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AMERICA'S COLLECTOR-CAR OWNERSHIP MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER 2023 #230

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On the Cover: In the Pacific Northwest, photographer Eric English spent a day out in the wild with this nicely restored 1964 Dodge W200 Crew Cab.

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HEMMINGS CLASSIC CAR

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

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Subscription rates in the US and Possessions: 12 issues
for \$19.95, Canada \$30.95; (CDN price includes surface
mail and GST tax). All other countries \$32.95 in US funds.

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Matthew Litwin

Travelling Tunes



Write to our Editor at mlitwin@hemmings.com and follow him on Instagram @[matt.litwin.hemmings](https://www.instagram.com/matt.litwin.hemmings).

"The trek's name left us delving into a litany of iconic road tunes that lyrically painted pictures of endless miles and a need to get somewhere quick."



MAYBE IT'S JUST our lack of luck, but the promise of efficient commercial air travel has taken a noticeable turn for the worse this year. Successive trips to Arizona, Florida, and North Carolina were besieged by increasingly longer delays, the latter of which had us stranded first in a terminal, and then onboard a big Boeing for nearly 12 hours in total. That's not including a connecting flight, or the required early arrival to check bags and pass through security, or the commute home from the airport. Add it all up and the North Carolina nightmare consumed 19 hours. Had I driven, the trek would have been less than 11—with stops.

Unlike Pavlov's dog, David Conwill and I then flew to north Indiana for a series of groundbreaking features that will be unveiled in forthcoming issues. Almost on cue, our flight out was parked at the end of the runway for 30 minutes, long enough to obliterate the layover. Think "Run, Forrest, run!" Two productive days in Nappanee, though, left us in a euphoric state, which only crumbled when the first leg of our return flight was grounded before takeoff by a "maintenance issue." More than two hours later the problem was fixed. We were on our way, until the same issue "manifested" itself at 30,000 feet, forcing a diversion to Dayton, Ohio. By the time we landed—fortunately without incident—it was clear that, one, we'd miss a rebooked connecting flight; and two, we'd be stranded overnight at some far-off hub.

Monty Python sang "Always Look on the Bright Side of Life." So rather than submit to more stresses beyond our control, we left the terminal, commandeered a one-way rental, and drove into the approaching nightfall. Our destination was a little over 11 hours away, a briefly frustrating fact considering we were roughly 10 hours from home that morning. Solace was found when we comically dubbed the trek "Our Cannonball Run" (Full disclosure: We had no intentions of breaking interstate records). The trek's name left us delving into a litany of iconic road tunes that lyrically painted pictures of endless miles and a need to get somewhere quick. We narrowed our list of favorites to three. In no particular order:

"Cannonball Run", by Ray Stevens:

What do you say when there are no words? (Beat it.);
 Feel a song that's never been heard? (Sing it.);
 How do you know when you hear the call? (Answer it.);
 What do you do when you've done it all? (Ball.);
 Cannonball!
 It's not what you do it's how you do it. Be anything you wanna be.
 It's not what you got it's how you use it. You be you and I'll be me.
 It's just a matter of style - you can't fake it.
 Mile after mile, feeling free.
 If you've got the soul - you can make it.
 Move 'em out,
 Let 'em roll,
 From sea to shining sea.

"East Bound and Down" by Jerry Reed:

East bound and down, loaded up and truckin'
 A-we gonna do what they say can't be done;
 We've got a long way to go, and a short time to get there,
 I'm east bound, just watch ol' "Bandit" run.
 Keep your foot hard on the pedal,
 Son, never mind them brakes,
 Let it all hang out 'cause we got a run to make;
 The boys are thirsty in Atlanta,
 And there's beer in Texarkana,
 And we'll bring it back no matter what it takes.

Finally, Off the silver screen, we settled on "Drivin' My Life Away" by Eddie Rabbitt:

Well, the midnight headlight blind you on a rainy night,
 Steep grade up ahead, slow me down, makin' no time,
 But I gotta keep rollin'.
 Those windshield wipers slappin' out a tempo,
 Keepin' perfect rhythm with the song on the radio,
 But I gotta keep rollin'.
 Ooh, I'm drivin' my life away,
 Lookin' for a better way, for me;
 Ooh, I'm drivin' my life away,
 Lookin' for a sunny day.

Somewhere on Interstate 90, the ordeal became another travel memory, like our trek in Hemmings' 1940 Buick Century. Or that of Dr. Lee Harman—documented on pages 50–55 of this issue—who purchased a 1935 Brewster Ford town car in Indiana and drove it to his Camano Island, Washington, home. In a moment of reflection while pulling into my driveway, perhaps the fouled-up flights are telling Dave and me that it's time for another vintage-ride road trip. All that remains is "To where, in what, and with which tunes." 🚗



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Refurbishment, Not Restoration

This 1956 Austin-Healey 100 BN2 will be correct in the details, but not too nice to drive

BY DAVID CONWILL
PHOTOS BY DAVID CONWILL
& MATTHEW LITWIN

Working on a project vehicle in your garage? Photographs and a brief synopsis of the current state of restoration or refurbishment can be sent to mlitwin@hemmings.com, or write to us at Garage Time, c/o Hemmings Classic Car, 222 Main Street, Bennington, Vermont 05201.

THIS CAR STARTED with the opposite of previous-owner syndrome. The previous owner, the fellow who sold this 1956 Austin-Healey 100 to current owner/refurbisher Ken Gypson of Poestenkill, New York, did right by the car in his turn, but Ken's determined to take it to the next step.

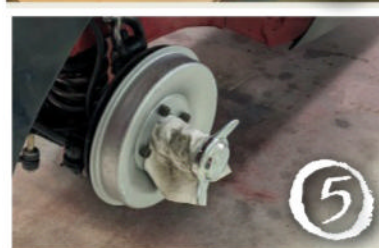
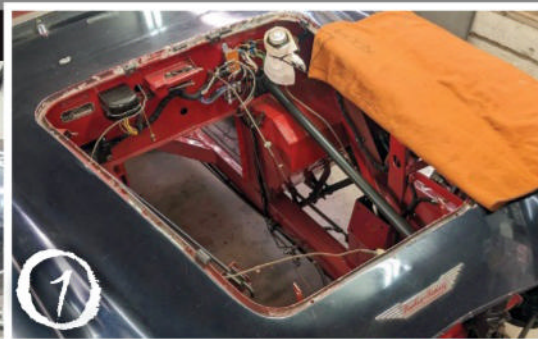
"The one thing I want to be perfectly clear: It's not a restoration, it's a refurbishment. I don't want to restore it to the point where I'm afraid to drive it. If I'm afraid to drive it, I can't own it."

Ken has had several "Big Healeys" in his life, going back to his youth when they were still available in knockabout condition at entry level pricing. As such, he's no stranger to their innards and he recognized a good foundation to build a correct driver when he saw one.

"After not having a Healey for 10 years, I searched for one and my son found this online. I test drove the car. The guy I bought it from had rebuilt the lower end of the engine and did all the rusty metalwork on the floor and the fenders. He did an outstanding job on the rust repairs, and it ran well."

The engine work had been done with the powerplant in situ and the rust repairs had been accomplished without disturbing most of what was a thoroughly used, if functional, car. Maybe things would have remained that way had not "something funky with the clutch" arisen.

"My friend Dave Frye and I pulled the transmission and found the clutch release bearing bushings were worn," says Ken. That work also revealed that the original Lucas wiring harness,



What's Inside:

1. Pulling the transmission to investigate a clutch issue led to pulling the engine, which in turn led to a valve job, a lot of cleaning and painting, and ultimately to a complete “refurbishment” in the name of drivability. Red paint is a precursor to a color change from blue.

2. This was a perfectly functional wiring harness—but for how long? Alarming signs of disintegration caused Ken and his friend Dave to opt for complete replacement of the original Lucas system. The new setup is from British Wiring and was nearly installed as of this writing.

3. The previous owner had accomplished all the rust repair and had rebuilt the bottom end of the engine without removing it. Taking out the good-running 2.660-cc inline-four gave Ken the opportunity to rebuild the cylinder head, and send the carburetors out for restoration.

4. There’s not a lot to go wrong on the classic SU sidedraft carburetor, but age will eventually wallow out the bushings on any throttle shaft. British Superior on Long Island, New York, handled that repair and polished up the brass and aluminum.

5. To ensure a car that drives like new, Ken and Dave are going beyond the glamorous and pretty parts. Fresh suspension and brake pieces will have the Healey making full use of the refurbished powertrain. A brand-new set of knock-off wire wheels and fresh tires are awaiting installation for the first shakedown run.

while undoubtedly functional, was “a total rat’s nest.” Ken sourced a replacement through British Wiring in Bally, Pennsylvania. “In order to install that, we pulled the engine.”

Pulling the engine led to a thorough cleaning and detail painting of the chassis, including a color change on the underside of the body to red. The topside of the body will remain unchanged until the mechanical refreshment has been sorted.

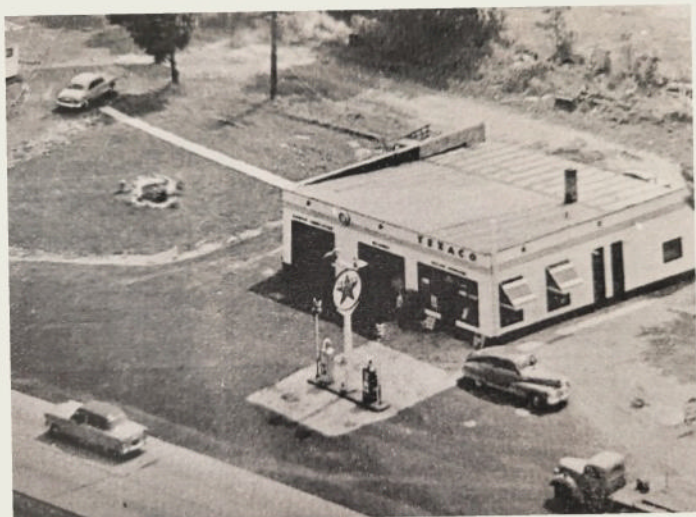
“Our plan before we paint the body is to test drive the Healey and make sure everything is copacetic. We don’t want to paint the exterior and then have to take the engine and transmission out; it increases the chance of denting or scratching something. The aluminum dents really easily.”

Engine refurbishment included a valve job and a rebuild of the SU carburetors by Joe Curto of British Superior in Flushing, New York. Rebuilds are mostly a matter of replacing the brass throttle bushings and cleaning up the aluminum castings, though Ken says occasionally overzealous amateurs will also damage the SU’s needle valve.

The chassis will also be ready for the refreshed engine. “It’s got brand-new wire wheels, new bumpers, shock absorbers, brakes, master cylinder, wheel cylinders, clutch throw-out bearing, pressure plate, and brake reservoir.” It helps that aftermarket support for the Big Healeys is robust. “It’s pretty easy to get parts,” Ken says. California- and Virginia-based Moss Motors is another key supplier to the project. 🚗

My Father's Texaco Service Station

Memories of growing up at a full-service station



IT WAS 1950, and after years of working at a local Ford–Mercury dealer—minus time away to serve during World War II—my father built and opened a Texaco service station on State Route 29 in Galway, New York. My dad's was your typical full-service station of the day. The building was white with a couple of green stripes to go along with Texaco's corporate colors. It had two work bays in front, one of which had a lift, and another bay in the back perpendicular to the front bays. At first, the station had a two-pump island that was later expanded to three pumps. Two of those pumps were regular (Fire Chief) and one was premium (Sky Chief). Three underground tanks, totaling 6,000 gallons, held the fuel.

I was born in 1957. Since our house was next door, it wasn't long before I started hanging around the Texaco station. I learned to pump gas when I was about 9 years old and I soon was checking oil, washing windshields, and filling tires with air. I'm not too sure how people felt about some kid doing these things to their car, but I don't recall hearing any complaints—although I do remember accidentally putting a quart of transmission fluid into an engine instead of motor oil. I also took care of restocking the soda machine, sweeping the office floor, and filling the cigarette machine (remember those?); I believe we sold cigarettes for 35 cents a pack. My dad was paying me \$1.00/hour, which, for a kid too young to have a driver's license, was plenty.

Back in the day, fuel fillers in vehicles could be located almost anywhere. There were a few times when a customer would drive in with a 1956 Chevy and be surprised that I knew the gas cap was (under the left taillamp assembly). As I recall, GM seemed the most inventive. Apparently, taillamps and taillamps made for great hiding places for gas caps. Early Volkswagen Beetles had their tanks and filler located in the front trunk and attendants had to open the panel to gain access. Even as a young kid, I questioned the soundness of that design. I learned quickly to look for

seams or hinges to try to find the fuel cap. Mustangs, Camaros, and Gremlins were easy, with their gas caps obvious and decorative. At some point, some designer concluded that behind the rear license plate was a great spot for the fuel filler, and then my job suddenly got easier. Almost every manufacturer followed suit.

When it was nice out, pumping gas and providing basic service was easy and enjoyable but, in the winter, it was a different story. Our gas station was vulnerable to westerly winds which, during winter, seemed to blow directly from the Arctic. I quickly developed an appreciation for manufacturers who put the filler behind the license plate. Back then people did not shut their cars off when they were being filled with gas, and I can remember huddling down at the back of the car next to a tail pipe, enjoying the warmth of the exhaust as I pumped gas into their car.

One of the benefits of growing up at the garage was that I had the privilege to know literally hundreds of people. Many were real characters, like the newspaper delivery man. He was an older gentleman who always bought \$2.10 of gas, and always shorted us the 10 cents. We didn't really mind. The Federal Reserve had recently switched from silver coins to the nickel/copper coins still in use today, and he was a treasure trove of silver coins that, of course, I kept. I still have most of them today.

Another character was nicknamed "Mad Dog." One day, when I was about 10 or 11, he challenged me to start his car. After getting the key, I could only get it to turn the ignition about ¼ turn and that was it. I looked all around for a starter button on the dash or on the floor. Not finding it, I somewhat sheepishly walked back inside admitting my defeat. It was a 1960 Buick and the starter switch was incorporated in the accelerator pedal.

Gas prices back then were a lot more consistent. Customers would usually ask for a dollar of gasoline instead of a fill-up. We had to input not only the currency into the cash register but also the amount of gallons dispensed. You quickly learned that \$5.00 of regular was 13 gallons of gas, and that \$2.00 was 5.2 gallons. Gas hovered around 38 or 39 cents per gallon for as long as I was there until the fuel crisis of 1973.

Credit cards were a lot less common then. When a customer wanted to use one, I would have to run into the office and swipe the card through a machine that pressed the particulars on to a two-page carbon-copy slip, then run back with the slip and their card on a neat little red tray. After a customer signed, we gave them the top copy along with their card. The bottom copy was a thin slip. Every week my father would gather the slips, add them up, and send them to Texaco to get his money.

We had a wrecker and would tow in broken-down and crashed cars; we didn't have a fancy wheel lift or even dollies. We'd either tow, drag, or push the vehicles in. There were several times owners just gave us their cars instead of paying for a costly repair. Most of those vehicles would end up in our junk yard across the road down behind some trees. On occasion, we would take one of these cars and get it running for my sister and I to drive around in the field behind the gas station. I learned to drive in a 1955 Chevy when I was 9 years old. I had to sit on a pillow to look through the steering wheel and peer out

the windshield. Other “field” cars were a ’58 Edsel with the gear select push-buttons in the steering wheel hub and a speedometer that spun around a stationary needle, two ’60 Chevy wagons, a ’62 Studebaker Lark, and a ’64 Impala—all brought back to some semblance of running life. Generally, we would destroy them within a year or so, and then go on to the next car.

The late ’60s and early ’70s were great times to be at a gas station. There were very few foreign cars, except for Volkswagens and the occasional Mercedes. Toyota and Datsun (Nissan) were just beginning to make some headway into the market. Luckily for me, there were all sorts of interesting domestic cars. I can remember being impressed with SS Chevelles and their cowl induction hoods, Mach 1s, Plymouth ’Cudas, and the like. An older friend of mine had a gorgeous ’68 Camaro SS/RS with a 396-cu.in. V-8. I remember a guy with a 440 Super Bee showing us how he could “get rubber” in all four gears. Another guy showed us how he could smoke the tires of his ’69 Mach 1 in our parking lot after I jokingly doubted his claim. One customer took me for a truly scary ride in his 429-powered 1970 Torino Cobra. We were doing well over 100 mph when a vehicle pulled out in front of us. Today it would have been no big deal, but in that drum brake Torino, it was an experience. I clearly remember pressing the imaginary brake pedal on my side of the car before we had to swerve around the slower car.

The gas station was also a great hangout. My dad let some local teens use the back bay to try to make a drag car out of an early ’60s Oldsmobile with a 215 V-8 (they failed). There was another group that used to hang around at night. I can recall

pitching quarters with them to see who was going to pay for a round of banana splits that someone would then go after. During the day, there were rousing games of three-handed cut-throat pinochle going on in the office.

