spider daily while the tentacles of rust plucked at the sheetmetal like mandolin strings. As he remembers, "It rusted badly. The rockers were shot, and the undercarriage was starting to go." So, he did another trade, swapping the car at a mechanic's shop on Coney Island Avenue in Brooklyn for repairs to one of his Jaguars. To the best of his knowledge, the Brooklyn wrench continued to wheel the Alfa around town, regardless of the rust.

Fast forward a generation and instead

of being squeezed into the rear of a corroded Alfa, Jeff is now collecting them himself, and restoring them. In 2021, he learned that High Octane Classics of Auburn, Massachusetts, had a 2000 Spider in its inventory. Right around then, both the Greenfields went to a local Alfa meet at a friend's shop and lo, there was the 2000 Spider, having been sent down by the dealership to have its brakes fixed. The nostalgia was all either man needed to agree on the purchase.

"It needed a master cylinder. That was the biggie," Jeff says today. "Plus, it did not run well. It had the wrong distributor in it. The carburetor jetting was completely wrong, and just a lot of other little, fiddly stuff. I think they turned the odometer back to zero when they restored it. The restoration was pretty much centered around the repaint. It was represented as being a nut-and-bolt restoration but was far from it. We had to do a bunch of mechanical stuff: rejetting the carburetors, fixing the brakes, and I got an original Girling master cylinder that I sent out and had sleeved and rebuilt. I also had to put a clutch in it."

Today, Jeff rates the Spider 2000, quality-wise, as being 8.5 to 9 on a scale of 10. The bugaboos of yesterday are decidedly gone. "I don't think the car was too rusty when the dealer got it," he says. "From what I understand, it was a California car its whole life, so it didn't require much. I think the car has had rust repairs in a few spots underneath, like the floors and inner fender wells, but other than that, I don't think it's had much work done in that area. It's rust-free now. It gets a lot of attention, and lots



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Owner's View

"With Alfas, for me, it's just a passion for the cars: The styling, the appearance of them. They're one of the oldest makes around. Maybe Fiat started a little sooner, but Alfa's been around since 1910.

I've owned so many of them, for so long, that I've never really thought about why I love them so much. I've got this one, plus a 1970 A12 Autocarro, which is an Alfa truck converted into a small car hauler, imported from Europe, extremely rare. Then there's a 1971 Montreal, a 1974 Berlina that I bought from the original owner, a 2015 4C Launch Edition, and just to throw it into the mix, a 1985 Ferrari 308 GTS QV. If the weather's nice, I try to drive all my cars."

—Jeff Greenfield



of people comment on it, although not everybody knows what it is. Lots of times, it gets mistaken for a Sunbeam Alpine."

The Spider 2000 presents strongly enough that it won a 2022 Best of Show award at the year's final Hemmings Cruise-In, which takes over the downtown business district of Bennington, Vermont. "Anywhere from 30 to 15 years ago, nobody wanted these cars because everyone compared them to the Giulias and Giuliettas. This is a much larger car—it's heavy, it's not all that fast. People claimed they didn't handle all that well, which I don't think is true. And then all of a sudden, in the last 10 years, their values have skyrocketed. I paid a stupid amount of money for this car."

The 2000 Spider is a Greenfield family heirloom, even if it's technically once

removed. "We looked at the car. We bought it," Karl says. "Considering what we paid for it after the first one, which was zero, it was a little difficult to stomach. But I thought that the Alfa design was very handsome, elegant, and Italian. It was a poor man's Ferrari in my mind. I think Alfa is just a wonderful car. When they're carbureted, it would give me a great deal of pleasure to relax by taking the carburetors apart, cleaning them up, rejettin' them, and putting them back together. You have to understand that I ran an architectural practice for years, and I had to interact with other employees, engineers, and bureaucrats. After you spend days trying to create something that way, it's much easier if you can just depend on your own two hands to do a task. That's my relaxation." 🚗



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Taking Flight



This 1963 Studebaker Gran Turismo Hawk has the supercharged “heart” of an Avanti

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM BLACK

One must admire the ad men of yore. Consider Detroit's automotive landscape in the early Sixties, for instance, when a basic formula for a five-passenger car was a sturdy chassis, a road-smoothing suspension, a thrifty six-cylinder or capable V-8 engine, a comfortable interior, and an attractive body. Everyone in the industry checked each box, so claiming the lion's share of the market came down to individual styling, creative engineering, and a talented word-smith to woo buyers.

This was especially true of automakers like Studebaker, which had been reeling from a litany of missteps that are still endlessly debated. The South Bend-based company was determined, though, banking on one of its infrequent halo models to pull its bottom line back into the black.

Enter the ad men, who wrote, “Classic styling ... timeless elegance... enhanced for '63 in keeping with its traditional lasting beauty and a bold new approach to luxury and power! Elegant perfection in a magnificent European-type road car is yours in the Gran Turismo Hawk by Studebaker. The performance of the Thunderbolt V8 [sic] is quiet and responsive to your slightest wish. And the Hawk's velvet-smooth ride, sure handling and steady going is contributed to by its 120.5-inch wheelbase and rugged chassis. Its luxury sports car flair is enhanced by the bucket seats and sport console. The functional new instrument panel places all of the direct reading gauges squarely in front of the driver. The Gran Turismo Hawk is truly an automobile for connoisseurs.”

Were such glowing words effective?

Introduced for the 1962 model year, the Gran Turismo Hawk, or GT Hawk, was arguably the grandest addition to the storied Hawk series (the Hawk itself was announced in 1956, a clever redesign of the Starlight and Starliner). At the time, the new flagship model—the only Hawk now available—offered the most advanced styling of any Studebaker; it was a masterfully refined facelift of the older Hawk profile, managed by Brooks Stevens. As ad literature boasted, it was easy to see the clean,



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equipped as such became known as “Super Hawks.”

During 1963, both a Super Lark and Super Hawk—equipped with R2 engines—topped 130 mph in timed USAC runs at Bonneville. In '64, Andy Granatelli returned to Bonneville and set 72 USAC records with Lark-based Daytona convertibles, while GT Hawks made a credible showing by setting several records as well.

Yet despite the headlines, and engineering and styling changes, Gran Turismo production dropped to 4,634 units, in part—one could argue—because of the 3,834 potential customers who instead purchased an Avanti. Regardless, there's little debate when it comes to brand loyalty, even after nearly six decades have passed since the last Studebaker car was produced. Just ask Omaha, Nebraska, resident Mike Fleek, whose collection includes this 1963 Gran Turismo Hawk.

“I have always been a big fan of Studebaker and the company's space-age styling and advanced engineering. One that had eluded me was a factory supercharged 1963-'64 model. I had been searching for quite a while when I saw this



1963 Super Hawk and Super Lark photographed during engineering evaluation tests at the South Bend test track. Both cars were equipped with R2 engines capable of helping them achieve 130 mph.

GT Hawk at a Studebaker Meet in June 2003 in Grand Island, Nebraska. I noticed the engine number and knew it was a special car.”

Indeed it was. According to paperwork, the Gran Turismo was built on October 5, 1962, and shipped to Pioneer Motors, in Kansas City, Missouri. Painted Rose Mist, it was fitted with a now-coveted R2 engine, along with the

column-shifted Flight-O-Matic transmission, power steering, power front disc brakes, Twin-Traction differential, tachometer, and more, that brought the MSRP to \$4,281.49, or \$42,232.28 in today's currency.

“At the show, the GT was owned by Lyle Behrens,” Mike recalls. “I told Lyle if he ever decided to sell, give me first refusal. Fast forward seven years and Lyle

Right: GT Hawks included a full complement of Stewart-Warner gauges including a 160-mph speedometer, an electric clock, and a 9,000-rpm tachometer.



A unique R2 emblem announces that something special is lurking under the hood of this GT Hawk.



This interior, believed to be all-original, features a new-for-1963 walnut applique. Standard bucket seats and center padded console utilized higher quality vinyl over '62 models. Aftermarket air conditioning was added later.



Special Halibrand aluminum wheels were a dealer option; a set of reproductions was installed by Mike shortly after buying the car. He opted for P205/75R14 whitewall radials instead of OE-style bias plys.



called one evening to say he was moving, and he wanted to know if I was still interested in buying his car. I told him yes and after a quick trip to see the GT, it was in my possession two weeks later. I became its third owner on June 27, 2010.”

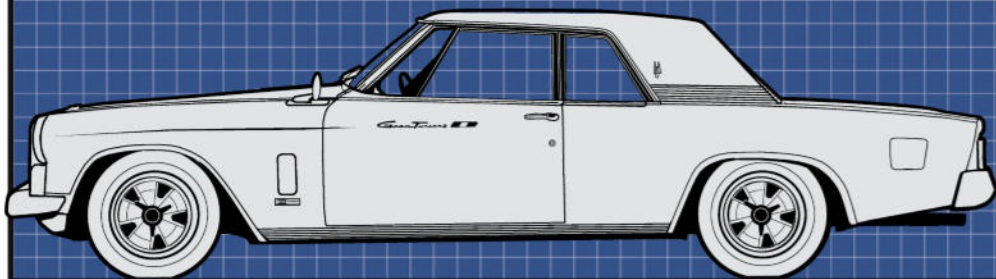
While negotiating the purchase, Mike learned the entire history of the GT, all later confirmed by documents. According to him, “The car remained at the dealership in Kansas City until December 1963, apparently to act as a demonstrator. The second owner, Lyle, confirmed that Arthur Stange—whose name is engraved on the dash plaque; one of the perks of buying this car new—walked into Don Wilson Motors in Grand Island, Nebraska, to place an order for a new supercharged Avanti, but the salesman said they were no longer available, and that production had ended. The salesman went on to say that he could get a supercharged GT Hawk from a dealer in Kansas City if he acted quickly. On December 20, the dealer took Arthur’s 1957 Hawk in for trade to defer some of the cost of the GT. He owned the car until May 5, 2000, when Lyle purchased it,” Mike says.

“This GT Hawk is almost totally original, but I believe it may have had a repaint at some point—even the suspension and brakes, as well as the interior, are original to the car,” Mike confesses. “At some point the original owner had installed aftermarket air conditioning under the dash, which I retained. It was not a factory option when a Studebaker was equipped with the R2 engine.”

So what’s it like to drive a supercharged GT Hawk?

I was growing anxious to try it out when Mike tossed me the keys and suggested, “Why don’t you take it for a drive while I head for pizza with my wife.” Finding the ignition at the far left of the dash, I inserted the key, gave it a twist, and the supercharged V-8 fired right up. There was a sweet rumble from the exhaust. Before taking off, I looked out over the long hood of the GT; the forward greenhouse design offered great visibility. As the rev meter bounced, I noticed the instrument panel layout was clearly visible and the Stewart-Warner gauges—supplied to Studebaker—were easy to read. At center was the 160-mph speedometer. I wasn’t going to attempt that speed, but it was impressive to see nonetheless. At the far left was a clock; far right was a 6,000-rpm tachometer, with ancillary gauges arranged in between. There was also plenty of room in the cabin, and I found the slightly bolstered bucket seats comfortable.

