BUMPER GUARDIAN

Summer 2024

1933 Auburn 8-105 Salon Sedan

Owned & RESTORED by Don Elmer

A Message from your Director

Greetings fellow Classic Enthusiasts! I hope that all Members of our PNR 'Family' are doing well.

I and other members of our Region have recently had the opportunity to attend the CCCA National Annual Meeting as well as the "Best of the West" CARavan, and I'd like to comment briefly on both.

The former was held in Southern California in Huntington Beach, CA. The venue was The Waterfront Beach Resort, a fantastic property overlooking the Pacific ocean. At the board meeting it was announced that I and four others had been elected to the National Board – thank you all for your support! I'll continue as PNR Regional Director at least through the current term.

In addition to the board meeting and various committee meetings, we had the opportunity to tour four fantastic collections. The meeting and these tours will be described in detail in the CCCA Classic Car magazine, but I have to comment that these collections were simply amazing. Long time Member Bob Joynt from Chicago commented as the last collection was toured that this might be the most impressive viewing of multiple car collections that the CCCA has ever experienced. The National folks always host top notch meetings – another reason to consider attending in the future!

The Best of the West CARavan ended just a few days ago (as I write this) and it, too, was very enjoyable. Four PNR Classics were driven to the event, avoiding freeways as much as possible. The Newlands/Taylors, Bob LeCoque, Craig Christy and I (accompanied by Treasurer Steve Larimer) saw some beautiful country on the way down – as well as some very challenging mountain passes. Going down was as exciting as going up!

I nicknamed the CARavan the "Mines and Wines" tour. It commenced in Sacramento, CA with an opening cocktail party and banquet. Our CARavaning began with a byways tour of the unique California Delta region and a visit to UC Davis to learn a bit about California's wine growing history. After another night in Sacramento we made our way to the Mother Lode Country of northern California, ending the day in the lovely town of Grass Valley. This was the first of the "Mines" part of the tour!

We then headed south to Rancho Murieta for three days. More gold country touring as well as a visit to Calaveras Big Trees Park where we visited and learned about the incredible redwood trees.

On to Napa where (you guessed it) the focus was on wines, although not exclusively. During our four day visit in Napa we visited the Keller Estate Winery. We did sample fine wine there, but the highlight of that day (and perhaps the entire CARavan) was a tour of the Keller Collection – probably the most impressive vintage automobile collection that most of us will ever have the privilege to view. We spent four nights at a very nice property in downtown Napa.

Back to Sacramento for a final banquet and awards ceremony. Then the Washington based CARavaners headed back home – a three day trip, this time up Highway 395. We wanted to avoid some of the more dizzying mountain passes!

As they say: A great time was had by all!

I hope to see many of you at the Coming Out Party on June 22nd. Quite a contingent is traveling to Forest Grove in July, another opportunity to kick tires. And Cherry Jarvis has invited everyone in the PNR to join the family at Terry's Celebration of Life on July 21st. Unfortunately, this is the same day as Forest Grove, so some difficult decisions will have to be made.

Best wishes and "Happy Summer" (when it gets here!) to everyone.

Frank

Editor's Note

Karen Hutchinson

Barrie and I are once again in Alaska for the summer and I find myself composing the Bumper Guardian on the "high seas." But, thanks to the contributions of our members, what an issue it has become!

Our featured car is Don Elmer's 1933 Auburn Salon Sedan that he has owned for almost sixty years. With the help of two friends, he has restored the ninety-year-old automobile from its low-point, when it was used as a chicken coop, to the beautiful Salon Sedan that graces the cover of the magazine. The trio of friends will debut their efforts at the annual Auburn Cord Duesenberg (ACD) Festival in Auburn, Indiana this Labor Day weekend. The thousands of ACD enthusiasts who flock to the event every year, will thrill at the opportunity to lay eyes on an Auburn that has never been seen at the festival!

Raymond Loe has a particular affinity for the ACD company since he restored a rare 1934 Auburn Cabriolet that he has since donated to the LeMay/America's Car Museum. He has two articles in this issue - one on the ACD Company and the second is a reprise from a 2006 Bumper Guardian article on the car he restored.

The centerfold feature was provided by longtime PNR member Al McEwan. In 2023, Al helped to procur perhaps the largest single showing of Mercedes-Benz S, SS, and SSK cars for the Pebble Beach Concours. Twenty-one of these beautiful and rare cars (fewer than 300 were built) were sourced from around the world. Thanks to Al, we have included photographs of each of the cars and received permission to reprint a very interesting article written by Johathan Sierakowski. We are pleased to be able to showcase these stunning works of "rolling sculpture" for the PNR membership.