Then it was 1973. Horsepower disappeared, and for a while, so did gasoline, when the Arab oil embargo began. We could only get as much gas from our distributor as what we sold during the same period from a year prior (if we were lucky). Gas prices pretty much doubled and my father reduced the station’s hours from 6:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m., to 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m., which pretty much cut me out of a job. We began to sell gas only to the local businesses, such as the loggers, and delivery people. On the other hand, I became the most popular kid in school, at least to my teachers who were looking to buy some gasoline. It seemed every day a teacher would stop me in the hall and ask if they could come over to the station and get filled up. Eventually the embargo ended, but gas prices would never be the same or stay consistent. Around that time, my father decided it was a good time for him to retire. Since I was still in high school, he decided to sell the station to his long-time mechanic. The station stayed pretty much the same for the next 20 years until the tanks were due for replacement (again). They pulled the tanks and stopped selling gas. Later it changed hands, was remodeled, and is almost unrecognizable today. It’s used mostly for storage.

With few exceptions, full-service gas stations are a rarity today. I look back at my childhood with fondness. I am so glad that I got to know so many people and make all those memories while enjoying the different automobiles that pulled in for service. 🚗



REMINISCING relates your personal stories and remembrances enjoying or owning a car. To submit your stories, email us at editorial@hemmings.com or write to us at **Reminiscing, c/o Hemmings Classic Car, 222 Main Street, Bennington, Vermont 05201.**



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IN 1959, I WAS LIVING in Hollywood, Florida, as an eighth grader displaced from the Midwest. While visiting my grandmother's tiny duplex one day, I discovered a tall stack of ancient *National Geographic* magazines. I asked Grandma if I could cut out some of the car ads that I found in them, and she readily agreed.

Her collection extended back to the late 1920s, and I was able to acquire numerous Cadillac, Lincoln, De Soto Airflow, and other ads from that decade through the early 1950s. Among the most intriguing were two ads for the 1951 Frazer Vagabond, including the one shown on page 70 of your June 2023 edition ("Rear View Ads").

As I am presently in the middle of organizing some 28,000 old car ads for ultimate sale, I felt it would be an easy task to lay my hands on the two Frazer ads. It was my intention to describe, or even send to you the companion ad to the one pictured. In that elusive ad, the SUV or crossover quality of the Vagabond was even more evident. The vehicle was being used at a small-town airport as a support firefighting vehicle, showing heavy fire extinguishers and hose reels being accessed through the rear hatch.

I've found all the rest of Grandma's stash, so I have to believe that I sold the two Frazer items as "truck" literature last year while disposing of my commercial, utility vehicle, and fire apparatus literature, as well as photos and ads.

Personally, I've been driving hatchback vehicles since 1972 and can't imagine why most people would want anything else. Only with the current demand for SUVs and crossovers has the flexibility of such vehicles finally been recognized. Meanwhile, organizing 28,000 items has become a form of exercise for this 78-year-old. The living room floor is the only space large enough for the task and my

I JUST FINISHED READING your June issue and the one article I really enjoyed was the restoration of the 1951 Studebaker. Then I again really enjoyed the old Frazer ad. I remember those Kaiser/Frazers being the most beautiful automobiles and would love to have one. I really like the independent automobiles. My dad had Essex/Terraplane/Hudsons until they went out of business. I barely remember his Terraplane, but well remember his 1940 Hudson. There was a doctor who bought a [new] Hudson every year. Dad had a deal with the dealer to buy the low-mileage one that the doctor turned in every other year. Dad was a salesman and put a lot of miles on a car. He kept that 1940 Hudson through World War II with over 200,000 miles on it. A friend who owned a shop overhauled the engine several times and kept it running for him until dad bought a 1950 Hudson. After that he became a Chrysler fan.

I have a B.S. in aeronautical engineering. After I graduated, I got married, moved from Massachusetts to California, and worked at the old Douglas Aircraft Plant in Santa Monica as a laboratory test engineer. Douglas was going downhill with layoffs every week. My wife, Joan and I decided to go back to New England to be close to our families. I obtained a position at Sikorsky in Connecticut as a flight test engineer. We had an MG TD that we were not going to drive back; I sold it and flew back. My brother-in-law gave me an old beat-up Chevy to drive that had been sitting in his field. After a while I went

looking for a second-hand car that was not beat up and found a 1955 Hudson with only 20,000-something miles on it. It was sitting in the back of a lot and I got it for very little money. This was in 1961 after Hudson had gone out of business. I loved the car, but it had an aluminum head and I was constantly installing gaskets. One time the gasket let go when my wife and I were away from home and by the time we got back the engine was ruined. My wife's uncle was able to get me a 1964 Chevy station wagon for a low price to replace the Hudson.

Fast forward; my wife and I moved to Texas so I could work in the Dallas-Forth Worth aircraft industries. I worked at every one in the area as a flight test engineer. Getting laid off and then hired elsewhere is the normal workings in the aircraft industry. My wife had MS and I retired as soon as possible.

She passed away in 2002. I sold our home to my daughter and moved in with my son and his family. My son told me of a fiberglass car that reminded him of the pictures he had seen of our MG TD. I went to see it, had them paint it, and bought it. It is a 1970 Volkswagen with a Gazelle fiberglass body resembling a 1929 Mercedes.

While looking through antique cars on the computer, I came across a 1955 Hudson Hornet for sale. It was in New York City and I had an old friend in Connecticut go look at it for me. He said it was in good shape with some interior problems, but it was a good buy. I bought it and had it shipped to my son's shop. I have displayed both

cars in many local shows and have received a few first- and second-place trophies. I met my current wife, Jean at our church. We went to dinner a few times and eventually married. She is a race walker and has many trophies. Jean was not too happy when one of my second-place trophies was larger than any of her many first-place ones.

I noticed some rust under the rug in the Hudson. When I removed it I saw that the heater had leaked and rusted out the firewall; it was not seen from under the hood. I removed the heater and found other things that needed work, and began working on these but still showed the Hudson in the "Under Construction" category until the engine gave up the ghost. The Hudson is now in pieces in my son's shop. He has taken it over as I am now 88 years old and cannot do what I would love to do anymore.

I would really like to see more independent automobiles featured, and maybe some fiberglass replicas. There are quite a few around and they're rather interesting. Attached are pictures of the VW Gazelle and Hudson Hornet. Thanks for a great magazine.

JAMES HICKEY
Springtown, Texas

Editor's reply: James, thanks for your letter of kinds words and story. We, too, appreciate the "independent" makes, and several fantastic stories are scheduled for the next few issues, beginning with the 1966 AMC Ambassador DPL that you'll find on page 48 of September's issue.

memory is at the point where I am constantly up and down, retrieving items left in the other room. In fact, maybe those Frazer items will resurface someday after all!

RICHARD B. HATCH
Fort Wayne, Indiana

LET ME BEGIN by saying that I'm a huge fan of Patrick Foster's work. As the proud owner of *American Motors - The Last Independent*, and previous owner of a beautiful 1973 AMC Hornet X, I read his articles in *Hemmings Classic Car* every month and enjoy them all. That said (yup, here comes a bit of confrontation...), his column in issue #227 took me a bit off guard. He'd written about the "could've been" merger of Hudson and Willys. Patrick's points about the potentially perfect marriage this could have made were absolutely on point. The potential merger probably would've

rewritten the automotive history books for decades on. Where I begin to disagree is toward the end of his script. The Jeep brand was not enough to save Kaiser, it was not enough to save AMC, and not even enough to save Chrysler. Daimler-Benz was tasked with the latter. I'm not exactly sure why Patrick thinks that Jeep, in and of itself, would've been enough to save Hudson. Now I will grant you that this would have absolutely been a symbiotic merger of the nth degree as he so capably pointed out. The product lines were capable of integrating and meshing themselves together in an almost unprecedented manner. Still, management makes the company (see George Romney vs. Roy Abernethy), and these were two companies in peril. I highly doubt that a single make — even as unique as Jeep was back then — would have been able to salvage what could have turned into a large

conglomerate. Anyway, thank you and I'm genuinely looking forward to your next essay.

GREGG CAMARA
Westport, Massachusetts

You make some very good points Gregg. Thank you for sharing your thoughts.
— Patrick Foster

IN REFERENCE TO your September 2023 cover story, late one evening more than 50 years ago, my college roommate and I were headed back to campus on a two-lane country highway. Tim, the roommate, was driving his Porsche 356 fastback coupe as usual, pretty much flat out, about 90 MPH give or take a few knots. Headlamps approached from behind and eventually pulled up close. Then the vehicle started to pass us and paused briefly alongside. We were surprised and shocked to see that it was a Karmann Ghia! The Karmann pulled

ahead, and we eventually lost sight of its taillamps. What was this, at 90 MPH being passed by a Volkswagen? Later as we drove into the town where our school was, there was the Karmann Ghia parked by the town square. As we pulled up behind the Karmann, a young lady climbed out of the driver's seat, smiled and said she had a six-cylinder Corvair engine in her car!! We were shocked and surprised a second time that night as in those long-ago times, we thought speed was a man's game. In a moment the young lady climbed into her Karmann Ghia and headed west with the night, never to be seen again.

Thanks for the great magazine!

BOB CUSHMEYER
Opelousas, Louisiana



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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1957 FORD FAIRLANE 500 SKYLINER



While the two-seat Thunderbird is Ford's reigning Fifties classic, the contemporary Skyliner had even more of a wow factor with its retractable hard roof. This first-year example left the factory Inca Gold, but was repainted in Colonial White over Willow Green. While the finish was said to have some flaws, the top was shown in a video to operate properly, and the two-tone interior looked attractive. It's not known if the 292-cu.in. V-8 was original to this car; it was rebuilt three years ago and, like the Ford-O-Matic, was said to run and drive smoothly. Some chassis work was done although cracked bushings and steering play were still present. The Skyliner offered a lot of bang for the buck.

Reserve: \$19,000

Selling Price: \$23,258

Recent Market Range: N/A

1986 PORSCHE 944 TURBO



A Guards Red Porsche 944 is a bona fide Eighties icon, even more so when it's turbocharged. This example, which sold for a very reasonable sum as a post-auction Make Offer listing, ticked all the right boxes; a two-owner car that had fewer than 30,000 original miles. A few paint chips were divulged on the exterior, while the black leather-upholstered interior featured an aftermarket stereo; the factory radio, upgraded with Bluetooth capability, went with the car. The 2.5-liter four-cylinder and five-speed manual transmission looked spotless and promised trouble-free operation, while the undercarriage was similarly tidy, and tires retained plenty of tread. This first-year 944 Turbo was a score.

Reserve: \$42,000

Selling Price: \$44,100

Recent Market Range: \$39,310-\$51,450

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Something Different

Mitch Layton admittedly has a broad taste in transportation. In his ownership history of interesting vehicles, you'll find a 1953 Volkswagen Sedan, '67 Volvo 122, '72 Ford Bronco, '80 Toyota four-wheel-drive pickup, and '97 Ford F-350 Crew Cab. His list of motorcycles is even more eclectic—'67 Triumph TR6C, '70 Zundapp 100 ISDT, '92 BMW R100 RS, a couple modern Harley-Davidsons, and a KTM 1290 "Super Adventure." The latter indicates his passion for adventure riding, a motorcycle discipline that involves long, self-supported tours, both on and off-road, over frequently challenging and technical terrain. He shares this passion with son, Tyler, which also brings us to the featured vehicle herein: a 1964 Dodge W200 Crew Cab that Mitch and Tyler restored together 20 years ago.

Mitch bought the Dodge from a truck-driving buddy, Steve, who enjoys keeping one eye peeled for interesting automotive relics during his hours behind the wheel; he spotted this Dodge within view of a highway near San Bernardino, California. Little is known or remembered about the history of said truck, though contrary to



WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY
ERIC ENGLISH

**It's not every day that you see a
1964 Dodge W200 Crew Cab**





The 318-cu.in. V-8 wasn't intended as a powerhouse in stock form, rather a workhorse engine when installed in trucks. Nevertheless, Mitch fitted it with a few aftermarket parts that provide a bit more grunt. Interestingly, the 318 was the only V-8 offered in 1964 Dodge four-wheel-drive pickups.



Twenty years ago when Mitch was looking for one, a new Weiland "High Rise" dual plane was a relatively easy find. We're told that speed parts for the Poly 318 are considerably tougher to come by today.

"I couldn't bring myself to paint the engine in the original Chrysler turquoise, as I just felt it clashed with the factory green engine compartment."



A 1-ton Chevy power booster and dual reservoir master cylinder were added to the stock drum brake system, which Mitch says made a dramatic improvement to the truck's braking ability.

what we initially thought when viewing the original color scheme, it does not have a Forest Service or Park Service background. Steve bought the Dodge from its original owner with around 50,000 miles showing on the odometer. He believes it was essentially retired by that point. There is no way of telling what the mileage truly is, but the as-purchased condition could make 50,000 miles believable. Little rust was present, the body still wore faded original paint, the steering wheel showed modest wear, and the paint you see on the dash today is all original—save for the ashtray.

Steve was able to make a deal and added the Dodge to his collection of four-wheel-drive projects that included various Jeeps. Yet like many an enthusiast, Steve was aware that not all of his projects

would see completion. So when Mitch was visiting and expressed interest in the W200, Steve was receptive. "Something clicked when I saw the '64, it's just something different," Mitch says. "This was before there was as much interest in trucks as there is today, but I just loved the rough-and-tumble nature of an early Crew Cab Power Wagon. I love the styling of the 'Sweptline' bed and other elements of the design. Interestingly, I later found that '64 was the first full year Dodge built crew cabs, having introduced them midway through '63."

Mitch also rightly figured the Dodge would make a great father/son project for himself and Tyler, who at the time was an impressionable teenager. Mitch had already passed on his love for riding and working on

motorcycles in Tyler. Wrenching on the '64 would be his son's first extensive hands-on experience with automotive restoration.

Beginning around 2002, the duo dug in and had the Dodge done in about a year. Mitch recalls, "Tyler already had a great work ethic and really put in a ton of time on the project, including complete disassembly, refinishing parts, and reassembly. I recall that during that summer he was pretty much working on it nonstop." They were blessed with a largely rust-free SoCal vehicle that was amazingly straight and unchanged considering the life of many comparable workhorses. After complete disassembly and a media blast to bare metal, the truck's return to glory could commence.

A common malady of this era Dodge are leaks at the corners of the windshield that lead to floorpan rust, and there was some of this in the front pans. It was remedied by reproduction sheetmetal from Vintage Power Wagons in Fairfield, Iowa. Some light pitting was also evident on the floor of the bed, but the dent- and corrosion-free condition of the rear wheelwells more than made up for it. A body shop in Buena Park did metal repairs, prep, and paint, and while Mitch has forgotten the name of the business, he still has a strong memory of the fellow who did the bulk of the work. "He was awesome. So meticulous, and with an amazing attention to detail. Some people would have seen this as just an old truck and not worth going the 'extra mile,' but this guy had the same vision I did. Proof of the quality effort he put in 20 years ago is that the truck looks as good today as it did when it was finished."

Once the paint and body were done, Mitch and Tyler tackled the mechanicals. While the majority of '64 Dodge light-duty trucks were built with Chrysler's bulletproof Slant Six, this one rolled out of the factory with the optional A-series 318-cu.in. V-8.



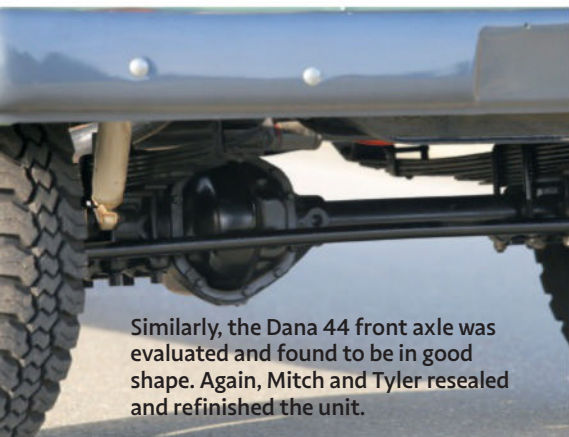
The writer was shocked to learn that the dash paint is original other than the front of the ashtray, which was obviously used regularly at some point. The rest of the interior was refinshed as necessary, including the stock appearing upholstery.



Having a back seat in a pickup was a far rarer concept in 1964. Dodge began Crew Cab manufacturing part way through the prior model year.



The Dana 60 rear end was evaluated and determined to be in good shape. Mitch and Tyler simply resealed and refinished the unit, which has been trouble-free for the last twenty years.



Similarly, the Dana 44 front axle was evaluated and found to be in good shape. Again, Mitch and Tyler resealed and refinished the unit.



Bamboo trim on the roof is a custom touch.

Also known as the poly-head 318, it is not to be confused with the LA-series 318 that would debut in 1967 (the LA itself launching in '64 as a 273). The poly 318 head and valve cover arrangement makes the engine appear larger than its displacement would suggest, but it matters little in the cavernous engine bay of a ¾-ton pickup.

