HEMMINGS
CLASSIC CAR
AMERICA'S COLLECTOR-CAR OWNERSHIP MAGAZINE
AUGUST 2024 #239

O CANADA!
1956 METEOR RIDEAU CROWN VICTORIA

PLUS
- 1941 FARGO PICKUP
- 1947 PONTIAC FLEETLEADER
- A LOOK AT DETROIT'S UNIQUE CANADIAN BRANDS

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CONTENTS

HEMMINGS CLASSIC CAR • AUGUST 2024 • VOLUME 20, ISSUE 11

PERSPECTIVE

6 **Matthew Litwin**
8 **Garage Time**
10 **Reminiscing**
12 **Recaps Letters**
24 **Pat Foster**
58 **Lost & Found**
70 **Rear View Ads**
72 **Jim Richardson**

TECH

68 **New Products & Parts**

FEATURES

16 **Cover Feature**
1956 Meteor Rideau Crown Victoria
26 **Barn Find**
1960 Chevrolet Corvette
34 **Special Feature**
Made in Canada
42 **1947 Pontiac Fleetleader**
50 **High Mileage Feature**
1983 Toyota Celica Supra
56 **News Reports**
60 **1941 Fargo pickup**

MARKETPLACE

14 **Hemmings Auctions**
66 **Swap Meet Scores**

On the Cover: Photographer Barry Kluczyk made several treks into Ontario to capture a trio of vintage vehicles that Detroit's "Big Three" manufacturers crafted for Canada's unique automotive market, including this stunningly restored 1956 Meteor Rideau Crown Victoria.

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Beauty, Eh?

Write to our Editor at mlitwin@hemmings.com and follow him on Instagram @matt.litwin.hemmings.

"Other themes might raise an eyebrow. Detroit's Diesel Disasters, Eastern Bloc Sensations of the Seventies, and Egregious Styling Exercises come to mind..."

MONTHLY "theme issues," designed to celebrate makes, models, or market segments of the vast vintage vehicle landscape, have been a staple of our family of Hemmings magazines for around two decades. A considerable amount of planning goes into each—whether we're honoring Cadillacs, Chryslers, pickups, or pony cars—to provide a wide variety of the topic at hand. Some themes have been pillars of popularity in this title, such as Classic Fords, Classic Chevys, and Vintage Trucks. More recently, your *Hemmings Classic Car* team has scanned the hobby's horizon and added exciting new themes to the glossy pages of this automotive buffet, including station wagons and America's SUVs, as well as Period Modified and Road Ready rides.

Like any epic buffet though, there are many steam trays one can sample from: Greatest One-Hit Wonders of the Early Aughts, Tantalizing Town Coupes of the Twenties, and Captivating Postwar Convertibles, one could argue, seem like logical choices for future issues. Other themes might raise an eyebrow. Detroit's Diesel Disasters, Eastern Bloc Sensations of the Seventies, and Egregious Styling Exercises come to mind, and finding culturally charming vehicles to fill the pages of those hypothetical issues could be difficult.

That's not to say we're not up for a challenge. All that's required beyond the basic idea is time and patience, the same pair of elements that see a restoration through to its completion. A case study is this month's issue, which pays tribute to vehicles unique to the Canadian market.

To be honest, the idea was hatched by accident two springs ago in Hershey, Pennsylvania, after Associate Editor David Conwill and I photographed a 1953 Mercury Monterey station wagon (*HCC*, October 2022). Beauty, eh? In a continued linguistic nod to our neighbors up north, we parted company and hung a Larry onto Route 39 for a few clicks before we hung a Roger into the northbound lanes of Interstate 81, nary a Timmies in sight for a double-double. Which meant during the six-hour drive home, we stayed alert by discussing the Monterey's relative rarity that, in turn, spurred discussions about uncommon creations. Lo and behold, the Canadian-only Meteor, Mercury's Ford-based budget model, was mentioned, and just like that we were off to the idea races.

Meteor segued to Monarch, Monarch to Fargo, Fargo to "Plodge," and so on, until I excitedly blurted out "Frontenac." I had seen one of those Falcon-based peculiarities in my youth, and to this day it remains one of the few times I've observed any north-of-the-border rarity in the wild. Another chance encounter occurred at RM Sotheby's 2018 Hershey sale where I witnessed a 1951 Monarch convertible bring $60,500. In between those memorable moments, a life-long friend purchased a 1923 McLaughlin Buick Model 35 Touring from the Hershey car corral circa 1997.

I admit that I was initially captivated by the fact that it was a Buick, but as my friend explained, McLaughlin—which was to become GM of Canada—began its automotive venture as a coachbuilder that massaged the metal surrounding Buick's venerable mechanical systems. By 1923, the amount of custom coachwork had diminished, yet subtle differences existed between the Canadian and American siblings, not least of which was the obvious alteration to the enameled radiator emblem.

The purchase of the McLaughlin Buick happened shortly after I had acquired my 1952 Roadmaster from the same friend, and when we weren't parading into a Connecticut car show with a mutual friend (who owned a 1914 Buick Touring), I was reading up on my Buick history. Or, bombing around the central part of the state in the evenings like a pack of hooligans, with the 1923's Klaxon alerting everyone within earshot of our presence. I was even afforded the opportunity to drive the Canadian Buick a few times—an experience that one should never pass on if so offered.

Opportunities can be few and far between, much like driving the '23. So, when I casually mentioned the idea of a Canadian-make theme issue to Detroit-based contributor Barry Kluczyk, he offered to help make it a reality. Beauty, eh?

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BY MATTHEW LITWIN
PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF HILL'S AUTOMOTIVE

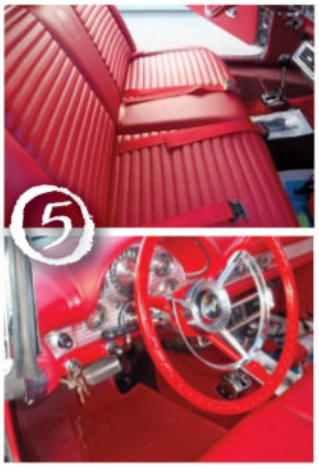
Putting The Thunder in a Thunderbird

Restoring this 1957 Ford icon with a twist

A FREQUENT ASPECT of the vintage vehicle scene is completing the restoration of a cherished ride. It's no small feat, especially when the end goal is to replicate–or surpass–the factory's as-built presentation. It consumes time, patience, persistence, and money. Which means there's a well-deserved element of pride when it comes to showing off the effort at events across the country. Owners often want to keep the restoration looking fresh as long as possible, while the desire to drive the vehicle tugs at heartstrings.

In a perfect world, the solution to this preserve-versus-drive conundrum is to have two similar vintage steeds: One for show; one for go. A case study is this 1957 Ford Thunderbird, recently completed by Hill's Automotive, of Racine, Ohio, for one of its clients. At first blush, the Gunmetal Grey icon of mid-Fifties motoring looks like a finely restored-to-stock example, but beyond the miles-deep paint and highly polished brightwork, a completely different 'Bird is eager to fly.

"When we opened in 1978, nearly all our work was factory-stock restorations. That trend has changed over the last 20 years, as the request for more restomods has increased," shop owner Marvin Hill says. "More people want



What's Inside:

1. The restoration of this 1957 Thunderbird started like any other: at the frame. Here it's already been repainted, though a keen eye might notice the engine mounts have been relocated.

2. At first blush, the rear suspension may look stock, but heavy-duty leaf springs were installed. Note the radial tires.

3. The Ford's front suspension underwent several upgrades, including disc brakes, coilover shocks, a heavy-duty anti-sway bar, and a Borgeson steering system.

4. Hill's secured a fuel injected, 300-hp, 302-cu.in. engine fitted with custom headers. The new V-8 was accompanied by a four-speed automatic overdrive transmission. This combination required the use of a custom driveshaft.

5. The Thunderbird's cozy two-passenger cabin oozes a stock vibe, though one fitted with modern custom seatbelts. The client also requested: cruise control; an AM/FM, Bluetooth stereo system; a tilt-away column and smaller-than-stock steering wheel to help ingress/egress; and a contemporary air conditioning system that makes use of the original dash faceplate for the climate-control unit.

a car with a classic look yet equipped with all the conveniences of things such as fuel-injected engines, more efficient transmissions, a better suspension system, improved steering with a tilt-away column, smaller sized steering wheels, disc brakes, air conditioning, AM/FM with Bluetooth radio, cruise control, and even updated consoles. At least 50 percent of our restorations today include many of these comfort, handling, and reliability upgrades, several of which also improve the safety for the car's occupants.

"That was the catalyst for the restoration of this Thunderbird. Our client owns a factory-stock 1957 Thunderbird, but also wanted one with modern handling, power, and comfort that he could use for long tours, drives to and from car shows, or any other excursion in pure comfort while keeping the car's classic look."

BY DAVID BURROWS
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

MY PURCHASE OF A 1951 JOWETT JUPITER AND THE ADVENTURES IT LED TO

David Burrows with his 1951 Jowett Jupiter and 1957 Morgan 4/4.

In 1988, David rode in Noel Stokoe's Jowett to Sandsend Beach near Whitby...

...and spent time with Edmund Nankivell's special-bodied Jupiter near Brighton, England.

RIGHT: In 1990, David went to New Zealand, seen here with Leo Bolter's Jupiter in Palmerstown North, on the North Island.

GROWING UP in Pittsburgh, my twin brother Robert and I had an early attachment to and love for cars. Added to the mix was a certain work ethic, allowing us both to start our working life at 12 when we ran a 150-customer paper route that serviced a major apartment complex near our home. We quickly moved on and by 15 years old, we were working at a major supermarket chain after school. Our goal was to buy our own car at the age of 16, which was accomplished while juniors in high school when we bought a 1954 Mercury hardtop painted Seafoam Green. It was equipped with flared skirts and Oldsmobile spinner wheel covers on the front wheels. This would be the first of many exciting cars in my life.

Over the next several years my twin would graduate from college with an engineering degree and I, too, would earn my degree and embarked on a lifelong career as a high-school physics teacher. The next chain of cars that I was then fortunate to own were all Chevrolets: a 1961 Impala hardtop, a '66 Chevelle hardtop, and a deluxe version of a '71 Nova.

By 1979, with my wife, Judie, now expecting and our previous travels worldwide coming to a temporary end, I bought a 1976 Morgan +4, which was quickly followed by a 1957 Morgan 4/4 in need of a total restoration. I had been told about it at a local car show and didn't hesitate in buying it and giving it a ground-up restoration. I still own it to this day. In 1987, I took the '57 Morgan to a local car show in Connellsville, Pennsylvania, and this was when my life really changed in terms of automotive adventures.

At the time, Morgans were not a common British make seen at local car shows, so it didn't take long for a gentleman to approach and inform me that he was in possession of a rare British car that he had been keeping in storage for over 20 years. It piqued my interest and upon asking what car he was trying to sell, he told me it was a 1951 Jowett Jupiter. I couldn't have picked one out of a crowd then, but that didn't faze me.

The following week, my wife and now 7-year-old daughter, Dana, traveled with me to Irwin, Pennsylvania, to find the Jowett in a closed shed, buried under a tarp with boxes piled on top. Removing the mass of materials yielded an amazing car of unusual design. The Jowett featured a unique aluminum body over a chrome-moly tubular chassis, a flat-four opposed engine with dual Zenith carburetors, and a torsion-bar suspension (I later learned the design allowed Jowett to win its class at Le Mans in the early 1950s). It did not take long to complete the purchase, thanks to an anxious seller, and me being a determined buyer. I started the restoration almost immediately.

While that was ongoing, I traveled to Scarborough, England, in 1988 and engaged in a two-week excavation of an Anglo-Saxon village, learning how physics and modern technology could be related to my classroom teaching. When not working at the site, I was contacted by Noel Stokoe, press secretary for the Jowett Owners Club of Great Britain. Immediately upon our meeting, he took me in his green Jowett Jupiter for a photo shoot at Sandsend Beach near Whitby. Again, the Jowett connection kicked in when I met Edmund Nankivell, the Jowett Jupiter registrar near Brighton, where I was treated to a ride in his special-bodied Jupiter. Both Noel and Edmund suggested belonging to the Jowett Club as well as the Jupiter

Owners to gain access to spare parts available to members.

By 1990, a masterful mechanical rebuild of my Jowett was completed in Pittsburgh by my friend Jim Biery at his Beverly Road location, and Art Klos Auto, which did a complete refurbishing of all the Jupiter body panels in a classic red paint. The time had come for the Jupiter's first show that July at the Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix and British Car Show. The initial reaction to all who took part was overwhelming with the Jupiter not only taking first place in its class–among nearly 400 British cars on the field–but Best in Show, too. These would be the first of many accolades for the Jupiter.

Later that year, we would travel to New Zealand, noted for its beauty and a large Jowett car club. In Auckland we were greeted by three Jowett Jupiters that took us to a Jowett Club welcoming party in the hills of the city. On the way south to Wellington, fellow Jupiter owner Leo Bolter invited us to stay with his family overnight, later driving my wife in his copper-colored Jupiter to Wellington at the southern tip of the North Island as I followed in our rental with my daughter. Crossing by ferry to the South Island, and then driving to Christchurch, we were greeted with a cocktail party in a warehouse where many of the Jowett owners showed their cars while entertaining us.

Similar stories could be told involving Jupiter connections, from driving under the Firth of Forth Bridge in Edinburgh, Scotland, in a local Jupiter, to Australian Jowett owners greeting us in Brisbane. In 2010, we again traveled to Great Britain for the 100th anniversary of the Jowett Car Company and saw many of our worldwide friends and hundreds of Jowetts on the show field near Manchester.

Owning the 1951 Jowett Jupiter resulted in many awards and invitations to prestigious concours—Meadowbrook in Michigan, The Glenmore Gathering in Ohio, and the Burn Foundation in Reading, Pennsylvania. But most importantly, it was the worldwide connection to so many fellow owners and the skilled people involved in preserving the Jupiter. The 1957 Morgan and 1951 Jowett continue to share space in a warm garage, still close to the hearts of our family.

In 1987, David bought a 1951 Jowett Jupiter that had been stored in a Pennsylvania shed and snapped this photo before starting its comprehensive restoration.

The Jupiter after its restoration was completed in 1990.

REMINISCING relates your personal stories and rememberences 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.

EMAIL YOUR THOUGHTS AND COMMENTS TO: mlitwin@hemmings.com

I HAD TO RESPOND to Jim Richardson's article, "Thwarting Thieves." In the spring of my freshman year (1970) at Oklahoma State, my 1968 two-door Malibu (with a 275-hp, 327-cu.in. V-8 and a Muncie four-speed) was stolen. It was found a couple of weeks later in a farmer's field and had been backed into a tree to pop open the trunk. The Muncie transmission was missing, but the car was otherwise intact. After a couple of months in the body shop, I got the car back with a new transmission and a repaired differential (which had been damaged, too).

Which brings me to creative methods to prevent theft. My spark plug wires were solid Delco Packard wires, not the resistor stuff, with typical boots on at each end. I obtained a short length of the same Packard wire, a small distributor boot and larger coil boot. I then pulled the wire core out of the wire, leaving it hollow, put the typical squeeze connectors on each end as well as the rubber boots. When I parked the car for an extended stay, or in a less-than-safe area, I removed the real coil wire and replaced it with the fake coil wire, pocketing the real one. I don't think I ever had another theft attempt on the car, but I always believed that remedy would have thwarted a quick hot wire. That's my creative method Jim asked for.

My thanks for an excellent publication.

–NATHAN AXTON
Cooksville, Illinois

I REALLY ENJOYED the article on "Mon Chevette" by John Robinson. I purchased new a 1979 Chevette and the only option it had was air conditioning (we lived in Houston, Texas). I worked in Texas City and needed reliable transportation with no frills. The Chevette was my first new car, and it was probably one of the most reliable vehicles I ever had. I traded it in for a Jeep Cherokee (also a base model) in 1988 and the Chevette had 160,000 trouble-free miles, and none of the problems mentioned in the article. I saw it around town for years after that. I never thought I'd see an article about a Chevette.

–MANUEL JUNCO
Via email

I HAD TO CHUCKLE when I read "The Colorful Life of Mon Chevette" in the April issue. I had the same car, in the same color, only mine was the evil twin. It was the worst car I ever owned and the cheapest-built. One mechanic looked at the flimsy, vinyl-printed fiberboard interior door panels and said, "They don't make them any cheaper than that."