The Taits led the annual Tulip event that is included in this issue. And, both Colin Gurnsey and Jim Tait provided technical articles. Finally, Laurel Gurnsey contributed another great look at the Classic Era with her article "Gas Station Signs."

Many thanks to all these contributors. Please consider sharing your experience with our readers.

Pacific Northwest Region
Classic Car Club of America

The Bumper Guardian is the official publication of the Pacific Northwest Region, Classic Car Club of America. The region was founded in 1963.

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Steve Larimer, Treasurer	206-954-7829
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Irene Tait, Facebook	206-234-9507
Karen Hutchinson, BG Co-editor	360-678-5453
Raymond Loe, BG Co-editor	360-678-9366
Colin Gurnsey, BC Liaison	604-980-7429

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Kenny Heng	2026	425-443-7546

Bumper Guardian Staff:

Advertising	Marty Ellison	425-941-9451
Caption Editor	Bill Deibel	206-522-7167
Copy Editor	Bill Allard	253-565-2545
Cover Story	Raymond Loe	360-678-9366
Staff Photographers	Michael Bradley	206-225-6491
	Steve Larimer	206-954-7829

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Regional membership is available only to Classic Car Club of America National members.

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The Bumper Guardian will print classified advertising free of charge to members on a space available basis. Display advertising rates are available on a prepaid basis only.

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Owned By Don Elmer

1933 Auburn

8-105 Salon Sedan

By Don Elmer

Auburn introduced a new top-of-the-line model for 1933, the Salon series, in an attempt to generate interest in the Auburn line and to boost lagging sales. Body styles included a Speedster, Phaeton, Brougham, Cabriolet, and Sedan.

The Salon trim level was introduced for both twelve- and eight-cylinder cars, the latter then designated 8-105. Salon cars had painted grille bars, horns set low in the catwalk, new-design fenders, a front splash apron, a gently-curved "wing spread" bumper and a V-shaped windshield.

The Model 8-105 was powered by a 268.6 cubic-inch displacement in-line eight-cylinder Lycoming engine that generates 100 horsepower. Other features included a three-speed manual transmission with Columbia electric overdrive, a solid front axle and live rear axle with semi-elliptic leaf springs, and four-wheel vacuum-assisted hydraulic brakes. The wheelbase of this car is 127 inches.

The eight-cylinder Salon Sedan was built only for one year. A total of 293 such models were sold. The cost new was $1,245.

My Auburn is a 1933 8-105 Salon Sedan. I got it in 1965 when I was in high school in Tacoma and as a 16 year old, I was in need of a car. My father heard of this car and suggested that it could fill the bill. I had not heard of Auburns but he assured me that they were fine cars.

The Auburn was nearby in a barn in Enumclaw and was being used as a chicken coop. I explored the idea of purchasing the car with two high school friends, Rick Pirret and Bruce Richards. (The three of us have been working on this project ever since.) Young geniuses that we were, we figured we'd have it rolling in no time. Turned out that the "no time" date proved to be three years.

By that time, the three of us were about to go onto graduate work. Then came marriages, kids and careers. So, for the next few decades, the Auburn resided in a succession of garage homes in the Seattle area. We did get it running and concluded a "restoration" that did not destroy the car. That brought us to the early 1990s. By that time, the three of us had migrated back to the Seattle area and the Auburn found a warm and dry home in my garage.

About 10 years ago, I decided that it was time to get going on the Auburn. Rick who was working for Fluke in Everett and Bruce who had retired from Hewlett Packard and moved to Arizona both signed-up for finally completing the Auburn project. It turns out that the restoration effort required both mechanical and electrical expertise. As an economics and math major, I became the grease-monkey on the project (and the voice for authenticity).