Mitch had the factory-installed engine rebuilt by Superior Automotive Engineering in Anaheim, California, which boosted performance at Mitch's request by using a Chet Herbert RV-spec cam, along with light cylinder-head port work, Egge pistons, a Weiand dual-plane aluminum intake, a Holley 570 Street Avenger carburetor, and metallic ceramic-coated headers. Says Mitch, "I couldn't bring myself to paint the engine in the original Chrysler turquoise, as I just felt it clashed with the factory green engine compartment." Instead, the engine wears a coat of Hemi Orange.

The rest of the factory drivetrain was rebuilt and/or cleaned and refinished to original specifications, including the NP420 transmission and NP201 transfer case. Interestingly, the factory arrangement was a heavier duty Dana 60 rear differential with 4.10 gearset, and a Dana 44 front transfer case with 4.09s. Brakes are heavy-

duty drums at all four corners, but with an upgrade to power assist. This was done via a Helitool adapter that allowed for a more modern one-ton Chevy truck power booster and master cylinder combination. Fabricated brake lines tie it all together, and the combination "works very well," according to Mitch.

One of many appealing elements of this W200 are the Budd 19.5-inch wheels and narrow Goodyear radials. In Mitch's mind, the combination "makes the truck," and we heartily agree. Mitch explained that Budds were optional, often seen on heavy-duty government-spec rigs. Think fire department, military, etc. The Budds aren't original to Mitch's Crew Cab; it came with split rims of a significantly smaller diameter. Nevertheless, Mitch knew about Budds and searched for a set of five.

"A fellow online was selling a project Power Wagon that had Budds," Mitch explains. "I contacted him to see if he'd sell the wheels separate, but he wouldn't." About a month later, however, the seller reached out. The Power Wagon hadn't sold, and he was willing to part with the wheels. When the Budds arrived, they were just as described, shod with ancient tires that Mitch had to cut from the rims using a saw. "The tires were like granite,



Original front bumper finish would have been white or optional chrome, but Mitch chose a tasteful dark gray powdercoat to match the wheels.



1964 was the last year for Dodge's quad headlamp front end during the distinctive '61-'71 era.

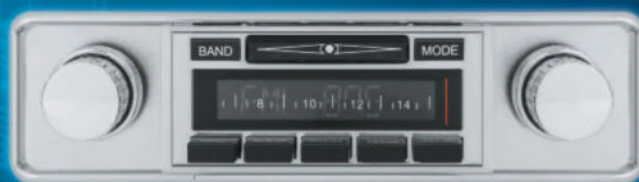
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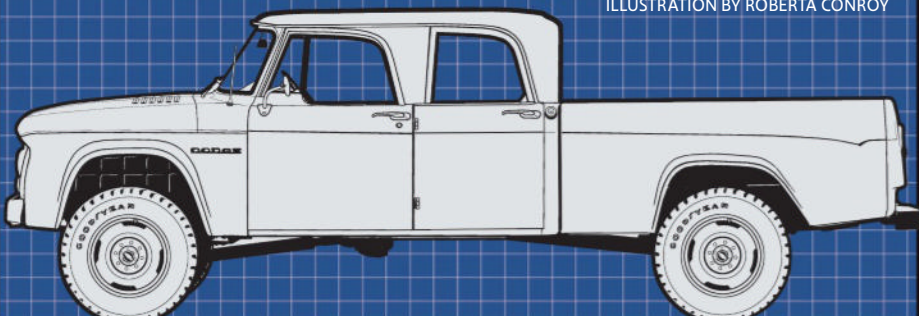
Owner's View

"I've been enamored by this truck since the moment I saw it at Steve's place a couple decades ago. There's just something about the body style, and the interesting details that Dodge designers implemented in an era before crash regulations. I have a 1997 F-350 Crew Cab that's a lot more capable and pleasant to drive, but there's just nothing like the driving experience of an old truck like this—as long as you're not talking about driving all day and/or in hot weather! Tyler and I had restored a Triumph TR6C "desert sled" motorcycle when he was younger, so he was keen at the idea of helping me on the Crew Cab. It turned out as good as we could have hoped, and every time I drive the thing, I think of our experiences together."

— Mitch Layton

1964 Dodge W200 Crew Cab

ILLUSTRATION BY ROBERTA CONROY



SPECIFICATIONS

Base price: \$3,269

ENGINE

Type: 1964 Chrysler polyspherical A-block OHV V-8, cast iron block and heads;
Displacement: 318 cubic inches; **Compression ratio:** 8.25:1; **Horsepower:** 210 @ 4,000 rpm;
Torque: 290 @ 2,400 rpm

TRANSMISSION

Type: NP420 4-speed; **Ratios:** 1st – 6.68:1, 2nd – 3.10:1, 3rd – 1.69:1, 4th – 1.00:1, Reverse – 8.25:1
Transfer case: NP201 2-speed

DIFFERENTIALS

Front: Dana 44 w/4.09 gears; **Rear:** Dana 60 w/4.10 gears

STEERING

Type: Manual recirculating ball; **Ratio:** 24:1

BRAKES

Type: Hydraulic four-wheel drums, power assist; **Front / Rear:** 12 1/8 x 2-inch

SUSPENSION

Front / Rear: HD semi-elliptic leaf springs, tubular shocks

WHEELS & TIRES

Wheels: 19.5 x 6-inch Budd steel; **Tires:** 8R19.5 Goodyear G171

PRODUCTION

In total, Dodge produced **104,762** light duty pickups for 1964



WHAT'S IN A NAME: CREW CAB? SWEPTLINE? W200? POWER WAGON?

I used several descriptors in my discussion of Mitch Layton's 1964 Dodge pickup, so let's clarify a bit. "Crew Cab" is a term that Dodge used in period literature for its four-door cab, where it's also sometimes referenced as a six-man Crew Cab. Dodge offered both stepside and fleetside beds on its light-duty trucks of this era, the stepside being officially known as "Utiline," and the fleetside as "Sweptline," the latter no doubt due to the interesting body crease that terminates in a creative flair at the back of the bed. "D-series" trucks were two-wheel-drive, whereas four-wheel-drives received "W-series" nomenclature, thus a half-ton two-wheel-drive was a "D100," and a ¾-ton four-wheel-drive was a "W200." Lastly, "Power Wagon" was a term applied to Dodge four-wheel-drives, rooted in the legendary flat-fender Power Wagons offered stateside from 1946-'68. Mitch's '64 Crew Cab originally wore "Power Wagon" emblems on its hood, but they were in poor condition and removed during restoration.



It took Mitch some searching to realize that Goodyear made a radial that looked at home on his vintage Budd wheels. These Goodyear G171s are 8R19.5 units.



and the rims had about 20 coats of rattle-can paint!" The Budds were then sand-blasted and powdercoated in a dark gray, and shod in vintage-looking Goodyear radials.

As expected, the interior looks period correct, and it's easy to imagine a work crew heading to a job site in the unusual-for-the-day four-door. Beyond the original dash paint, highlights include bench seats rebuilt and recovered by Collins Trim Shop to appear as original, and floors

treated to a utilitarian coat of bedliner. It's decidedly old school, with all the charm and simplicity that the era had to offer. Driving this pickup is a workout, and a far cry from today's near-luxury ¾-tonners. The clutch is heavy-duty, the shifts are notchy with long throws, and the manual steering requires serious input. In short, you gotta love it.

As the years have passed since restoration, interest in this Dodge has only grown. At local shows, his one-of-a-kind truck garners as much attention as a 1970 Hemi 'Cuda. Most people have never seen a Dodge Crew Cab four-wheel drive of this era, much less in meticulously restored condition, especially with the eye appealing combination of its original Turf Green/Sand Dune White color combination. The story of the father/son restoration is compelling as well, and while it didn't transform Tyler into an enthusiast of all things vintage automotive, he still loves motorcycles, riding with Mitch, and the memories and experience of bringing a worn-out truck back to life. And at its core, isn't having positive experiences what the vintage vehicle hobby is all about? 🚚



Mitch was thrilled that the wheelwells hadn't been beaten up during the truck's years of regular duty. Virtually no bodywork was required.



The original rear step bumper had some damage, and required considerable rebuilding plus powdercoating to end up looking as it does here. Considering it was emblazoned with the dealer name, it was worth the time and effort.



Pat Foster

The Revolutionary Super Six

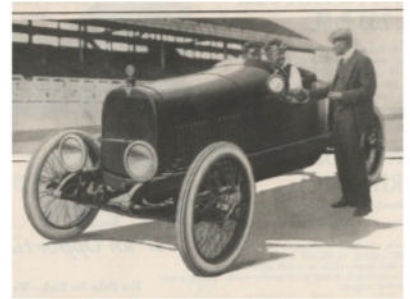
“The
Super Six
featured
a new
side-valve,
six-cylinder
engine
that really
was
revolution-
ary.”

IT SEEMS nowadays that companies like to announce “revolutionary new” products, many of which are simply repackaged versions of existing or far older products. During much of its history, the American automobile industry liked to trumpet “all-new cars” every model year, claiming great advances that many times were pretty minor. But there were certain years when truly ground-breaking things were introduced.

Take, for instance, 1916. It was a boom year for the nascent American auto industry when vehicle production increased by something like 70 percent. The Hudson Motor Car Company—because of production capacity increases pushed through earlier, coupled with the introduction of a radical new model—actually managed to outpace even *that* lofty number; its production jumped a whopping 100 percent. This elevated Hudson into ninth place in an industry that was crowded with worthy competitors. That radical new car was dubbed the “Super Six”—a great name—and it debuted on January 16, 1916. Although none of the advertisements we viewed show a model year for the new car, the company reportedly considered it to be a 1917 product.

The arrival of the Super Six was completely unexpected. That’s because Hudson had initially introduced only a refined Model 40 (a.k.a. the Series G, or Six-40), which was simply an upgrade of its prior year automobile. It was meant to be a stopgap model until the important new car, the stunning Super Six, arrived. When it did, it took the entire industry by storm. The reason was the Super Six featured a new side-valve, six-cylinder engine that really was revolutionary. It featured the best of contemporary thinking, including cylinders cast ‘en bloc for simplicity and greater efficiency, but offered a whole lot more.

In designing the engine, Hudson engineers focused much of their attention on increasing power output by reducing internal friction and enlarging air passages for improved breathing, along with significant cam and carburetion improvements. However, the biggest single innovation was the engine’s counterbalanced (or fully compensated) crankshaft. By designing the crankshaft to balance out both rotating and torsional vibrations, the RPM capability of the engine was greatly increased.



Overnight, this advance, working with all the other engine refinements, made the rest of the industry’s six-cylinder engines seem obsolete. Nobody else had anything like it. Although it displaced 288.5-cu.in., similar in size to Hudson’s prior six-cylinder, the new Super Six boasted vastly more power: 76 hp versus 48 hp, a nearly 60 percent increase. It seemed amazing that engineers could get so much more power out of the same displacement.

The Super Six can thus be considered one of the earliest performance cars. It delivered driving performance on a scale unheard of in Hudson’s price range. And it was affordable! Super Six (Series H) prices began at just \$1,375 for a roadster, which anyone could see represented extraordinary value for the dollar. Even the most expensive Super Six, the seven-passenger Town Car Landaulet, was priced at \$2,750, well below cars of comparable performance, comfort, and quality. It was no wonder buyers flocked to Hudson’s banner, doubling sales.

With the debut of the Super Six, Hudson’s performance image—which was already considerable since its earlier ‘Mile a Minute’ roadster had proven popular with speed enthusiasts—became solidly established. Ralph Mulford, one of the top drivers of the day, managed to do 102 mph over the measured mile at Daytona Beach, setting a new stock-car record. Super Six cars went on to set additional records at Pikes Peak, Sheepshead Bay, and other notable speed venues throughout the year. The special roadster pictured here was driven 1,819 miles in 24 hours – or over 75 mph for a full day and night. Remember, this was in an era when a Model T was pretty much out of breath at anything over 40 mph. The Super Six special had gone farther in one day than any other car in America.

Hudson would build on this boost in reputation and remain in people’s minds as a car of great performance. Its later domination of NASCAR didn’t surprise old Hudson fans—they probably expected it. 🏎️



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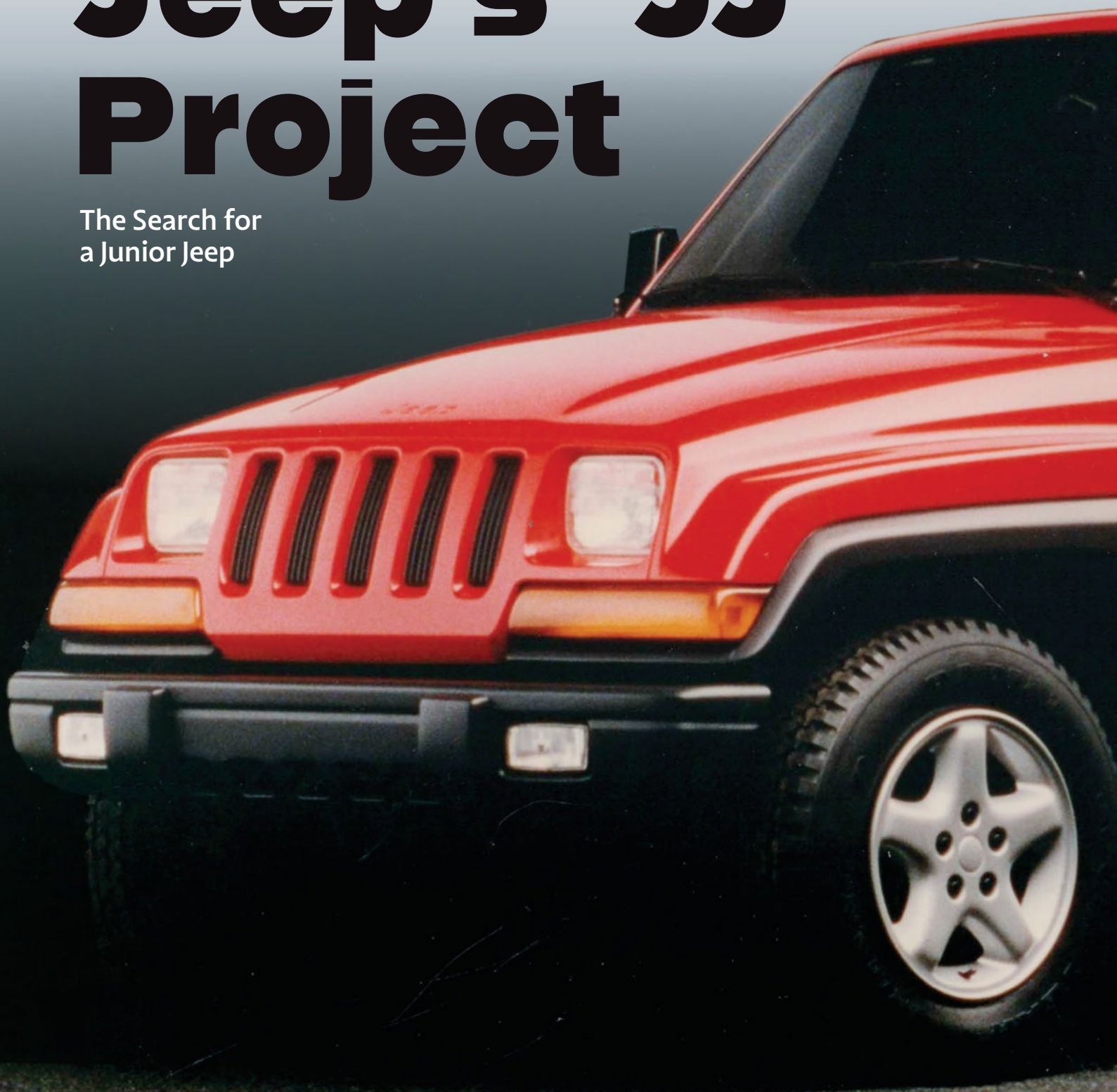
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Automotive Design

Jeep's "JJ" Project

The Search for
a Junior Jeep



BY PATRICK FOSTER WITH JOHN SGALIA
PHOTOS COURTESY OF PATRICK FOSTER

The Jeep JJ project was an attempt to field a vehicle to compete at the low end of the market against the Suzuki Samurai and later, the Daihatsu Rocky.



The original plan for the JJ was to offer just one model, an open roadster with a pull-off soft top. Over time the program grew to encompass other versions.



THE MOMENT Suzuki Motors introduced its new compact Samurai SUV to America for 1986. Jeep management began to worry. True, the Japanese four-wheeler was rather small and slow. Powered by a 1.3-liter overhead-cam four-cylinder that delivered just 63 hp, the Samurai was measured by Motor Trend as accelerating from 0-60 mph in 16.9 seconds. But on the plus side, the Samurai was fun to drive in town, and during off-roading the tough little runt seemed nearly unstoppable. However, the biggest draw—the thing that made the folks at Jeep really sweat—was its base price of \$6,550. By comparison, the base price of Jeep's Wrangler was \$9,899.