I too, just wanted something to get me from Point A to Point B, but it didn't always work out that way. The Chevette broke down twice and required a tow each time to the shop. There was no harmonic balancer on the engine, just a bolt that would snap off and the next thing you knew the engine was dead and you had to coast to the side of the road. The second time it happened, the mechanic said he would fix it if I promised to sell the car. He did, and I did.

–PHILL WOLFE
Warrenville, Illinois

CHRIS HARTMAN'S collection of anecdotes from his days as a parking-lot attendant (Reminiscing, May 2024) reminded me of something. In about 1960, a chap brought an Isetta into a parking lot in downtown Des Moines, Iowa. He told the attendant that he was going to a double feature (remember those?) at a nearby downtown movie theater, and therefore would be gone for over four hours–until nearly midnight. "Got it," said the attendant as he hopped in, and then drove the Isetta to the back of the lot because of the long time estimate, and up against a brick wall to tuck it out of the way.

That's when he learned two things. One, the Isetta's door opens to the front. The attendant hadn't made a mental note of that when he got in. Two, he had no idea how to find reverse in that car. So, there he and it sat for the remainder of the evening, confounding customers who wondered where the attendant was and how to get their cars back. He even made a local columnist's daily piece in the paper.

And if it's true that all Isettas had a sunroof and he could have escaped that way, well, he probably never looked up in the darkening shadows to discover that.

–GEORGE HAMLIN
Clarksville, Maryland

I HAD TO WRITE after reading "Ticket, Sir?" (Reminiscing) in the May issue. My story takes place around the same time, circa 1976. My best friend, Jack, and I worked at Fire Island Ferry Company to and from the island. The community there was very wealthy. We thought of a service for the people who needed their cars washed and waxed when they were staying at their beach house. That sideline of work took off and we were getting some high-end vehicles; Maserati and Ferrari were the best cars we took care of. It was a little nerve-wracking but our "detailing facility" at Jack's house was two minutes from the terminal.

One Saturday night a gentleman pulled up in Rolls Royce Corniche convertible painted ruby red complemented with a tan interior and top. He had three beautiful women with him and when we told him about the service he said yes. That night around midnight we got the car to our detailing facility. The next morning was the Fourth of July, and it was a spectacular day. Even better was the fact that both Jack and I had the day off, and my brother Bob showed up with his pal Mike. Being nice as it was, we dropped the Rolls's top and picked up some cold drinks.

As we were driving around town, we found out the parade was starting soon and somehow managed to maneuver to the back of the parade line. Yeah, we were actually in the parade! I will never forget the expressions on the faces of friends and family. When the parade was over, we took a ride to Jack's girlfriend's house only to find her waiting outside visibly upset. She had called work to see where we were, and the office staff told her the owner came off the beach three days early and was steaming over the Rolls's absence. We bolted back to the detail facility, chammied the car, and got it back to the terminal where Jack smoothed everything over with the boss and car owner. He even paid us for the service. Jack became a lawyer. It's something I will surely never forget.

–BILL CONNO
via email

I REALLY ENJOYED the story and photos of the Cannons' beautiful two-door 1962 Ford Falcon station wagon. It brought back many memories as my parents had a similar Deluxe Trim two-door '63 Falcon wagon that they owned from new to '68.

I was able to find some more specific production numbers for these cars. For both 1962 and '63, the two-door Falcon wagon made up about 18 percent of Falcon

wagon production. According to "90 Years of Ford" by George H. Dammann, there were 20,025 units in '62 and 11,591 for '63. Also, in '63 Ford did break out standard trim versions versus deluxe, the numbers being 7,322 and 4,269 respectively. If that breakout had been the same for '62 the Cannons' car would have been one of approximately 12,616 examples. Meanwhile, total Falcon wagon production numbers were much lower in '63 than '62: 61,821 in versus 109,427, respectively.

I don't think this was a problem with the cars themselves, but in-house competition from the Fairlane wagons, which were added to the Fairlane range for 1963. If you added the sales of these wagons to the Falcon wagons for '63, that number would exceed the total of the '62 Falcon wagons.

–PAUL SHANAHAN
Upper Darby, Pennsylvania

IN READING the May issue in my usual fashion, starting with Jim Richardson on the back page, I was greatly amused by his account of right-hand drive experiences. It reminded me of my first experience on a vacation in Australia, many years ago. Driving our rented Toyota around our arrival city of Cairns, I initially often turned on the wipers when making a turn. My wife and I joked that the locals probably had us pegged as "yanks." Another unrelated traffic experience left us confused at city intersections with absolutely no signs, signals, etc. We finally went into a government office to ask about the rules of the road. It was simple "yield to the right." It was surprising how well it worked. Up to that point we marveled at how patient the Aussies were as we poked our way slowly through intersections with no horn blowing or yelling. As always, I'm looking forward to the next issue.

–ROBERT CALLARD
Perry, Michigan

A WAVE OF NOSTALGIA washed over me upon opening the May article about the 1955 Plymouth Belvedere convertible. As a teenager in the 1960s, I pleaded with my mother to convince my father to buy her a used '55 Plymouth two-door post Savoy. It was going to be the car I got to drive to school on the days when I worked in the afternoon at a local candy shop. All three of us went to look at the car offered by someone who lived in a mobile home park. When the owner started to engine and I heard the burble of the dual-exhaust V-8, I gave Mom a nod that said, "I want this car." It was a three-speed manual like the car in the article. My dad was leaning toward something more conservative, like a six-cylinder Nash or Studebaker. I still remember how proud I was to have that car. No wire wheels or two-tone paint job, but my pride and joy. If I could find a rust-free V-8 stick again, I'd buy it in a heartbeat. I've been looking, but no luck so far!

–TOM CLARKE
Scotts Valley, California

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

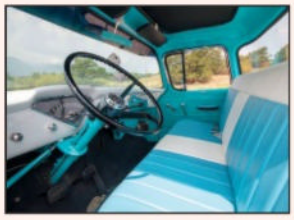
BY MARK J. McCOURT
IMAGES COURTESY OF HEMMINGSAUCTIONS.COM

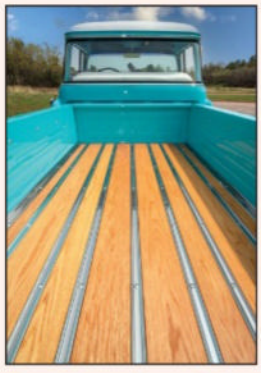
1973 VOLKSWAGEN TYPE 2

The recent introduction of Volkswagen's Type 2 tribute "ID. Buzz" has sparked fresh fascination with the original Microbus. This 1973 example was built in Brazil and was the basis for a restomod treatment that ended with it looking like a pre-1968, sunroof-equipped 23-window Samba. This work, finished last year, included fresh two-tone paint; new vinyl upholstery and sunroof; an "excellent"-running, rebuilt 1,500-cc flat-four (with minor oil leaks divulged); and refreshed suspension and braking systems. Numerous pre- and in-process restoration photos reassured bidders of the Bus's quality, and the seller answered many questions. This VW sold well as a post-auction Make Offer listing.

Reserve: $70,000
Selling Price: $66,675
Recent Market Range: N/A

1958 CHEVROLET 3100 APACHE





While today's steroid-injected pickups menace other road users, that's not how trucks always were. This classic 3100 Apache Custom Cab Stepside showed Chevy once built usefully sized trucks that offered reasonable ability, adequate performance, and timeless style. It was restored from a rust-free base and the Tartan Turquoise/Bombay Ivory paint was said to have no flaws; the matching interior was very fresh and featured custom touches. The rebuilt, 283-cu.in. V-8 and column-shift three-speed manual were called "perfect," like the wood-floor bed. Six videos and a wide array of quality photography showed the half-ton in its best light, and its hammer price represented a surprising bargain.

Reserve: $35,000
Selling Price: $37,800
Recent Market Range: $47,000-$62,000

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Saturday, June 22-Sunday, June 30, 2024

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START: Veterans Blvd., Owensboro, KY – 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
OVERNIGHT: Walnut Street, Lawrenceburg, IN – 5:15 p.m.

SUNDAY, JUNE 23
LUNCH: South Broad Street, Downtown Lancaster, OH – 12:30 p.m.
OVERNIGHT: Front Street, Historic Downtown Marietta, OH – 4:15 p.m.

MONDAY, JUNE 24
LUNCH: High Street, Downtown Morgantown, WV – 12:15 p.m.
OVERNIGHT: Gunter Hotel, Frostburg, MD – 4:45 p.m.

TUESDAY, JUNE 25
LUNCH: Ken Walsh Farm, Purcellville, VA – 12:15 p.m.
OVERNIGHT: Gateway Gettysburg, Gettysburg, PA – 4:45 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26
LUNCH: Hufnagle Parkt, Downtown Lewisburg, PA – 12:05 p.m.
OVERNIGHT: Washington Street, Downtown Binghamton, NY – 4:45 p.m.

THURSDAY, JUNE 27
LUNCH: Clinton Street, Downtown Montgomery, NY – 11:20 a.m.
OVERNIGHT: Marriott Hotel, Downtown Providence, RI – 5:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, JUNE 28
LUNCH: New England Racing Museum, Loudon, NH – 11:30 a.m.
OVERNIGHT: Main Street, Historic Downtown Freeport, ME – 4 p.m.

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OVERNIGHT: Owls Head Transportation Museum, Owls Head, ME – 4 p.m.

SUNDAY, JUNE 30
FINISH: Water Street, Historic Downtown Gardiner, ME – 1 p.m.

Shooting Star

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY BARRY KLUCZYK

This 1956 Meteor Rideau flashed brightly to help grow Ford Motor Company across Canada

Introduced in 1939, the Mercury brand wasn't on the road very long before civilian production was halted for the duration of World War II. A month after V-J Day—August 15, 1945—though, Ford merged Mercury with Lincoln to form a separate marketing division, with a distinct dealer network. Ford of Canada followed suit and even added a Mercury truck line that wasn't offered in the United States.

With Canada's vastly lower population density, the move was a boon to that nation's dealers and customers, as it spread Ford's reach farther across the often-wide distances between towns, particularly in the sparsely populated Western region. In fact, that's one of the reasons Mercury Trucks were introduced, as many rural communities didn't, or couldn't, support separate Ford and Mercury dealerships. For those with only a Lincoln-Mercury store, it was also the only dealership to get a truck, so the Mercury Trucks line filled the gap.

The newly minted Mercury dealers, however, were faced with another challenge: Satisfying customers in the low-price market. Mercury cars were larger and more expensive than Fords and there wasn't a model at the entry level. It was an especially acute predicament because unlike the United States, where two-thirds of car buyers had been financing their cars since at least 1930, auto loans in Canada were less common—and often harder to obtain.

In the more rural communities, Canadian dealers depended on a low-priced model to get customers onto the showroom floor and they got it in the 1946-'48 Mercury 114, which was based on the Ford passenger-car platform and its shorter, 114-inch wheelbase. In fact, it was all-Ford, apart from Mercury trim and badging—and while it fit the bill for a low-priced car, it also diluted Mercury's mid-range branding.

So, in June 1948, Ford announced "a brand-new automobile in the low-priced field, to be known as the Meteor," with the press release also stating, "it will be exclusive to the Canadian market and will be distributed by the Mercury and Lincoln

Powering this Meteor is a date-correct, Ford 312-cu.in. Y-block V-8 engine. It was rebuilt to OE specifications during the car's restoration.

Owner's View

"Every time I get in this car, I think of my dad—along with every stop along the way during its restoration. I'm sure I get my appreciation for Meteors from him, and even with spending all the time and money to make this one as perfect as possible, I knew I was also going to drive it. That's where Dad got his enjoyment with these cars and that's what makes my connection to them even stronger." —*Jordy Bester*

dealers across the Dominion."

The first Meteor models were produced for the 1949 model year, and like the Mercury 114, they were based on the low-priced Fords, but with unique cues. They were also initially offered in DeLuxe and Custom trims, just like the Fords, while priced about $65 more than the base Ford models—and with the option of two-tone paint, which wasn't available with Ford models in the U.S.

Meteor was an instant hit and quickly streaked to fourth place in national sales. Convertible and wagon models joined the lineup, along with Customline and Crestline trims. The brand's design cues continued to evolve throughout the Fifties, growing more distinctive, but still maintaining Ford architecture and drivelines beneath the chrome.

By the mid-Fifties, the cars were even offered with tri-tone paint, while the trim names changed to reflect Canadian themes. Customline and Crestline became Niagara and Rideau, while the cars were offered in Victoria and Crown Victoria models similar to the Ford models.

In Ontario, Jordy Bester's father was always enamored with Meteors and owned a number of them over the years, including the tri-color 1956 Crown Victoria Rideau seen here. It's one of only 206 produced for the year and Bester's father bought it in the mid-Seventies. The car had reportedly sat for more than a little while on a used car lot in the small town of St. Jacobs, before an acquaintance of Bester's father finally bought it and performed an amateur restoration. Bester's father purchased the car from him.

"It wasn't a 100-percent correct car, but Dad didn't mind," Jordy says. "It was a driver that looked good enough and he drove it for years. He didn't do a thing to it."

By the time Jordy's father died, he had amassed a good-sized car collection and when the estate was settled, the vehicles were split up among the family. Jordy got the keys to the Meteor, and while the car may have looked good enough at a glance, it was decidedly less so under the skin, ultimately prompting a full, body-off restoration.

"The frame was in really bad shape," Jordy says. "It had also been hit very hard in the rear. It needed a lot of work."

A replacement frame was sourced and fortunately, it was the same as standard 1955-'56 Ford models. Replacement front fenders were also found and, again, the body parts were the same as Ford models. They differed only with the trim and while Jordy had all those unique parts, he was missing a few emblems, which were tracked down eventually. A few are even reproduced.

The rear bumper proved to be the most difficult component to land during the restoration. Although it looked just like a Ford bumper, it was embossed with "METEOR." Not surprisingly, most had rusted away decades ago. Through a parts connection, Jordy found a gentleman with a horde of Meteor parts, including a correct bumper. It took some dogged persuasion and more than a little begging, but he got the bumper.

The Meteor also received a black, white, and red paint scheme that matched the original color combination. It's complemented inside with an oh-so-Fifties black-and-white cabin that was restored with correct material. Again, some of the trim was a bit different, but the basic look and materials were the same as other Ford models. The fresh upholstery was stitched

by a shop in Pennsylvania that Jordy says helped save the project, after a previous shop contracted for the work folded.

"I'd already placed my order when they shut down," Jordy says. "I ended up getting my money back, but I was initially at a loss about what to do for the interior. Vinny's Interiors really saved the day. They needed a good rear seat to use as a pattern and I was able to send them mine, which helped speed up the process. The results were bang-on perfect."

The powertrain included a 312-cu.in. Y-block V-8 and Ford-O-Matic automatic transmission. Jordy had both rebuilt and the engine itself was expertly detailed. But it was after all the work on the V-8 was completed that someone pointed out that while the block's "VV" code was correct for a Meteor, it was for a 1957 engine. A '56 engine would have been stamped "TV." The rebuild and detailing had been performed on an

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incorrect engine.

Jordy was undaunted. He found a correct TV-code block through one of his contacts and the build process started again. The second time was the charm and the powertrain slipped into the chassis to help close out the restoration. It was finished in the summer of 2023, only a few hours, it seemed, before the car debuted at the Cobble Beach Concours, about three hours northwest of Toronto. It earned a third-place trophy, but more than the accolades, Jordy says displaying the car was an homage to his father.

"I think he'd have been very proud of how the car turned out," he says. "And I'm very proud I was able to have the restoration done—and done correctly. We were able to keep it original-looking and that's what Dad always appreciated with these cars."

Aside from its stunning restoration, this 1956 Meteor also represents the pinnacle of the brand's design and marketing distinction. Meteor's history got murkier in the years that followed, particularly in the Sixties. It was canceled after the 1961 model year, but was resurrected in 1964, with models that looked more like Mercurys with Ford underpinnings. From 1969-76, Meteor was still a separate brand, but the cars also wore Mercury badges—and after that, the Meteor name was relegated to a trim on the Mercury Marquis until 1981, when it finally burned up in the marketing atmosphere.