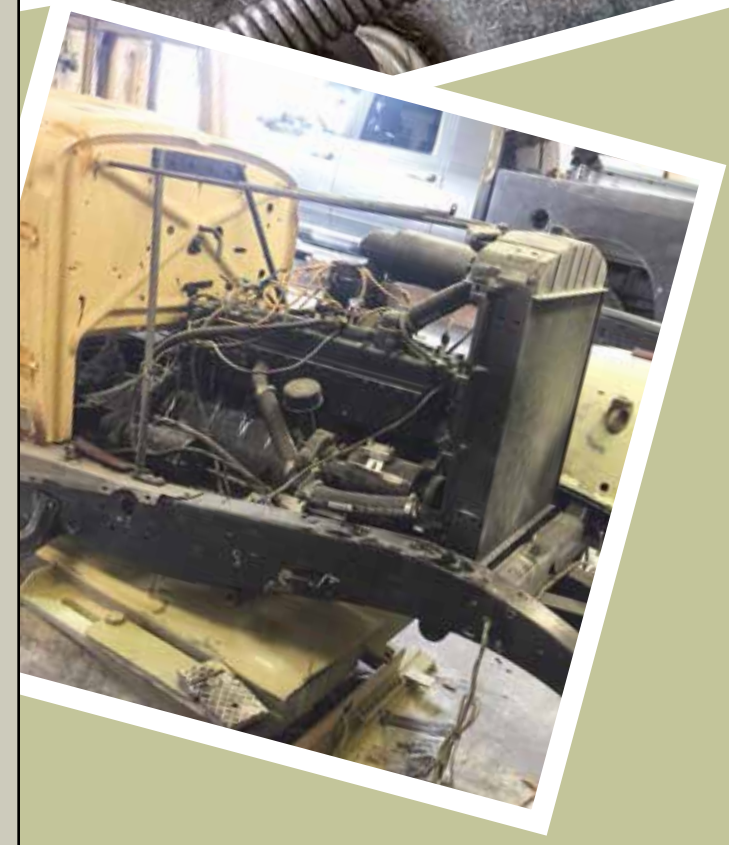
Rick went to Cornell for his undergrad mechanical engineering (ME) degree thanks to a General Motors scholarship. At the time of his graduation, GM was not hiring new engineers, so he went to Bell Labs in Holmdel, NJ. After joining Bell Labs, GM sent him to Stanford for his Master's degree. Eventually, he went to work for Fluke and was able to return to the Pacific Northwest. He became the mechanical brains for the project.

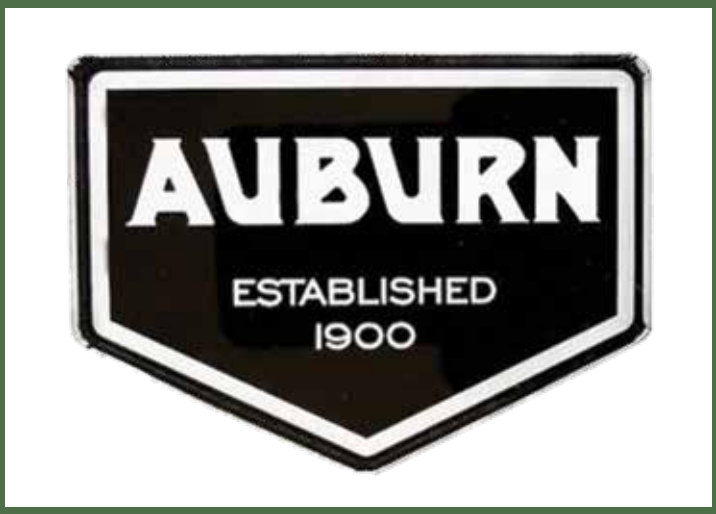
Bruce went to Michigan State on a full athletic scholarship for swimming. He was a VERY successful NCAA swimmer and earned a BS in electrical engineering (EE) on time with honors. He was also sent to Stanford to earn his master's degree. Bruce joined Hewlett Packard in Mountain View, CA and then went onto be part of initial operating team for the HP Plant in Lake Stevens. He took on the electrical aspects of the restoration.

Between the three of us, we know the car from bumper-to-bumper. Rick and I have spent an average of a day a week on the car since 2019 so we know most every bolt and nut on the car. There is no Bondo or fillings. The color combination matches the factory paint and all of the parts are original.

Our plan was to drive the Auburn back to Auburn, Indiana for the annual Labor Day Reunion of Auburn Cord Duesenberg (ACD) enthusiasts. Karen Hutchinson's accounting of one of their drives on US Route 2 left us concerned that the newly restored Auburn could have an unexpected glitch and stage a "sit-down" strike in mid-Montana. Since we did not want to find ourselves performing some repair during the heat of August, we looked for Plan B.

Bruce went with me to talk with Barrie Hutchinson about using his trailer. Rick, Bruce, and I quickly decided on comfort and convenience. Bruce's truck will tow Barrie's trailer with the enclosed Auburn to Indiana this September. The trailer will ensure our arrival in time for the biggest event of the year for ACD owners and "wannabes" where the car will be "certified" by the ACD Club for originality. Held in conjunction with the ACD Festival and the ACD Automobile Museum (see article page 19), the event brings together thousands of people interested in the history and future of ACD cars. It is a reunion of friends and family, as well as cars, and includes the largest collection of Auburns, Cords, and Duesenbergs anywhere in the world every year. We are looking forward to debuting our car!