Sure, the all-new Wrangler was considered a 1987 model, since the 1986 CJ-7 had a very short production run—the last examples were shipped in January 1986—but the Wrangler's price tag was nearly 50 percent more than the base Suzuki. To buyers who couldn't stretch the budget for a Wrangler, the Suzuki looked like a good deal.

The Jeep division's worries turned out to be justified. Suzuki's original plan was to import 1,200 Samurais per month in its first year (14,400 in total), but demand

proved so strong the company wound up selling 47,000 during the year. By mid-1988, Americans were buying 8,000 Samurais each month, or nearly 100,000 a year.

Jeep management realized many Samurai buyers were folks who, in the ordinary course of things, would eventually have purchased a Wrangler. Now, it was evident Jeep might lose the bulk of the entry-level SUV market to Suzuki. Worse, if Suzuki introduced additional, larger four-wheel-drive vehicles to its lineup, they could capture buyers that were prime prospects for Cherokees and Wagoneers. Obviously, something had to be done.

The funny thing is that a decade earlier American Motors/Jeep had displayed a concept vehicle similar in size and concept to the Suzuki—and Jeep enthusiasts hated it. Called the Concept Jeep II and styled after the early 1950s CJ-3A, it was to be powered by a Renault-supplied four-cylinder drivetrain. Though primarily planned to be offered as a four-wheeler, there was talk of a front-wheel-drive version that would have sold in the lowest price range. Jeep lovers were aghast! A front-wheel-drive Jeep? With a Renault engine? At special private showings of the Concept Jeep II, enthusiasts let the

company know how much they disliked the vehicle, thus Jeep ended up shelving the idea. But in the car business, timing is everything.

By the early 1980s buyers were more ready to accept a smaller SUV. Since Concept II apparently wasn't what people wanted, around 1984 Jeep management authorized an entirely new vehicle development program they dubbed the "J90," a Jeep for the '90s. Work had been progressing steadily when the Samurai debuted. Jeep's goal was to now turn it into a suitable Suzuki-fighter.

Under the direction of Jeep's legendary design chief Bob Nixon, and with lessons learned from the concept, the first phase of the new project evolved under the influence of Michael Moore, recently assigned from the Chrysler interior studios. AMC designer John Sgalia, promoted to Jeep studio manager, was ordered to refocus and inject Jeep design DNA into the production version. The project's new codename: "JJ," for Junior Jeep. Initial development began at American Motors Plymouth Road Jeep Studio. After considering the timing, demands for critical focus, and to protect the security of Renault design variants *, the project moved to a

(* Author's note: The Renault design was developed in the same off-site studio under the direction of Anne Vercruse, who later moved to GM. There was a bit of conflict when the Renault design's face took on the rounded surfacing of the CJ5 and a seven-slot grille. The Jeep-style grille was quickly renegotiated for a different appearance. Ultimately the Renault partnership dissolved, and the JJ project was relocated to the new world class Product Design Office in the Auburn Hills Jeep Studio. The proposed four-door JJ was designed in Auburn Hills.)

This clay model shows the simple lines of the proposed “JJ.” Advanced “Bond and Bolt” construction was intended to reduce assembly time and eliminated welding.



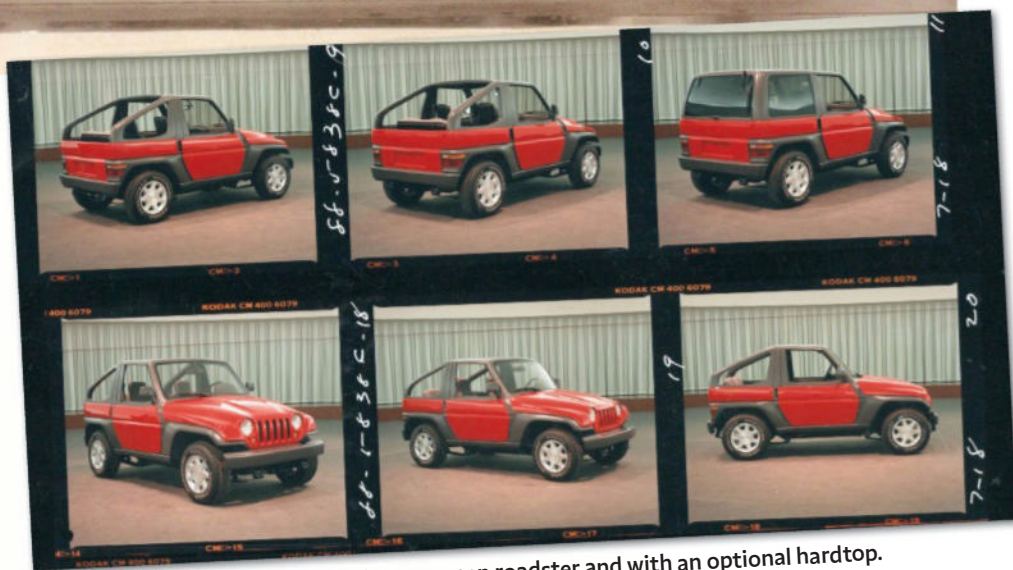
facility in Madison Heights, Michigan.

The goal was to produce a vehicle of roughly comparable size to the Suzuki, with superior performance and styling and competitive pricing. It would be sold worldwide, with overseas assembly for larger markets such as Venezuela and China. Despite the extra cost, it was decided vehicles for the North American market would be produced in the U.S. perhaps at Jeep’s Toledo, Ohio, complex, or at a new facility.

Engineers were determined to design a “real Jeep,” i.e., a vehicle capable of traveling the supremely difficult Rubicon Trail, Jeep’s ultimate test grounds. They would do so using a mix of Jeep and Renault technologies, since Renault was the major stockholder in AMC, and the likely engine source.

The first stage was to decide on the vehicle “package”—its length, width, height, weight, seating layout, powerplant, etc. A wheelbase of 87 inches, 7 inches more than the Samurai, was chosen that would support and overall length of 131 inches. The longer wheelbase would provide a more stable, smoother-riding chassis and greater legroom. The JJs width was to be 63 inches, a half-foot more than Samurai. The body would be a simple open roadster, like the CJ/Wrangler vehicles.

Powerplants originally considered included the Renault 1.7- and 2.0-liter



A different view of the “JJ” shows it as an open roadster and with an optional hardtop.



Side view of JJ. At first glance this appears to be a hardtop, but a closer inspection reveals stitching around the side windows, so it’s likely a soft top.

four-cylinder engines, which would save millions versus designing a new engine of comparable size. (AMC's own 2.5-liter four was too large and heavy for the JJ). But once Chrysler Corporation bought AMC in 1987 the Renault-sharing aspect ended. Engineers switched to Chrysler's 2.5-liter four with a five-speed transmission, turned north/south to accommodate a four-wheel-drive layout. With a light-weight drivetrain, low overall weight, and a much larger engine, the JJ was now expected to offer significantly better performance than the Suzuki.

Jeep had revolutionized the American SUV market with its 1984 Cherokee XJ unibody design, and for the JJ's body/chassis an advanced unibody was created, consisting of 13 basic modules with simple "Bolt and Bond" technology. It offered weight savings, easier assembly, and reduced manufacturing costs. Structural "modules" were designed to be painted one color: accent grey. With the use of molded-in-color wheel flares and facias, only the applied panels—hood, doors, rear quarters and rear gate—required painting. This approach provided a youthful, robust vehicle distinctive from anything else on the market. The JJ's curb weight was projected at around 1,800 pounds, slightly



This early clay model frontal view shows the five-slot grille chosen for the JJ, a change from Jeep's traditional seven-slot grille.

Eventually a four-door version of the JJ was proposed. It was a handsome vehicle, but its introduction would have greatly increased the program's costs and the vehicle became less viable.



Renault, which controlled American Motors at the time, decided it wanted its own version of the JJ to sell through its worldwide dealer network. This vehicle would probably not have been offered in the U.S. since the vehicle would compete with the Jeep version.

less than the Samurai despite it being a larger, more powerful vehicle.

The new JJ would be available in just one body style. One engine and one transmission, a five-speed manual, would be offered. To further reduce costs, a single-speed transfer case would be utilized. Optional equipment would be sharply restricted to reduce assembly-line complexity. Sixty prototype vehicles were built and tested, but in the end the decision was made to drop the program.

What happened? Several things. Some engineers felt the JJ wasn't a real Jeep because it couldn't complete all the brand's rugged Rubicon Trail tests. Chrysler's financial department felt the money would be better spent bringing the new Grand Cherokee to market sooner. Further, the "JJ" was initially designed to be a single open roadster, though eventually someone suggested a fixed hardtop model be added, another asked for a

removeable hard top version, and finally someone insisted on a four-door example, which would have meant a second all-new model with attendant tooling costs. It prompted Chrysler Vice President Bob Lutz to quip "the program grew too large." The program also became too expensive for the limited amount of profit it could generate, versus the more

profitable Grand Cherokee. So, Jeep got the new Grand Cherokee, Dodge received sharp new pickup trucks, and JJ was dropped.

In 1986 Jeep introduced a new version of the Wrangler with a sharply reduced price. That model, the Wrangler 'S,' was Jeep's belated response to the Suzuki. Priced at just \$7,861, it sold quite well. 🚙



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WORDS AND
PHOTOGRAPHY
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Restored, Refurbished, Resplendent

Stored in a Las Vegas facility for a third of a century, this rare 1964 Datsun NL320 pickup was Nissan's sportiest truck

The story starts as it ends— with this 1964 Datsun NL320 pickup, a truck that even hardcore Japanese-car enthusiasts have a hard time picturing, and a fat stack of receipts from the no-longer-extant Bookout Datsun/Nissan of Visalia, California. Current owner Moses Thompson of Tucson, Arizona, explains, “I’m sitting on 20 pages of receipts for everything under the sun—steering wheel, door felts, visors, lenses—and they all say ‘Ralph’ on them.”

Ralph is Ralph Bookout, son of the founders of the eponymous California Datsun dealership. And while the first 16 years of this NL320’s life have been lost to time, we can pick up this truck’s story in late 1980, when it was effectively restored for the first time. “The parts he ordered probably haven’t been available since 1980,” Moses muses. “He might even have cleaned out the dealer’s NOS hoard.”

Few recall that Nissan tried to sell two similar-but-different pickups in the first half of the ’60s. They shared a face—one that was also shared with the humble Bluebird sedan at the time—as well as that sedan’s 1,189-cc (72.5-cu.in.), 60-horsepower Nissan E-Series mill combined with a four-on-the-tree manual transmission. A torsion bar/A-arm front suspension was paired with rear leaf springs and mounted to a full perimeter frame; each corner received 10-inch drum brakes and 14-inch steel wheels. But the standard 320 was built on an older Datsun pickup frame; it had a pickup bed that didn’t match the body lines. The truck seen here was called the NL320, and was considered the sporting version, despite not being mechanically different than its siblings.

The NL320 sports an integrated body and bed as an El Camino or a ’60s Econoline pickup might, and has doors that are more than half a foot longer, with cab space to match. This was good news for more generous Occidental frames that found the standard truck a bit too tight. The rear sheetmetal



Stored in a Las Vegas facility for a third of a century, the little Datsun pickup had collected vast quantities of desert upon its panels.

and taillamps were cribbed from the three-door station wagon/panel van version of the Bluebird. It was available only from 1963-’65, and best estimates suggest about 1,000 were sold Stateside over the period. That’s not 1,000 per year—that’s 1,000 over the course of three years. It sold better nearer home, in Australia, and in Thailand, where serious sleuthing can still uncover NOS parts now and again.

And so, this truck that few had heard of, and still fewer remembered, was brought back to as-new shape at the dawn of the ’80s. Stripped down





to nothing, it was repainted and lovingly reassembled to look new again. A pile of NOS spares sat in the bed. By 1987, the NL320 was in the hands of Clyde Yokoi of Las Vegas. He couldn't get it running—and the little Datsun sat. And sat. And sat. For more than 30 years, it stayed in Vegas.

Fast-forward to 2021. This magazine featured Moses Thompson and the first vehicle he ever restored—a '62 Datsun 320 pickup—in the September '21 issue. We told the tale of his half-dozen years of trials and tribulations with finding and making parts for a vehicle with virtually no domestic aftermarket support:

crowd-sourcing a batch of side-glass soft trim from an Asian nation where no one among his friends knew the language; learning the 3D-printing skills to make knobs and grommets; making parts for components like, say, carburetors, for which there is no rebuild kit, so that the engine may run with the pieces as the factory intended. That's rather a lot for someone who had never actually restored a vehicle before.

Moses picks up the story from here. "Clyde tracked me down on Facebook through the Datsun 320 forum and messaged me, saying, 'I've got a Datsun truck

sitting here since 1987, I need the space. You know these trucks, are you willing to help me price it out?' And he sent me a million pics of it sitting in a metal building, with an inch of dust on it. Between the parts and the truck itself, I did my best. It's tough to put a figure on the truck because they're just not out there. I told him what I'd pay if I had space or money—even though I didn't have space or money. This is my favorite body design on any truck ever made, full stop, so I wanted to help place it and get it back together the way it should be and find a good home for it."

The NL320 was advertised, a deal was made, and the deal fell through. Soon Clyde was back on the horn, telling Moses that he was the only guy he'd sell it to, "'or I'll push it back into the building and die with it,' Clyde told me." The "only guy" price was struck, and as Moses still had no room in Tucson, he borrowed some space in his dad's garage in Phoenix. Clyde towed it from Vegas for gas money; Moses' dad grumbled, "I thought my kids were too old to be bringing home [derelict cars] and putting them in my front yard."





The gas fill surround panel is 3D printed; a clock took up residence in the dash after our visit; the 60 hp badge is worn proudly on each front fender.

In truth, the NL320 was in considerably better shape than that. “It seemed so original, the wiring harness was pristine. The engine bay and mechanicals looked new. The interior had factory door panels and kick guards. Factory visors. The steering wheels on these, they turn into potato chips after a month in the sun; this one looked new. It had original upholstery. After doing a full restoration on a similar truck, you learn what’s available and what isn’t. I don’t know what rubber formula Nissan used for the floor mat, it shrunk and warped and got hard and cracked. This NL had pristine floor mats in it. There’s a shelf

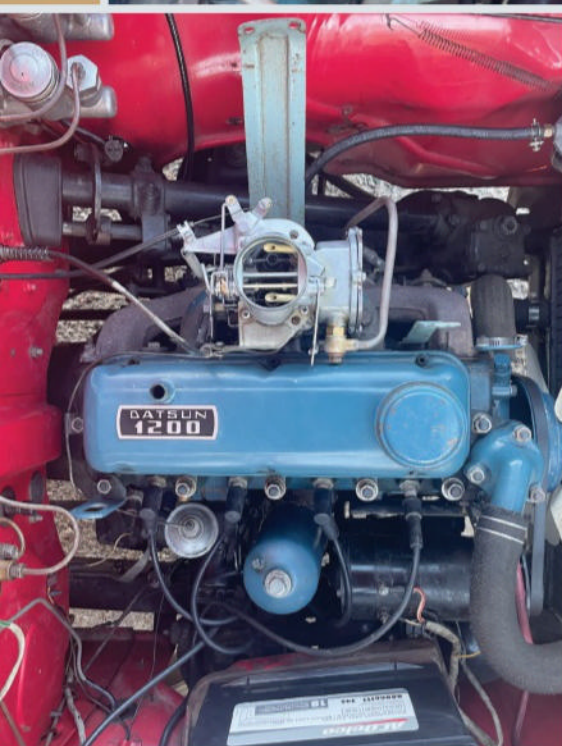
behind the seat that’s usually really brittle, and I’ve only ever seen pieces of them. Here, it’s pristine. The steering column grommet on the firewall is just made of garbage rubber; the one on this truck was pristine.”

But it wasn’t running. “Clyde told me the reason it sat since 1987 was he couldn’t get it started,” he continued. “I didn’t try to start it; I knew I had to redo the fuel system. I put in new fuel lines and boiled the gas tank; I took the [cylinder] head off and did a light rebuild on the top end, then rebuilt the fuel pump and generator, got it ready, started crank-

ing... and realized the distributor had been installed 180 degrees out of time.” Once that was sorted, it ran as new.

All the while, Moses was in a quandary. He really dug his NL320 and wanted to drive it—but his experience with his previously featured green truck told him that a proper restoration was going to take years of painstaking assembly. A couple of conversations with experts in the field, however, suggested that treating the NL320 as a preservation project, rather than a restoration, would be just as fulfilling and, probably, require a lot less labor and heartbreak. Plus, he could





Nissan's all-iron 1189-cc (72.5-cu.in.), 60-hp Nissan E-Series engine, shared with the Bluebird sedan, was paired to a four-on-the-tree manual transmission.



get to enjoying his truck far more quickly. The hard work had been done, and the bulk of the tough-to-find components were all present and in decent shape—so why not?