For the Canadian market, Meteor came along at the right time to help Ford expand its footprint across the country, flashing like a shooting star into the growing postwar market. The distinctive trim and unique tri-color paint scheme on Jordy beautifully restored example illustrates why the cars garnered a strong following with customers.

MONARCH: FORD'S OTHER ROYAL IDEA FOR CANADA

Just as Canada's Mercury dealers needed the Meteor to offer customers a product in the low-price segment, Ford dealers were looking for a showroom replacement for the larger and more profitable Mercury, which was slotted in the mid-priced field. The solution came in the Monarch, an all-new brand launched in 1946 and offered exclusively through Ford dealers. Using the same playbook as Meteor, which was based on re-trimmed Ford models, the new Monarch was essentially a rebadged Mercury, with a different grille insert, Ford taillamps, and a few other trim differences.

The new brand grew and evolved for more than a decade, with models including the Lucerne, Richelieu, and, later, the Sceptre. It carved out a small yet strong niche in the Canadian market, but hit the skids and was canceled in 1958, when Ford introduced the Edsel. The cars were aimed at the same price segment and the Monarch got dethroned. Ford's new king of the mid-priced field, however, famously flopped and after only a year's absence, the Monarch returned in 1959. Called the Monarch II or Mark II by some, the revamped nameplate wore more subdued styling and followed Mercury's overall downsizing by 1961. It was offered only in the Richelieu by that time, which proved to be brand's final year of production.

Mercury revived the Monarch name in the U.S. and Canada in 1975 for its badge-engineered version of the Ford Granada, but it had nothing to do with the stand-alone brand marketed from 1946-61.

1959 Monarch Lucerne Cruiser hardtop coupe

MATTHIEU HAMEL

PatFoster

The 1955 Hudson

"I think American Motors made a big mistake when they used the smaller Hudson 202-cubic-inch six as the 1955 Wasp's standard engine."

YOU HAVE TO PITY the poor 1955 Hudson. Overlooked or avoided when new, even today they're disparaged by many otherwise diehard Hudson aficionados. This disdain is often reflected in their selling prices, which are generally much lower than those of the "real" 1950-1954 Hudsons.

Some of this I can understand. My regard for American Motors' 1958 Ambassador lineup is far less strong than my feelings for the lovely 1952-'57 Nash Ambassadors. The fact that the styling of the '58 "Ambassador by Rambler" was originally intended for the same-year Hudson Hornet is an added irritation to Ambassador fans like me.

I'm aware that the overall performance of the 1955 Hornet is nowhere near as exciting as the 1954s, because the newer car is softly sprung and half a foot taller than the fabulous step-down predecessors, which were much more agile to drive. Even the potent Packard-V-8-powered Hornets lack the thrilling feel of the sharp-handling 1954s. But the '55 Hornet models offered the same beloved Hudson flathead six-cylinder engine as before, with available Twin-H power, so straight-line acceleration could not have been that much different from the prior year. But, as Hudson expert Jack Miller once explained to me, the step-down's big advantage was its superior handling. It's what helped them dominate NASCAR for years. It's what made them so special to drive.

To me, the case is different with the 1955 Wasp. I think American Motors made a big mistake when they used the smaller Hudson 202-cubic-inch six as the Wasp's standard engine. With a 110 hp version standard and 120 hp optional, the Nash-based Wasp had less power than the '54 Wasp's 232-cu.in., 126-hp six, as well as the Super Wasp's 140-hp six. In a market that was introducing higher-horsepower engines every year, this was a noticeable step backwards that, when combined with the new model's less precise handling, resulted in a car considerably less than thrilling to drive. As a lower medium-priced car, and a Hudson no less, the '55 Wasp should have had the 140-hp six as standard equipment. Hudson buyers expected excellent performance and I'll bet they were turned off by the decreased power. It was tough enough for a car in that market segment to be powered by a six; to be stuck with a wimpy six bordered on unforgivable.

In terms of styling, the 1955 "Hash" (Hudsonites' derogatory nickname for the Nash-based Hudsons) looks very much like what Hudson Motor Car Company planned to build if it had remained independent. Sure, the senior models would have been much lower in height, but stylists managed to capture the essence of Hudson's planned 1955 looks, especially up front. So, although I see why some Hudson fans might not like the senior models, I can't understand the revulsion some folks have for them.

Ditto the 1955 Hudson Ramblers, which replaced the Jet series. During the Nash/Hudson merger negotiations, the Jet investment was a large sticking point between Nash CEO George Mason and Hudson's A. E. Barrit. Mason had no intention of continuing the Jet; it was a fiscal boat anchor that hadn't sold nearly as many cars as expected. Mason insisted Hudson write off the Jet's tooling and development costs prior to the merger. Barrit had to give in. The Jet was replaced by a line of Ramblers wearing Hudson badges and hubcaps.

Hudson Ramblers offered more models and body styles than the Jet, and their styling was updated for 1955 to eliminate the annoying enclosed fenders. The Rambler two-door Deluxe sedan was the lowest-priced American car on the market, and a noted fuel-economy champ. There were also Rambler four-door sedans and station wagons, plus two-door wagons, and hardtops, in three trim levels. It was a broad array of models appealing to younger buyers.

Hudson dealers recorded a more than 20 percent increase in retail sales for 1955, although model year production was down. But the following year Hudson sales resumed their downward slide and by the end of 1957 the Hudson brand was gone from the American market.

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Vegetative State

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY SCOTT LACHENAUER

This 1960 Chevrolet Corvette has spent the last four decades in an overgrown backyard

This 1960 Corvette spent the last 40 years hidden in an overgrown backyard in northern New Jersey. Luckily, the car was spotted by marque enthusiasts and was rescued from seclusion.

Many a young automotive enthusiast fell under the spell enchanted by the exhaust notes of Chevrolet's first-generation Corvette. One pre-teen held captive by its many attributes, including racy styling, was Mike Walsh, of Shohola, Pennsylvania. "My father Don had a repair shop in Brooklyn, New York, and was a founding member of the Brooklyn Hot Rod Association. He had a sweet 1959 Corvette back then and that's what got me into the sport at an early age. I really love the first-generation cars," Mike says.

By the time Mike was 16 he was ready to find a Corvette to call his own. Even though he wasn't old enough to drive yet, that inconvenience didn't stop Mike from pursuing an example he had heard about from a friend. "That 1962 'Vette wasn't a 'cream puff' to say the least. It was basically lying in a swamp when we found it. The thing was a junker that had been picked over, but I saw something in that car, and I knew with enough time and parts, I could bring it back to life," Mike remembers.

He purchased the project and soon landed a job with a nearby speed shop, using his hard-earned cash and acquired mechanical ability to put that Corvette back on the street. It's a car that Mike still owns today.

Mike eventually struck out on his own and started a business aptly named the Early Vette Shop, located right in Shohola, spending his days doing the thing he always wanted to do: rehabilitating needy Corvettes and getting them back on the street. Mike worked alongside his brother, Joe Erven, and the duo has lost count of how many cars passed through their now-closed shop doors, but it hasn't stopped Mike from enjoying his free time tinkering with his favorite car; it's a life's passion that seems to see no end.

To that point, Mike keeps his eyes open, and coupled with his shop's legacy, it's only natural that friends and customers approach Mike with leads on hidden gems. "Recently, a past client contacted me about a 'Vette he had found in the suburbs of New Jersey. He told me right off the bat that the thing was hidden, and nobody knew about it. Once he told me where it was, I figured I'd take the time to have a look at it," Mike says.

The Corvette was in a town not far from Mike's old stomping grounds. When he got there, Mike discovered the long dormant 1960 Corvette not far from the roadside, and partially visible though a thick grove of vegetation that had done its best

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Not long after the Corvette was rescued from 40 years of neglect, Mike stripped the paint from the fiberglass body. Some of the factory red paint remains on the lower extremities.

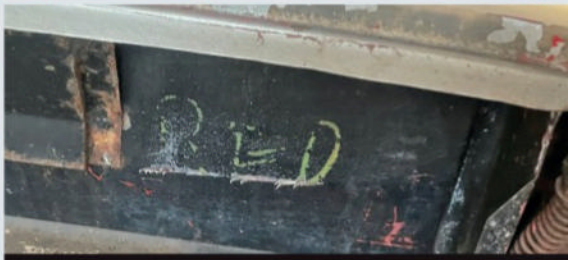
to bury it. "From what I could see, it had a tarp over part of it that was ripped, and the car was shrouded with plenty of debris and plant life. Sadly, a branch had fallen and broken the back window, and an animal got in and shredded the interior."

Mike soon uncovered the Corvette's sobering story. According to what he was told, "The owner had kids, and over the years they all moved out and moved on. He was later moved into an assisted living facility and the car was left on the overgrown property. It didn't stick out much because next door there was a nursery center with plants, shrubs, and trees, so it all kind of blended in."

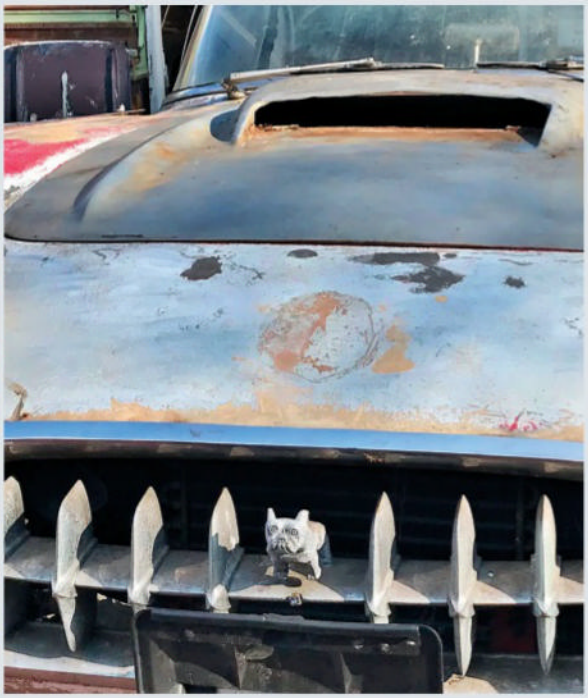
As the story unfolded, Mike learned from the family that the Corvette was also for sale, and he was able to negotiate a deal. Mike returned shortly thereafter to machete a path to free the Chevy from its vegetative state and load it on a flatbed. At the shop, Mike was finally able to thoroughly examine the car, and he quickly determined it was originally a Roman Red example, complemented by a red interior. But there was more to it than the color combination.

The original drivetrain was long gone. In its place was a rusty 350-cu.in. small-

Some of the original parts that came with the Corvette were in the trunk, including the exhaust manifolds.



You can see the word "Red" written on the trunk backing at the factory.



The original hood that came with the 270-hp, 283-cu.in. V-8 is now adorned with a '67-style scoop.

block, but Mike suspects he knows what was originally installed in the engine bay at the factory. According to him, "The last owner took the 'Vette apart to paint it, and never put it all back together. So, it was easier for me to spot some telltale signs that strongly suggest the car was built with the optional 270-hp, 283-cu.in. engine, which wore a pair of four-barrel carburetors. One dead giveaway was the fact this car was built with a 6,500 rpm redline tachometer. Another was that the 'Vette also had the hood with a factory relief that was needed to clear the top-tank radiator and core support used in conjunction with 270-horsepower cars."

The car was originally optioned with a T-10 transmission, but it too was replaced, though with an automatic unit. "The third pedal was still in the car; he–or someone else–never took the time to remove it," Mike says. As far as the body goes, it wasn't in bad shape and was never hit. It was wearing some of its last paint job, which was a heavy-flake silver respray that had been removed in a few spots; apparently the owner was preparing the body for a new custom respray. Because of this, some of the original Roman Red was visible as well.

The original dual four-barrel 283-cu.in. V-8 is long gone, along with its manual transmission. In its place is this rusty and crusty 350-cu.in. small-block that took a beating from New Jersey's humid climate.

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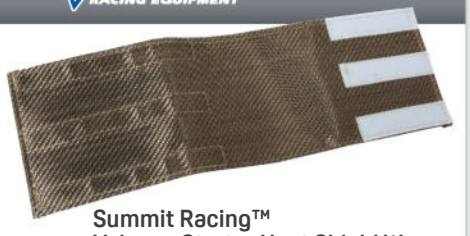

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When Mike first set eyes on the Corvette, the interior's upholstery was shredded and encrusted with animal waste. The floor shifter had not yet been removed when this photos was taken.

Mike ended up stripping all the paint off the fiberglass body and uncovered some more surprising facts about the car. One unique discovery was that the Corvette was a hardtop-only example, meaning it had no holes drilled for the bracketry or even the latches needed to secure a factory soft top. Another was the lack of an antenna hole on the rear quarter, a telltale sign that the Chevy was also a radio-delete car. Adding up the facts–a high-output engine, soft top, and radio delete–it's plausible that the Corvette was originally bought to race. "That's a very distinct possibility," Mike says.

As to the rest of the car's condition, the frame was in surprisingly decent shape considering its decades of outdoor neglect. "I think the saving grace was the fact it was parked on a partial concrete slab, which was a lot better than grass, dirt, or anything else that would hold moisture." Mike noted that the braking system was pretty much shot, and the suspension had not been altered over the years, save for a set of rear air shocks. The Chevy did have its original rear differential, possibly containing a 3.55:1 gear set. One obvious deviation from stock was the set of vintage Appliance Wire Mag wheels secured to the car.

"Despite the animal damage done to the interior, I could tell the upholstery had been redone during the 1970s. It was one of the nastiest interiors I've ever seen in a Corvette that I've rescued. The damage was that bad," Mike says, yet he points out that the cockpit did boast some add-ons. "Aside from a shifter needed for the automatic transmission, an 8-track player was in the dash, extra gauges were installed to keep track of the engine's vitals, and a Grant three-spoke wood steering wheel was installed."

There were some other slight modifications made to the exterior of the Corvette, too. Another obvious change was a '67-style Corvette scoop that had been grafted to the original hood, which

The dash is in restorable condition and still has the original 6,500-rpm tachometer.

These Appliance Wire Mag wheels were all the rage in the 1970s show circuit. Later, Mike removed the aftermarket wheels and installed a correct set of steel wheels wearing "dog dish" hubcaps.

looked out of place. Less noticeable was that the front license plate reliefs had been filled, and the valence was smoothed. The car was also nosed and decked, and all the emblems were removed, and the corresponding holes had been filled. Someone also installed parking lamps under the bumpers. "Probably the most interesting add-on was the Mack bulldog mascot bolted on top of the grille. That was a bizarre touch, to say the least."

Over the next several weeks, Mike thoroughly went through the Corvette, fixing what he could on his budget. "Early on I realized that this car would probably be better suited for someone who had the time and money to invest into making it a dream ride. After cleaning up the body the best I could and clearing out the mess that was the interior I decided to let this car go to another enthusiast."

As of this writing, the Corvette is in the hands of a capable builder who plans to give this ride the attention it deserves. "This Corvette certainly needs a second chance at life. Its rarity makes this one a keeper. Though Roman Red on red is not that rare of a combination, the hardtop and radio delete, paired with the performance engine, does make it interesting. The car is a great candidate for a complete restoration. It was a great find and a cool car, and I'm happy we found it and got it back into the public eye where it belongs."

The 1960 Corvette was the last year with taillamps mounted on the rear fenders.

Body drop of a 1955 Chrysler at the Windsor factory.