1963 Studebaker Gran Turismo Hawk



SPECIFICATIONS

Base price: \$3,095; **Options:** R2 289-cu.in. V-8; Flight-O-Matic automatic transmission; power steering; power front disc brakes; Climatizer (heater/defroster); Twin-Traction differential; electric clock; AM push-button radio; tinted glass; tachometer; whitewall tires; undercoating

ENGINE

Type: Studebaker V-8; cast-iron block and cylinder heads; **Displacement:** 289-cu.in. **Bore x stroke:** 3.56 x 3.62 inches; **Compression ratio:** 9.0:1; **Horsepower @ rpm:** 289 @ 4,800; **Torque @ rpm:** 303 lb-ft @ 5,000; **Valvetrain:** Solid lifters; **Fuel system:** Single Carter four-barrel with Paxton supercharger; mechanical pump; **Exhaust system:** Dual manifolds; dual outlets

TRANSMISSION

Type: Borg-Warner Flight-O-Matic; heavy-duty automatic; **Ratios:** 1st/2.40:1 ... 2nd/1.47:1 3rd/1.00:1 ... Reverse/ 2.00:1

DIFFERENTIAL

Type: Dana Spicer 44; Twin-Traction; **Gear ratio:** 3.31:1

STEERING

Type: Bendix, power assist; **Turning circle:** 42.6 feet

BRAKES

Type: Bendix hydraulic, power-assist; **Front:** 11.5-inch rotors with two-piston calipers; **Rear:** 11 x 2.00-inch finned drums

CHASSIS & BODY

Construction: Body on frame, all steel; **Body style:** Two-door, five passenger coupe; **Layout:** Front engine, rear-wheel drive

SUSPENSION

Front: Independent; unequal length upper and lower control arms, heavy-duty coil springs, tubular hydraulic shocks, anti-sway bar; **Rear:** Solid axle, semi-elliptic leaf springs, tubular hydraulic shocks

WHEELS & TIRES

Wheels: Stamped steel; full covers (Currently: Halibrand, aluminum); **Front/Rear:** 15 x 5 inches; **Tires:** 6.70-15 blackwall bias ply (currently Cooper whitewall radial); **Front/Rear:** P205/75R14

WEIGHTS & MEASUREMENTS

Wheelbase: 120.5 inches; **Overall length:** 204 inches; **Overall width:** 71 inches; **Overall height:** 54.5 inches (loaded); **Front track:** 57.4 inches; **Rear track:** 56.5 inches; **Curb weight:** 3,230 pounds





Owner's View

"I'm fortunate in that I own this GT Hawk and five other Studebakers—a 1948 Champion convertible, '62 Lark Daytona convertible, '63 Lark Pursuit Marshall, '64 Avanti, and a '65 Daytona sport coupe. The '63 GT Hawk is my favorite of the lot currently. I just prefer its styling, originality, and handling. It looks like it could just take off and fly away at any moment. I just love this car. It's a pleasure to drive."

—Mike Fleek



All GT Hawks came with a dual exhaust system and bright chrome extensions.

I shifted the automatic into drive, pulled onto the side street, and began to accelerate while sensing road feel through the GT's steering, as well as its braking potential. At the first stop sign



The "Avanti Supercharged" emblem tells of the official name of the optional engine installed in this GT Hawk.

the car slowed quite nicely thanks to the front power disc/rear drum arrangement. Maneuvering onto the main road, I was finally able to test the R2's supercharger. It wasn't as responsive as I expected but still adequate (I found out later that Mike had detuned the engine this season due to the higher fuel costs. He plans to readjust it next season). The car tracked straight and true and its factory suspension systems enabled the GT to corner better than other cars of the era I've driven; it felt very stable. As I completed my short test run, I loved the GT Hawk's handling and sporty feel. In my opinion, few early-Sixties cars, other than Corvette, can match the superior handling and performance of this GT. 🚗



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I guess I was a little bored. For the past hour, I'd been on the phone with Daniele, the head of my office in Italy, reviewing our latest purchases of Italian gold, Murano glass and Italian-made shoes and handbags.

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Pat Foster

The Flajole Forerunner

“William Flajole, the man who created the original design for the Nash Metropolitan... I found him a very interesting, forward-thinking individual.”

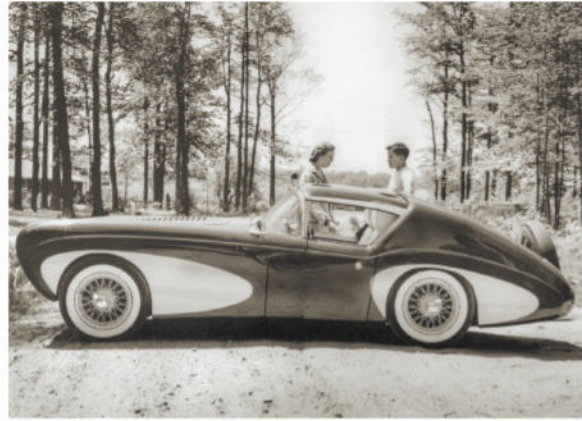
YEARS AGO,

I was privileged to interview designer William Flajole, the man who created the original design for the Nash Metropolitan, among other things. I found him a very interesting, forward-thinking individual who, over a long career, worked for such companies as Graham-Paige, Nash-Kelvinator, Chrysler, and General Motors, along with various motorhome and boat manufacturers. During his career as an independent designer, he introduced some unique styling features that were soon adopted by the automotive industry, including a hood-line lower than the front fender tops. First seen on his NXI (Metropolitan) prototype, that design debuted on production cars with the 1952 Nash Ambassador and Statesman. People have long thought the Met's styling mimicked the big Nash, but the reverse was true.

After World War II, his firm, William Flajole and Associates, took on a diverse array of projects, designing everything from futuristic kitchens to yachts, homes, children's toys, caskets, kitchen appliances, and other non-automotive items. Flajole had his staff working on several projects at once. His portfolio grew to include advanced designs for various American automakers and even some wild, futuristic-looking aircraft.

Flajole created several ideas for postwar cars, including some interesting rear-engine concepts. When Graham-Paige first considered reviving its automobile business, Flajole submitted designs for a new postwar Graham automobile. His sleek sketches depicted a car that was trim on the outside yet large on the inside, with minimal ornamentation, aimed at the lower-price market. Unfortunately, it was not to be. In the end Graham-Paige management partnered with Henry Kaiser to co-produce Kaiser-Frazer automobiles. It settled on a large sedan designed by Dutch Darrin that targeted the medium and upper price ranges. Who knows? Graham-Paige might have done better had it continued on its own path with Flajole's design concept.

One of the more interesting projects he undertook was a sports car he dubbed the Flajole Forerunner. He envisioned it serving as a showcase



of his ideas, crammed full of innovative features including a fiberglass body, a power-operated Plexiglas roof panel that retracted into the fastback rear body section, recessed headlamps, and shock-absorbing bumpers. Newspaper

accounts claimed it took 7,000 hours of staff time to create, and \$8,000 to build. *Motor Trend* magazine loved the Forerunner so much that it featured it on the cover of its September 1955 issue.

When I spoke with Flajole, he referred to it as “[...]one of the first of the ‘Flajole Classics,’” adding “It was[...] a really beautiful car. We built it on a Jaguar chassis. It was a real high-performance automobile, with an engine of, I think, 185 horsepower and a special front suspension that brought it low to the ground. Some of the features, particularly the power-operated retractable hardtop roof, are just now showing up on some expensive foreign cars.”

Flajole's daughter told me, “My dad was very proud of the Flajole Forerunner. Although it was essentially a design study, a one-off car, it was decades ahead in terms of design, materials, and safety features. It had an all-fiberglass body, Plexiglas sliding roof, high-back aircraft seats to protect the driver[...] This was his personal transportation for several years.”

The Forerunner featured oval-shape tubular “nerfing bar” bumpers front and rear, headlamps set behind the grille, and a high-mounted “continental” spare tire. Body sides were recessed to better display the car's large wheels and tires, and featured contrasting painted coves, like the later Corvettes. Style-wise, the Forerunner was similar to the Nash Wisp concept we wrote about here some years ago, except for the steeply raked fastback roofline. Thankfully the Forerunner survives and resides today in the AACA Museum collection in Hershey, Pennsylvania.

Bill Flajole continued working into the 1970s. He designed mobile homes for firms that included Marlette Coach and Guerdon Industries, and claimed to have designed the first double-wide mobile home. A talented and notable designer, William Flajole passed away on May 9, 1999. 🚗



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"Behind the Barn"

You never know what kind of vintage vehicles are stashed out back!

When you are elbow-deep in the world of vintage vehicles, having a significant presence in the local car community can pay off. Jon Ponulak of Bridgewater, New Jersey, is one of those guys who has stayed in the proverbial loop, keeping an eye on the surrounding scene and on a constant vigil for potential purchases. That's because Jon is a diehard barn-find aficionado who has enjoyed a lifelong career in seeking out lost, abandoned, and tucked away vintage rides, and bringing them back to market where they can be enjoyed by others. Truth be told, several such treasures have been tucked away in Jon's sizeable collection over the years, where he enjoys them on a nearly daily basis.

Jon started in the automotive resale business right out of high school, pairing up with his brother

Stan to open Main Street Motors in nearby Somerville. Over the years, the Ponulak brothers did very well, selling vintage rides across the States and abroad. "One year we sold over 300 cars. Business was always good, and it is something we both love to do," Jon says. He still has a large inventory—over 200 and counting, though these days Jon isn't about building a bigger collection. It's more about getting vintage vehicles back in the public eye and on the road where they belong.

A few years ago, Jon was hit with some bad news. His good friend, Tim, had passed away and the family wanted to build an inventory of the vehicles and parts scattered about the estate. They also needed assistance cleaning out the buildings on the property. For many good reasons, Jon was first on the family's list to spearhead efforts.





Finds

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY SCOTTY LACHENAUER

"Tim owned a 100-acre farm. He grew up racing Enduros—think demolition derby meets hobby stock race—and both his mom and dad raced stock cars. Even in his advanced age, Tim was the points champion in the Northeast the summer before he passed. He was a quiet guy who would help anyone and repair anyone's car even if they couldn't afford to pay him. Tim could hold up a transmission with one arm while he bolted it in with the other. He was a kind man with love of family, especially his daughter Candace, who inherited the farm and its contents," Jon says.

So, with the task at hand, Jon surveyed the property and made note of the cars, trucks, and parts in the barns and buildings on the property. Though a 1968 Chevrolet Camaro was one of the

major finds on the farm, the backyard "barnyard" offered several compelling specimens. The ultimate goal here was to salvage any usable vehicles and parts, and eventually make any unwanted items available to enthusiasts in the near future.

"There were tons (no pun intended) of great finds. Everywhere one looked there were complete engines and stacks of parts that Tim saved for future use. Every day we seemed to uncover something new and unique," Jon says. Since Tim was a racer, many of the parts were intended as spares for his race cars, but there was something here for anyone in the vintage vehicle hobby. Here's a brief look at some of the treasures from the barns and barnyard, as described by Jon.





The first car we saw was this green-over-black 1968 Chevrolet Camaro; it was also one of the few vehicles spared from the elements. Tim purchased this six-cylinder, manual transmission coupe to restore in 1977. It was going through a V-8 conversion when he stopped and pushed it into the darkness of the main barn. I've located the original interior and most of the body panels; parts got scattered across the farm. Sheetmetal that sat outside is in poor condition, but the chassis is still in great shape. There are a lot of small-block Chevy V-8s on the premises to easily finish the conversion.