Preservation doesn't simply mean leaving things alone, however. Mechanically, all was well—but Moses still had a fair amount of work to do to bring the visuals up to his level of satisfaction. "I took off the stainless side trim and sent it out to have a couple of dings removed, and while they were off, I did some extensive cutting and buffing of the paint since it was oxidized. I'm embarrassed to say how many hours of 2500-grit sanding and buffing took place to get it to how it looks now."

The fragile dash knobs are now 3D-printed in high-resolution resin. While Moses had new lenses and gaskets (in factory boxes!) for the NL320's lights, he had a harder time sourcing clean taillamp bezels. They're a shape that defied even injection-molded plastic copies, though 3D-printed technology has improved; another attempt may be on the horizon.

Along with an NOS tool kit sourced out of Australia since our photos were taken, Moses also found a factory clock, obtained from a 320-generation Bluebird, and solved a mystery within the community. "A clock is listed in my N320 parts

catalog," he says, "but no one had ever seen or heard of one in a truck. I saw one in the background of an online ad selling Bluebird door handles. I've been looking for one since 2016, and this one probably came out of a Bluebird, so I inquired and made an offer. My NL320's instrument panel had the clock-delete plug and when you remove it, there's a wire in the harness that's the lead for a clock. The shape of the clock bezel also fits the delete plug. Once I had the clock repaired at the clockmaker's and got it working, it plugged right in. It's so opulent!"

Moses' green truck was factory-painted red—but was color-switched because, as he said at the time, red was "the only color that's a dealbreaker for me." The NL320 seen here is, spoiler alert, red. Aside from missing out on the opportunity to have a matched pair of similar-vintage Datsun pickups in the same color ... what gives? "Red is the right color on the NL320," he explained. "I don't hate it on that truck." Indeed, Moses has put about a thousand miles on the odometer since its completion a year ago, suggesting that preservation was the right answer as, "I don't want to not drive it for a few years. In fact, I've learned so much since I restored the green truck, it makes me want to go back and change stuff on that one."



Knobs are 3D printed. Taillamp bezel is both fragile and hard to find. Owner Moses Thompson liked refurbishing (and loves driving) his NL320.



The NL320 will escape such scrutiny as he's having too much fun bumping around town and piling on the miles.

Part of the fun is sharing it. "I sent Clyde a video when I fired it up and drove it. He was so generous to me with this truck—I feel like it brought him joy, and it was hard for him to let it go.

He liked how I did the green 320, and he wanted only me to have it. It brings me joy to show him the result. It's like I justified his decision to sell it to me. I was so lucky that the right guy with the right truck found me."

And there's one more share to come: "I've recently found that Ralph Bookout is

still alive. I'm going to reach out soon." Maybe Ralph can fill in some of the missing story regarding the early years of Moses' NL360 and explain what drove him to hoard parts for it while simultaneously bringing it back to life. Memories rekindled and friendships made, the story of this Datsun NL360 starts as it ends. 🚗

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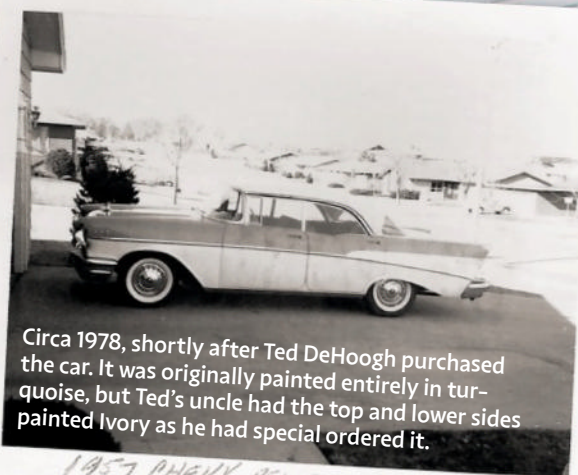
Family Heirloom

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY
BY JIM BLACK



Any 1957 Chevy Bel Air was easily one of the most recognizable cars on the road that year.

**This 1957 Chevrolet
Bel Air four-door sport
sedan has remained in
near original condition**



Circa 1978, shortly after Ted DeHoogh purchased the car. It was originally painted entirely in turquoise, but Ted's uncle had the top and lower sides painted Ivory as he had special ordered it.

1957 CHEVY BEL-AIR 1978





Among the unique design elements were the predominant fins and aluminum insert trimmed in stainless that graced the rear quarters.

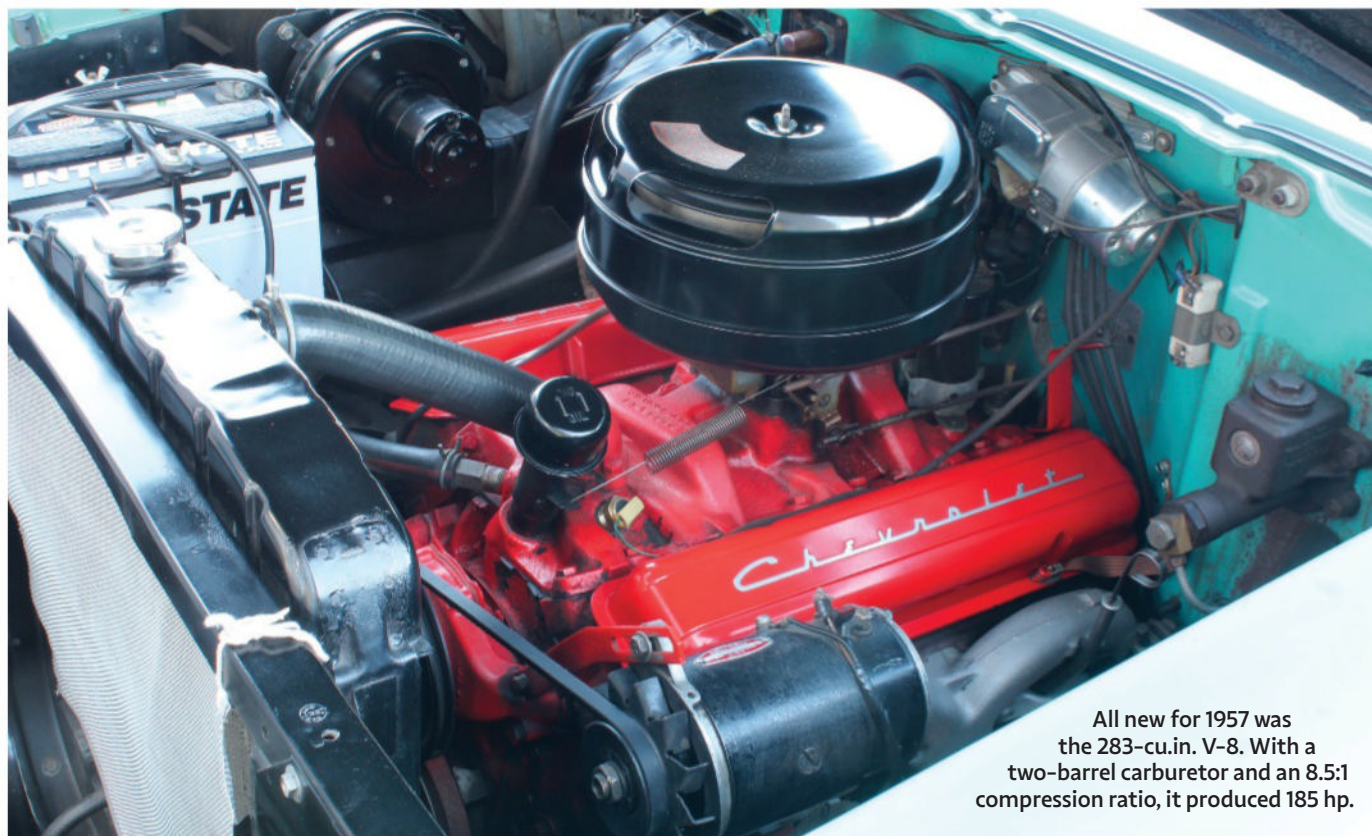


"I've had this car for over 44 years now, but I still consider myself as the caretaker and not the owner."

Considering the thousands of makes and models that have emerged from assembly plants since the dawn of the domestic automobile industry, it could be argued that fewer than two dozen have transcended time, celebrated for their status in pop culture as much as their styling designs and mechanical engineering. A good many come from the pivotal year of 1957, including Chevrolet's sharp, top-of-the-line Bel Air. They've been idolized, restored, street rodded, restomodded, hot

rodded, and replicated in volumes that far exceed the countless "how-to (enter project type here)" and historical reference books that have been published over the last six decades. They enjoy the kind of popularity where it seems there are more on the road today than when Chevrolet shut down its assembly plants to tool up for the unique '58 model year.

Offered in seven different body styles—including both a conventional and Nomad station wagon—pop culture would have us believe the most popular



All new for 1957 was the 283-cu.in. V-8. With a two-barrel carburetor and an 8.5:1 compression ratio, it produced 185 hp.



Ted DeHoogh, pictured at left, installed a set of Coker Classic radial wide whitewalls mounted to body-color steel wheels featuring deluxe "spinner" wheel covers.



The overall design demanded attention, thanks in part to a massive front bumper, wide grille, hooded headlamps, and chromed twin rockets imbedded in the hood.



Anodized gold emblems set in the front fenders were standard on Bel Airs.



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Interior features a color-keyed turquoise steering wheel, instrument panel, and door caps, along with two-tone cloth and vinyl seating. Standard instruments were a 120 mph speedometer, and temp and gas gauges. The push-button radio and electric clock were optional.



Original mileage reads 72,302 at the time of our visit.

example when new was the two-door hardtop Sport Sedan. Not so. It ranked second in model sales with 166,426 units scooped up by customers at season's end, surpassed by the sale of 254,331 four-door sedans. Third on the Bel Air sales list were the equally stylish, 137,672 four-door hardtop Sport Sedans built during the year, including our featured example owned since 1977 by retired art teacher Ted De-Hoogh of Sioux Center, Iowa.

Ted's familiarity with the spacious four-door far exceeds his nearly five decades in the driver's seat. He explains. "My aunt and uncle purchased this Bel Air from Verschoor Chevrolet-Buick, in nearby Sheldon, in early 1957. They ordered it, rather than buying one off the lot, and they deleted the radio to reduce the cost by \$25."

That's probably because the couple had also requested that the full-size Chevy come equipped with a new-for-1957 two-barrel 283-cu.in. V-8 engine, as well as a



Trunk appears as original except for the Coker Classic spare radial.

two-speed Powerglide automatic transmission; both were options. So, too, were the color-keyed two-tone interior and electric clock that was selected off the option list. Assembled at the Janesville, Wisconsin, plant in January 1957, the four-door hardtop arrived at the dealership matching most of the couple's specifications.

"When my aunt and uncle went to take delivery of the Chevy, the 283 and Powerglide were installed, as was the two-tone interior, two-speed wipers, heater, floor mats, EZ-Eye tinted glass, bumper guards, whitewall tires, and deluxe wheel covers. But the factory had also installed the AM push-button radio that my uncle hadn't ordered, so he got it at no extra cost. The real sticking point was the paint, though. The body was slathered entirely in Tropical Turquoise rather than the two-tone he ordered. My uncle insisted that it be painted two-tone with India Ivory, as requested, so the dealer had its shop paint



both the roof and the bottom half of the car, headlamp to taillamp, in Ivory," Ted recalls.

For the benefit of novice Chevrolet enthusiasts, the "Turbo-Fire" 283-cu.in. engine Ted's relatives specified was a revised version of the division's revolutionary 265-cu.in. small-block V-8 that had been introduced two years prior. One could say the 283 was a bored-out version of the 265 but there was more to it than a larger piston bore (3.75 inches versus 3.87).

The engine was incredibly adaptable. A variety of internal and bolt-on components, two- or four-barrel carburetor, or a fuel injections system, for instance, helped create a 185 to 283 horsepower range. In fact, it was a fuel-injected 283 in a base model 150 coupe that gave birth to the "Black Widow" nickname that was prevalent in the early part of the 1957 NASCAR season. That is, until the governing body outlawed everything but four-barrel induction systems, the self-imposed AMA motorsports ban that followed notwithstanding.

Bolstering the pre-ban racing exploits were road test periodicals. In January 1957, the same month Ted's relatives' hardtop Sport Sedan was ordered and sent into production, *Motor Trend* published performance results of a four-door Bel Air sedan equipped with a 270-hp version of the 283, paired with a Powerglide automatic and a final drive ratio of 3.55:1. The 115-inch wheelbase Chevy went from 0-60 mph in 9.9 seconds and traversed the quarter-mile in 17.5 seconds at 77.5 MPH. To put that into perspective, the same issue of *Motor Trend* contained a test of a Ford Fairlane 500 four-door sedan—fitted with a 245-hp 312-cu.in. Y-block, Ford-O-Matic automatic transmission, and a 3.10:1 final drive ratio—that went from 0-60 in 11.1 seconds while it travelled the quarter-mile in 18.2 seconds at 77 mph. Suffice it to say, the 283 kept Chevrolet's "The Hot One" sales slogan at the tip of

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driving enthusiast's tongues, including Ted's driving instructor.

"Aside from living in the same community as my aunt and uncle—meaning I grew up with their Bel Air—my high school driving instructor's car was a nicely optioned Inca Silver Bel Air Sport Sedan that had a 'Power Pack' 283 under the hood, along with a three-speed with overdrive, a Wonder Bar radio, whitewall tires, and full wheel covers with spinners! What a dream to drive for a 15-year-old student," Ted says.

"Because of all this exposure to these '57 Bel Airs over the years, I became smitten with its incredible styling, and in particular the color combination of my aunt and uncle's. They kept the Chevy until 1977 when, at age 70, my uncle decided he wanted to buy a new Malibu Classic," Ted says. According to him, the dealer wanted to take the aging Bel Air in trade, but his uncle declined and offered Ted the car instead. Ted eagerly accepted in November of that year. When the Chevy's title changed hands, the odometer read 62,800 miles.

"Shortly after I purchased the Bel Air, I had Northside Body Shop here in Sioux Center change the lower Ivory portion back to Tropical Turquoise, but I kept the Ivory top," Ted reports. He admits that due in part to the car's low mileage—recorded as roughly 72,300 at the time of our visit—the hardtop Sport Sedan has required a few humble repairs rather than a full restoration.

"I had some reupholstery work done to the front seat since the mylar piping and

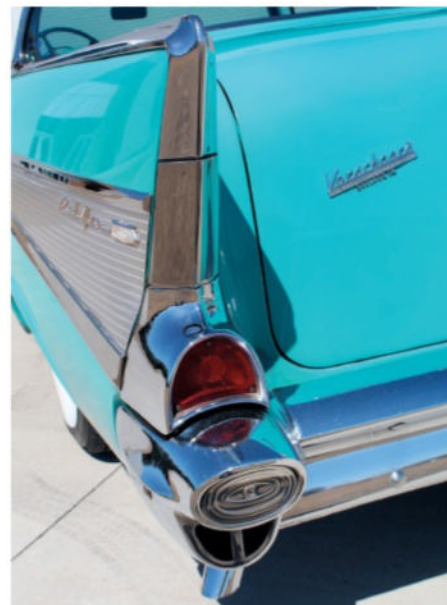
fabric was showing some wear. Vanderstelt Upholstery did the work with material purchased from Ciadella Interiors." Ted also replaced the front and rear carpeting and had a few exterior pieces restored, including the front and rear bumpers and a taillamp housing. Some front grille parts were replaced, too.

"Locating replacement parts has not been a challenge since many vendors cater to 'Tri-Five' owners. I have used Classic Chevy International, Eckler's, CARS, Inc., and Merv's Classic Chevy Parts for specific '57 Bel Air items. I also use local parts stores for routine mechanical replacement parts. NOS parts are more of a challenge, but swap meets and the internet can yield results. On rare occasions, I turn to local auto shops for repairs that I cannot manage.

"Over the decades of ownership, I have belonged to Tri-State Classic Chevy Club, Classic Chevy International, Eckler's, and most recently the Sioux Center Classic Cruisers. Club membership offers access to fellow enthusiasts who are eager and willing to assist owners new to the hobby in any way they are able. I highly recommend club involvement for the classic car enthusiast," Ted says.

Despite his 1977 purchase date, Ted really didn't start displaying his 1957 Bel Air at local events until '84; since that time he's accumulated many memories.

"While displaying at various car shows, I have had people stop by and remark that they had a '57 Chevrolet of the same color or body style and wish they hadn't sold or traded it for a newer model.



They share stories about their experiences. Car shows are just one part of it, though. In 1996, we used the Chevy to escort our son and his new bride from the chapel where they were married to our church for their reception. Whenever I get the Chevy out for a drive, a show, or a cruise, I almost pinch myself that I own a vehicle of such significant styling that I can enjoy and drive while getting waves, smiles, and plenty of thumbs up.