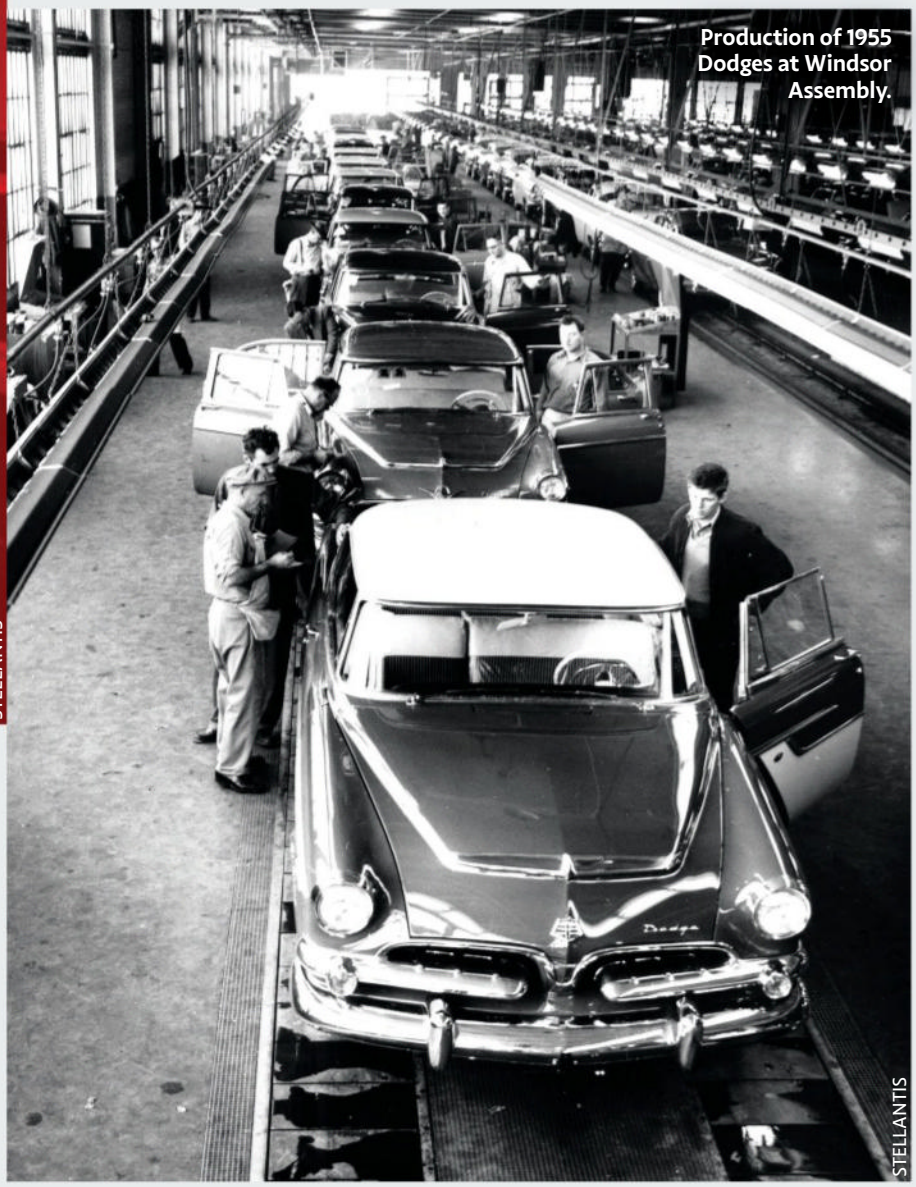
Made in Canada

BY BARRY KLUCZYK • PHOTOGRAPHY BY BARRY KLUCZYK AND AS CREDITED

The Big Three's Canadian manufacturing and marketing strategies in the era before and immediately after the landmark Auto Pact of 1965

Final inspection of 1933 Dodges at Windsor Assembly.

STELLANTIS



Production of 1955 Dodges at Windsor Assembly.

STELLANTIS

STELLANTIS

Henry Seth Taylor, a Quebecer, is credited with building Canada's first horseless carriage. That was in 1867 and his steam-powered "pleasure carriage" forged a path for a nascent industry that, as in the United States, spawned countless start-up auto builders by the turn of the 20th century. And just as in the U.S., most faded away with only comparative handfuls of vehicles produced.

In fact, the going was even tougher in Canada due to its vastly lower population and relatively limited technical resources. In 1900, there were 5.3 million residents across Canada, compared to the 76 million Americans to the south. Simply put, the U.S. had the population to support the economies of scale required to sustain successful manufacturers. The U.S. certainly shed its share of less-competitive brands as the new century wore on, but the strong ones grew exponentially.

In Canada, most homegrown brands gave way to Detroit's big automakers after World War I and during the Great Depression. Those American vehicles were popular, but because of stiff import duties instituted under the National Policy of 1878, they were also expensive, carrying up to a 35-percent duty. The tariffs affected most items imported from the United States and the tax rate varied over the years, as the Canadian government tried its best to level the economic playing field with its larger neighbor.

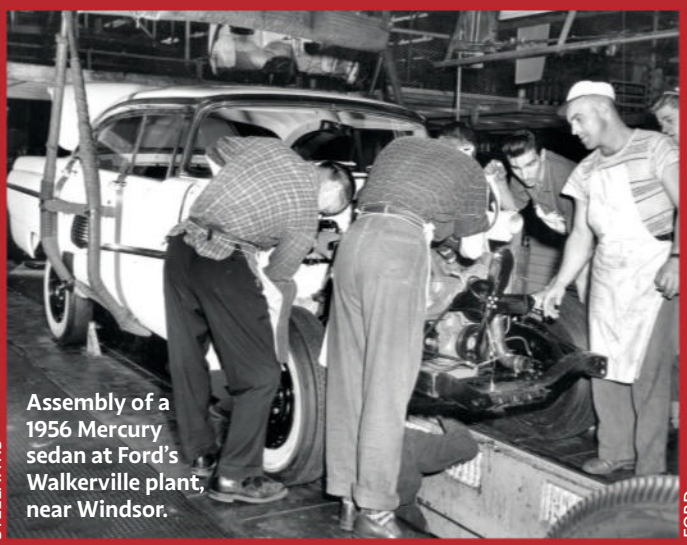
To combat those duties, Detroit's major automakers set up shop in Canada, building tariff-free vehicles in and for the country, while also leveraging export advantages within the British Commonwealth. They included the Big Three, of course, but also independents such as Hudson and Studebaker.

Windsor, Ontario—across the river from Detroit—became Canada's early center of automobile manufacturing, although the enormous output of what would become GM of Canada's operations in Oshawa would ultimately outpace that of Windsor. Studebaker also had plants in Ontario, first in Walkerville (now a neighborhood in Windsor) and later in Hamilton. So did Hudson, which built cars in Tilbury.

A more straightforward 17.5-percent duty and 7.5-percent excise tax were introduced in 1936, simplifying Canada's tariff structure. But with the independent manufacturers all but gone by then, the effect was to congeal the Canadian auto industry into subsidiaries of the American manufacturers, and even they were reluctant to invest heavily in an essentially closed and much smaller market. Nonetheless,

STELLANTIS

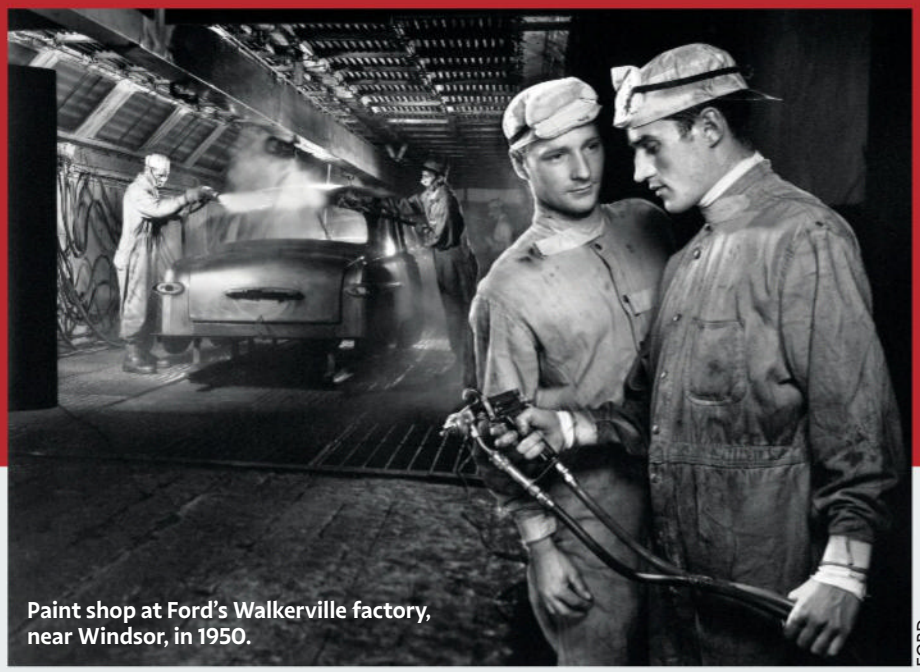
The main gate at Chrysler's Windsor Assembly facility, in 1959.



FORD

Assembly of a 1956 Mercury sedan at Ford's Walkerville plant, near Windsor.

After Ford established production in 1904 in Walkerville, Ontario, the Model T would follow and dominate the early Canadian market.



FORD

Paint shop at Ford's Walkerville factory, near Windsor, in 1950.

each of Detroit's major manufacturers developed unique brands and models for the Canadian market, often mixing and matching parts from their established lines to create distinctive products without heavy investment.

This moved the market along well for the next 20 years or so, but by the end of the Fifties, the Canadian auto industry was struggling. Production costs crept up and output declined, as the protected home market also meant the country wasn't exporting production to the larger U.S. market. Some minor trade revisions helped boost manufacturing and employment modestly, but it was clear the status quo was untenable. By the early Sixties, the Canadian auto industry was uncompetitive and in decline.

After flirting with a tariff remission program that was challenged in court, the Automotive Products Trade Agreement was drawn up in 1964 and signed in '65 by U.S. President Lyndon Johnson and Canadian Prime Minister Lester Pearson. More commonly known as the Auto Pact, the agreement had its complexities and nuances, including a balance of Canadian and American content in affected vehicles, but it essentially eliminated the tariffs for vehicles between the U.S. and Canada for Detroit's manufacturers.

It's those unique marques and models in the era before and immediately following the Auto Pact we're highlighting, with a primer of how each of the Big Three entered and carved out their respective niches in the unique Canadian market.

FORD DRIVES A FLEDGLING INDUSTRY

Just as it did in the U.S., Ford is credited with jumpstarting the modern auto industry in Canada—and that effort predated the Model T. In 1904, in an agreement with Henry Ford, wagon builder Gordon McGregor formed Ford Motor Company of Canada. Reportedly, 117 cars were produced at McGregor's facility near Windsor, most of them two-cylinder Model Cs and a few four-cylinder Model Bs.

As with the U.S., the introduction of the Model T gave Ford of Canada a period of great domination, commanding nearly 70 percent of the market. The Mercury brand came later and until World War II, Canadian dealers sold both, with a few also selling Lincoln. After the war, the dealer network was split—existing dealers sold Ford, Ford Trucks, and a newly created Monarch line, while a new dealer branch sold Mercury, a newly created line of Mercury Trucks, Lincoln, and a new Meteor brand.

In the previous structure, dealers had low-priced (Ford) and mid-priced (Mercury) products. To give those fledgling Mercury-Lincoln dealers a low-priced car, the Mercury 114 was offered from 1946-'48. It was essentially a rebadged Ford, riding on the Ford's 114-inch wheelbase versus Mercury's standard 118-inch wheelbase.

Naturally, Ford dealers wanted something a little more upmarket, with the higher margins of the Mercury

The McLaughlin Carriage Works in 1910. The Oshawa, Ontario factory would become GM's flagship production facility in Canada.

COLLECTION OF THE CANADIAN AUTOMOTIVE MUSEUM

McLaughlin-Buick with a snowmobile conversion, circa 1926.

BELOW: Paint curing of a 1957 Oldsmobile 88 at GM Oshawa.

BELOW: One of two 1939 McLaughlin-Buick stretched convertibles built for the cross-Canada tour of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth.

models they'd lost. The Monarch was the answer, an essentially badge-engineered Mercury (on the 118-inch wheelbase), but with a unique grille, trim, and Ford taillamps. The Monarch brand was produced through 1957, when it was suspended as Ford dealers geared up to sell the Edsel, which occupied the same rung on the price ladder. When it was clear Edsel wasn't succeeding as anticipated, Monarch was reintroduced in 1959 and lasted through '61.

As for Meteor, it supplanted the Mercury 114 and gave Mercury-Lincoln dealers an official low-priced car line to sell. The methodology was the same as Monarch—Ford-based models with distinctive trim. It gets a little weird by the early-Sixties, when a new Meteor was sold by Mercury in the United States. It was originally designed as the 1961 Edsel Ranger but was adopted by Mercury when Edsel collapsed. There wasn't a single Mercury badge on its flanks.

Ford of Canada also canceled the Meteor marque in 1961, citing too much crossover with the U.S. models, but it was revived in '64 when the company realized its elimination had handed the market segment to Pontiac. Rather than Ford-based models, however, the reborn Meteor relied on rebadged and retrimmed Mercurys. The brand soldiered on until '81, surviving more than 15 years after the Auto Pact. Ironically, production for the final two years came from the U.S.

Another interesting footnote in Ford of Canada's history was the 1960 Frontenac, a compact based on the Ford Falcon and

FORD

The 1960 Frontenac was Canada's second-best-selling compact for its only year of production.

FORD

Designed to give Mercury dealers a low-priced entry, the 1949 Meteor was based on the shorter-wheelbase Ford sedan.

FORD

Monarch was conceived to give Ford dealers a higher-margin car. A 1950 Sport Sedan is shown.

A 1959 Monarch Lucerne Cruiser two-door hardtop, powered by a 383 MEL-series V-8.

MATTHIEU HAMEL

GM launched Acadian in 1962, which included Invader and Beaumont models. A Beaumont wagon is shown.

The Mercury M-Series pickup was produced from 1947-'68. A 1953 model is shown.

A 1965 Meteor Montcalm convertible.

The 1970 Pontiac Parisienne 2+2 was based on the Chevy full-size chassis and used Chevy engines. This one is 350-powered.

sold through the Mercury-Lincoln-Meteor dealers. It was marketed as a separate brand and more than 8,400 were sold, more than the Corvair and Valiant in Canada. It lasted only a single year, as Mercury dealers got the Comet in '61.

As for Mercury Trucks, they also differed in the grille and trim, but were architecturally identical to their Ford cousins. After the Auto Pact was signed, Mercury Trucks were phased out by 1968.

THE GENERAL SETS UP CAMP IN OSHAWA

Canadian carriage maker Robert McLaughlin helped to found General Motors in the U.S. and he would go on to become the first president of General Motors of Canada.

It started with the simpatico relationship forged between McLaughlin and GM founder William Durant, who was also was in the carriage business. With his acquisition of Buick Motor Company, Durant was better established in auto manufacturing and an agreement was struck to supply the nascent McLaughlin Motor Company, in Oshawa, Ontario, with powertrains.

That led to McLaughlin providing capital support for Durant's founding of General Motors Holding Corporation in 1908. Two years later, after over-leveraging the new company in the acquisition of numerous vehicle and component companies, Durant was ousted by the board of directors. Undaunted, Durant founded Chevrolet and quickly offered McLaughlin the Canadian rights to the Classic Six, which he agreed to, but with bodies designed by McLaughlin. They were built alongside the McLaughlin-Buicks in Oshawa.

The success of Chevrolet enabled Durant to wrestle back controlling interest in GM by 1918 and he brought McLaughlin along for the ride, as McLaughlin Motor Company and Chevrolet Motor Company of Canada merged to form General Motors of Canada.

With his brother George, Sam McLaughlin oversaw rapid expansion of GM in Canada and the Oshawa manufacturing campus production mushroomed, with Oldsmobile joining the chorus by 1920. The McLaughlin marque remained until World War II. After the war, it was just Buick.

The same tariff structure and market size challenges that affected Ford also affected GM of Canada's development. All the same brands as the U.S. were represented, but with some distinctive differences—the most significant found on Canadian Pontiac models. From the late-Thirties to the late-Sixties, they were based on Chevrolet chassis and typically used Chevy bodies fitted with Pontiac trim. At first, GM insisted on brands using their own respective engines, but after the introduction of Chevrolet's overhead-valve V-8 in the mid-Fifties, Canadian Pontiacs featured Chevrolet power.

There were also different Pontiac model names and designations, but there weren't any unique GM brands in Canada until the Sixties, when it was determined Pontiac dealers needed a compact to compete in the growing segment. Because of the tariffs, the U.S.-produced Pontiac Tempest wasn't offered in Canada and the initial plan was to retrim the Corvair, already in production at Oshawa. That plan quickly evolved into developing a unique version of the forthcoming Chevy II and market it as a separate brand: Acadian. Both debuted in 1962.

A split-grille design echoed Pontiac styling cues, but Acadian was indeed a distinct brand offered in three trim levels: a base model, the mid-level Invader, and the top-rung Beaumont. This is where GM's Canadian branding gets confusing. In 1964, the Acadian brand grew to include the newly introduced A-body. Pontiac in Canada didn't get one, but Acadian did, and it was called Beaumont (offered in Standard, Custom, and Sport Deluxe trims), which was essentially a re-trimmed Chevelle on the outside, but with Pontiac dashboard and trim on the inside. And Chevy power, of course.