This big-back-window, two-door 1977 Chevrolet Caprice Classic was driven into the local junkyard years ago and Tim just had to save it. He drove it to his farm on a borrowed dealer plate and then left it languishing in tall grass. The Light Buckskin-painted Chevy has a 305-cu.in. V-8 and an automatic transmission. These Caprices were at the forefront of GM's downsizing of its full-size cars. I dumped a little gas down into the V-8 and it fired right up. It's a shame the roof got so rusty, but it still has a solid body and frame.



Tim went to look at this 1973 Lincoln Continental Mark IV when it was put up for sale by a local equestrian farm that owned it. It had only about 40,000 miles on it, and it ran like new, but they needed it sold fast. So, Tim paid what was said to be a high asking price and parked it out back. Fortunately, it does start, and the interior is still holding together nicely. Below the hood is Ford's massive 460-cu.in. powerplant paired with a C6 automatic transmission.

Like so many others in the Northeast, this 1977 Chevrolet Monte Carlo was being turned into an Enduro car when another more deserving vehicle for such competition took its place. This was the last year for the second-generation Monte. Only two V-8s were available this model year: the 140-hp two-barrel 305 and a 170-hp four-barrel 350. This car never saw track time, but some parts did go to another race car. Tim was the kind of guy who would help another driver, whether with parts or mechanical help. Sadly, this Chevy was so far gone it went to the crusher.



This 1976 Chevrolet C10 has the "Big 10" package. These were a direct response to Ford's world-beater F150. Basically, they are a 'heavy half,' which is a ½-ton truck set up for towing with a 12,000-pound gross combined weight rating. This was bought new by one of Tim's neighbors. After Tim did a large job for the family, they didn't have the funds to pay him, so they offered the pickup in lieu of payment. It was relegated to the barnyard 20-plus years ago. Amazingly, it's complete and remains in solid condition, worthy of a restoration.

Not much is known about this 1980 Chevy Van beside the fact it has low miles on the odometer and that it was used by the maintenance department at the Hunterdon Medical Center. It was relegated to storing race tires and wheels over the years. We don't know if it's drivable, but it could be a good foundation for a cool custom one day.





Tim's dad bought this 1972 Chevrolet C20 Custom Camper new. It has a 350-cu.in. V-8 mated to a Turbo Hydra-Matic automatic transmission, as well as power steering and power brakes. There's a lot here to work with. Thanks to the popularity of these C/K Chevy trucks of this era, it should find a home rather quickly, despite the load in the cargo bed.



Chevrolet's third generation Chevelle went through an extensive overhaul from its predecessor. This 1973 four-door Deluxe was purchased by Tim for parts—specifically the bumpers, as they are a 'must have' for Enduro racing—and nothing else. The bumpers often sell for 300 bucks each. As you can see, Tim never got to use them.



Tim's prized car was this 1987 Oldsmobile Cutlass Supreme, only driven on special occasions. You know it was cherished, as it was spared the elements and kept in a clean section of the garage. Surprisingly enough, this Olds was equipped with a V-6, and he had the suspension jacked up a bit all the way around. Fittingly, his daughter is going to hang on to this one.



Here's Tim's Ford 600 stock car hauler he used until the late '90s. It's a heavy-duty ride, built with a 370-cu.in. engine. Interestingly, this rig does not have air brakes. Many cars took their last ride to the scrapyard on the back of this. When New Jersey made using such a vehicle for race car hauling more difficult, it was relegated to wood hauling on the farm. Recently, the engine did kick over on some starting fluid.



This 1976 Chevy Monte Carlo was used for just one Enduro season. The differential that was in this car, rebuilt for racing, was pulled early on and stuffed under Tim's most recent race car that won him the points title the summer before he passed. He raced his most recent Enduro car while wearing a heart monitor that was linked to the hospital. They kept calling Tim as it was "going off" during the race.



This 1977 Chrysler Cordoba was Tim's circuit-winning championship ride in the early 2000s, still wearing some of its race livery; it hasn't seen the track in over a decade. The Cordoba is in poor shape, even as a race car.



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BY TOM COMERRO

HARLEY RACER?

Kenneth Kurant, from Fairview Heights, Illinois, sent us photos from the Belle-Clair Fairgrounds in nearby Belleville. As a fan of cars and Harley-Davidson motorcycles, this trailered vehicle caught his eye;



KENNETH KURANT

regrettably the owner was nowhere to be found. It appeared to be a Harley-powered midget racer that had no powerplant under the hood; exhaust pipes and shift linkage were still there. From time to time, some midget racers from the late 1940s and early 1950s powered by Harley flathead or knucklehead engines become available through our Hemmings Marketplace classifieds, though it's rare. The July 2013 edition of "Lost & Found" featured what was said to be a three-wheeled Harley-Davidson prototype, though there was no follow-up on it, and we're doubtful that this was something the motorcycle company built. We'd be keen to learn more though, particularly if you've raced or seen one at tracks, past or present.

MILESTONE MGB

Senior Editor Mark J. McCourt received an email out of the blue from Rodney McDonald in Spanish Fort, Alabama, announcing that after a 22-year search he had finally found the 250,000th MGB built by the famous British car maker. The B is a 1971 GT that was raffled off in MG's "Great 250,000th MGB Giveaway" that took place that year in the United States as a promotion and "thank you" to MG's largest international market. The lucky winner was William Lewis Newton of Mobile, Alabama, who later sold it to Tony Wilson, the nearly 40-year owner of the car who Rodney had finally tracked down.

Despite being car enthusiasts in the same region, Tony and Rodney were in different orbits for a long time. Rodney ramped up his search for the MG around the turn of the millennium, trying every avenue that included online forums, websites, MGB registries and publications, including *MG Driver*, but there were no responses or leads, and it appeared the car might be gone forever. However, in June of 2020, Tony emailed Rodney after seeing one of his blog posts and they began corresponding. The COVID pandemic, and other circumstances, prevented Rodney from seeing the car in person for another 2 1/2 years, but he was finally able to examine it this past February.

Tony became the second owner of the car in 1984 and has garaged and cared for it since. As of this writing, it is not running and needs some work inside and out. There's no major corrosion, but its Blaze paint and Rostyle wheels have seen better days, the cabin needs to be reupholstered, and the carpet is gone. Happily, the original promotional display sign, custom plates, and official paperwork are all complete, and Tony is planning a restoration of the historic MGB. Rodney hopes his club, The South Alabama British Car Club, can honor it at its show this October. For more details and pictures of the MGB/GT, read Mark's story at hmn.com/MGB250k.



THE BMC ARCHIVE AT BURTON HALL & ASSOCIATES



RODNEY McDONALD



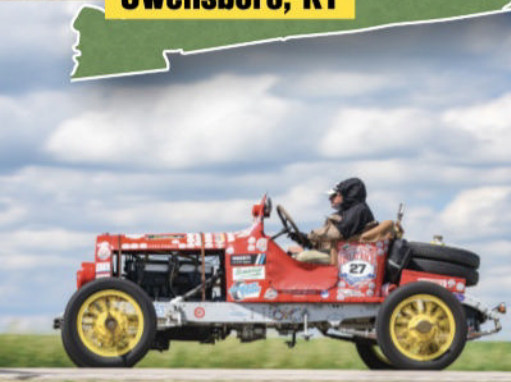
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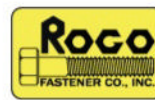


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BY TOM COMERRO



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DAVID LACHANCE

THE AUTOMOTIVE OCTOBER CLASSIC

Hershey is near and the AACA Eastern National Fall Meet has released a tentative schedule for the famed, week-long classic car extravaganza. As has become tradition, the massive antique car show will be supported by an impressive flea market and car corral that always offers an array of marques from every era. The meet, held on the parking lots of Hersheypark, Giant Center, and adjacent grounds, will also continue to include a high wheeler contest, race car condition run, AACA Juniors for the youngsters, a talent show, and an old-time movie night. In addition, RM Sotheby's returns as the official auction of the event with a two-day classic car and memorabilia auction at the Hershey Lodge. The nearby AACA Museum, a mere mile from the event, will host its annual Night at the Museum, where enthusiasts are encouraged to participate in a silent auction, enjoy dinner in the Richard O. Ullman Family Foundation Gallery, and attend the presentation of its annual Automotive Heritage Award. The meet will take place October 3–6 (October 2 will be vendor setup day), the auction October 4–5, and the Night at the Museum will be October 3. For more information about this year's Hershey events, visit aaca.org, rmsothebys.com, and aacamuseum.org.

BORTZ PAIR AT PETERSEN

The Bortz Automotive Collection includes several concept and prototype vehicles, two of which—the 1955 La Salle II Roadster and the 1955 Chrysler Falcon by Ghia—are currently on display at the Petersen Automotive Museum in Los Angeles, California, until May 2024.

The La Salle II was an attempt to resurrect Cadillac's prewar companion marque, spearheaded by Harley Earl and his design department. The roadster took cues from early La Salles with unique touches such as vertical grille bars, open rear wheels, and a side exhaust. Bortz found the La Salle II in a salvage yard more than three decades ago and meticulously reassembled it in time for

the 2008 Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance.

The Chrysler Falcon was designed by Virgil Exner and Maurice Baldwin to compete with the Corvette and Thunderbird. Built in collaboration with Ghia, the sports car featured a 276-cu.in. hemi V-8 paired with a PowerFlite automatic transmission. Its wheelbase was 3 inches longer than that of the Corvette and Thunderbird with a length that eclipsed both offerings by 15 and 7 inches respectively. The Falcon never became a production car, however. Bortz's is the second of the three built.

For more details about The Bortz Auto Collection, visit bortzautocollection.com; more information about the Petersen Automotive Museum can be found at petersen.org.



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Alternate History

BY DAVID CONWILL

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF KOCH AND MATTHEW LITWIN



**The Bugatti-like nature
of this 1915 Scripps-
Booth Vitesse speedster
suggests wonderful
might-have-beens**

Road racing and sports cars took a long time to really catch on in the United States. Not so in Europe. Eighty to 100 years ago, however, cross-Atlantic communications were slower and more limited than today. Few Americans likely realized what they were missing out on as their own domestic sports car industry, along with road racing itself, faced extirpation.