"It hardly seems possible that I've had this car for over 44 years; I still consider myself as the caretaker and not the owner," Ted admits. "My wife, Noreen and I love taking it on short weekend outings as it's become a member of the family and a family heirloom at the same time. Looking back, I was so happy to get that first chance to purchase it." 🚗



1935 Triumph Gloria Southern Cross

Robert Smith-Walker
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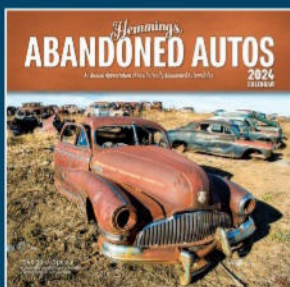
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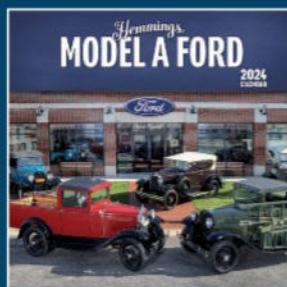
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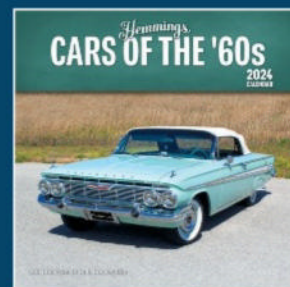
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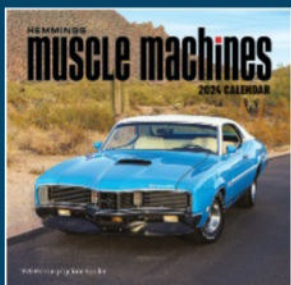
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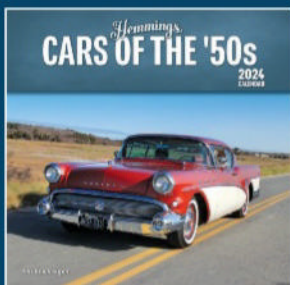
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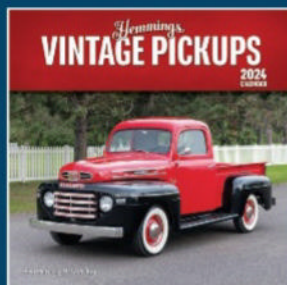
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BY TOM COMERRO

CRASH TESTED AND STOLEN 8/10 CORD NOW ON DISPLAY

The Auburn Cord Duesenberg Automobile Museum announced that a rare 1966 Cord 8/10 car has been donated to the museum by Martin J. Gallagher III, in memory of his father Martin “Marty” Gallagher II. The scaled down 8/10s were 80 percent the size of the original classic Cord design; it’s believed only 97 were built. Pat Foster marveled at Glenn Pray’s repicar in the May 2023 issue of *HCC*, noting that the diminutive front-wheel drive Cords were built with American parts, which was unusual at the time.

The donated example first served as a demonstrator and was eventually driven through a brick wall to show off the car’s strength. After its 30 mph crash, the Cord still functioned and was driven away. Gallagher II purchased the car in 1972, but the restorer he subsequently hired stole the car. Due to some mix-ups and an incorrect VIN on the police report, the Cord disappeared for more than two decades. Gallagher made several phone calls in hopes of finding his father’s long-lost Cord, and with the help of 15 government agencies and a search encompassing 22 states, the car was found in Virginia. In 1997, Gallagher was finally granted ownership and was able to reunite it with his father. The scaled-down Cord can now be seen at the ACDAM’s Gallery of Excellence and Innovation, located in Auburn, Indiana. Visit automobilemuseum.org for more information.

AUBURN-CORD-DUESENBERG MUSEUM



DAYTONA’S THANKSGIVING TRADITION

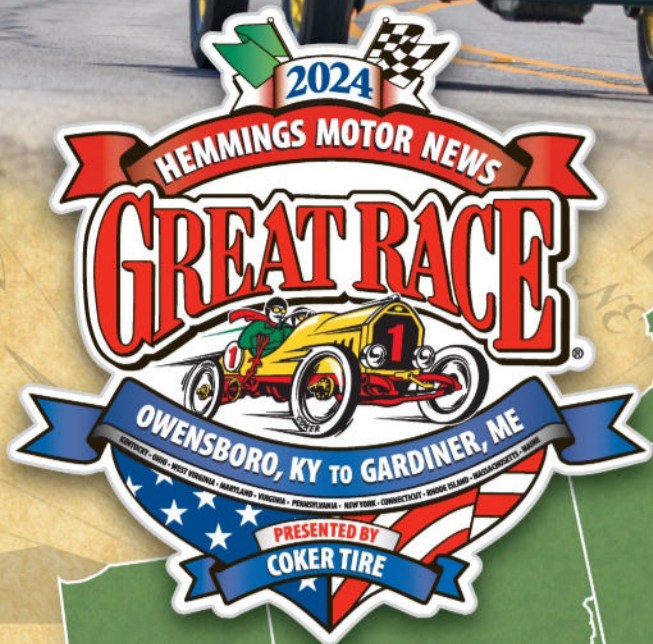
The 50th Daytona Turkey Run at Florida’s Daytona International Speedway features something for every car lover. More than 5,000 show cars of all eras are expected to attend this year’s event, which will include a car corral of 1,500 cars and a full swap meet brimming with hard-to-find parts. As always, the event will feature a raffle car: this year it’s a 1932 Ford roadster outfitted with a Chevy 350 V-8 and Turbo 350 automatic transmission. The steel-bodied Hi-Boy will be awarded on November 25 at 9 p.m. with all proceeds going to local and national charities. Tickets are \$5 each, or 5 for \$20, and you do not need to be present to win. The Turkey Run will take place November 23–26. Visit turkeyrun.com for more details.



HILTON HEAD CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE

2023 HILTON HEAD CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE

November 3–5 will mark the 2023 gathering of some of the finest automobiles at South Carolina’s popular Hilton Head Concours d’Elegance, on Hilton Head Island. The three-day event will culminate with approximately 200 vehicles displayed on the 1st and 18th fairways of the Port Royal Golf Club’s Planter’s Row Golf Course. Support events include a film festival, “Flights & Fancy Airport Gala,” car-club showcases, and motoring festivals. The Concours will take place on the final day with a class list that includes a tribute to Corvette’s 70th anniversary, Indy 500 race cars, English sports cars, and a “Class of 1963” group. Tickets are now available, and entries are still being accepted. For a full itinerary, visit hhiconcours.com.



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MASSACHUSETTS MYSTERY

Our friends at Undiscovered Classics posted these images on their Facebook page and they have us stumped. The car was acquired in Bellingham, Massachusetts, home of Bellingham Auto Sales, where it was believed to have been stored in a barn since the early 1970s by the last active Hudson dealer. In addition to selling and servicing cars from the famous independent, BAS was known for owning several unique special-interest vehicles ranging from a “two-headed” Hudson (L&F #157) to the bizarre safety car Sir Vival, which is currently under restoration in The Lane Motor Museum. Among the many abandoned projects to sell as BAS liquidated most of its properties two years ago was this mystery car that features a steel, hand-built body on a 1955 Volkswagen chassis powered by a Corvair engine. The period would suggest that it was built in the 1960s and we’re hoping someone has pictures of it in its prime, or recollections of it as it roamed the picturesque roads of New England more than 50 years ago.



THE LAST VW SCHULWAGEN?



What is thought to be the only surviving Volkswagen Type 2 Schulwagen (school wagon) made a surprise visit at the International VW Bus Day in Huntington Beach, California, earlier this year. In 1955, VW put together a fleet of these Type 2 Kombis to accompany its upcoming establishment of a U.S.-based dealer and distributor network. Technicians and trainers would have used the specially



equipped Schulwagens to instruct dealerships’ personnel. At the program’s height, there were 14 buses crisscrossing the country as Volkswagen gained a foothold in the import car market.

The Schulwagen seen here was purchased by bus collector Lind Bjorsen after it had been awakened from a 43-year slumber in an Ohio barn. Seeing some options unique to the Schulwagen and literally digging into it — 10 layers of paint into it — Bjorsen discovered the original Volkswagen of America livery was still present. VW subsequently verified the vehicle was a legitimate original Mobile Service School bus that had been delivered to VWoA in January of 1955.

The vehicle’s restoration was quick, only taking 5 months, yet it was thorough. In addition to fixing all its mechanicals, the exterior was properly refinished to replicate the original livery. Equipment, tools, and items that would accompany the original training crews were period-correct and repaired where needed.



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Brewster's Minions

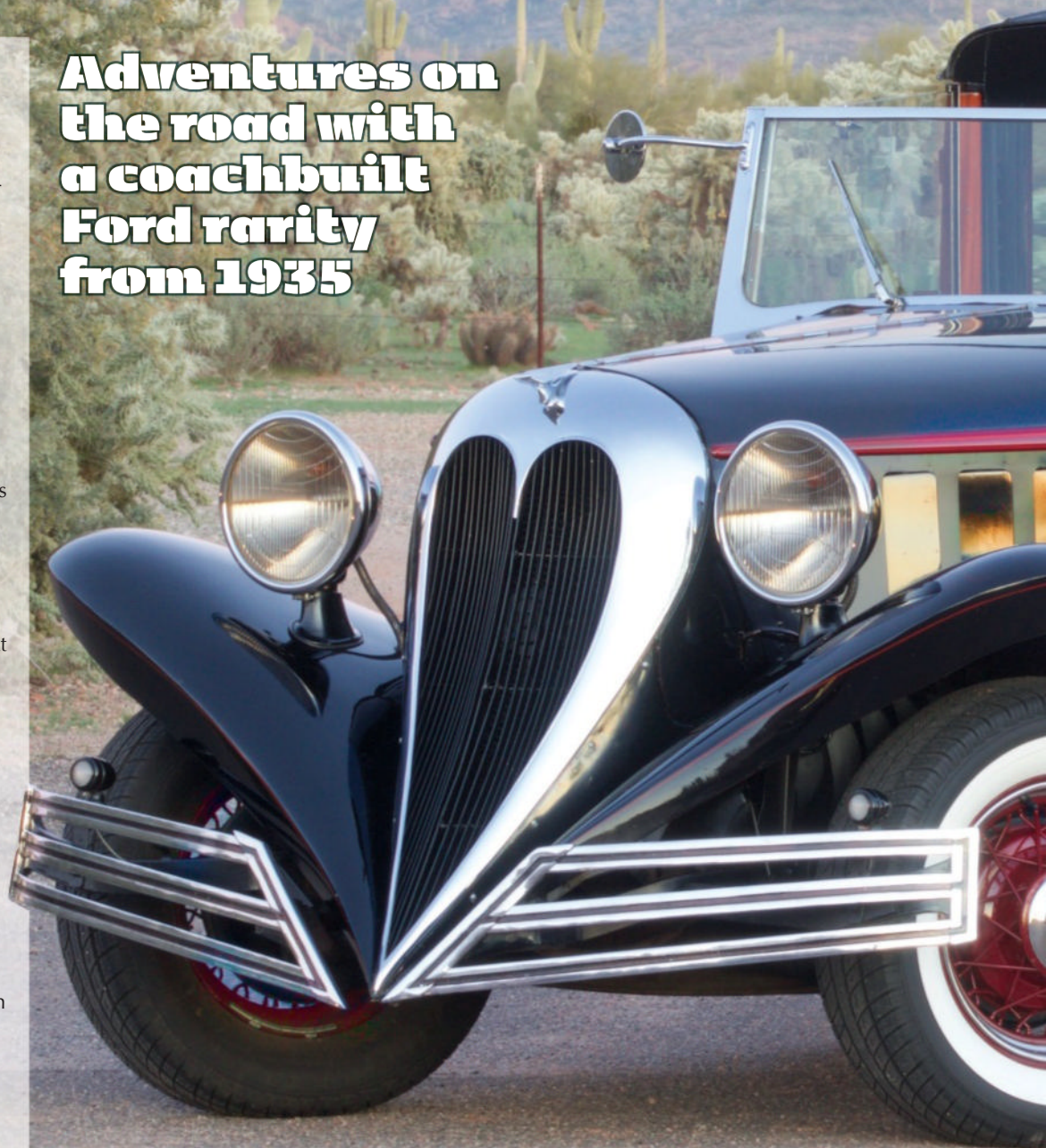
BY JIM DONNELLY
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF KOCH

Individuals who venerate historic cars are some of the most resilient you're ever likely to encounter. They're downright enthusiastic about investing hours and dollars by the bushel into preserving the conveyances they love so much. Getting to know some collectible cars involves more effort than others. As a case study, we offer the tale of this highly unusual relic from the great American coachbuilt era that ended in the 1930s: this 1935 Brewster Ford, a car that establishes a sinuous thread that chronologically ties the past histories of Rolls-Royce and the Ford Motor Company together. At least slightly.

Of equal significance, however, is the odyssey that was required to get this largely original chauffeured town car, with hand-built bodywork, more than halfway across the country to its new home. No, the Brewster wasn't trailered. Instead, it took a three-week hegira to get the flat-head-powered jewel across more than 2,300 miles, with new friends undertaking emergency fixes to keep it rolling.

Not many people would be willing to put up with three weeks of constant anxiety for any car. But not every collector is as

Adventures on the road with a coachbuilt Ford rarity from 1935







determined as Dr. Lee Harman, a retired ophthalmologist who lives on an island in Washington state, or his longtime “friend and co-conspirator,” as Lee calls him, Bill Ward, a retired Army artillery commander. You could say they’re a little bit nuts when it comes to cars. After all, when you’ve successfully taken a Ford Model A on the 2019 Peking to Paris Motor Rally and actually finished (one of only 21 cars still running under their own power by the time the grind reached Paris), the notion of a cross-country trip in a 1930s car that had been parked for years doesn’t look so intimidating.

“My claim to fame is to take a wonderful old car and get it back out on the road so people can see it and enjoy it,” Lee tells us. “I belong to the Camano Island A’s in Washington. It’s a Model A club made up of an eclectic mix of shipwrights, professional mechanics, computer pros, and at least one doctor. My wife says my collection has to stay at the same number of cars. I had sold a 1965 Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud, an award winner in the past that needed a lot of restoration. The person who could take care of that car finally retired, so I sold the Rolls-Royce in New York.

“I was researching the Horseless Carriage Club newsletter and lo and behold, I find this Brewster that was an amalgamation of Rolls-Royce and the 1934 and 1935 Ford V-8 chassis,” he says. “A light bulb went off that this was the one. It was in Lafayette, Indiana. Parts are available and Fords are fixable.”

The Brewster was the ideal car for its time—almost. Founded in 1810 as a carriage producer by James Brewster, the

Brewster firm became the first, and only, American carriage works to be presented the Gold Medal at the Paris Exposition of 1878. Four years later, Brewster’s son William joined the firm, which at that point called itself the “Carriage Builder for the American Gentleman.” With new production facilities in New York City, Brewster produced a variety of premium horse-drawn conveyances until 1905, when the first Brewster automobile was built.

From the outset, Brewster specialized in custom coachbuilt cars, built on chassis that included Rolls-Royce. In 1914, Brewster became the U.S. sales agent for Rolls-Royce while building its own car, the Brewster Knight. In 1921, Rolls-Royce began to produce cars and chassis for the U.S. market in Springfield, Massachusetts. It’s from this point that the full Brewster story really evolves, starting in 1925, when the new Rolls-Royce of America purchased Brewster outright, making it the lead source of bodywork for the Springfield-built cars.

Rolls-Royce production in Springfield ceased in 1931, after 2,946 cars were built. Phantom II chassis were shipped directly from England to Brewster’s main plant in the industrial Long Island City section of Queens, where Brewster bodies were installed. That continued until 1934, when the Depression was at its bottom and Rolls-Royce of America was dissolved. It left Brewster with several dozen completed bodies but no chassis upon which to mount them. That’s when longtime Brewster employee J.S. Inskip, who by that time owned a piece of the company, entered automotive history thanks to his innovative solution.



Owner's View

"I've been involved in mechanical things my whole life, like motorcycles and my Morgan Plus Four, owned for 48 years. If you drive a Morgan, you have to be prepared to be at the side of the road, fixing things. The same passion is held by Bill Ward, and that's how we became friends. The Brewster has uniqueness and it's a real period piece, a piece of history that most people don't know about, the collaboration that involved Ford, Rolls-Royce, and Brewster. That just made the car irresistible to me. It has the panache of the old Art Deco coachwork from Rolls-Royce, with the reliability and repairability of Henry's 1935 V-8 Ford."

— Dr. Lee Harman

According to Don Weir of York, Pennsylvania, who today is one of the nation's foremost authorities on Brewster, Inskip first tried to persuade Henry Ford to supply him with chassis. According to Weir, the Old Man balked, so Inskip instead approached the Universal Ford Co., a dealer in Queens, which agreed to supply what is generally agreed to be 135 new Ford V-8 chassis, spanning the 1934 and 1935 model years.

Lee correctly notes that by that time, people who might have ordered a Duesenberg, Pierce-Arrow, or any other coach-builder-ready chassis were given pause at the notion of driving past a Depression soup line in a car that ostentatious.