With that change, the top trim on the compact Acadian was renamed Canso. Then, for 1966, the Beaumont name was recast as its own marque alongside Acadian, which retained only the compact, Chevy II/Nova-based model. Beaumont models remained essentially Chevelles and even offered big-block-powered performance options like U.S. Chevys.

The Beaumont brand was introduced just as the Auto Pact was being signed and therefore lasted only through

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1949 International Harvester KB-1 Pickup
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1963 Chevrolet Corvette Sting Ray Coupe
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1950 Cadillac Series 62 Coupe deVille
Sold for $56,000

1950 Mercury Station Wagon
Sold for $69,500

1961 Chevrolet Impala Sport Coupe
Sold for $115,000

1973 Datsun 240Z
Sold for $23,200

1999 Land Rover Defender 90 TD5
Sold for $53,025

Beaumont became a separate brand in 1966. A 1967 model is shown.

Brochure cover for the 1967 Acadian line.

INSIDE THE CANADIAN AUTOMOTIVE MUSEUM

For more than 60 years, the Canadian Automotive Museum has celebrated and told the unique stories of the country's auto industry. It's located in Oshawa, Ontario, approximately 40 miles east of Toronto, where Canadian auto pioneer Sam McLaughlin set up shop and eventually founded GM of Canada.

The museum is home to several early McLaughlin-Buick models and numerous other home-market vehicles from the fledgling days of the Canadian auto industry. It also showcases several of the unique Big Three models from the pre-Auto Pact era, including a Frontenac, a Dodge Regent (a genuine "Plodge"), a 1949 Meteor, and more.

Located just off Highway 401, the main east-west expressway flowing through Toronto, the museum is a worthwhile destination for automotive enthusiasts visiting the area. Go to canadianautomotivemuseum.com for more info or look them up on Facebook.

1969. Acadian made it to 1971, although the Acadian name was reused starting in the mid-Seventies on a Pontiac version of the Chevette.

GM of Canada flirted two more times with unique brands. Passport International Automobiles launched for the 1988 model year, marketing a rebranded and Daewoo-produced version of the Opel Kadett E (similar to the badge-engineered Pontiac Le Mans in the U.S.). Passport folded in 1991, giving way in 1992 to Asüna—a captive import marque like Chevrolet's Geo sub-brand in the United States. It lasted only two years.

CHRYSLER'S 'PLODGES,' FARGOS, AND OTHER 'VALIANT' EFFORTS

The company formally known as Chrysler Corporation of Canada followed perhaps the most convoluted path to establishment in Canada. It started in the economic slump that followed World War I, when Walter Chrysler—whose great-grandfather was one of Chatham, Ontario's settlers—took control of Maxwell Motor Company.

Maxwell had a subsidiary operation in Windsor and, starting in 1924, built Chrysler cars under license. When the Chrysler Corporation was officially formed in 1925, Chrysler Corporation of Canada was created only 11 days later, dissolving Maxwell, but continuing Chrysler production in Windsor. Dodge Brothers had already established a manufacturing footprint in Windsor, too, but when the company was absorbed by Chrysler in 1928, production moved briefly to Toronto.

Chrysler Canada forged a unique path for its home market, melding elements of Plymouth and Dodge models to create distinctive cars sold under the Dodge banner. Often, this involved putting Dodge noses and trim on Plymouth bodies—a hybrid approach that earned the nickname "Plodge." This tactic endured into the mid-Sixties. Canadian-built Dodge models featured Plymouth interiors, and carried unique names such as D-3 and D-4 in the early years. Later, names were inspired by Canada's association with the British Empire—Mayfair and Regent.

In 1936, the Fargo truck brand was made exclusive to Canadian Plymouth and De Soto dealers. They were mechanically identical to Dodge trucks and the marque also lasted the longest after the Auto Pact was signed, continuing all the way through 1972 in Canada. A 1941 Fargo half-ton is featured in this issue starting on page 60.

Chrysler Canada also marketed the unique Valiant brand in an attempt to establish a stronghold in the compact market, as Ford and GM had done. It started in 1960 with a car based on the U.S.-market Valiant, but with trim and branding differences. For the 1963 model year, the Valiant was revamped and based on the larger U.S. Dodge Dart, but with a Plymouth Valiant nose—a reverse twist on the Plodge theme.

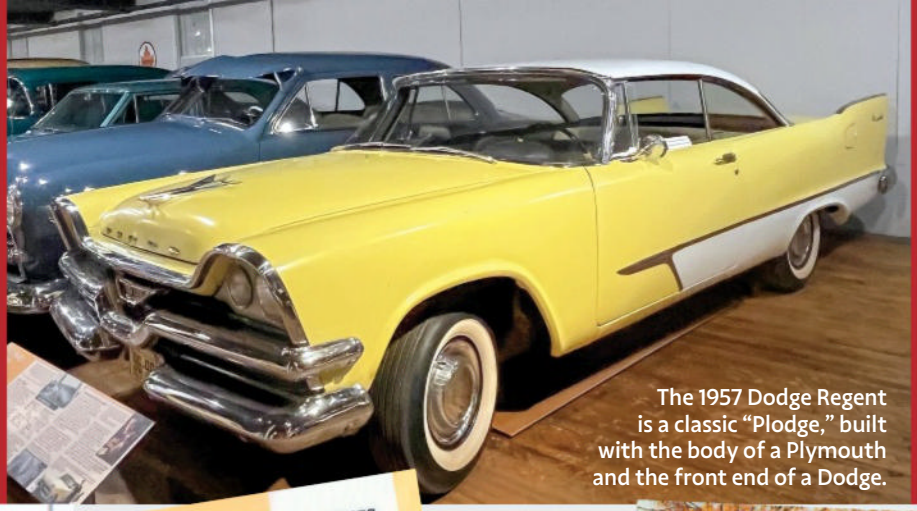
Valiant continued to evolve and by 1965, the lineup included the Plymouth Valiant-based 100 and Custom 100, along with the larger, Dodge Dart-based 200, Custom 100, and Signet. Even a Valiant version of the Barracuda was offered. The Valiant brand was canceled in '67, but the Plymouth Valiant continued to be offered in Canada.

AFTER THE AUTO PACT

The immediate effect of the Auto Pact on Canada was positive. Manufacturing increased and the boom brought jobs. For Canadian consumers, it also meant lower prices. Importantly, it wasn't exactly a free trade agreement, but it essentially allowed the Big Three to build components and vehicles in the two countries and sell the vehicles on either side of the border without tariffs.

That more homogeneous North American market triggered the phase-out of Canada's distinctive brands and models. Most disappeared by the late-Sixties, with some lingering into the early Seventies. The landmark Auto Pact itself was dissolved in 2001, as other trade agreements, including the North American Free Trade Agreement, made it obsolete. We salute the distinct, creative engineering and divergent marketing from the Big Three that forged the unique identities and indelible legacies of Canadian-market cars from this fascinating period of history.

A 1951 Fargo half-ton pickup.



The 1957 Dodge Regent is a classic "Plodge," built with the body of a Plymouth and the front end of a Dodge.

A 1956 Fargo Town Panel.

LEFT: Brochure cover for the 1959 Fargo line.

RIGHT: Brochure cover for the 1965 Fargo line.

MIX AND MATCH

The 1947 Pontiac Fleetleader Special was based on Chevy architecture for the Canadian market

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY BARRY KLUCZYK

In the decades prior to the signing of the Auto Pact in 1965—and even for a number of years after—Pontiac was more popular in Canada than the United States. It's true. With Canada's population roughly one-tenth of America's, Pontiac wasn't selling more cars in Canada by volume, but overall and even compared with the sales of its corporate cousins, Pontiac took a larger slice of the Canadian market's pie.

In fact, Canadian Pontiac sales only trailed Chevrolet by about 25 percent in some years, while Chevrolet generally outsold Pontiac by a three-to-one margin in the States. Pontiac also enjoyed the same slightly upmarket position in Canada, which helped GM earn even more money on the brand, as for approximately 30 years the Pontiac full-size models were largely based on Chevrolet platforms, but with Pontiac trim and, up to the mid-Fifties, Pontiac engines. Chevy engines came after that.

This warhorse flathead engine is Pontiac's venerable 239-cu.in. six-cylinder that boasted 93 hp.

When we say the Canadian Pontiacs were based on the Chevys, we mean everything from the chassis to the body structure. Our 1947 Pontiac Fleetleader Special feature car—a Canada-specific model owned by Ontario resident Mike Mercer—is a great example, particularly when viewed from the rear, where the shared Chevy sheetmetal is unmistakable. That's the way it had been with domestically made Canadian Chevrolets and Pontiacs since 1938, as they were produced side by side at GM's Oshawa assembly facility—essentially one line for Chevy and another for Pontiac.

Regardless of the home market, the 1947 Chevrolet and Pontiac models retained prewar designs that were only mildly updated from 1942. In the U.S., however, the Pontiac Streamliner had a 6-inch longer wheelbase than the Chevrolet Fleetmaster and a faster-sloping rear profile. The Oshawa-built Fleetleader was built on the same architecture as the Chevy, including its shorter, 116-inch wheelbase chassis.

Despite sharing the Chevy's architecture and basic sheetmetal, the Canadian Pontiac wore a unique face that was freshened for 1947, including a new grille design. It looked essentially the same as the U.S. version but was tweaked slightly to fit the Chevy body's grille opening. The American Pontiacs were also about 2 inches wider than the Chevrolet and that showed, too, on the Canadian model, where the bold, wide chrome grille extended farther towards the edges of the fenders, with the turn signals located squarely below the headlamps. On U.S.-built Pontiacs, with their larger proportions, the turn signal lamps and the grille bars didn't extend nearly as far outward.

Overall, it lent a wider look to the Canadian Pontiac, even though it was a couple inches narrower than the U.S. version. It was a look that also gave greater emphasis to the chrome, as it soaked up more of the front-end real estate. And because the Chevy was narrower than the U.S. Pontiac, Chevrolet bumpers were used, front and rear.

A distinctive Pontiac styling element that did not get incorporated on the Canadian model was the body-side streaks on the lower fenders, but it did have the Silver Streak trim on the hood, along with the mascot hood ornament. The decklid has Silver Streak trim, as well, framed at the bottom by Chevy taillamps.

Owing to the Chevy architecture, even the right-hand fuel filler location is

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PARISIENNE—THE CANADIAN THAT RESCUED PONTIAC IN THE STATES

Introduced in 1959, the Pontiac Parisienne was one of the cross-bred models built at GM of Canada's Oshawa plant strictly for the Canadian market. It shared the shorter wheelbase and X-frame architecture of the full-size Chevrolet, along with its powertrains. It largely carried the look of the American Catalina and Bonneville, but because of the different-sized Chevy chassis, the sheetmetal wasn't interchangeable with the American cars. In the early Eighties, the American division ran into a problem when it downsized the Bonneville to the revamped G-platform. Sales dropped precipitously and caught without a full-size sedan for the first time in decades, Pontiac turned to Oshawa for an immediate fix: the Parisienne. It was largely a badge-engineered Caprice, but an older Catalina rear end was resurrected shortly thereafter to give it a more Pontiac-family appearance. The nameplate remained a fixture in Canada and was offered in the United States until 1986.

different than the U.S. version's left-hand filler. Inside, however, the instrument panel, controls, and steering wheel mostly match U.S. Pontiacs, but some of the trim varies, and the dashboard itself is narrower.

Mike's car has brightwork around the exterior window openings, along with a cabin featuring uplevel elements such as front-and-rear armrests, an ashtray, and a lighter. Those are the standard features of the higher-rung Special rather than the entry-level Fleetleader model.

It's also worth noting that some American-built Pontiac Streamliners and Torpedos were imported to Canada, but with the roughly 35-percent tariff on top of the base price, very few made it across the border.

When it came to propulsion, Pontiac's stalwart flathead six- and eight-cylinder engines were offered, as General Motors was still insistent on brands using their own engines. That would change in Canada in the mid-Fifties, when those Pontiac engines went out of production and the cost for starting a new Pontiac engine line in Canada was nixed by the bean counters.

Nevertheless, it was all-Pontiac power for 1947, including in our feature car, which has the base, side-valve 239-cubic-inch straight-six that was rated for 93 horsepower. Flathead engines were still the industry norm, and while the Pontiac design dated to the early Thirties, it remained comparatively modern, with full-pressure lubrication and replaceable bearing inserts at a time when even other GM engines still relied on poured-babbitt bearings and splash oiling.

"It's a very smooth-running engine," Mike says. "And it's always been very reliable. It just starts right up and goes."

Not surprisingly, this Pontiac's engine is paired with a three-speed manual transmission. It's a column-shifted unit in this one, too, and it and the six-cylinder engine are the car's originals.

"That's one of the things I liked about this car," Mike says. "It has been repainted and had some of the upholstery redone, but it's otherwise an original-condition car."

Curiously, Mike didn't go looking for this Fleetleader. It found him when its previous owner called about a 1928 Dodge sedan Mike was selling.

"The Dodge was a partially completed project and that's what the Pontiac's owner was looking for," Mike says. "He asked if I'd be interested in trading cars—my Dodge project car for his Pontiac. We worked out the deal and I couldn't be happier with the result."

The car has 61,000 miles on the odometer and has had five previous owners, three of them within the same family. In fact, it was the previous owner's grandmother who originally purchased the car. That was in Tisdale, Saskatchewan, and it stayed in the family for years, until it was bought by another Tisdale resident, who handled having the car repainted a very close facsimile of the original Para Wine color. He also had the headliner and seats redone. The rest of the car, including the carpet, trim, and trunk lining are original.

Considering the car is 77 years old, the overall presentation and preservation appear very good, with authenticity to


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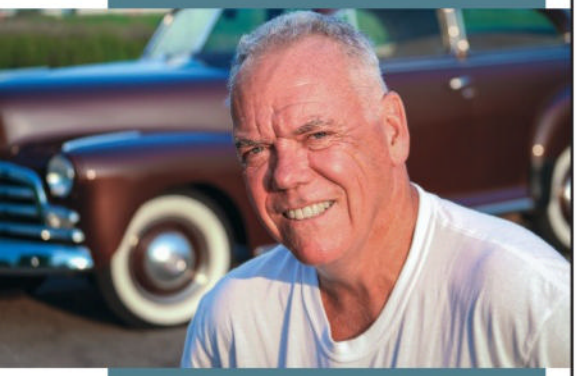


Owner's View

"This car is fantastic—it drives great and is very reliable. I've even driven it to work in the summer. You just hop in and go, and the ride is super-comfortable. It's like a road trip on your living room couch. I admittedly didn't know what to expect when I made the deal for the car, but I love it and it's become a real keeper in my collection."
—Mike Mercer

the patina seen on the aged finishes of everything from the hubcaps to the steering wheel. Even the original Bakelite controls and knobs have held up remarkably well and because Saskatchewan's prairie climate is known for being relatively easy on sheetmetal, this Pontiac's vintage steel is remarkably rust-free.

After the trade was completed and Mike introduced the Pontiac in his garage, he had it professionally inspected and the only noted need was a bit of front suspension work.

"It was a little loose," he says. "We had the steering tightened up and replaced the tie rods, et cetera, but that was about it. Everything else was in good shape."

That's fortunate, because Mike notes GM of Canada's cross-pollination of Chevy and Pontiac parts makes for a fascinating, but also rare amalgamation that can make it difficult to determine which parts apply to the car.