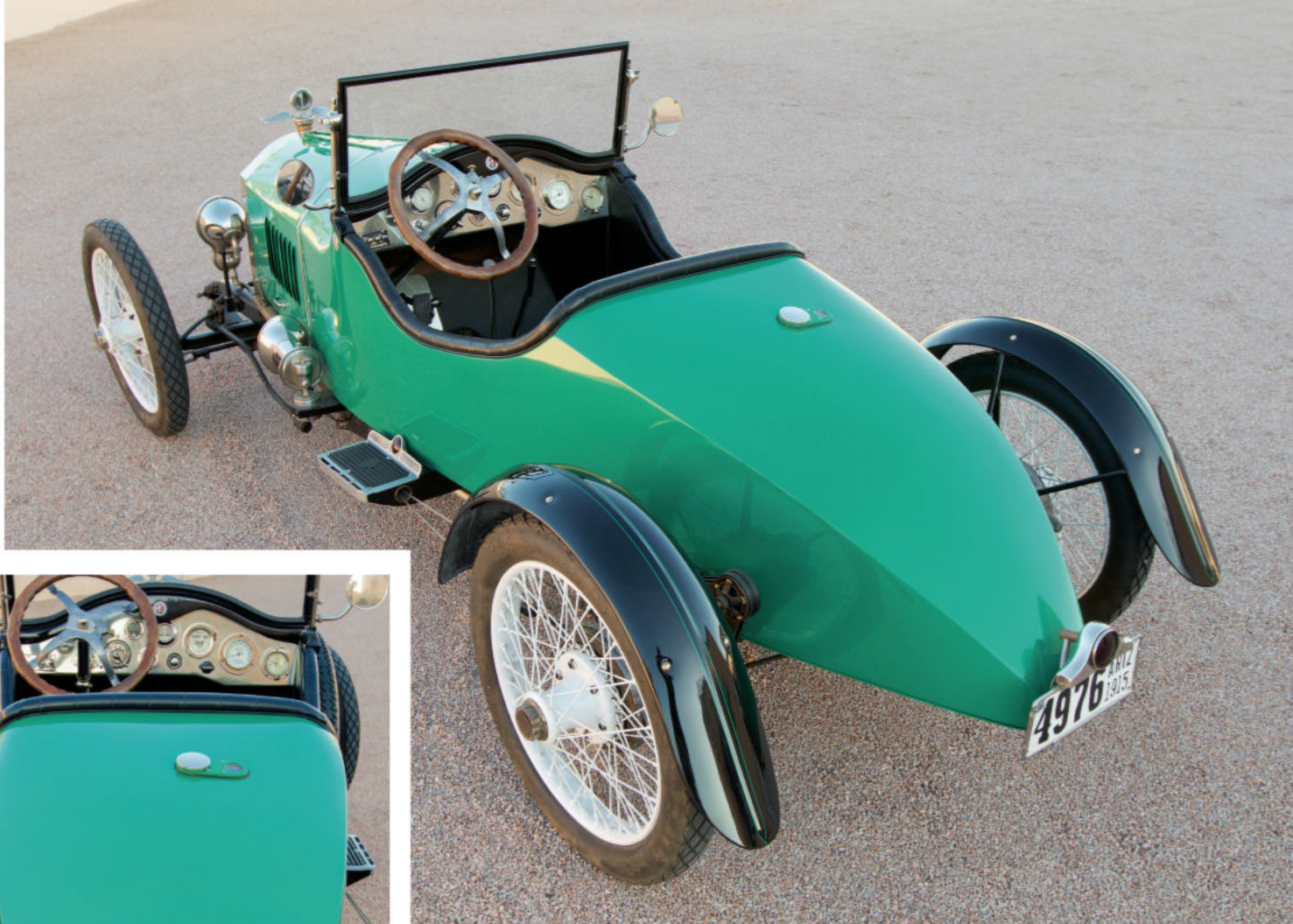
In a different world, James Scripps Booth (who apparently did not hyphenate his name personally but did hyphenate the name of his companies in honor of his ancestry) found the money to tool up series production of the Scripps-Booth Vitesse and breathed new life into the sports car niche by providing a small, powerful, well-built car to compete conceptually with the larger Stutz and Mercer offerings.

Booth was a fascinating character, scion of a wealthy publishing family, an accomplished artist, and a talented, self-taught automotive engineer since his teen years in the

early 1900s. He is worthy of an article himself, but suffice it to say that his time spent living and studying art in France had exposed him to fine, light cars with motorcycle-like sporting characteristics that he wished to replicate here at home. His efforts, both before and after the Vitesse, bear further reading.

Vitesse, if you don't speak French, means "speed." And the choice of language gives a hint at the best comparison for this car: the masterful creations of Ettore Bugatti.

Bugatti, in 1915, was a man and a marque in between nations. Milan, Italy, was his hometown and where he was waiting out the First World War. His technical training and early employment had been in Germany and his factory was located in Molsheim, part of the Alsace territory historically disputed between France and Germany. After the war, when Bugattis were at their height of fame, Molsheim was French territory, and they are perhaps best remembered wearing *Bleu de France*.



The void left by Bugatti cars during the war was nil. It was still a young company in a young hobby and Europeans were too busy fighting anyway. The substantial U.S. market cared seemingly little for sports cars or the road races in which they competed. American motorsport concentrated quickly on former horse tracks, predecessor to the dirt, asphalt, and brick ovals of both NASCAR and open-wheel racing. American roads between towns were notoriously bad in many parts of the country right through the 1920s, and the communities around improved roads quickly banned speed in their midst.

Thus, the sports car ethos never thrived in America until the post-World War II era. Especially not on the production side. Yet it roars still today, on race-tracks and on two lanes, more poignant for its rarity and might-have-been nature.

This 1915 Scripps-Booth Vitesse includes a V-8 designed by Alanson Brush and produced by marine-engine builder Ferro Machine and Foundry. If Ferro sounds familiar, you've perhaps seen the name as a casting mark because they survived the stillbirth of the Vitesse and went on to supply the auto industry for many years (hmn.com/V8engines).

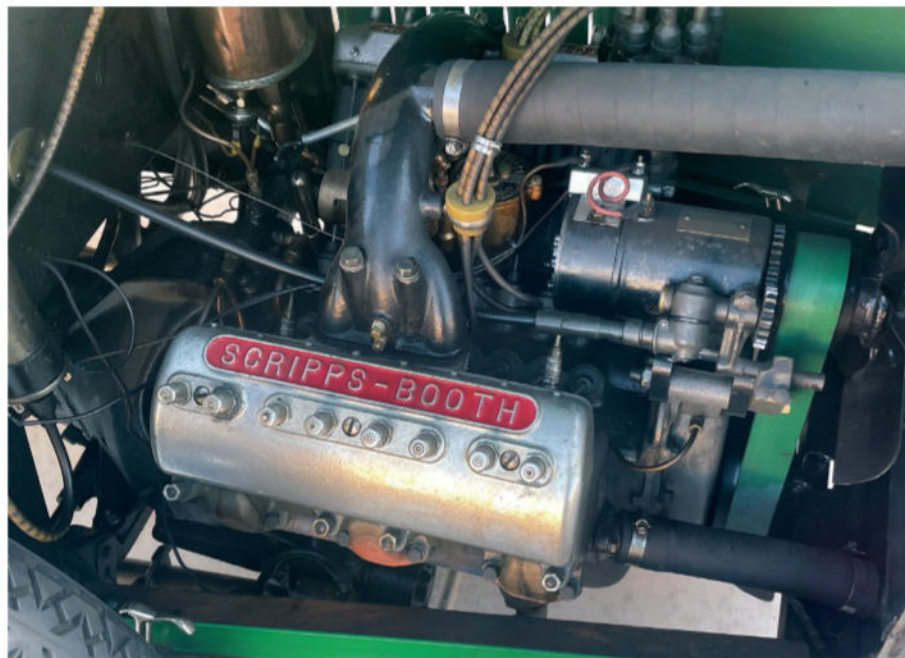
Present owner Alan Travis, of Scottsdale, Arizona, describes the Ferro V-8 as being like two four-cylinder engines joined at the crankshaft, each bank of cylinders fed by one chamber of a water-heated two-barrel Zenith carburetor. A large flywheel keeps the vibrations at bay.

A V-8 was an unusual-enough configuration in 1915, but it permitted Booth to pack unprecedented power into a package smaller than a Ford Model T. It makes for a nimble, fun car, but the folks with the money didn't want to finance something so frivolous, and instead backed a seemingly more practical, larger touring car version, the Scripps-Booth Model D of 1916-'17.

If the Vitesse was produced in the multiple, you are almost certainly looking at the only survivor. If not, this is the very car (or major portions thereof) that appeared at the 1915 New York Automobile Show to announce a factory speedster that never occurred. It became "vaporware" before the term existed.

Scripps-Booth, not long thereafter, was acquired by General Motors founder Billy Durant and combined with his Chevrolet organization in 1917—around the same time James Scripps Booth resigned. It was among many such purchases of businesses





"Scripps-Booth" valve covers notwithstanding, the V-8 was actually designed by Alanson Brush and produced by Ferro. The engine outlived the Vitesse experiment.

in which Durant saw potential, most of which were unceremoniously liquidated in 1922 when the passionate GM founder gave way to more calculating men at the helm named du Pont and Sloan.

Rewind a bit, however, and it's easy to dream up a world where Scripps-Booth produced a whole series of cycle-car-sized speedsters and derivative vehicles, eventually going larger just as Bugatti did in the early 1920s. Then, the Durant purchase/Chevrolet merger makes this a kind of Brass Era proto-Corvette.

That's definitely how Alan drives it. "It's been raced at Laguna Seca, Lime Rock, and Sonoma," he says. "It's a good replacement for a Bugatti."

Alan has a collection of about 20 cars, "all brass"—1895 to 1915. He started collecting them in the early 1980s with a 1910 Knox Model R and his 1913 Bugatti Model 22 (a future *HCC* cover story) is considered the earliest on the road in the United States.

After 1915, Alan says he finds the cars "just got boring" due to mass production,

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“It’s a good replacement for a Bugatti.”



compared with their earlier counterparts, which he describes as “interesting, individual, handmade” and “an engineer’s dream.” Despite that, or perhaps because of it, Alan notes that brass cars are a niche interest in the enormity of the modern car hobby and that he sometimes worries about being “the only one left to be into them.”

It’s perhaps natural that this car came to Alan, then. He didn’t seek it out, he says—“It found me.” He is the third or fourth in a lineage of ownership stretching back to the 1960s and centered on, first a pile of parts and later a project car.

“I don’t know if it’s the original,” Alan says regarding the potential provenance connecting that pile of parts to the auto-show Vitesse. “I don’t have enough of the original specifications to know for sure.”

“Frank Kleptz, in Terre Haute, Indiana, did the bulk of the work,” Alan says, but Frank died in 2010. Alan acquired it in time to finish it up for the car’s centennial at the 2015 New York International Auto Show.

It’s no doubt in part because of Kleptz that the Vitesse survives as something much more than a show pony. Kleptz was a dedicated driver and a repeated successful participant in what is now known as the Hemmings Motor News Great Race. He no doubt intended the Scripps-Booth to be driven and Alan has kept it in that tradition. The car rises to the occasion.

“It has Model T cubic inches, but it revs and has overhead valves. It will do 75 miles per hour and has gone 10,000 miles. It’s not faster than a Fronty,” meaning a Ford Model T four-cylinder with

a Frontenac OHV conversion, “but the cruising speed of 55-60 mph is the same.”

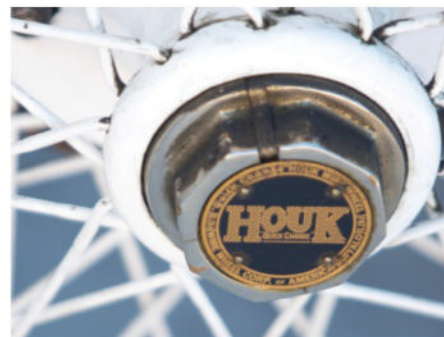
The Model T comparison keeps coming up and it’s easy to see why. It even stops similarly, with rear-wheel-only mechanical brakes with bands acting on the outside of the drum—Alan calls them “stagecoach brakes.” Such a system was more common than not on American cars before the mid-1920s, though Alan’s 1913 Bugatti has what Alan calls “amazing” cable-operated four-wheel drums.