Inskip decided on a Ford-based car, its wheelbase stretched at Brewster from 112 inches to 127, with an out-the-door price of \$3,500. That was considerably less than what one of the coachbuilt Olympians—most of which would be gone by the end of the decade, along the coachbuilding firms, including Brewster—cost new in 1934. It was a comparatively cheap and reliable premium automobile. Four body styles were offered, including town cars, convertible sedans, and roadsters. According to Don, Brewster lore says that Inskip sketched the basic design on a napkin at a New York City restaurant.

The signature design feature of any Brewster is its distinctive radiator shell that resembles a BMW double-kidney grille that got squeezed in a vise and suddenly grew a lantern jaw. “At a luncheon, he was discussing a replacement for Rolls-Royce when he drew a point on the napkin, and it resembled the point of his fountain pen,” Don explains. “The grille is rolled steel, formed in four sections, welded together and chromed, with the bars put in from the rear.”

Brewster bodywork followed period coachbuilding convention, with the custom bodywork formed from rolled aluminum over an ash frame, with hand-formed steel fenders. The running gear is dead stock “flathead” Ford except for the stretched wheelbase. Don says that the first Brewster Ford was built in June 1934 and went new to Edsel Ford, with Brewster workers adding the finishing touches aboard a railroad car. The Brewster is now in the Ford House in Grosse Pointe Shores, Michigan. The last one was produced in May 1936, the same year coachbuild-

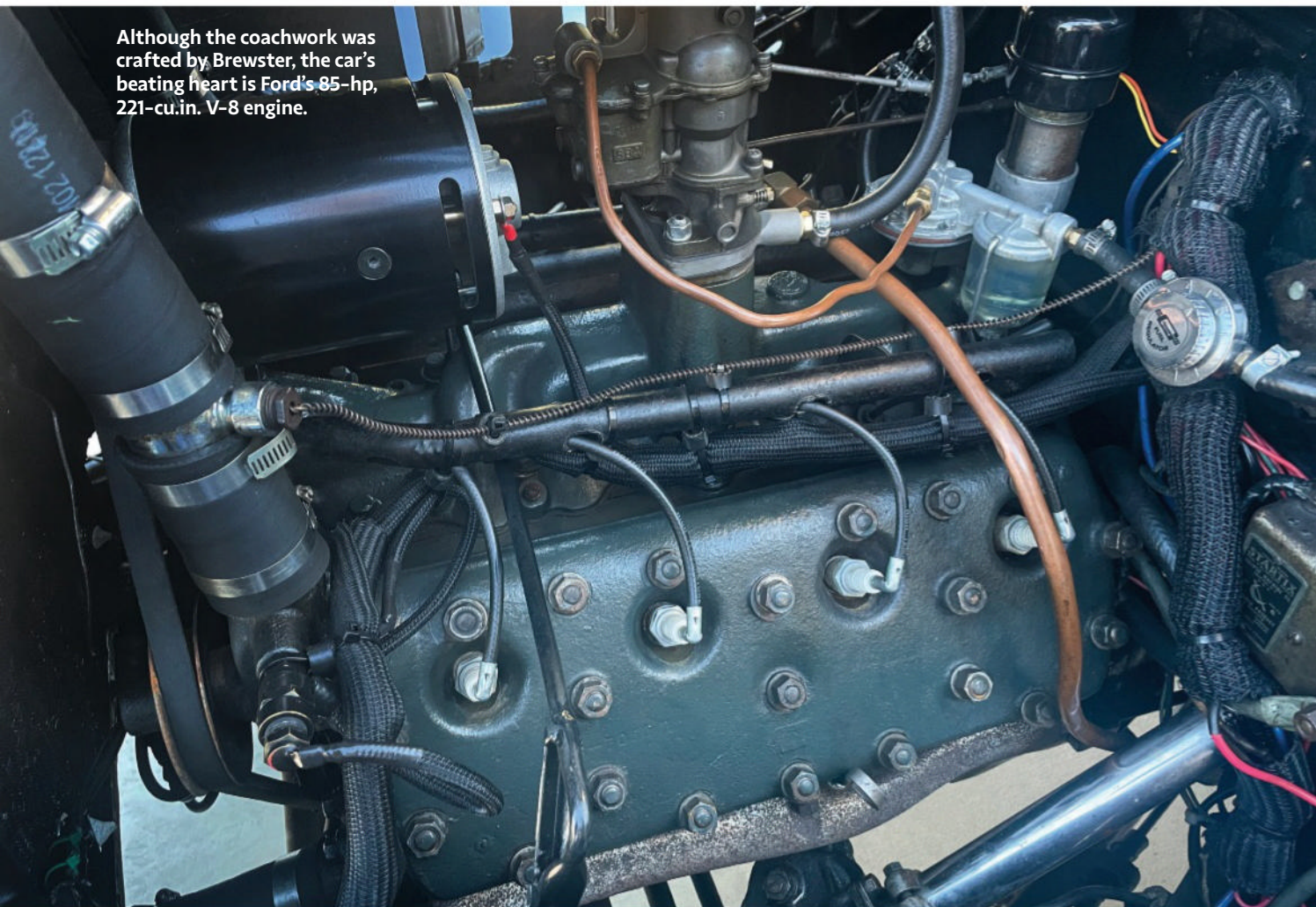
ing ended at Brewster; it was delivered to Danbury, Connecticut.

Lee’s car, serial number 9117, is one of 83 Brewster town cars, which were produced, the most of any body style. It’s believed to have been sold new in New York City, and was eventually obtained by a Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, collector who kept it for more than 40 years, beginning in the late 1970s. It reportedly did a round trip to Alaska under his ownership, before entering an Indiana collection in 2018. That’s where Lee found it. He dragooned his longtime automotive cohort, Bill, who now lives in Gold Canyon, Arizona, to help him recover it.

They took Bill’s Jeep from Arizona to Indiana, intending to get the Brewster rolling and drive it back to Washington, some 2,300 miles. “Immediately,” Bill recalls, “the car taught us that when a vehicle has been sitting for 20 years and you set out to drive it across country, it’s going to communicate with you.”

That one-way discussion started a few miles out of Lafayette—68, to be exact—when the generator started smoking. Next, the Early Ford V-8 Foundation Museum in Auburn, Indiana, volunteered to fix another smoking issue, from a failed water pump, providing two spares in the process. Then a short mounting stud caused the new generator to come loose. After that, the generator dropped off and was pushed through the radiator, causing a coolant gush. A replacement 1935 Ford radiator was again sourced from the V-8 club, but Lee and Bill found in Chicago that it didn’t fit the narrow Brewster shell. A AAA tow to Davenport, Iowa, got the original radiator patched. Eventually, all four tires also went flat. The trip to Washington

Although the coachwork was crafted by Brewster, the car’s beating heart is Ford’s 85-hp, 221-cu.in. V-8 engine.





Weather-resistant leather seating up front provided more durability for chauffeurs.

took three weeks instead of the planned 10 days.

Lee's Brewster was already fitted with a Columbia two-speed rear axle, making it a competent highway cruiser. Despite having been unused for a long time, the car needed surprisingly little refurbishment, retaining its original 221-cu.in., 85-horsepower V-8. Lee installed an electric fan, electric fuel pump, and LED lighting. The major restoration project was renewing the chauffeur's open compartment, whose leather was shredded by age. Lee said the Brewster coachwork was largely intact. He replaced

the wooden battens that held the original headliner in place so it could continue to be used. Even the original rear window shade was intact and useable.

"It's now restored to a very elegant driving state," Lee explains. "It's not a concours automobile but it shows very, very well. The paint goes back to the 1980s and is still quite serviceable. We drive this car because it's fun, and people go crazy when they see it. Other than what we did, it's absolutely stock. It's got a couple of moth bites. It smells like your grandmother's house." 🚗



Benefit for a Berlinetta Bullet

It's the details that make a **1966 Ferrari 330 GTC** concours-worthy.



BY JIM DONNELLY • PHOTOGRAPHY BY LUKE MUNNELL;
RESTORATION PHOTOS COURTESY OF TOM MISCHKE AND ED MONTINI

It's a very long way from finding a rusty, parts-missing hulk atop a two-axle trailer and getting it onto the show field in any kind of shape. An automotive restoration requires patience, tactile skills, deep attention to detail, and a profound respect for the subject. That's always true, regardless of the restoration vehicle's initial shape. Getting this prized 1966 Ferrari 330 GTC coupe into the best possible show condition required an exacting hand and the focus to get a million little details absolutely right.

The owner, who wishes to remain anonymous, of this 330 GTC knew what he wanted out of the car, and where to get it. Classic Performance Restorations got the nod to perform the

restoration efforts. Tom Mischke, owner of CPR and Ferrari 330 expert, Ed Montini, together tackled the project. Classic Performance Restoration, located in Gilbert, Arizona, not far from Phoenix, began a post-purchase inspection of the 330 GTC and was able to identify numerous opportunities to improve the car.

"It looked good from a distance, maybe 20 feet," Ed explained. "It had solid lines, was not all banged up, had decent paint, and blew a little bit of smoke out the back, but it was a nice condition car, though not concours-restored. I would say it was used as a driver, or driver/competition, like Cars and Coffee."

What's special about this car? First shown on the salon circuit in 1965, the 330 GTC made its debut as a 1966 model,



a gestation process that began when Maranello phased out the fabled 250 GT Lusso in 1964. It was one of three new models that Ferrari rolled out for the 1966 model year, which continued the grand tradition of offering front-engine GT cars from the prancing-horse people.

The 330 GTC was evolutionary, sharing the 275's Gioacchino Colombo-designed DOHC V-12, fed by a triumvirate of Weber carburetors and producing 300 horsepower. It also borrowed the 275's independent rear suspension and then-new Michelin XWX radials. As the Lusso's ultimate replacement, a total of 600 coupes were produced through the end of 1968, plus another 100 Spiders when the 365 GTC replaced it.





Corralling proper documentation was a critical first step of this Ferrari's restoration. Research proved that this 330 GTC wore a rare factory hue of Bleu Sera.



The Colombo-designed DOHC V-12 engine smoked and suffered oil pressure issues during a preliminary test, prompting its removal and subsequent rebuild and final testing by specialists.



A preliminary examination of the bodywork determined at least one door repair had been made, followed by a partial repaint, so the decision was made to chemically strip it to bare metal.



Although it's not obvious here, *Bleu Sera* contained a very fine metallic flake contemporary paints do not replicate. It's a small fact experienced judges spot. The paint applied to this Ferrari was matched perfectly to 1966 specifications.



After minor metal repairs were completed and the panel gaps were perfected, the body received a coat of epoxy primer. Extensive sanding followed.



Reinstalling the Ferrari's Colombo-designed V-12 engine was a delicate process. One slip could have marred the paint on the body or in the bay, or worse, damaged the metal. Note the abundance of protective cloths in use.



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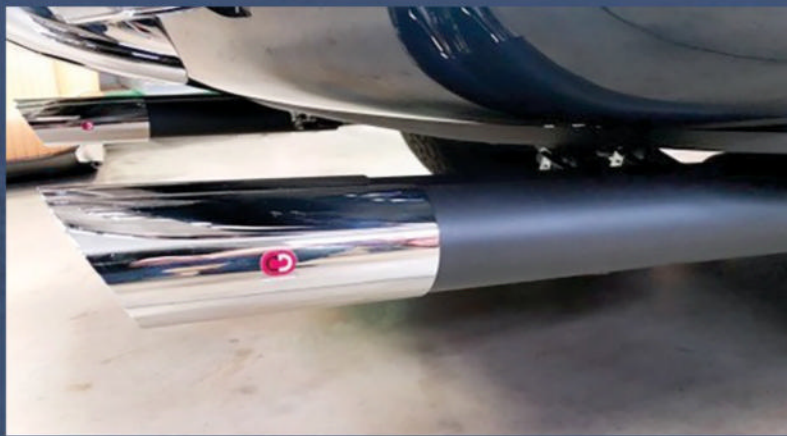
No shortcuts were taken during reassembly, as demonstrated by the reinstallation of the rear package tray seen here.



Focus remained on finite details, such as those seen on this chromed wheel nut. Aggressive polishing or inferior plating could have erased this level of Maranello craftsmanship.



The Ferrari's original Connolly leather was treated with a spray dye to hide imperfections. Rather than retreat, new leather, along with new carpet, was sourced and installed.



Attention to detail went beyond the obvious, such as the chrome-tipped exhaust pipes.



Novice enthusiasts may not be aware that Ferraris of this era were hand built with incredible precision, which means a "perfect-fit" windshield is exactly that. reinstalling one requires many hands and patience.



In its first post-restoration concours appearance, the Ferrari 330 GTC was bestowed with multiple awards.



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Tom and Ed have turned out three show-worthy examples of the 330 GTC, in addition to restoring the very rare 250 GT coupe by Ellena featured in our July issue. Those are part of a broad range of premium restorations that CPR has performed. With a Ferrari, that process starts when Ed contacts a gentleman in Switzerland named Marcel Mancini, a marque historian who develops in-depth ownership histories of individual Ferraris. “This is an original European car,” Marcel’s report said. “We don’t know how it came to the States, but we have a report from the day it entered production right through to the fourth owner.”

History in hand, the restoration commenced in February 2016 with a front-to-back assessment, attempting to answer, “What do we need to make this a concours-level car?” The inspection showed decent paint, with some stress cracking and “very slight” bubbling around wheel openings, especially at the right rear. The duo also noticed that one door was wavy, which turned out to be the result of previously performed body repairs. One real plus was its original paint—a rare factory shade called *Blue Sera* that’s highly sought among collectors of the 330 GTC. “The chrome was nice but not super brilliant,” Ed said. “The lenses were a little faded. There were some other technical issues that we didn’t like, either.”

Tom quickly grasped that the interior, though outwardly nice enough, had been not-too-gracefully sprayed with leather dye in various spots. “It’s the cheap way of improving the interior look without

replacing the original Connolly leather,” Ed said. “Without a doubt, keeping the original installed was not going to be acceptable to the client.”

It took further examination to learn that the V-12 had an issue. “We noticed some smoke on startup, which indicates worn valve guides. More importantly, when you revved the engine, the oil pressure jumped up, and when you let off, it dropped to zero and came back up again,” Ed explained. “That’s an indication of excess play in the crankshaft, and that’s not a good thing. We decided that pulling the engine would be best, and at that point, the slippery slope began; we recommended it was best to embark on a comprehensive engine rebuild, as well as restoration of the body, chrome, and interior. We were given the nod to get started.”

The engine first went to Brian Duffy at Duffy Motorsports of Phoenix. It was disassembled and the crankshaft was removed, after which Duffy repaired the clearance issue near the end plate. He also rectified other clearances in accordance with original Ferrari specs. After Duffy did the machine work, the engine was sent to another specialist, Andy Falbo, at Ferrari Motor Service of Fountain Hills, Arizona, for assembly and break-in. The 330 GTC has a rear-mounted transaxle, which Ed said was in good shape once they replaced the clutch and pressure plate. Under the hood, the radiator was removed and re-cored, and the engine bay was sanded and refinished while fasteners and hose clamps were correctly CAD-plated. An incorrect Bonaldi brake booster



was replaced with the proper Dunlop unit; the master cylinder, horns, and fans were also addressed.

As to the suspension, the original Koni shocks “had lost some of their dampening effect,” and all four assemblies were sent out to Performance Shocks of Sonoma, California, for a full rebuild that included new valves, bushings, and paint. “The chassis and brakes were in relatively good shape,” Ed said, “and it was obvious that someone had done some work because the control arms were finished nicely and there seemed to be other relatively fresh components throughout. It was an attempt to refurbish the car and tighten up the ride.” The original wheels are magnesium 10-hole Campagnolo units, which were refinished in a satin silver with rechromed three-ear straight spinners and new center pieces.

The Pininfarina bodywork, which apparently had undergone a partial repaint, was chemically stripped to bare metal and any discovered body filler was ground out. All the chrome, including the window frames, were removed to be replated.



Ferrari’s 330 GTC was noted for its front-engine design and dynamic performance from its DOHC V-12.





Greg Kathrein of GK Kustoms in Queen Creek, Arizona, handled the body- and paintwork, and cut a small—about 1 by 2 inches—patch panel to remediate the rust near the right-rear wheel. “The body was in nice shape, with good-quality sheetmetal,” he recalled. “There’s not a lot of structure to the doors, not like today’s units with metal bars, and they have no support, so we had to carefully block-sand the door to get rid of the wave.”

Next, Greg used a DA sander with 240-grit paper to perfect the Ferrari’s metal. He then applied a locally produced epoxy primer called Squeege’s in two coats, which were block-sanded using 320-grit paper. The grit grew finer, to 400-grit,

as the primer was sanded for flatness. Using tools that included a gap gauge, the body panels were then gapped to factory specifications.

When it came time to apply three coats of *Blue Sera* color by Glasurit, Greg took care to use paint with very fine metallic particles, as was Pininfarina practice in 1966. “Ferrari uses a super-fine metallic,” Ed said. “Judges look for it. Metallics used in today’s cars will stand out like a sore thumb; the particles are too big.” Once the color was sprayed, three coats of clear were applied, dried, and re-sanded with 800-grit paper and another three coats of clear. After drying, the clear was sanded in increments from 1000- to

5000-grade before buffing to eliminate any risk of orange peel.