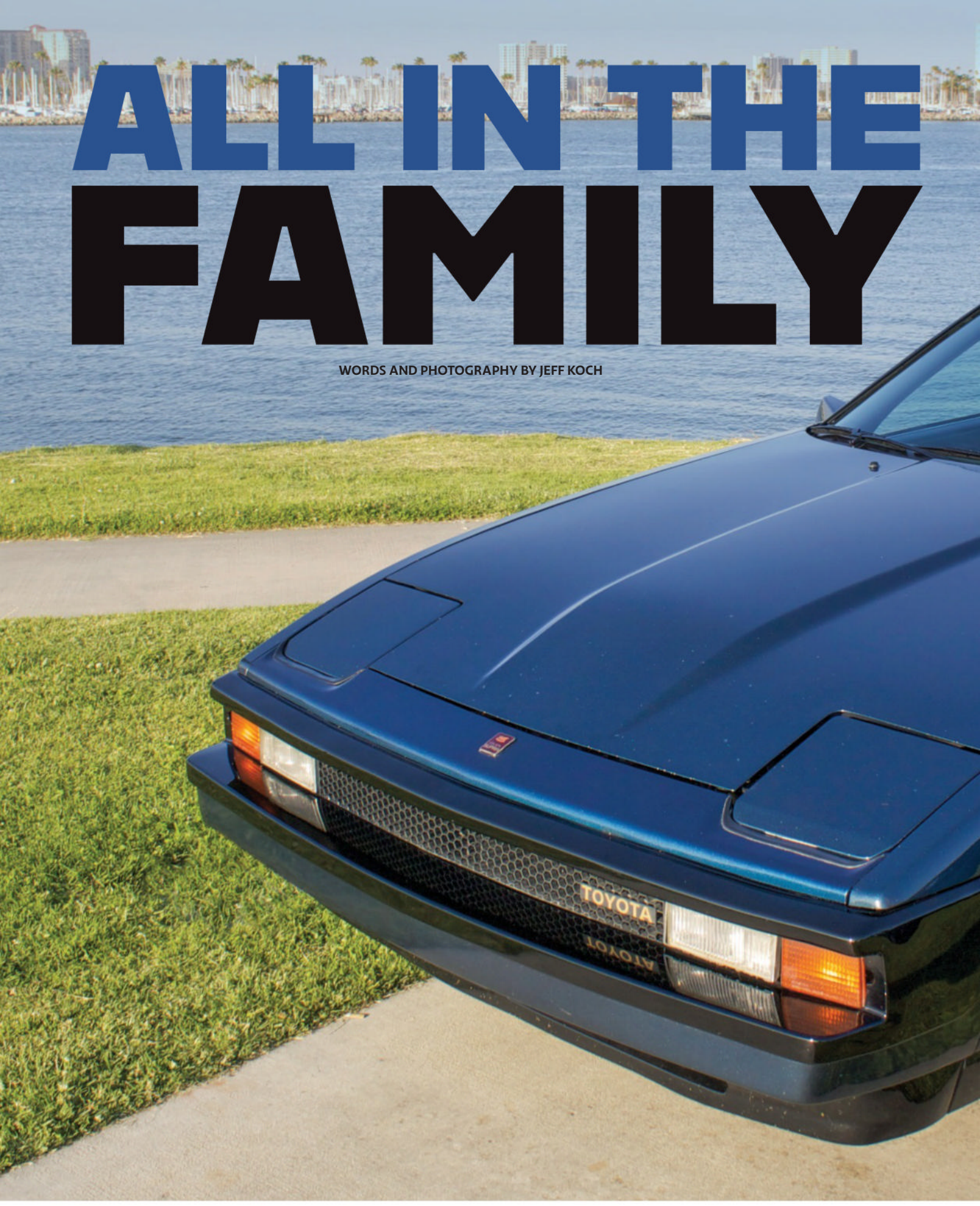
"Some of the parts are the same or interchangeable and some aren't," he says. "That's especially true for the powertrain stuff, because it uses a Pontiac engine in a Chevy chassis."

Those differences reinforce the distinctiveness of the home-market Pontiacs in Canada. This Fleetleader Special is a well-preserved example and a six-cylinder-powered history lesson about General Motors' unique production and marketing strategies in the country.

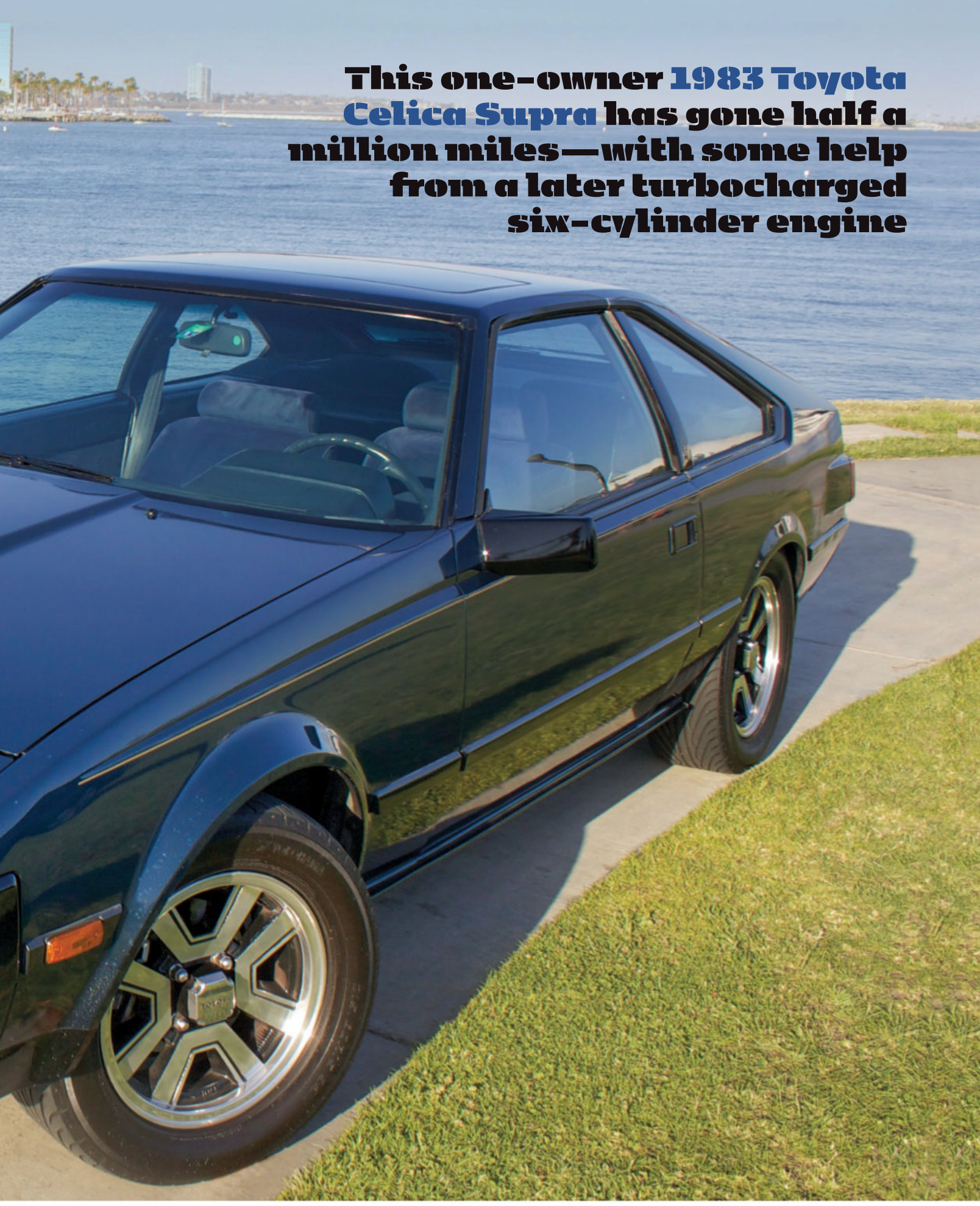
Despite using Chevrolet architecture, Canadian Pontiac cabins matched that of U.S. Pontiacs in both upholstery and trim.

ALL IN THE FAMILY

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF KOCH



This one-owner 1983 Toyota Celica Supra has gone half a million miles—with some help from a later turbocharged six-cylinder engine



A smorgasbord of factory-stock Toyota bits adorn the 7M-GTE six-cylinder short-block under the hood, including a 24-valve cylinder head and a turbocharger, to help create 230 hp.

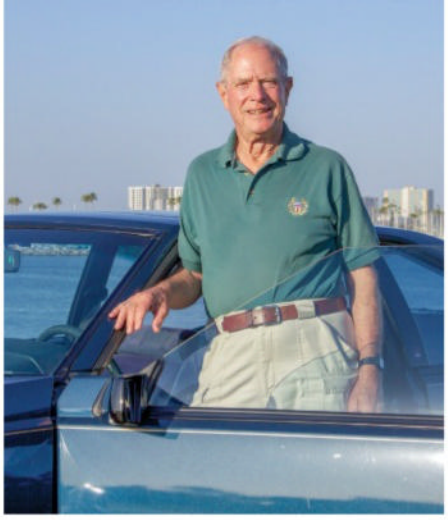
Derek Liecty wasn't looking for a forever car when this Toyota Celica Supra fell into his line of vision back in 1983. But more than half a million miles later, it's the one he's kept.

Forty years ago, a premium-priced Toyota seemed out of sorts with the company's cheap-'n'-cheerful image. In America, Toyota built its reputation on the backs of Corollas, Coronas, and Celicas—basic, honest, efficient, reliable transportation, much of it in the $2,000 price range. The Crown, the car that brought Toyota to the dance, so to speak, got squeezed out of the U.S. market in '71, when the notion of a $3,000 Toyota didn't seem like such a bargain. Yet the company endeavored to build sporty cars: the 2000GT sports car, the pocket-sized Sports 800, and the cheap-fun-for-the-masses Celica were proof. But Stateside dreams of a more premium model had to wait a while.

The original Cressida sedan, Toyota's American flagship when launched mid-'77, was $8,300, at a time when the Celica was $6,600—a tentative toe dipped in to test premium waters. The public responded well enough, and Toyota rolled out a Cressida-powered Celica and called it Supra. It was something of a hedge: a new upmarket car on the bones of a more popular one. The Mk I Supra, debuting in '79 (a year after the new Celicas), had a few people scratching their heads. That first Supra may have had the personal-luxury trappings down, but to the untrained eye it looked like a Celica—and nothing kills status faster than resembling a downmarket model.

Things changed considerably for the '82 model year, when a new Supra debuted alongside the Celicas. The Supra (sold as the Celica XX in Japan) continued to share Celica sheetmetal from the firewall back, but the Supra Mk II strove to transcend its Celica origins. The Supra's nose was stretched nearly 7 inches, with a completely new face incorporating hidden headlamps, to accommodate Toyota's straight-six 5M-GE engine.

Toyota's M-family inline-sixes had evolved continually from the mid-Sixties, and indeed were the only six-cylinder car engine Toyota had for nearly three decades. The 2.8-liter (171-cu.in.) 5M-GE was a big step forward for Toyota: it debuted a belt-driven, wide-angle, aluminum DOHC cylinder head (the first since the legendary 2000GT) and fully digital Bosch L-Jetronic fuel-injection system. The 5M-GE was rated at just 145 hp at its 1982 launch, but it continued to evolve over the course of the Mk II's life. Updates included an electronically advanced distributor in 1983; a year later, a compression bump to 9.2:1 and a redesigned intake manifold with D-shaped runners



"If I'd kept going with modifications, I'd probably have gone with a 2JZ"

—the twin-turbo six, factory-rated at 300 hp, that made the '93-up Supra a tuner-car legend.

boosted power, and in '85, the 5M-GE got a new EGR, a recalibrated throttle position sensor, and a resulting power rating of 161 hp, regardless of transmission.

There were two flavors of Mk II Supra: P-type (performance) and L-type (luxury). The L-type eschewed wheel flares and offered narrower wheels, an optional digital dashboard, and optional leather seating. The P-type offered fender flares, 7-inch wheels, a limited-slip differential, eight-way-adjustable cloth bucket seats, and an analog instrument cluster. Mechanically, they were identical. The suspension was tweaked by Lotus in the early days of the English firm's consulting business; in exchange for Lotus sorting the suspension, the Supra donated several pieces to the Eclat-based Excel, including the W58 five-speed transmission, rear differential, alloy wheels, and even the door handles.

Styling was seen as controversial back in the fall of 1981, when the Mk II Supra launched. Both bumpers, as well as the hatch, were painted glossy black, regardless of body color. The roof-mounted rear spoiler was advertised as a "sunshade." Rear-quarter reflectors jutted out from the body behind smoothed-in fairings. A hard-edged wedge shape profile was countermanded by the rather butch-looking fiberglass fender flares. "Surface excitement," is what they called it.

Well, suffice it to call Derek excited. Fresh off the theft of his Honda Accord, which disappeared off the streets of San Francisco never to be seen again, he was steered by a friend toward the Supra, which had won *Motor Trend*'s "Import Car of the Year" award in the spring of 1982, as well as one of *Car and Driver*'s inaugural "Ten Best Cars." The look drew Derek in.

"The lines are classic, and it was clear to me that this was going to be an iconic car," Derek says, but the first drive nearly put him off. "I drove a P-type, with the wider wheels, and I thought it felt awfully rough. It didn't feel comfortable to me." In retrospect he wishes he'd plumped for a P-type instead, but that's hindsight: in the moment, a turn behind the wheel of the plusher L model was the perfect fit. Derek's Supra was painted the cleverly named Toyota Dark Blue, with blue interior, five-speed manual transmission, and not much else. Then again, Toyota loaded them up so that precious little extra was necessary. All Derek really wanted was a little more power.

And for nearly two decades and 392,000 miles, Derek (now living in Walnut, California) happily drove his Supra around the northern half of that state—until a turn-of-the-millennium traffic incident wiped out everything ahead of the firewall. Faced with the question of what junkyard to tow his beloved Supra to, Derek simply said, "No, I'll keep it." And while the sheetmetal was straightened and brought back to as-new condition,

covered in a new coat of not-quite-factory-Toyota-Dark-Blue paint, the real work began under that tapered hood. Recalling his youth as a Santa Barbara-based hot rod hooligan, he wanted to go for a little extra power between the shock towers.

Toyota provided the answer: the M-series inline-six had evolved into the 7M-GTE for the 1987-up Supra with 230 horsepower thanks in part to a 24-valve cylinder head, turbocharger, air-to-air intercooler, oil cooler, and distributorless ignition, among other upgrades. The five-speed transmission it attached to was beefier. *Car and Driver* clocked a 6.4-second 0-60 time in a turbo third-gen Supra—a car that weighed a good 500-pounds more than the second-gen Supra. The power he always wished was there was now available.

Then Derek visited the annual Supras in Vegas event, held each October for well over a decade now, and met Anaheim, California-based tuner John Nguyen. Over time, there have been three different iterations of the 7M under the hood of Derek's L-Type—the most robust of which used Wiseco pistons, Eagle rods, and 14 pounds of boost to make 300 dyno-corroborated horsepower at the rear wheels. All the while, Derek kept piling on the miles: at the time of this story's printing, the odometer reads 558,000 and climbing. "If I'd kept going with modifications," he suggests, "I'd probably have gone with a 2JZ"—the twin-turbo six, factory-rated at 300 hp, that made the '93-up Supra a tuner-car legend.

But the most recent iteration of the Supra is even more stunning: Derek having reached 91 years old, is reconsidering the six figures he's invested on various engine builds over time, and having now largely divested himself of what he calls his "speed greed," he sourced a vintage, unused 7M-GTE short-block and is now running stock (well, stock third-gen Turbo Supra) power—that's 230 horses, up a useful 80 horses from the car's stock 150, and in a chassis that is considerably lighter than the one designed for the turbo mill. Less power, sure. But don't you dare call it a slouch. "The executor of my will will be disposing of it for me," Derek suggested.

In the meantime, he has grabbed a hold of a second second-gen Supra: an '85 P-type automatic. "It's Cherry Red, the best color they ever put on a Mk II Supra. I bought it with 112,000 on the odometer, and now it's got 168,000. I love that it's an automatic—especially for someone who's 91 years old." Will it be able to match the blue car's half-million-mile endurance? Who would dare bet against it?

Supra Mk II Production

1982	34,046
1983	26,972
1984	29,871
1985	23,568
1986	33,823*

*** Denotes mix of Mk II and Mk III Supras; Mk III was a mid-year '86 introduction. Production numbers are not separated out. Data courtesy of Toyota Motor Company archives.**

BY TOM COMERRO

SPECIAL AACA EASTERN FALL NATIONAL

Virginia is for car lovers, too, thanks in part to the AACA's 2024 Special Eastern Fall Nationals scheduled to take place in Hampton, Viriginia, on August 22-24. The three-day event is hosted by the club's Historic Virginia Peninsula Region, making it convenient for attendees to tour nearby Colonial and Civil War sites, including Yorktown, Jamestown, and Williamsburg. Organized tours include visits to the Virginia Air & Space Science Center in Hampton, as well as a Hampton Roads Harbor Tour aboard the *Hampton Queen*. Anchoring the event will be the car show and swap meet held in the climate-controlled Hampton Roads Convention Center. Visit hvpr.aaca.com for more information.