The Ford comparison also explains why the Vitesse may have been doomed from the start: Unless Scripps-Booth had been able to keep the car current with the times, the Vitesse would probably never have found domestic success. Within five years its niche as a small performer was filled much more economically by the Ford.

If you had lots of money to pour into a small, high-performance car after World War I, you simply bought a new Ford and outfitted it with the myriad aftermarket parts available to make it go faster, accelerate harder, look quicker, and handle better. Ultimately counted among those accessories were speedster bodies, suspension-lowering components, wire wheels, and overhead-valve conversions.

Technologically speaking, to the modern eye the Scripps-Booth splits the difference between the agricultural Ford with its 177-cu.in. flathead four-cylinder and the watch-like Bugatti and its overhead-cam, multivalve, 85-cu.in. four. Generally, that should make it welcome in both worlds, though Alan says he once got pushback on a “speedster” run from





The cockpit is appropriate for racing duty, with the gamut of instruments and a familiar shift pattern. Houk wheels mount easily obtained, inch-sized tires.

clinchier tires mounted to Houk wire wheels. The similar wire knockoffs on the Bugatti use a metric-size tire, though with 144 splines on the hub, they count as a much finer piece than the 36-spline Houks. In typically American engineering fashion of the period, the Scripps traded lightness for strength.

In the end, since there's only one Scripps-Booth Vitesse around, the question as to which provides the most bang for the buck—it, a Ford Model T, or a Bugatti Model 22—is probably moot. The real lesson here is that letting it all hang out in a brass-era performance car is as fun as can be. There's no wrong way to do it. 🚗

someone who objected to the inclusion of what was ostensibly a factory performance car amongst the modified vehicles.

The official nomenclature was noted, however, and the Vitesse was allowed to participate. That's an especially happy outcome as Alan reports the mostly Model T-centric speedster events to be the most enjoyable outings for the car. The car is "too fast," Alan reports, for Horseless Carriage Club of America events, where he prefers to run his 1904 Mitchell (another from his collection to be featured in a future issue of *HCC*).

On the flip side, the Bugatti comparisons would have made it state of the art in 1915. "The Bugatti is essentially the same car," Alan says. "It has bronze trunnions, et cetera, and they go essentially the same speed. The Bugatti is lighter, but the Scripps has more cubic inches."

Alan says the original idea behind the Vitesse was to give Italian ultra-luxury carmaker Isotta Fraschini a lightweight, race-formula car to sell for Le Mans style,

voiturette events. Who knows if it would have caught on in Europe, had Isotta Fraschini stayed in the program, but it would be nice to have more of them around as Alan reports the Scripps-Booth to be "way more fun than other 1915 cars. It takes corners really fast, and the V-8 climbs hills."

True to its era, the Vitesse does sport a hand throttle and manual spark advance. That's part of the fun with a car this early. A bigger comfort to modern drivers, however, is the familiar shift pattern.

"If I loaned someone a car," Alan says when asked to compare the Scripps-Booth with the similar Bugatti, "I'd loan them the Scripps because of the non-gated three-speed versus the reverse-pattern gated four-speed of the Bugatti." The Scripps-Booth three-speed uses the same shift as found on American vehicles through the 1980s, making driving it far more intuitive to the average user. "It's like a '55 Chevy truck."

Other welcome American features of the Scripps includes Ford-size 30 x 3.5



The Only One



Internet surfing leads to the restoration of an extremely rare **1968 Ford XL Fastback**

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY TOMMY LEE BYRD

For car enthusiasts, it's common to seek out a particular type of car for a restoration project. Whether you're trying to recreate a childhood memory or perhaps you simply love the styling or performance of a given car, the thrill of the hunt is part of the enjoyment of our hobby. On the other hand, some of the greatest automotive finds are quite the opposite. Stumbling upon a cool restoration project is not as easy as it once was, but hidden gems are still out there. Take this 1968 Ford XL for example: the full-size Ford was not Jay Atwill's idea of a dream car. In fact, he didn't know much about these models or the variety of options that Ford provided its customers during 1968. But this car is the product of curiosity, a lunchtime marketplace session, and an offer that Jay couldn't refuse.

Jay is based out of Brentwood, Tennessee, and he is an equine dentist, allowing him to follow his lifelong passion for horses. Once a professional rider, Jay suffered an accident that



led to hip replacement and strict orders to retire from riding. Jay says, "I traded my horses for horsepower." His automotive experience was somewhat limited until he and his father reworked a Chevy pickup truck, but things have escalated quickly in the last few years.

Back in 2020, Jay was in the small town of McMinnville, Tennessee, for work. Between jobs, he scrolled through the local marketplace to see if anything caught his attention. A 1968 Ford XL popped up in his feed, with an asking price of \$5,000. As it turns out, the owner and his son had intentions of turning the big Ford into a drag car, but thankfully, those plans never materialized. The Ford had no visible rust, and it appeared to have all its original drivetrain intact, so it got Jay's attention, even though he wasn't looking for an intense project. He talked himself out of buying it, and a few days later, received a message from the seller, who informed him of a major price reduction. The car's



When Jay bought this Ford, it was in running condition. Although the car rolled on aftermarket wheels and tires, the rest of it was surprisingly original.



The interior was worn, but not badly damaged. The factory bucket seats and console needed to be reupholstered and refinished, but the interior was intact and many of the parts were serviceable.



Jay began by disassembling the car in his driveway. Later, he would send the chassis to RES Automotive for disassembly and restoration. Jay and his friend Scott Cavanaugh would handle a lot of the detail work.



Things escalated quickly with the restoration, going from light work to a full body-off build. RES Automotive would remove the engine and transmission and rebuild them to stock specifications.



The rear suspension needed new bushings, but most mechanical systems, including the 9-inch differential, were in great working order. Notice the non-original exhaust, a modification likely performed in the 1990s.

The frame was completely stripped of its suspension components and placed on jack stands to clean and prepare for paint. Chassis black paint was used on all frame and suspension components.



The original Z-code 390-cu.in. engine came from the factory with a 10.5:1 compression ratio. It produced 315 horsepower and guzzled premium fuel through a four-barrel carburetor. Jay's Ford XL is fully loaded with power brakes, power steering and air conditioning.

original asking price reduced by nearly half, Jay couldn't resist and he bought it. Amazingly, he was able to drive it home and made the 70-plus-mile trip without any issues.

After getting the XL home, Jay confirmed that nearly everything on the car was original, including the 390-cu.in., four-barrel equipped big-block engine and C6 automatic transmission, and even though it needed some attention, the bones were there for a very authentic restoration. The only piece of original documentation he found was the original title, when Clayton Barritt bought the car new in Phoenix, Arizona.

Knowing this was an unusual combination, Jay sent off the car's information and received a Deluxe Marti Report that



Owner's View

"I wasn't searching for a 1968 Ford XL but I couldn't walk away from this one. It was rust-free and affordable, and the best part was being able to drive it home.

We spent a great deal of time during the 18-month restoration searching for parts and waiting for certain parts to arrive. I knew this would be a challenging car to restore, but any car that can be narrowed down to a one-of-one combination of options deserves the attention. I'm thrilled with the finished product."

—Jay Atwill

Inside, the Ford retains many of its original components, but every piece has been refurbished to like-new condition. The car was ordered with an AM radio, deluxe seatbelts, and a remote-control driver's side mirror.



confirmed its rarity. As it breaks down, the car is one of 50,045 XL Fastbacks built in 1968, but the numbers start getting small when one considers the Ford's list of options. The Marti Report tells us that it's one of only 52 examples with this engine and transmission configuration that was factory-painted Light Beige. Moving further down the rarity rabbit hole, it's one of 10 such examples with bucket seats, one of six with a black vinyl roof, one of two with Ford's single key system, and one of one with air conditioning. The Marti Report really pushed him to go forward with a body-off restoration.

Mechanically, the car was in good condition, but needed normal reconditioning to make it safe and reliable. For the mechanical aspect of the restoration, Jay called upon the folks at RES Automotive in Franklin, Tennessee. RES disassembled the chassis and rebuilt the steering and suspension with new bushings, ball joints, and tie rods. The car came from the factory with power brakes, with a combination of discs up front and drums out back, so RES rebuilt the original brake components, only replacing what was necessary. Jay says, "The guys at RES were awesome to work with and they allowed me and my friend Scott Cavanaugh to work on the car, too."

Ford's full-size model was available with several engine

options, ranging from an inline six-cylinder to the Police Interceptor 428 that cranked out 425 horsepower. Jay's example was ordered with the FE-based 390-cu.in. engine with a four-barrel carburetor, a workhorse that produced 315 horsepower at 4,600 rpm and 427 lb-ft of torque at 2,800 rpm. These engines have good parts availability, but luckily, this one didn't need any serious attention. A stock rebuild took place at RES Automotive that refurbished many of the original components, and only replaced the bearings, rings, seals, and gaskets. Behind the 390 is a C6 three-speed automatic, Ford's strongest offering. Moving further back is the original 9-inch rear differential, equipped with a standard 2.75:1 gearset that made for excellent highway cruising.

Ford originally offered the XL with black sidewall tires or pinstripe whitewall tires sized 815-15, as well as multiple wheel cover options to conceal the 15x5-inch steel wheels. The seldom-seen GT package included Firestone Wide Oval tires sized G70-15, but buyers could also select the beefy tire upgrade if they checked the box for the 390 or larger engine options. Jay wanted to spice things up a little bit, so he ordered a new tire and wheel package from Coker Tire, consisting of 15x7 Magnum 500 wheels with three-bar spinner center caps. The



RES Automotive allowed Jay and Scott to help on the project when time allowed. They handled projects like sandblasting, priming, and painting and logged approximately 120 hours doing the tedious work.



The pile of refurbished parts continued to grow as new bushings were pressed in and new ball joints were installed. After the frame was painted, RES Automotive's technicians got the car rolling again.



The original Z-code 390-cu.in. engine was in outstanding shape, and only needed to be freshened up. Nearly every original component was rebuilt, only replacing the parts that could not be refurbished at RES Automotive.



As chassis assembly took place, all new brake lines were run to the rebuilt brake system. Jay's XL features disc brakes up front and drums out back.



The original seats were in excellent shape structurally, but Jay sent them off to N-Motion, an upholstery shop in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. The shop went back with original black vinyl material and added new foam to give the upholstery a nice tight look.

The XL is starting to look like a car again, with the body on the frame and reassembly taking place. Jay was able to reuse most of the glass but did have to replace the windshield. Refinished trim is being installed, and the black lower body stripes will be applied later.





chrome wheels are wrapped in BFGoodrich Silvertown redline radials, sized at 215/70R15.

Again, Jay's XL was ordered in Light Beige paint, one of 15 colors available in Super Diamond Lustre enamel in 1968. When it came time for bodywork and paint, Jay sent the car to Hard Kandy in Franklin, Tennessee, for a full workup. Luckily, the sheetmetal was in excellent shape, so the car just needed to be stripped of its original paint to start from ground zero. Hard Kandy's technicians applied urethane primer and went through a few cycles of block-sanding with increasingly finer grits before applying Axalta paint, mixed to the original 1631-A paint code. Color sanding the fresh paint removed the imperfections, and then buffing and polishing brought the paint to a beautiful shine. Hard Kandy was also responsible for installing the new black vinyl top. The original door glass, quarter windows, and rear window were cleaned and reinstalled, and a new windshield was ordered and fitted.