The 330 GTC’s interior consists of black vinyl plus dyed leather. “The decision was made to redo all the interior except for the dashboard, which is black vinyl supported with teak cradling Veglia gauges, all of which were quite nice,” Ed said. To assist with the interior, Sonny from Sonny G’s Upholstery in Mesa, Arizona, created new seat covers and door panels, as well as a re-creation of the Wilton wool carpet’s patterning. A new package tray replaced the warped original. New black vinyl matched the original’s grain. Additionally, perforated speaker holes were mechanically punched into the tray, duplicating factory practice.

The finished Ferrari 330 GTC reflects the realities of restoring a car this valuable to an exceptional degree of fineness. It was unveiled in January 2017 at the Ferrari Cavallino Concours at The Breakers in Palm Beach, Florida, and was awarded Platinum status. The coupe also received an Excellence award the next day at Mar-a-Lago, plus a second Platinum award at the 2019 Ferrari Club of America event in Scottsdale, Arizona.

“The most difficult part of this process, or of any restoration, is the attention to detail, especially in the reassembly process,” Ed said. “It’s about the care you use then to make sure you don’t nick or scratch the paint or chrome. That’s always what’s the most nerve-wracking thing to me about a restoration. You have to really work to put all this back together without damaging anything. I’ve found that you can so-called de-trim a car in two or three days, but to re-trim it after the paint can easily take three or four weeks.” 🚗



One Super Project



This battered 1949 Buick beckoned restoration bravado

SWAP MEETS THAT HAVE THE SIZE and stature of the AACA's Eastern Fall Meet in Hershey, Pennsylvania, abound with seemingly endless purchasing possibilities. Whether you're on the hunt for automotive ephemera, petroliana, or hard-to-find parts, the object that haunts your dreams just might be lurking in one of the seven—yes, seven—named fields. The same applies to the hunt for your next restoration project vehicle, as it may not be in the miles-long car corral. A perfect case study is this 1949 Buick Super convertible we happened upon somewhere in the Green Field during the latter days of the 2022 extravaganza.

It probably goes without saying that 1949 was a monumental year for the domestic automobile industry, when every carmaker welcomed truly new postwar designs in earnest; or at least those that didn't have a head start, such as Hudson or Studebaker. It could also be argued that Buick's much anticipated update featured a masterful inclusion of traditional elements—we're

looking at that "waterfall" grille—that complemented fresh flanks flaunting ventiports and sweepspear trim (that latter initially on top-of-the-line Roadmaster hardtop Rivas), two Buick hallmarks seen in various guises through the Seventies.

Exterior motifs aside, this well-used example, one of a staggering 21,426 built during the model year, seemed to be rather complete. What you don't see affixed to the exterior—front and rear bumpers, for instance—looked to have been buried under a pile of miscellaneous parts that littered what once was a standard, leather-trimmed cabin. Being a convertible, it was also furnished with a hydraulically operated top, seat, and windows (precursor to the electric versions that soon followed), all standard equipment in the \$2,583 base price when new.

More good news: This one boasted the optional Dynaflow transmission, and the "Pilot-Centered" instrument panel was

still populated with a full complement of factory gauges. Moreover, the Super series was Buick's bread-and-butter line for 1949. Total production was a whopping 220,165 units. Roadmaster sales came in at 86,130 units. (*The entry-level Special began the '49 model year with carried-over '48 styling. The series did not sport '49 updates until midyear.*) This means that whatever body and trim parts required to resurrect this tired steed to



1949 BUICK SUPER MODEL 56C CONVERTIBLE

ASKING PRICE: UNDISCLOSED
FOUND AT: AACA EASTERN FALL MEET, HERSHEY, PENNSYLVANIA




as-new condition, like the smashed decklid, are potentially more plentiful, to say nothing about far-more-common mechanical components.

If there was any bad news, at least one door panel was missing or had evaporated, tires neglected to hold air for any length of time, and surface rust outside may have been hinting at what could have been lurking on the chassis. Then again, Buicks of this era were constructed upon extremely substantial


X-braced frames that supported robust suspensions and the division's famed torque tube drive system. Unless it was submerged in mud or water, the frame should still be rock solid.

If the Buick still looks daunting, consider that restoring this Super may only take a carefully planned budget, time, and patience if one first opts to tap into the considerable support network easily accessible via the Buick Club of America. Now, if it only sported an asking price...🚗



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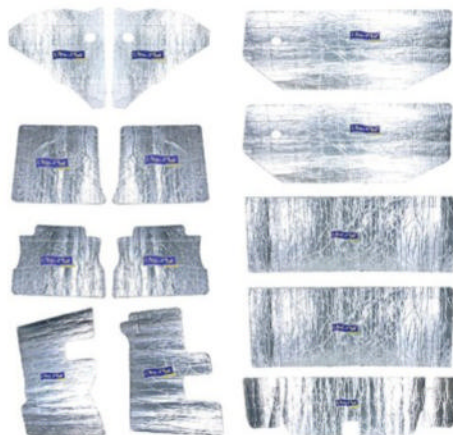
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These new tires have the appearance and sizing of vintage bias-ply units yet incorporate modern radial construction. Perfect for the road or display use, the 670R15 tires feature a 2.75-inch (other sizes available) whitewall incorporated into the sidewall during initial construction for high-quality and durability. All tires are thoroughly tested, DOT approved, and will provide longer lasting use than original radials. Adding to the vintage look is the old-style tread pattern that mimics those of their respective periods. Tires are available for cars and vehicles ranging from the 1920s to the 1970s; keep in mind that tubes are required on some OEM and reproduction wire wheels. Ask about p/n 700303 for more details.

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\$416

vintageair.com



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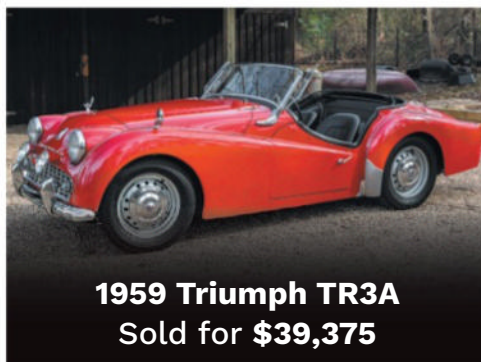
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From John Deere to S.E.V. Marchal: Yellow tint film gives old tractor floodlamps the aura of European driving lamps.

THE POOR MAN'S SELECTIVE YELLOW

Can an amateur apply translucent vinyl tint film at home?

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID CONWILL AND CRYSTAL CONWILL

FOR YEARS, yellow-filtered lighting was believed to be easier on the eyes than pure white, thanks to having much of the blue spectrum knocked out. Until 1993, so-called Selective Yellow headlamps were required as standard equipment on automobiles in France.

Today, it's theoretically possible to produce white-hued lighting without the dazzling blues, so yellow lamps have become redundant functionally if not aesthetically. Yellow lamps on a vintage vehicle tend to add a European sporting touch. You can buy yellow bulbs or lenses to fit most lamps, but if you have an odd application, there are also options for adding a transparent coating to clear.

At one time, paint was the primary DIY method for tinting lenses, but getting paint to adhere to glass isn't easy. Vinyl wraps provide an alternative to paint not only for automobile bodies, but also for glass tinting. This product, the least expensive option on Amazon (about \$8 for a 1-foot x 4-foot roll), came with

only the sketchiest of instructions, but the mixed reviews indicated that (for good and for bad) it was otherwise the same industrial-grade, thermal-adhesive-backed translucent vinyl available at higher prices in name-brand form.

My results, exercised on the GE tractor floodlamps that came in my \$20 swap-meet score housings, look best from 10 or more feet away. My first effort worked out better than my subsequent attempts. I've concluded this was from the amount of heat and water applied to each. The first lens has almost no air bubbles, but in several spots the film came to have obvious stretch marks that I couldn't smooth out. My attempts to use less heat (first dry, and then with a generous amount of water) the second and third times meant I didn't achieve the same level of conformity. It also seems you can't re-heat the vinyl once it has cooled, as wrinkles take a set that only bakes in harder—much akin to the heat-shrink tubing used in electrical wiring.



While the instructions say to clean the lenses with water, I opted to start with a thorough dish-soap-and-water wash. In addition to the film and the lamps themselves, this project required a spray bottle of tap water; scissors; an old credit card, vinyl squeegee, or some equivalent; a hair dryer or heat gun; and a utility or razor knife. Some way to balance the project and hold it in place is also imperative, but the clothespin expedient seen in subsequent photos isn't necessarily the recommended method.

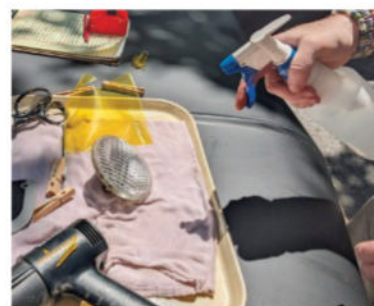


The bulbs were 4.5 inches in diameter, so I cut 6-inch x 6-inch squares of material. I experimented with trimming more closely but discovered that the excess was useful for pulling the portion to be retained tight to the lens surface.

Not included in the main instructions was a note advising that the tint film was protected by two transparent films. Per the note, the installer is expected to remove the backside film to expose the adhesive but not the front film, which remains on after installation as an added protective layer.



The reviews were mixed as to whether wetting the lens, per the instructions, was recommended. Some reviewers even cited success in using window-film application solution. My experimentation used water and suggested that a damp, but not dripping, lens was ideal. The water assists positioning the vinyl during the heating process, but eventually dries out and allows adhesion. Use too much and the vinyl never gets traction.



PARTS LIST:

• Generic yellow-vinyl tint film	\$8.00
• Plastic spray bottle of tap water	\$3.25
• Scissors	\$15.00
• Dish scraper	\$5.50
• Heat gun	\$17.50
• Razor knife	\$7.00
• 2x PAR 35 sealed-beam bulbs	\$30.00



It's a trick to heat the vinyl and simultaneously work it into conformity with the lens (not to mention take photos). This is where positioning the subject horizontally allows gravity to help stick the film to the glass. The instructions recommend using a plastic card to eliminate the air bubbles, but that is seemingly a better task for fingertips. Where the card/squeegee implement helped most was in pushing the softened vinyl into the lip outside of the lens.

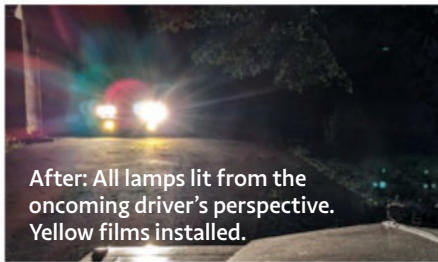
Time and repeated experimentation, I suspect, will make this a worthwhile purchase and I was able to achieve okay results in just one afternoon. It remains to be seen how the vinyl-covered lenses hold up in the long run. The light output didn't change dramatically, nor did the color from the perspective of the operator, but the effect for oncoming drivers seems to be less glare. 🚗



It pays to not be too aggressive in removing the excess film, as it plays a mechanical role in holding the vinyl to the lens. The edges here are completely covered by the driving lamp's trim ring.



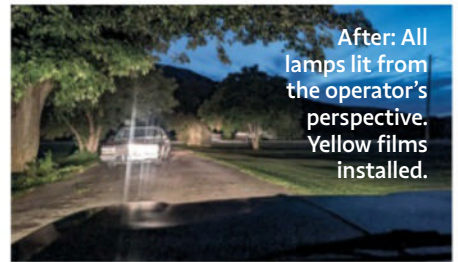
Before: All lamps lit from the oncoming driver's perspective. Clear lenses.



After: All lamps lit from the oncoming driver's perspective. Yellow films installed.



Before: All lamps lit from the operator's perspective. Clear lenses.



After: All lamps lit from the operator's perspective. Yellow films installed.

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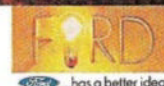
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HORIZON GRABBER

Ford knows that great road cars are made, not born. Case in point: 1968 XL Fastback. You can make it 428 cubic inches big, to take the measure of a long, black line on the salt or snake over the purple mountains in the distance. Optional front disc brakes, heavy-duty suspension, SelectShift (answers the question—to shift or not to shift?) are just a few of the other reasons why big Ford can live on any road you can find. There's a lot more to it than just some finely engineered components, though. Big Ford was built to be a driver's car right from the optional equipment wide-oval tires up. There's a unit-built body shell—almost strong enough to be a car all by itself—mounted on a computer-designed separate chassis. This Ford-engineered combo swings just enough so that wheels and suspension handle the rough stuff instead of just skittering sloppily over it. Try that long, open bend, the washboardy one that's the terror of every hard-sprung sports car in the neighborhood. The third or fourth time through it in the big Dearborn Delight and you'll realize Ford engineering has been there before . . . thousands of times. That's how our slide-rule brigade learns about great road cars.



Some nuts-and-bolts facts about the '68 Fords: you can choose from five V-8's from 302 to 428 cubic inches. Three- and four-speed manual transmissions . . . plus the 3-speed SelectShift automatic. Two different suspensions: stock and heavy-duty. Power front disc brakes, and wide-oval or radial-ply tires. Fourteen convertible, sedan and hardtop models . . . plus seven wagon models.



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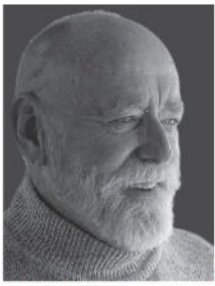
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Jim Richardson

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home with
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and enjoy
their
company
greatly.
They
are usu-
ally smart,
capable,
successful,
and
friendly."

THERE WAS A TIME

when every self-respecting corner service station could do a breaker-points ignition tune-up, lube wheel bearings, clean air filters, and repack universal joints. Not anymore. Modern cars can go for years, and for many miles, before they need such care. Cleaning and oiling air filters has become a lost art. Unfortunately, so are the knowledge and skills to do routine maintenance. If you are having such problems with your vintage ride, you're not alone. Join the club.

By that, I mean two things: First, that we owners of older classics are all in the same boat, and second, the best way I know of to mitigate this situation is to join the club for your marque. I say that because my experience tells me that someone in that club will know how to do what needs doing and when, and other members will know who can do what you need done if you aren't of a mind to do it yourself.

Do you see that older paunchy guy over there, sitting under an umbrella behind his beautiful classic that is the same model year as yours? Go tell him your problems. He may not be able to help you with your angst, but chances are he will have a wealth of information on how to take care of your classic, and he will most likely be flattered that you find his knowledge valuable. He may even be so honored that he will help you do what you need done.

Or he may know the perfect place to take your chariot to keep it looking and running its best. He will probably know a place where someone will light up when you say the word "Studebaker." Also, there may be a young guy in the club who is smitten with the same make and era as you, who can wrestle out a standard transmission and replace a worn clutch. And that older guy will most likely know which clutch and throwout bearing is right for the job.

I suggest you buy these folks lunch. Most likely you will be repaid many times. You may even get invited over to their garage to see their collections, and hang out with people who look a lot like you a lot of the time—by that I mean dressed in overalls or dirty jeans and an old T-shirt with stains on it, and who have a residue of grease or rattle-can paint in the cracks around their fingernails.



They may be grown-up versions of your high-school friends who smoked Marlboros in the restroom, or you might just discover that they are doctors, teachers, successful business leaders,

police, or firefighters. In fact, you are likely to make connections that are great for other areas of life, too. After all, no matter what your day job might be, you will all share a love for certain cars, and the enjoyment of driving, maintaining, and touring in them.

Taking care of your classic can be easy if you know the right people. This is the ideal time to get to know some fellow motorheads, and there is a club for every make you can imagine. There is even a De Lorean club for enthusiasts who covet the stainless-steel steeds; there are clubs for almost any make, domestic or import.

I am anything but a social butterfly, but I am in car clubs. I am actually a social moth. I learned to dance as a lad—sort of—in order to meet girls, but then I met the right one half a century ago and haven't danced since. I am not a joiner at all, but I then feel right at home with car people and enjoy their company greatly. They are usually smart, capable, successful, and friendly.

I am a proud member of Packards International, the Vintage Chevrolet Club of America, and the Morris Minor and Cadillac LaSalle clubs in New Zealand, where we spend the winter. As I pointed out previously, joining the club for your marque has benefits other than social. Someone in the club knows where you can find those plastic radio knobs or that stainless-steel grille surround that got mangled in the parking lot.

Drop a check in the mail, or use your credit card number on their website, and then spiff up your ride and attend a club outing or two. You will be glad you did, and will probably make some friends for life. Trust me, it won't be like some of the classic-car clubs of yore where you had to pinch a set of flippers to be a member, and the members used the same grease on their hair as they did for wheel bearings, but then you won't have the fuzz following you around either. In fact, classic car clubs usually confer an element of prestige, and are generally viewed as an asset to the community. 🚗

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