HISTORIC PENINSULA REGION AACA

ACD FESTIVAL

AUBURN CORD DUESENBERG FESTIVAL

Labor Day weekend means one thing in Northern Indiana: the Auburn Cord Duesenberg Festival. The 68th edition of this famed gathering takes place, as always, in Auburn (home of the three Classic marques), and once again the week-long event promises to provide attendees not only the long-coveted classic cars, but also swap meets, parades, cruise-ins, and more. Annual fixtures are back, such as the Parade of Classics, where participants show off their rides on the streets of Auburn, and the Annual Garage Cruise that provides a behind-the-scenes look into the garages and shops of local automotive enthusiasts. In addition to an extensive car corral and swap meet, shoppers can visit Worldwide Auctions' annual sale. As a bonus, the nearby ACD Museum will extend its hours of operation during the week. The festival will take place August 24-September 1, and a full list of activities can be found by visiting acdfestival.org.

PEBBLE BEACH CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE ANNOUNCES 2024 FEATURED CLASSES

The Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance is renowned for showcasing tantalizing classic automobiles and the 73rd event will continue that tradition. This year marks the 125th anniversary of Packard, which will be honored with four classes: Open Cars, Closed Cars, Early Packards (up to the 1915 model year), and the celebrated Packard 734 Speedsters of 1930, which redefined factory performance.

Joining Packard on the famed 18th fairway will be classes celebrating the cars of Maserati, in addition to a special class honoring the exquisite coachwork styling of Pietro Frua, best known for his automotive designs of the Fifties and Sixties. Meanwhile, the Wedge-Shaped Concept Cars & Prototypes class will feature one-off vehicles, such as the Alfa Romeo Carabo and Lancia Stratos HF Zero, which laid the groundwork for many production models that followed from Lamborghini, Lotus, Fiat, and others. Rounding out the list will be a display of sleek BPR & FIA GT Race Cars from the Nineties, which delivered the era's renowned supercars to sports car racing enthusiasts across the globe.

The 73rd Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance will take place August 18, preceded by the Pebble Beach Tour d'Elegance on August 15. Visit pebblebeachconcours.net for more details.

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BY TOM COMERRO

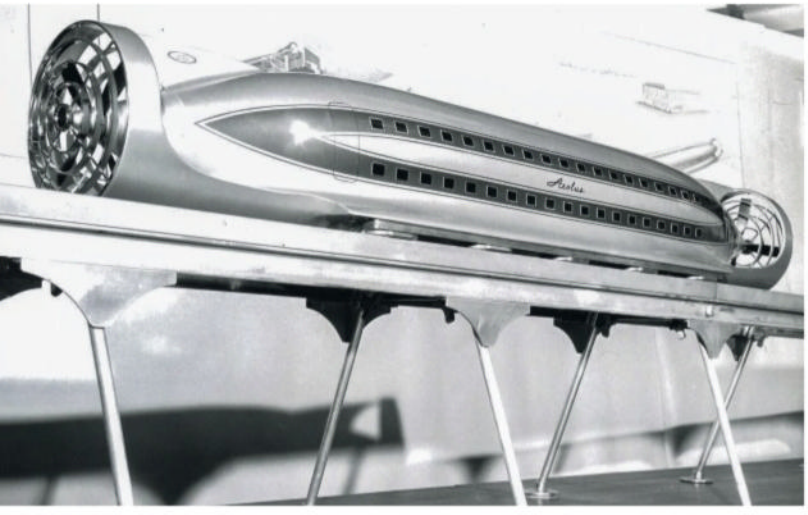
AIR TIME

Andrew Sidwell sent an email showing off this futuristic model that Ford's Engineering and Research Staff had been working on in 1963 called the Aeolus. Named after the Greek god of wind, the Aeolus project was demonstrated at the Connecticut General Flight Forum and was a part of Ford's ongoing promotion of its Levacar propulsion projects. The Levacar Mach I (not to be confused with the Mustang) was designed in the 1950s to be used on railways with "levapads" fitted underneath that pumped air between the pads and the track to minimize or eliminate friction and maximize high-speed land travel. Ford boasted speeds capable of 200-500 mph thanks to power from gas turbine-driven shrouded propellers and forced air from turbo-compressors. Here are some specs and snippets from Ford's 1963 press release:

"The Aeolus represents a 200-passenger Levacar which may someday shuttle between major city centers. Guidance and propulsion of a 38-ton Aeolus would be 5,270 horsepower with lower power requirements than a modern aircraft. Among rockets, airplanes, helicopters, flying jeeps, and air-cushion vehicles, Levacars would be closest to the ground, riding on a film of air only a few thousandths of an inch thick and supported on Levapads that cover only a small percentage of the Levacar bottom. In addition to speed, safety is one of the system's major advantages. The vehicle is capable of sliding to a comfortable stop, even in case of total engine failure. Operations would be continuous in all but the most severe weather conditions."

The press release wrapped up with the following statement: "It is too early to forecast accurately the future for the Levacar system, according to Ford engineers. The technical feasibility of the Levapad principle has been established in the laboratory, but a major engineering development program must be carried out before a full-scale operating system can be brought into service. This development would cost millions of dollars and require several years to complete. The research team at Ford, however, believes that a working system can be developed, and that the system may well find an important place in public transport because of its unique speed, comfort, safety and economy."

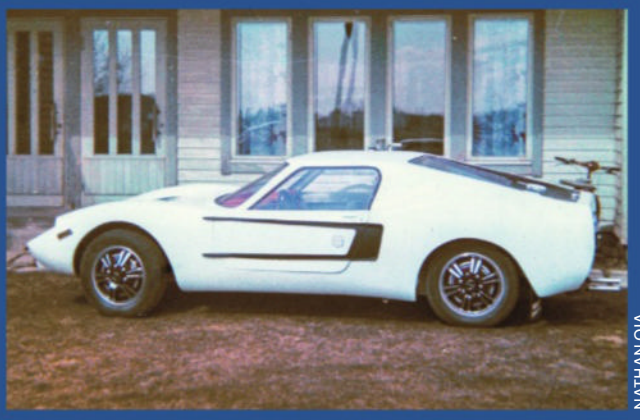
These Levacar projects never seemed destined for production, but they were still popping up in Ford's concepts as recent as the early 1980s. If you remember the Levacar concepts or other futuristic projects that were proposed back in the day, let us know.



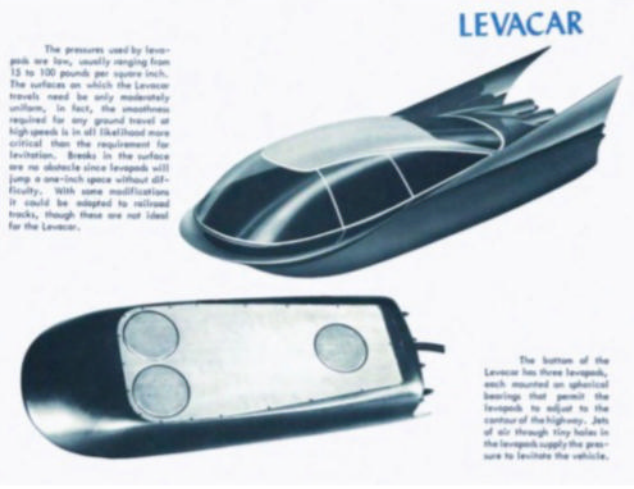
ANDREW SIDWELL

MYSTERY FROM FINLAND

Nathan Oja from Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada, sent us a picture of an unknown vehicle. He suspects it is a car that was photographed in 1970s Finland when his father received the image from a relative who lived in the Nordic region. Looking a bit like a bulkier Saab Sonett III with different detailing, it's made us curious about its identity as well. It seems to be giving off some kit car vibes, so if you've seen one before, in Scandinavia or elsewhere, contact us.



NATHAN OJA



FORD

FORD

Recently discovered a unique or noteworthy classic car or vehicle? Let us know. Photographs, commentary, questions and answers should be submitted to Lost & Found, *c/o Hemmings Classic Car*, P.O. Box 196, Bennington, Vermont 05201, or emailed to tcomerro@hemmings.com.

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Asking Price: $27,500

Make/Model: 1969 Ford Bronco
Asking Price: $156,450

Make/Model: 1947 Oldsmobile 98 Convertible
Asking Price: $52,500

Make/Model: 1930 Hudson Super Eight Roadster
Asking Price: $150,000

PARALLEL STRATEGY

This rare 1941 Fargo half-ton is a stylish reminder of Chrysler's unique 36-year program of twin truck lines in Canada

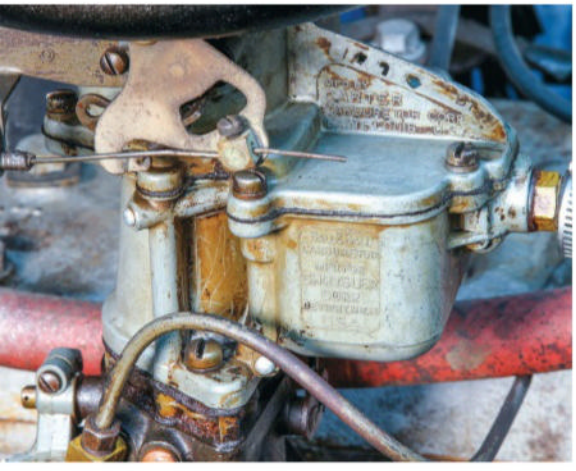
WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY BARRY KLUCZYK

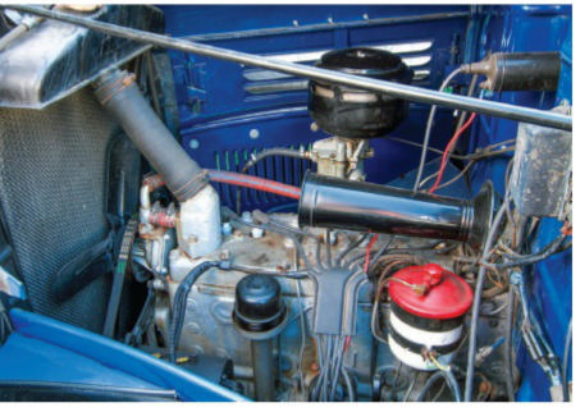
Established to give Plymouth and De Soto dealers a truck line to sell in the U.S. and Canada, the Fargo brand had recently launched when Chrysler Corporation purchased Dodge Brothers in 1928. It was a significant move, for the Twenties had been a decade of tumult and transition for Dodge Brothers. Sales in 1920 were second only to Ford, but John Dodge died in January of that year, followed by his brother Horace in December. The company floundered in the aftermath and sank to fifth in overall sales by 1925, and to thirteenth by 1927.

One of the bright spots in those years was Dodge Brothers' trucks. The company had partnered with Indiana-based Graham Brothers for truck bodies that were merged with Dodge chassis and powertrains, including heavy-duty models up to 3 tons. Dodge Brothers eventually took control of Graham Brothers and the trucks briefly all wore Graham badges.

The truck business was lucrative and the Dodge Brothers' manufacturing capacity was attractive to growing Chrysler, which had tried to purchase the company in 1926. With its fortunes still faltering despite the strong truck market, Dodge Brothers' board agreed in 1928 to a stock transfer worth $170 million (approximately $3 billion today) and the company became the next subsidiary of Chrysler Corporation.

Powering this 1941 Fargo is a 201.3-cu.in. L-head six-cylinder engine capable of producing 82 hp and 160 lb-ft of torque.





When the dust settled and the stock ticker tape was finally broomed away, Chrysler found itself with three truck brands: Dodge, Graham Brothers, and Fargo. The Graham Brothers brand was phased out, leaving Dodge and Fargo.

Unlike the dedicated truck chassis of the Dodge models, the Fargo trucks were lighter-duty and based on a modified passenger car chassis. Sales were modest prior to the corporate merger and dropped precipitously when the Great Depression ravaged the economy. Chrysler consequently suspended Fargo production in 1930.

The nameplate reemerged in 1933 on heavy-duty trucks for export markets, but the light- and heavy-duty models that were marketed exclusively for Canada first appeared in 1936. They were sold through Canadian Plymouth and De Soto dealers and built in Chrysler's Windsor, Ontario, factory, just across the river from Detroit. Dodge trucks sold in Canada would be built in Windsor and the United States.

Notably, the new-generation Fargo trucks were based on the true truck architecture of the Dodge trucks. In fact, they were mechanically identical and, in 1939, they adopted the same Streamline Moderne-inspired redesign of the Dodge models. The streamlined styling looked more aerodynamic and incorporated a vented windshield. Inside were a new, wider seat and a few rudimentary controls, but virtually nothing in the way of creature comforts.

This generation of T-, V- and W-Series models would collectively be known as the "Job Rated" trucks under Dodge's marketing and would be built until 1947, emerging from the 1942-'45 World War II production hiatus essentially unchanged.

Compared to earlier trucks, the chassis of the Job Rated generation was more robust, thanks to steel with higher tensile strength and additional updates that enhanced rigidity. Half-ton models rode on a 116-inch wheelbase, while the suspension system was largely carryover in design: solid front and rear axles with leaf springs.

Our featured 1941 Fargo half-ton, owned by Glen Bender, was delivered in June 1941, just a few months before civilian vehicle production halted for the duration of the war. Original records that came with the truck when Glen purchased it in 2013 show it was sold new in Cardinal, Ontario, more than 450 miles east of the Windsor factory.

After the original owner died, it changed hands a couple times and remained on the road until 1974. After that, the next couple of owners largely stored the

Owner's View

"My wife deserves the credit for spotting this truck first. She found it online and we immediately went to look at it—and as soon as I saw it, I knew it was coming home with us. It was in great shape. I'd owned another Fargo years earlier and always liked them, but this one was something special. There aren't many '41 models out there and this one is a keeper, because I know I'd never find another like it."
—Glen Bender

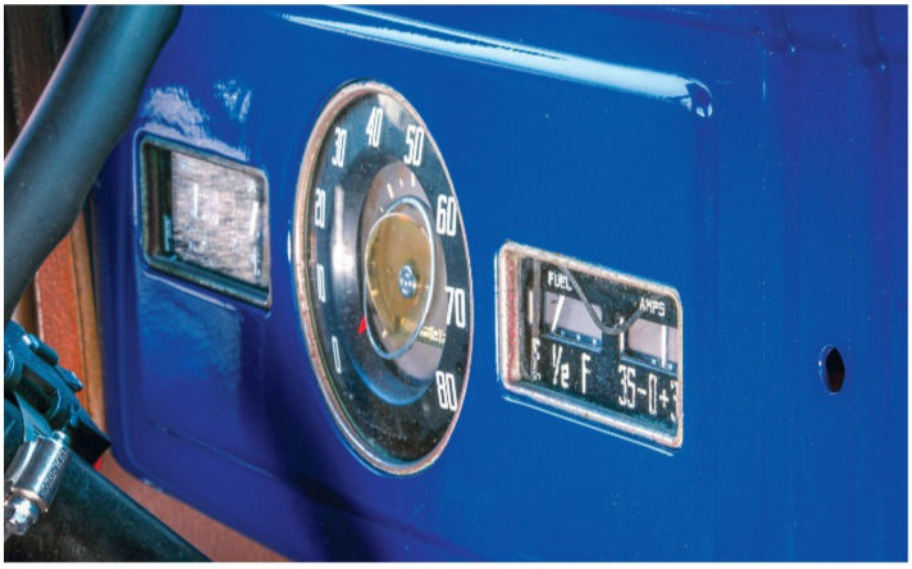
rare truck—although somewhere along the way, it underwent a cosmetic restoration.

Glen admits he's unsure about the Fargo's restoration history, but it was complete and splendid-looking when he discovered it for sale, and it remains in show-ready condition today, with an honest patina under the hood. In fact, it was on display at the large Moparfest event in New Hamburg, Ontario, when we first saw it.

"No, I don't know much about the restoration work, but I have always loved old Fargo trucks and this one was in great shape," Glen says. "As far as I can tell, everything on the truck appears original except for replacement wood in the bed."