Although the bodywork was straightforward, the trim and emblems presented quite a challenge. Restoration parts are

not widely available for these cars, so Jay and his friend Scott scoured the internet, looking for various pieces to replace anything that was missing or too badly damaged. Jay says, "The XL emblems with the red insert were difficult to find, but nothing compared to the challenge of finding four usable wheel lip moldings." Once he gathered all the trim pieces, he sent everything off to S&H Chrome Plating & Powder Coating in Madison, Tennessee, for refinishing. N-Motion, an upholstery shop in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, handled the stitchwork, using black vinyl on the original bucket seats and other surfaces. The console and shifter appear factory-fresh, and all the original woodgrain finishes give the dash and steering wheel a classy look.

Jay and Scott burned the midnight oil to button up the final details on the car in spring of 2022, working right up until they loaded it in a trailer and headed to Carlisle, Pennsylvania, for the Carlisle Ford Nationals. There, the XL took home first place in its class, as well as a celebrity award. Although it is in excellent mechanical condition, Jay hasn't yet put many miles on it. He does plan to drive it after the new wears off a little, but for now, he enjoys taking it to car shows and swapping stories with other owners, and sharing information about the ultra-rare combination of options on his high-class 1968 Ford XL. 🚗

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Return to the Road

SERIES Part 2

BY MATTHEW LITWIN AND DAVID CONWILL
PHOTOGRAPHY BY HEMMINGS STAFF

Long-dormant 1940 Buick Century sport phaeton hits the highway

Last month we introduced you to *Hemmings Classic Car's* first project vehicle, our 1940 Buick Century four-door sport phaeton (Model 61C), and explained that it had been sitting dormant at our headquarters' vehicle display at the Sibley Shop since late 2001 (HCC #171; hmn.com/SibleyShop). The display has recently been transformed into Hemmings Garage, where we assembled a team—comprised of David “Junior” Nevison, Jerry Pitt, Tom Comerro, and your co-authors of this installment—dedicated to repairing the rare convertible. Ultimately the goal was to return it to the road in spectacular fashion: a 400-mile trek to partake in the Eastern Museum of Motor Racing's (EMMR) one-day Hot Rod Annual on May 13, 2023, at Lincoln Speedway in Abbottstown, Pennsylvania.

Though a preliminary analysis of the Buick's condition occurred during December 2022, the real work commenced in April, all captured by videographer Bryan VanZandt as a two-part video series broadcast on the Hemmings YouTube channel, both of which are now available.

To recap part one, when we began the project, it was assumed the Century was a factory-stock example, albeit one that had seen a restoration decades prior and several subsequent repairs after it was purchased in 1987, at least two of which involved swapping damaged gear clusters within the three-speed manual transmission. Further, the Buick's history file indicated that a third transmission failure had occurred, and parts were ordered; however, it was not clear as to whether the repair



01

1. To remove the transmission, we first had to disconnect the rear suspension from the differential and torque tube assembly, the latter of which was supported by a hydraulic lift and safety chains. The assembly only needed to be pulled rearwards fewer than six inches and not removed from the car entirely.
2. In the interest of safety, the hydraulic transmission jack was positioned below the front crossmember, lest the dislodging of the torque tube assembly make the Buick “nose heavy” on our two-post lift.
3. Our damaged 1940 transmission (left) and rebuilt '41 unit (right) are nearly identical dimensionally and visually, making the swap relatively easy. No mounting modifications had to be made.

had been made. Adding to the potential complexity of mechanically resurrecting the Buick was the fact that it was parked without preparing the electrical, brake, and fuel systems for long-term storage. There were also a handful of aftermarket upgrades installed due to its rally use in the late Nineties.

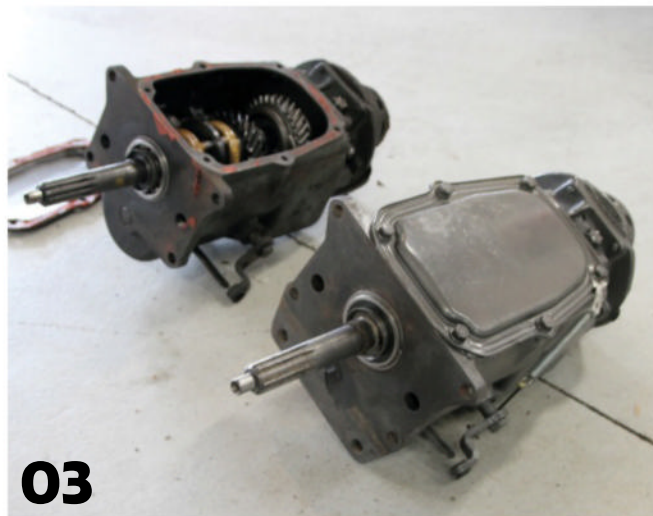
Those upgrades—an inline electric fuel pump, a 6-volt alternator, and an electric fan mounted to the front of the radiator—were removed, allowing us to focus on the health of the Century’s factory systems, beginning with the electrical system. Fortunately, battery corrosion was limited to the positive and negative cables and the tray (more on the latter in a moment); replacement 6-volt batteries remain available through major auto parts outlets. A new set of 7.00-15 bias-ply whitewall tires was purchased from Coker Tire, and new hydraulic drum brake system parts were obtained from Fusick Automotive Products. While working on the brake system, we discovered unchecked damage to the right-rear assembly. During repairs, Doug Seybold Restorations informed us that the rear drums on our Buick were from a 1941 model.

Pressure testing the cooling system also revealed leaks in both the water pump and Century-specific radiator. US Radiator has been commissioned to create a replacement unit, but due to the lead time required and its conflict with our deadline, quick repairs to the original radiator were made by Empire Auto Radiator. Meanwhile, a new water pump was purchased from Doug Seybold. It was during this stage when confusion arose over which version of the 320-cu.in. straight-eight engine was installed in our Buick. The engine number initially had us believing the block was a replacement circa 1951-’52, but an inspection by Skip Boyer of Boyer’s Restorations later revealed that the engine pre-dated the 1948 model year.

Which brings us to part two of this saga, when we found that the transmission had not been repaired. Taking off an access panel in the floorboard and removing the three-speed transmission’s cover, we found a broken gear tooth. The damage



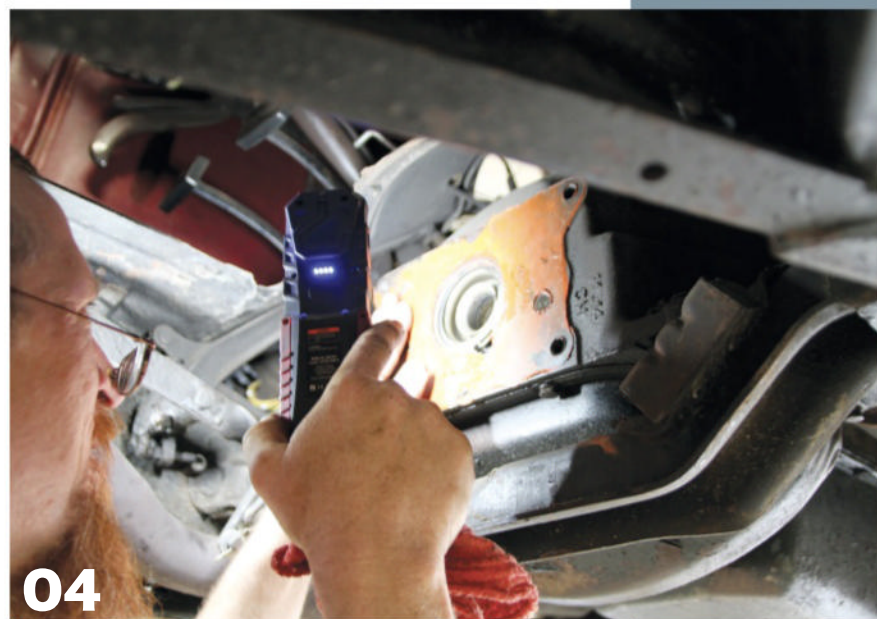
02



03

likely occurred when downshifting from second to first before coming to a complete stop; only second and third gears are synchronized. Further, Doug Seybold informed us that 1940 transmission parts are unobtainable. Our options were limited: Rebuild our '40 case using easily obtainable '41 components, or swap in a complete and almost identical '41 transmission. We chose the latter. The work is detailed on the following pages, along with an unexpected 11th hour repair that jeopardized our deadline.

Everything fell into place without further incident, and on the morning of May 12, your co-authors departed the Hemmings headquarters in Bennington, Vermont, and aimed the four-door phaeton – top down—for what would turn out to be a 400-plus mile drive to Abbottstown, Pennsylvania, with most of our repair crew in tow. How well did the Buick perform? We turn to Dave Conwill.



4. Previous transmission repairs included the use of orange RTF silicone between the three-speed manual and bellhousing. A proper gasket was fabricated and positioned before our replacement unit was aligned.


5. A hydraulic transmission jack adding support, the replacement three-speed manual was coaxed into place and bolted to the bellhousing. Reattaching the torque tube assembly moments later was an equally easy process.



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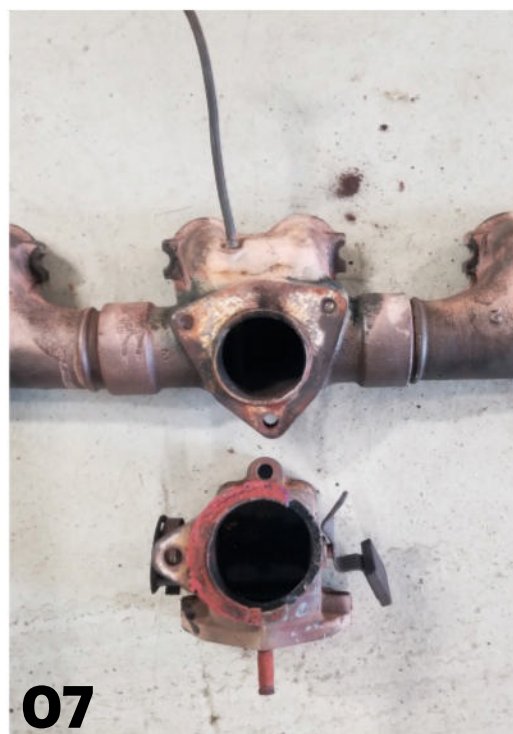




6. Before installing a new 6-volt battery, the corresponding tray and bracket were cleaned and refinished using POR-15 three-step Stop Rust Kit.

7. Just as the Century was completed, Junior Nevison noticed that the exhaust manifold was cracked on the rear bell of the center section, and it appeared the head pipe gasket was leaking and blowing onto the block. Further examination revealed that both center sections of the intake and exhaust manifolds were cracked; the former sported a large crack, but oddly enough it was not leaking air even though it looked like it should have. Seven cracks were found altogether.

8. It was extremely fortunate that Doug Seybold Restorations happened to have a matched and machined intake and exhaust manifold available. Their expedited delivery enabled us to install the subassembly a day prior to departing for the Hot Rod Annual.