The Auburn Automobile Company

(an abbreviated history)

By Raymond Loe

After over 25 years making carriages the Auburn Automobile Company was founded in Auburn, Indiana in 1900 to produce automobiles. The enterprise was modestly successful until 1919 when material shortages due to WWI forced the plant to close and precipitated sale of the business to a group of investors. The new owners revived the business, but as it continued unprofitable, they approached highly successful automobile salesman Errett Lobban Cord with an offer to run the company. Cord countered with an accepted offer to take over the company in what amounted to a leveraged buyout. Cord aggressively marketed the company's unsold inventory and completed his buyout before the end of 1925.

In 1926, Cord purchased the existing Duesenberg company and soon thereafter followed with the introduction of a new front-wheel drive car named after himself and designed by Alan Leamy - the model L-29 "Cord".

In 1929, the Cord model L-29 was the first American front-wheel drive car to be offered to the public, beating the Ruxton automobile by several months. With a drive system copied from Indy-500 racers the L-29 was the first production car to use constant-velocity U-joints now standard on all front-wheel drive automobiles. The lack of rear drive-train components and a straight frame allowed the Cord profile to be much lower than competing cars. Both stock cars and special bodies built on the Cord chassis won prizes in contests worldwide.

The L-29 was powered by a Lycoming straight-8 L-head engine with the crankshaft pushed out through the front of the block driving a three-speed transmission mounted in front of the radiator. Gearing in both the transmission and the solid front axle proved to be inadequate for this 4,700 lb. car, even at that time, and its performance was readily exceeded by the less expensive Auburn and many competitive makes. The L-29 was discontinued in 1932 after just 4,400 cars were sold during its three year production run.

Leamy is a prime example of the bright, rising talented designers hired by E. L. Cord. He went on to design the renowned second generation Auburn "boattail" speedster and ultimately the entire Auburn line from 1931 through 1934 (see sidebar page 7).

Recognizing the L-29s shortcomings, Cord engaged designer Gordon Buehrig to develop a new front-wheel drive replacement Cord, the Model 810, which was rushed to be first shown at the New York Automobile show in November 1935. The car caused a sensation at the show with a flood of orders taken, promising delivery by Christmas. Production delays pushed actual first delivery to April of 1936. Early customer enthusiasm cooled rapidly due to reliability problems including slipping out of gear and vapor locking. This resulted in the dealer base (and car sales) shrinking rapidly with only 1,074 Cords being sold in that initial year. At

the beginning of the 1937 model year the unsold and in-process Cords were renumbered and sold as Model 812s. In August 1937, Auburn ceased production of the Cord and, although no certain figure can be given for the number of late model Cords actually produced, it has been agreed by recognized experts that between 2,972 and 2,999 Model 810 & 812 Cords were built.

After the late 1929 stock market crash, despite advanced engineering and aggressive styling, Auburn's upscale vehicles proved to be too expensive for the Depression-era market. This caused Cord to take extreme measures to keep his company afloat and led to Cord being convicted of illegal stock manipulations that forced him to give up control of his automobile holding company. Under injunction from the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission to refrain from further violation, Cord sold all his shares in his automobile holding company and in 1937 production of all three marques ended. The Cord empire, amid allegations of financial fraud, was sold to the Aviation Corporation and E.L. Cord moved to Nevada where he went-on to earn millions in real estate and other enterprises and was elected as a State Senator for Nevada during his retirement years.

The Cord 810/812 design was re-marketed almost immediately in 1940. Ailing automakers Hupmobile and Graham-Paige tried to save money and revive their companies by using the same body dies. Their resulting four-door rear-drive sedans, the Hupp Skylark and the Graham Hollywood were unremarkable and, due to the minimal tooling design, were very costly to hand produce. While Hupp Motor Company built a few prototypes for the 1939 model year they did not have the resources to manufacture the car. So, Graham-Paige stepped-in and built 1,850 units of both cars for the 1940 model year. Hupmobile closed before the 1941 model but G-P continued to build their Hollywood version for a short time before also closing down for good in November 1941.

Alan Leamy Historical Marker

Location: Marker is in Auburn, Indiana, in DeKalb County at the intersection of Wayne Street and Gordon M. Buehring Place. 41° 21.373′ N, 85° 3.441′ W.