The Fargo's original equipment includes the U.S.-built 201.3-cubic-inch L-head straight-six, which was rated for 82 horsepower and a comparatively healthy 160 lb-ft of torque. In fact, with its 4.375-inch stroke helping generate all those pound-feet at very low rpm, the engine was more than competitive with Ford's vaunted flathead V-8 options, which included 221- and 239-cubic-inch versions in the company's 1941 truck lineup. The 221-inch flathead was rated for 85 horsepower and 155 lb-ft of torque, while the 239 flathead was rated at 170 lb-ft, so

Light-duty trucks were utilitarian workhorses, even in Canada. This Fargo's cabin offered basic instruments and equipment controls.



the Mopar six could certainly pull its own weight against Henry's V-8s.

In Glen's truck, the engine has been maintained to stock specifications, down to the correct Carter BB single-venturi carburetor. Like virtually all vehicles of its day, the Fargo's six-cylinder is backed by a three-speed manual transmission. Glen says it is surprisingly smooth.

"It has a lot of power and is really easy to drive," Glen says, and adds that apart from replacing a few past-their-prime wires under the hood, the stalwart six has been trouble-free. "It starts and runs great—I've never had a problem."

Despite its relatively elemental construction, Glen says the Fargo drives nicely up to about 55 mph.

"It's great for cruising the backroads," he says, while also noting radial tires made a big difference in the driving experience. "It drives really well and is relatively quiet inside. It's easy to hold a conversation."

The era's work-truck aesthetic is on full display inside—and that means there's not much at all to display. The truck has a steering wheel, speedometer, basic instruments, a few other basic controls, and that's it. No radio. No carpet. Not even a heater.

To put a finer point on it: Not even a heater in Canada.

There were other things the Fargo didn't include as standard equipment, including dual taillamps and turn signals. The only rear illumination on the truck when new was a

single taillamp mounted above the license plate frame. For his own peace of mind, Glen installed a pair of taillamps below the bed, along with an aftermarket turn-signal kit, which explains the more contemporary-looking stalk on the steering column.

"I wanted to keep the truck as original as possible, but I still wanted to drive it—and no taillamps or turn signals just wasn't safe," he says. "My wife also put her foot down about that and rightfully so."

The Fargo lineup modernized and expanded in the postwar years, mostly mirroring the evolving Dodge truck lineup and powertrains, including pickups and panel vans, Power Wagons, the A100 vans and pickups, and the later Dodge B-series vans. The brand was phased out in Canada at the end of 1972, ending a unique chapter in Chrysler's history, as well as the Canadian automotive story.

For more than 35 years, Chrysler offered parallel truck lines in Canada, a distinctive strategy that wasn't followed in the United States' larger market. Comparatively few were produced and in the more than 50 years since the branded folded in Canada, the surviving Fargo trucks and vans have attracted increasing attention from enthusiasts and collectors like Glen Bender.

In fact, Glen's 1941 Fargo has attracted plenty of attention and more than a few purchase offers since he's owned it, but he says it has a permanent home in his garage.

"It's true there aren't too many left on the road, which makes them all the more interesting," says Glen. "They're also unique to Canada and there's pride in that."

Swap Meet Scores!

BY DAVID CONWILL

Off-Brand Speedster Stimulus

1920s non-Ford body panels seen at Hershey

1926-'28 WILLYS WHIPPET COWL AND RADIATOR

ASKING PRICE: $200
FOUND AT: 2023 AACA EASTERN FALL MEET (HERSHEY, PENNSYLVANIA)

IN THE EARLY 1930s, many LA-area taxicabs were missing their radiators. That's because they were 1926-'28 Willys Whippets and used a streamlined radiator shell that was in demand for the era's homebuilt speed-machine enthusiasts, who used the Model T-sized units on their Ford gow jobs. They're still in demand today among Ford Model T speedster builders and it's unusual to still see one associated with its original host, which is why we were attracted to this small lot spotted at the 2023 AACA Fall Meet in Hershey, Pennsylvania, priced at $200. It's the cowl of a closed Whippet 96 or 93A along with that coveted radiator shell and its original radiator.

Throughout the 1920s many companies tried (and largely failed) to produce a competitor to the Ford Model T. Initial attempts, like the 1915-'22 Chevrolet 490 and the 1920-'25 Overland Four (models 4, 4A, 91 and 91A) replicated its bare-bones nature but could never achieve the low price made possible by Ford's production volume. General Motors' answer to this conundrum showed the way forward and would eventually prove the Model T's undoing. The 1923-'26 Chevrolet Superior was initially built on the 490 chassis but offered more style and more convenience features—elements that added little to its production costs but justified the higher price.

John North Willys was a savvy businessman and carmaker and directed his company, Willys-Overland, to rework the Overland Four into something more appealing for the 1926 model year. The new car, internally designated Model 96, was heavily revised, featuring elements like four-wheel brakes (a feature not found on Chevrolet or Ford until 1928), water-pump cooling (the Model T retained the thermosiphon system throughout its run, though aftermarket water pumps were popular accessories), and pressurized lubrication for its 30-hp, 134-cu.in. four-cylinder flathead engine. The Whippet engine was such a good start, noted ex-Studebaker engineer Barney Roos used it as the basis for the famed 60-hp World War II-era Go Devil Jeep engine and even the postwar 75-hp Willys Hurricane F-head.

Although smaller and lighter than the average American car of the time, the revised Overland Four was technically sophisticated and Willys-Overland promoted it as being in the European vein and even tried to coin a new term to encapsulate its virtues: speed, economy, handling, and style at an inexpensive price point. John Willys coined the term "Whippet" as a 1920s synonym to what we might now call a sport compact. The generic usage didn't catch on, but the new Overland eventually received the name as its model designator that was reflected in its badging for 1927 and 1928, which dropped the Overland name entirely in favor of a radiator emblem and hubcaps using the model name.

The Whippet 96 was a big hit for Willys-Overland, selling far more briskly than the old Overland Four. Wishing to expand on that success in the 1927 model year, the company restyled the six-cylinder Overland 93 into the Whippet 93A. It was not as technically overhauled as the Whippet 96, but the 93A used the same appealing styling, including that streamlined radiator shell. The 93A wore Whippet 96 styling for only one model year, however. For 1928, the 93A was restyled with a more upright, squared-off radiator shell. The Whippet 96A, which replaced the 96 for 1929, adopted this styling as well.

With fenders, hood, visor, and badging all missing, it was impossible for us to determine the exact provenance of the Whippet pieces spotted at Hershey: 1926-'28 Whippet 96 or 1927 Whippet 93A. Regardless, we couldn't help but think what a unique speedster they might someday become.

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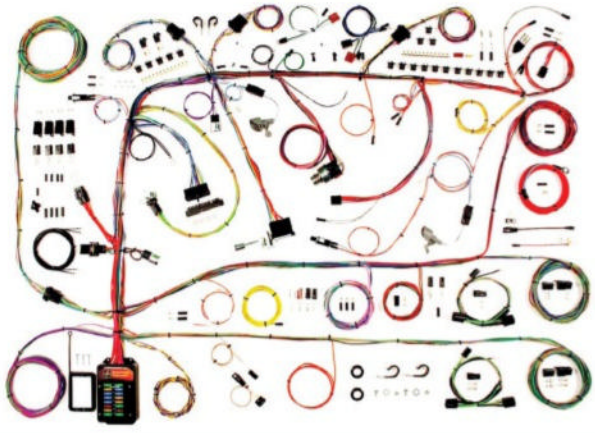

2

4

1.

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Rear View ADS

BY MATTHEW LITWIN
IMAGE FROM THE AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

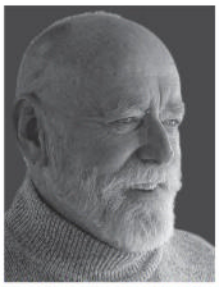
International's 1964 "Family room on wheels"

A Concise Message that was Hard to Miss

There was a time when some filmmakers added subliminal cuts to make viewers thirsty, hungry, or both. Then there were ad men who painted pictures of idyllic personal luxury in dreamy, carefree worlds by use of camera lenses and filters. Others simply stated facts, like International's "Family room on wheels" campaign from 1964. One photo and concise verbiage that didn't beat around the bush. Message delivered.

Advertisers in this issue

Advantage Lifts-USA 49
American Autowire/F.F. 33
Bauer Electronics 33
Bird Nest 33
Bobs Speedometer 55
The Bradford Exchange ..... inside front cover
Central PA Auto Auction 5
Coker Tire ..... inside back cover
Custom Autosound Mfg 41
The Garage Media 28
The Great Race 15
GovMint 7
Gullwing 65
Hill's Classic Cars 23
Hydro-E-lectric 23
JC Taylor Antique Auto Insurance 11
Keleen Leathers, Inc 23
National Parts Depot ..... back cover
Pro Plus Med 13
RPM Foundation 67
SMS Auto Fabrics 55
Summit Racing Equipment 31
Universal Vintage Tire 21
US Radiators 49
Waldron's Exhaust 55
Wilwood Engineering 1



JimRichardson

Time and Again

"I restored this car because it is decent looking, roomy enough to sleep in, comfortable for family and friends, and is the kind of car I grew up driving."

CLASSIC CARS begin to mean something when you put them in their times. They become more than old relics to look at if you know from whence they came. Take my 1955 Chevrolet Beauville station wagon, for example. It was, and is, a mundane car built in an ordinary year, but the more you know about even a mundane old car and the era in which it was produced, the more interesting it becomes.

My wagon is a four-door people hauler, not a Nomad. It's a typical shoebox Chevy, albeit equipped with the division's new small-block V-8 (sporting a Rochester four-barrel carburetor), coupled to a "Touch Down" Borg-Warner overdrive transmission. The latter was a kind of Rube Goldberg three-on-the-tree semi-automatic that gave you five speeds when needed.

I restored this car because it is decent looking, roomy enough to sleep in, comfortable for family and friends, and is the kind of car I grew up driving. I don't have to think about it. My hands do the work while my mind enjoys the experience. It is dependable, will cruise at 70 mph all day long, and I can fix anything on it quickly and easily.

It could not be more ordinary. But did I mention that my old Chevy is a time machine, too? It can take me back to when Bill Haley and the Comets rocked around the clock, and Little Richard screamed out "Tutti Frutti." "The Ballad of Davy Crockett" "who kilt him a b'ar when he was only three" was big, too, along with the TV show.

Disneyland opened in Anaheim, California, in 1955. The Dodgers were still in Brooklyn, and Yogi Berra and Roy Campanella were baseball's most valuable players of the year. Bill Gates and Steve Jobs were born that year; the TV remote was introduced; and Velcro was invented. Upstaging all of this was the fact that the Salk polio vaccine was approved by the FDA, eliminating a crippling scourge that had become pandemic. It was also the year in which "In God We Trust" was first emblazoned on our money.

Harlow Curtice was *Time* magazine's "Man of the Year" in 1955, and his company, General Motors, made over half of all the new cars on the road in America. And that was when Packard, Hudson, Studebaker, Kaiser, and Willys were still in the game, not to mention the two heavy hitters, Ford and Chrysler. The all-new Chevrolet lineup for that year was a major contributor to Curtice's success.

But all was not bliss. As it happened, 1955 was the year actor James Dean starred in *Rebel Without a Cause* and John Steinbeck's *East of Eden*, only to die in an auto accident outside Cholame, California, on his way to a race in his aluminum-bodied Porsche 550 Spyder he named "Little Bastard."

More tragedy happened on the racetrack when Bill Vukovich was killed in the Indy 500 trying to win his third consecutive race. But historically, the greatest catastrophe in motorsports happened at Le Mans when Pierre Levegh was involved in a crash in his Mercedes. It broke apart during the impact and careened into the crowd, killing 83 spectators and injuring 120 more.

The Warsaw Pact was formed, and the Cold War heated up dramatically in 1955. In school we had drop drills in which, when the alert sounded, we would crawl under our desks and cover our necks with our hands, in a futile effort to save ourselves. There was even a new residential development built in Southern California that offered a bomb shelter in backyards as an extra-cost option. However, even with the possible nightmare of nuclear obliteration staring us in the face, surprisingly, the outlook was positive in 1955, with science seemingly able to solve all our problems. America was on top, and things would only get better.

I lived in Lakewood, California, then, which billed itself as Tomorrow's City Today. And one of the biggest attractions at Disneyland was called Tomorrow Land. Television was everywhere by 1955, as were Birdseye frozen TV dinners, and fold up TV trays so you could watch your favorite shows, such as *The $64,000 Question, I Love Lucy,* and the *Ed Sullivan Show,* from your living room couch.

But perhaps best of all, if you had a big new Chevrolet station wagon, you could take your family on a vacation to see the Grand Canyon, and drop in on Grandma in Nebraska, availing yourself of our budding interstate highway system that made getting there half the fun.

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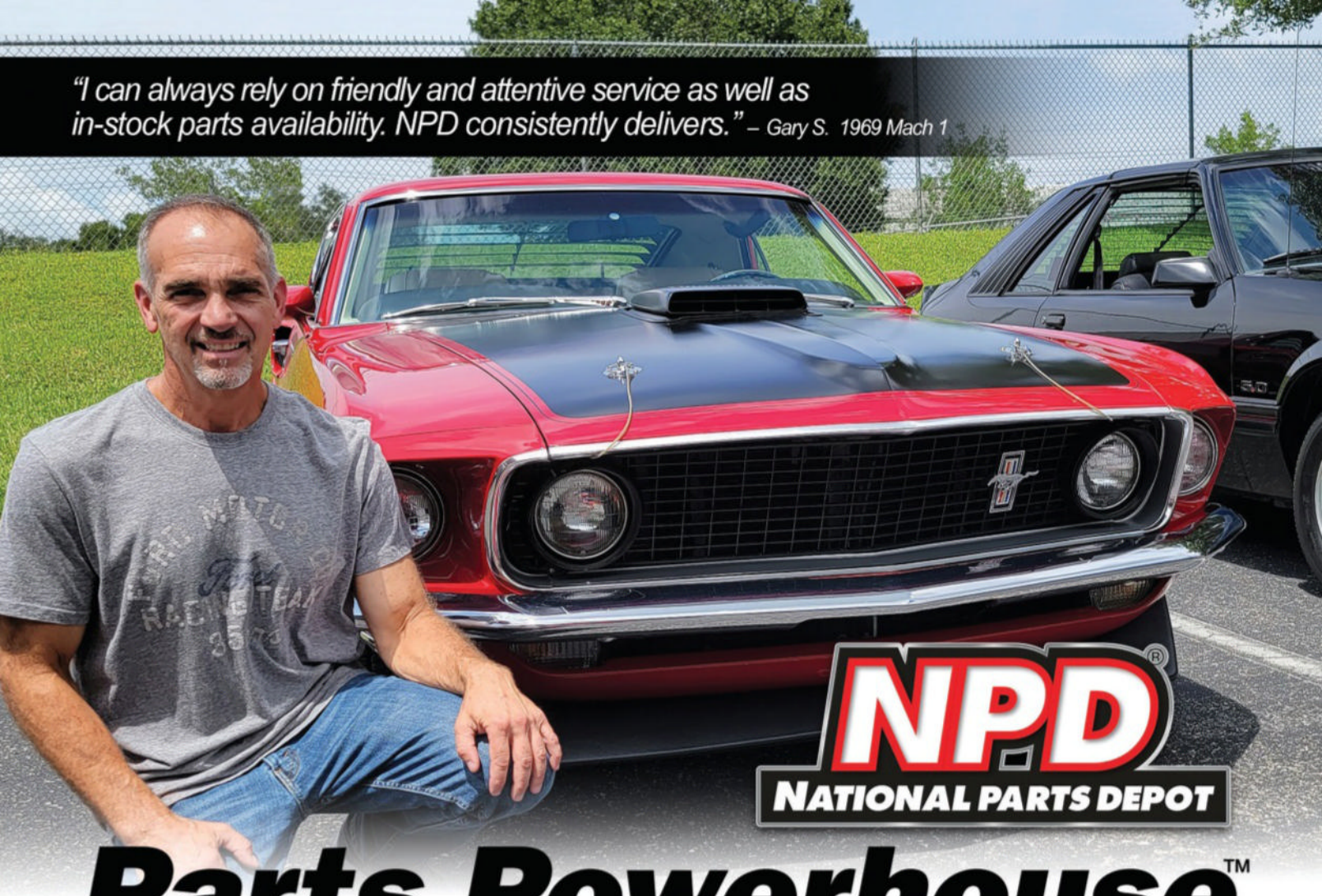

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