DRIVING THE CENTURY

Cars get less exciting to drive every year. Soon we won't be driving them at all—all the more reason to look backward at cars built earlier. Go back all the way, to the beginning (say, 1895-1916), and you will find some cars so complicated and arcane that you perhaps ought to be an engineer before attempting their operation and repair. Come forward just a bit, however, to circa 1935-'54 and you've entered the sweet spot: cars that are automatic enough (not automated mind you, just automatic in some respects—like spark advance and fuel mixture) that they aren't very intimidating to any driver with a reasonable amount of experience.

So it was when I was first given the opportunity to pilot the Hemmings Century. Prior to this, I'd had the privilege of driving a 1949 Buick Super, a 1940 La Salle, and my own 1950 Studebaker Champion. The Century shared a lot of elements with these cars, the La Salle in particular, but simultaneously demonstrated a personality all its own. Within 24 hours of my first taking the wheel, it had reaffirmed my affinity for the 1940s-style of automobile.

You sit up high in the Century. The view is akin to a modern SUV. Most people also think you sit too close to that big, banjo steering wheel, but it's not true. The ergonomics of a 1940 Century are different from your 2019 Encore, no doubt, but they're not worse. The accelerator pedal, for example, has a semi-circular notch at the bottom. When I arrived Friday morning, May 12, for our trip to Pennsylvania, I wore my vintage Florsheim wingtips to take advantage of the suggested position for my throttle foot. The result was that my knee was much happier than it usually is on long trips—absence of cruise control notwithstanding. My only complaint, and Junior voiced it as well, is that the horn ring tends to interfere with the driver's





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desire to grip the top of the wheel from the inside while executing tight turns.

Starting a Buick of this era is quite unlike anything that's been built since the 1960s. Today, the key (fob) never leaves your pocket. In 1940, it served mainly to lock the ignition switch. Actual starting is done with the accelerator pedal. The best procedure for a cold start is to give the pedal a couple pumps with the ignition off, then switch on and push the pedal to the floor. At the end of its natural travel is a detent—push into that and it activates the starter. Just don't forget to have the car in neutral and/or the clutch disengaged, or the starter will propel the whole vehicle as it turns the engine over.

If there's a source of discomfort in this car, it's the clutch. As it sits, seemingly all the take-up is in the last 20-percent of pedal travel. That can be a finicky situation, given the 320-cu.in. straight-eight's massive torque and the aged, somewhat glazed condition of our clutch disc. Let the clutch out too slowly or hesitantly and

you risk burning it into uselessness quickly. Let it out too rapidly and the car will leap forward more quickly than is comfortable and controllable. Even when not shifting, the worn disc makes its presence known through a periodic skip in the straight-eight's otherwise smooth power delivery.

Because we'd driven the Buick so infrequently up to the point we departed for Pennsylvania, and because limited-access highways are far from the best way to see America, our route was based on the 1931-'32 Automobile Legal Association Green Book. It seemed that the best way to avoid overstressing our museum fugitive was to keep to the roads for which it had been designed. What those roads quickly demonstrated was that its in-period reputation as a performance car was well earned.

Once rolling, the Buick really shines. The torque means that shifting is an infrequent event (in fact, the worn column shifter meant we briefly lost access to first gear—if it hadn't been for the aforementioned clutch issues, it would hardly have mattered) and the advantageous power-to-weight ratio of the Century means that keeping speeds down was a real challenge.

More than once I looked down to see that our 83-year-old conveyance had crept up to 65 mph while I wasn't looking. Similarly, it was happy to climb any hill in top gear, even gathering speed as it went. The handling was even more impressive, as the coil-sprung suspension with front and rear anti-sway bars meant that the bias-ply shod Buick would confidently take any curve or corner at speeds that exceeded the comfort of those inside on the flat, leather-upholstered bench seat.

Ultimately, darkness would force our departure from the old roads for the better-lit and less-deer-trafficked super slab just north of Harrisburg. Unleashed, the Buick happily kept up with the light traffic we found there—all the while attracting amazed looks, smiles, waves, and thumbs-up from other drivers. Perhaps on long grades or in heavy stop-and-go, the drum-brake technology would finally have disappointed us, but the car behaved perfectly.

In fact, this 1940 Buick is such a joy to drive I really rather wish we could keep it (see "What's Next" below), but I know we'll soon be finding other ways to experience the fun of prewar motoring with another *Hemmings Classic Car* project vehicle. 🚗

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What's Next:

We have to sell our 1940 Buick Century four-door sport phaeton to make room for our next *Hemmings Classic Car* project, which will be revealed in a future issue. While we're saddened to bid adieu to the Buick, we're pleased with its performance, having proven itself as a very capable touring vehicle for its next caretaker. The Century will be offered through Hemmings Auctions without reserve on August 15 through September 6. To register to bid on our Buick, or a wide array of other vehicles, visit hemmings.com or download the Hemmings app to your mobile device.



The crew strikes a pose upon arrival in Pennsylvania. From left to right: David Conwill, Junior Nevison, Bryan VanZandt, Tom Comerro, and Matthew Litwin. Below, your co-authors are captured traversing Route 209 through the Delaware Water Gap in Pennsylvania.



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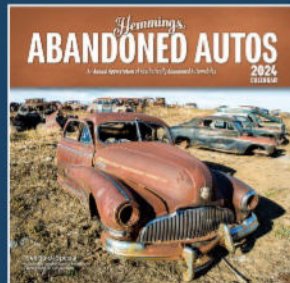
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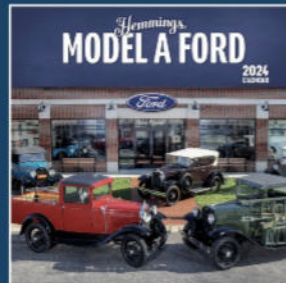
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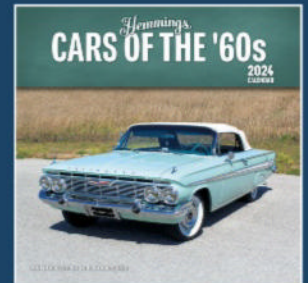
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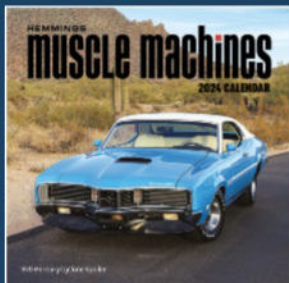
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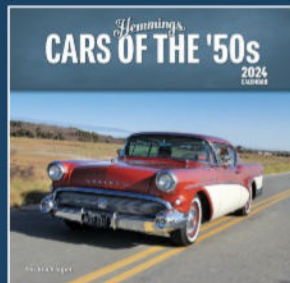
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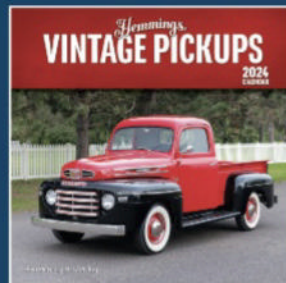
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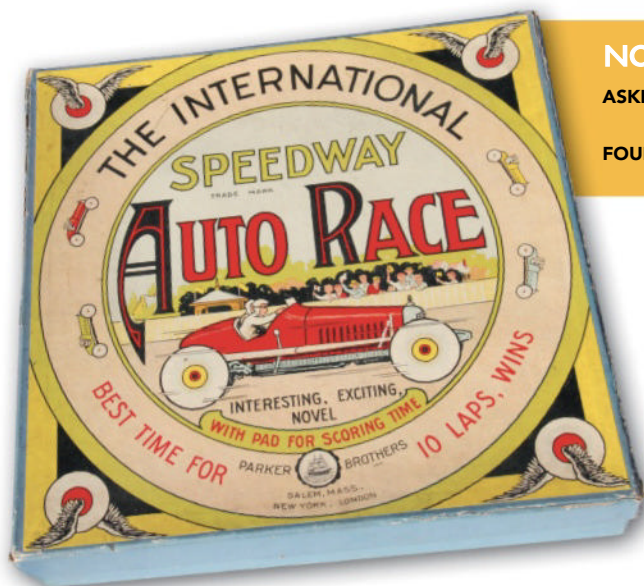


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A quick look back at a pair of fast-paced, small-scale, automotive challenges



IF YOU THINK ABOUT IT, most every board game is—in effect—some sort of race, whether it be against the clock or other competitors. Consider popular games, such as “Aggravation” and “Trouble,” in which you have to race your game pieces around a course and past hazards to be the first to reach “home.” “Monopoly” is based on the same principle: Race around the board while out-maneuvering and collecting as many properties as possible. So, why not base an assortment of games on automobile racing?

We’ve highlighted a handful of old racing games previously in our sister publication *Hemmings Motor News*, including the demolition derby themed “Collision” (March 2021) and “Stock Car Race” (April 2021). At the 2022 AACA Eastern Fall Meet in Hershey, Pennsylvania, we raced across two other nearly forgotten gems from the past: “The International Speedway Auto Race” and “Grand Prix.”

Let’s start with the former, which was issued by Parker Brothers (of Salem, Massachusetts) circa the 1920s. At just under 12 square inches, the game’s box art is impressive for the era, which conveniently spells out the objective on the round speedway “surface.” Designed for two to four players, the board consists of a much simpler playing surface, with four discs partially hidden below. Each disc—decorated with six numbered cars—rides on a spindle mounted to a small block of wood that’s glued to the game box. Those cars are visible through a window cut into the playing surface, and after each player spins the disc ten times, the person with the highest score wins.

Again, the game instructions were printed on the game box, and score cards were included.

A more conventional racing game by today’s standards was “Grand Prix,” which was created by Bell Toys of London, England, and first issued in 1958. Here again, the box art was colorful, and certainly dramatic enough to conjure images of open-wheeled grand prix cars racing across a European countryside à la the Mille Miglia. This two- to four-player game included basic rules, four wooden cars, and a six-sided die, and the festive board was emblazoned with a twisting, 100-space course. Of those, nine were painted green with advance position instructions; eleven red hazard spaces threatened setbacks, including losing a turn, being forced back to “start,” and falling back a handful of spaces.

At the time of this writing, the fate of Bell Toys is unknown to your author; however, “Grand Prix” has not faded into game obscurity. During the last 23 years, it has been faithfully recreated, right down to the box art, save for the Bell logo atop the cover’s signpost. A quick search online has revealed that “Grand Prix” has been offered through Heritage Games Ltd. (a British game publisher) and House of Marbles (of New Jersey and New York), and possibly others.

Original editions, particularly “The International Speedway Auto Race,” can be a little challenging to find, and prices will vary based on condition and completeness. The asking price for “Speedway” at the famed Hershey swap meet was \$180, while the original Bell copy of “Grand Prix” was offered for \$50. 🏁

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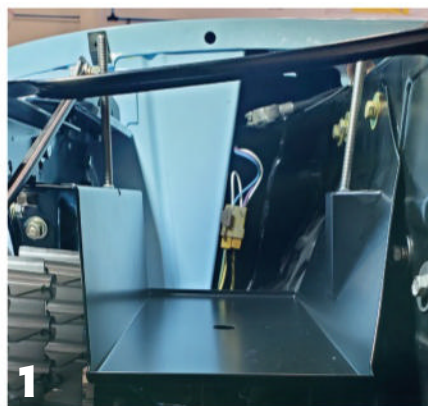


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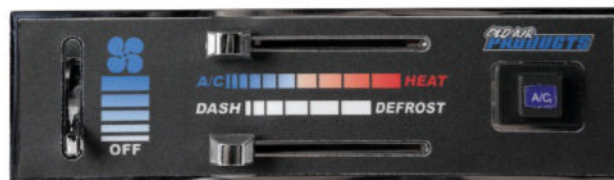
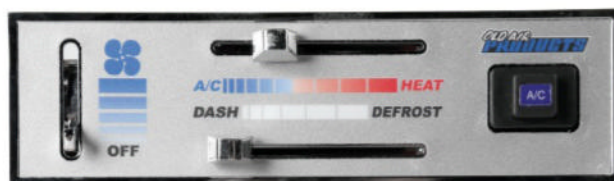
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My old passive welding helmet. Note the thick layer of dust that has accumulated since I bought the auto-darkening helmet.



HOBART INVENTOR SERIES AUTO-DARKENING WELDING HELMET

Price:	Starting at \$110 (amazon.com)
Where to get it:	hobartwelders.com, tractorsupply.com, Amazon.
What we liked:	Easy to use for beginning welders.
What could be better:	Neck guard could be a little longer.
Overall rating:	★★★★☆

[Editor's note: *Hemmings* occasionally receives products from manufacturers for the purpose of product reviews. In this case we bought this item with our own money.]

HOBART'S INVENTOR SERIES AUTO-DARKENING WELDING HELMET

WITH ALL THE YOUTUBE tutorials you can watch, all the various welding machines with gee-whiz features you can buy, and all the local community college classes you can take, there are just two key things you need to become a better welder: practice and an auto-darkening welding helmet.

We've seen expert welders who make it look cool when they do the hands-free head nod to flip their helmet down as they start showering a work surface in sparks. It's obvious they've spent years welding with a regular passive helmet, and they've found a helmet with the right fit, padding, and balance so they can line up their weld in plain vision and then pull the trigger almost immediately afterward. On the other hand, welding isn't about looking cool, it's about making and fixing cool things (and, when it comes to helmets, staying safe). An auto-darkening helmet makes that much easier, especially for beginners.

True, there's less to go wrong and there's no batteries to drain down with a passive helmet, but for somebody just learning how to weld, who might not yet feel comfortable holding the gun, positioning the tip, and getting their welds started, an auto-darkening welding helmet will remove much of the frustration that makes beginners feel like they're flying blind and subsequently keeps them from wanting to practice welding. In fact, I'd recommend a novice welder get one even before buying his or her first welder. That way they can get accustomed to the weight and fit of the helmet and start to dial in the lens' sensitivity, delay, and shade settings, perhaps while observing an expert or their instructor at work.

I am one of those beginning welders. I'd had a couple friends and acquaintances show me basic techniques here and there over the years, and I even bought a passive helmet at a tag sale for a buck and replaced its broken glass lens long ago in anticipation of getting a welder of my own. It wasn't until the initial pandemic lockdown, though, that I decided it was time to figuratively pull the trigger on buying a welder so I could start literally pulling the trigger on some metal fabrication projects.

After a few test welds with the passive helmet, and after missing my mark too many times, I decided to switch to an auto-

darkening helmet. My only real criteria were that it fit within my budget and that it didn't have goofy graphics or flames like so many helmets seem to have these days (if I want my helmet to look customized, I'll customize it myself, thank you). While there's some super fancy helmets out there that look like something Spaceman Spiff might wear, the Hobart Inventor Series seemed like it had a decent set of features for not a lot of money.

The 9.3-square-inch viewing area might not be as large as that on other inexpensive auto-darkening helmets, but I've not yet felt restricted by it, even though it's smaller than the viewing area on my old passive helmet, which measures nearly twice that. It has a trio of controls to adjust shade, sensitivity, and delay, along with a switch to toggle between welding mode and grinding mode. While the location of the controls inside the helmet and above the viewing area might not be ideal for somebody who's constantly fiddling with the adjustments, all I'm doing right now is MIG, so I just made a few test passes with my welder to dial them in and have almost forgotten about the settings since then.

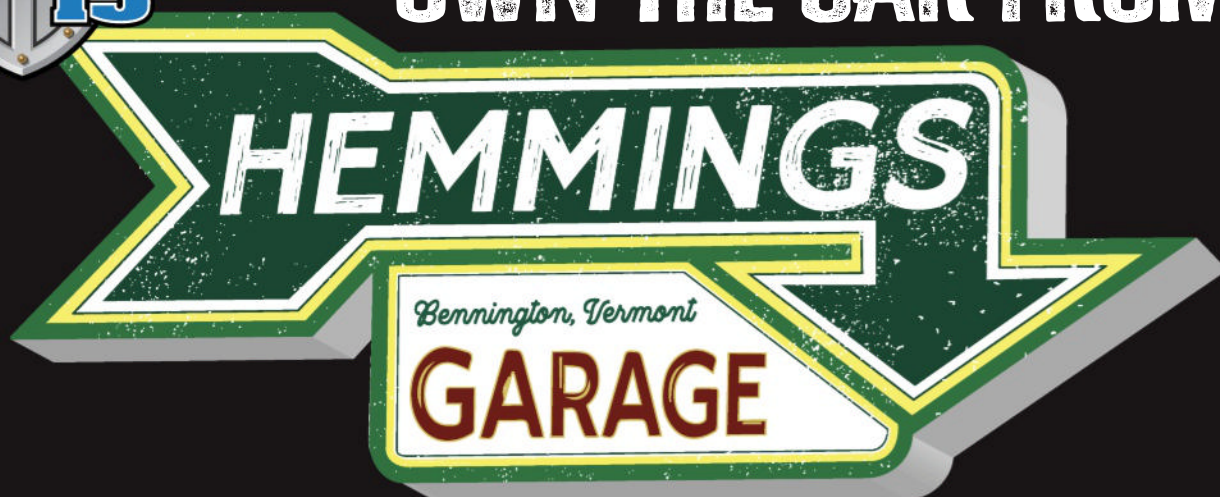
The fit has been great since I similarly spent a few minutes at the outset tweaking all the tensioners, probably because the headband tensioner is more adjustable than the click-type on my old helmet. The straps and padding have proven comfortable without gouging my forehead, though I only wear it for short periods of time. I wear glasses and have never had them touch the screen or interfere with the Hobart helmet. On the occasional cold morning I might fog the screen with my breath, but it doesn't last long. My only gripe with the fit is that the neck doesn't come down quite far enough, so if I happen to be wearing a light-colored shirt instead of a full welding jacket for a quick zap, it'll reflect off the shirt and up into the helmet. Not blinding, more distracting, and that has more to do with my choice in gear.

Battery life has been fine so far, which is as good a reminder as any (both for me and for everybody else with auto-darkening helmets) to keep an eye on the low-battery indicator so I don't get a surprise flash. The helmet material is nylon rather than fiberglass, presumably for weight savings, so it's not rated for overhead welding, though I've yet to need to weld overhead.

As a hobbyist working in the garage, I've really enjoyed this helmet primarily for how it's enabled me to spend more time acquainting myself with my welder. The helmet's simple, it does the job, it's not an obstacle for welding, and it didn't cost an arm and a leg (retail cost on Amazon, it's \$110 as of this writing). It probably won't be the helmet of choice for more advanced welders, or for those super fearful of technology letting them down, but it's hard to see how beginners could go wrong buying one. 🛠️



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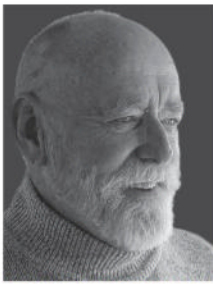
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Jim Richardson

Deco Daze

"I've come
to grips
with being
a misfit
of my
generation,
loving
cars and
styles that
happened
before
I was
born."

WHEN I WAS about 10 years old, I delivered circulars door to door, and one day I noticed an ancient car parked on a neighbor's front lawn. It was painted a dark green that had aged, dulled, and become chalky. Rust was showing through on various parts of the body, and its chrome was pitted. But the car had a distinctive, almost sinister look, with its low slit-like windshield and unique classic grille styling. I fell in love with it, and when I completed my route, I went home and tried to draw it and understand why its look was so distinctive.

For example, it had running boards. Running boards? Weren't they so gangsters and cops could shoot at each other like in the old movies? And its headlamps were in separate bullet-like pods on stalks. Interesting. It also had a tall, narrow hood that made the car look as if it had a huge, powerful engine in it. I found out later that the compelling car was a 1936 Packard 120 coupe.

Back when I first beheld this machine, the beautiful 1953 Corvette roadster had just debuted, and I thought that little 'glass sports car was almost as beautiful as my Uncle Benny's 1954 Cadillac Eldorado convertible. But then, everybody loved those cars and you saw them around a lot.

Instead, I was intrigued by a totally different—although as it turned out, mundane—machine from another age that had a certain something none of the newer cars had. That was Art Deco styling. I was so intrigued, in fact, that I have owned and restored four of those old Packards from the Thirties since then.

I'm not talking about the one-off classic masterpieces from the late Twenties and early Thirties. They are magnificent, but they have always been far beyond my meager means. Actually, I am more interested in the car designs that came shortly after that, thanks to the Depression. The surviving car companies were short of funds at that point and knew they could not come out with all-new cars every year. But those same companies also knew they couldn't just keep offering the same old, same old. They needed to stand out to survive.

Some great designers and stylists came to the rescue. Harley Earl started it all at General Motors back in 1927 by founding GM's Art and Colour Section, but there were several other greats that came soon after, such as Gordon Buehrig, who designed the magnificent 810-812 coffin-nosed Cords



of 1936; Raymond Loewy, who designed the Studebaker Champion; Amos Northup, who designed the "sharknose" Grahams; and especially Ford's brilliant E.T. Gregorie. And then there was Ed Macauley at Packard.

In 1982, my wife and I were at an antique show where we saw a clean 1939 Packard 110 Coupe for sale at a modest price. I fell in love all over again, and after witnessing my moment of ecstasy, my wife said, "Why don't you just buy it? You can afford it, and you've always wanted one." So I did. And since then, I have owned and sometimes restored four of them, along with a couple of La Salles, which were kind of a Deco styling counterpoint to the Junior Packards.

Those Packards were considered to be of conservative good taste, and were driven by bankers, doctors, and ministers, whereas La Salles were bold and cutting-edge, and were driven by movie stars like Hedy Lamarr and Harley Earl himself, who preferred them to the more expensive, but less sporty Cadillacs. I only have these "Art Deco/Streamline era" cars because I can't own the Chrysler Building in New York, or Union Station in Los Angeles, both of which exhibit a similar exciting style on a grander scale.

I've come to grips with being a misfit of my generation, loving cars and styles that happened before I was born, but don't think I am alone in the world. Maybe we should get a club together and reminisce about that beautiful time in design history—though I would not want to have lived through the Great Depression with all its tumult and desperation. There was the Dust Bowl, bank failures, and an average life expectancy of only 60, but all the dire necessity during of the era turned out to be the mother of invention for some inimitable design innovations.

If you too like these old prewar everyday machines, I will say this: They are easy to work on, parts are still out there for the ones that were mass produced, and they are generally a delight to drive if you are not in a hurry. If you go for a Depression-era car, grab a manual for it and join a marque club. But don't do it if you prefer to remain in the background or are on the run, because people will come up to you anywhere you go, just to explore such unique design thinking from another age. 🚗



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