Inscription: Alan Leamy's ever-lasting gift to the automotive world is a legacy of stunningly beautiful body styles that are the epitome of classic car design. He was only 25 years old when he created the distinctive classic look of the Cord L-29, America's first successful front-wheel-drive production automobile. His work on the Duesenberg Model J included the front-end sheet metal and fenders. Leamy also designed the entire Auburn line from 1931 through 1934. The 1931 Auburn was the bestselling car in the Company's history. Leamy is a prime example of the bright young talent that was discovered and utilized by E.L. Cord.

Alan Leamy was born in 1902 in Arlington, Maryland. He was a victim of polio as a youth and used a cane and leg brace throughout his life. He began his design career at Marmon in Indianapolis in 1927. Aware of E. L. Cord's radical idea of building a front-wheel-drive automobile, he wrote to Cord with hopes of obtaining employment. Leamy was hired, and in 1928, he began the desirable task of designing an all-new automobile that was destined to be a classic masterpiece, the Cord L-29. He loved driving cars and was skilled at operating a clutch by manipulating his braced left leg with his hands. Leamy died in 1935 of blood poisoning from a medically administered injection.

It is often said that a great artist never becomes truly famous until after his death. That is certainly true of Alan Leamy. While his work was appreciated during his lifetime, it is now considered legendary and he is regarded the equal of great Classic Era automobile designers such as Gordon Buehrig and Harley Earl. When Leamy passed away in 1935 at the age of 33, he left behind an impressive portfolio of innovative and elegant automobile design - including the Cord L-29, second generation Auburn Speedster, Duesenberg J. and the line of 1931-1934 Auburns. One of Leamy's last Auburn designs was the 8-105 featured on our cover.

www.bigstatues.com/post/big-statues-called-to-bring-car-designer-to-life

Skagit Valley with its unique microclimate is the perfect place in Washington State to cultivate tulips. A combination of temperate climate, mild winters, and a healthy dose of rain help grow some of the most beautiful displays of tulips you can find in the U.S.

Individual farmers prepare all winter so that their fields are successful – and can handle the thousands of visitors each April. The fields bloom according to the species (depending, of course, on weather) with the earliest tulips opening in late March and the late bloomers opening in early May.

With the snow-capped peaks of the Cascade Mountains in the background, the rows of brightly hued red, yellow, orange, purple, white, and pink blossoms are picture-perfect. Visitors from around the world wander along the (designated) flower-lined paths, savor the beauty and return home with lovely memories and lots of photographs.



Tiptoe through theTulips

Article by Jim & Irene Tait; Photography by S. Larimer and L. Gurnsey

A warm sunny April day made our 4th annual visit to Roozengaarde truly an amazing day.

The event started at the Smokey Point rest stop with donuts and visiting. At 9:30 Brad again took us on a leisurely drive using the back roads and Hwy 99. Beautiful views and a stop for some local history made for a fun drive. Bob LeCoque's 1940 Cadillac was the only Full Classic on the drive.

We reached the gardens at a little after 10 a.m. It was more crowded than last year because of the beautiful weather but still easy to enjoy the wonderful gardens. Roozengaarde plants over two million bulbs just in their three acre display gardens. There are also millions more planted in the surrounding fields. The blooms were even more beautiful this year perhaps because of the warmer weather and because of the sun "lighting" up the gorgeous flowers.

Our group left for lunch at Shawn O'Donnell's Irish Pub in Mount Vernon after taking a group picture in front of the Roozengaarde windmill. After a toast to friendship, Classic cars, and tulips we enjoyed everything from burgers to chicken pot pie. It was a time to catch up on past and future plans, life events, current car projects, and to share our garden photos.

After lunch we went our separate ways. Some members went to visit family or headed home. A small group went to visit Brad Ipsen's garage in Marysville to see his current project, a 1940 Cadillac 60 Special built for William Knudsen.

Thank you to all those who joined us for the event. Seeing you all made this a special day. We hope to see you and any other members who wish to join us next April at Tiptoe Through the Tulips 2025.

Attendees: *Jerry & Keenon Greenfield , Tom & Patty Alberts, Colin & Laurel Gurnsey, Jim & Irene Tait, Brad & Hyang Cha Ipsen, and Bob LeCoque.*

Not Pictured: John & Koko Carlson, Stan Dickison & guest Linda McCullough, and Steve Larimer.

For many years - a significant number of PNR members have had a consequential relationship with the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance. PNR member Glenn Mounger was co-Chair of the Concours from 1999 to 2005. He went on to serve as our Chief Honorary Judge through 2019 before adding Emeritus to his former title.

Pebble Beach Chairwoman Sandra Button created the Selection Committee following Glenn Mounger's retirement as co-chair of the Concours. PNR members on the Selection Committee include Richard Adatto, Peter Hageman and Al McEwan. They have all been part of the Selection Committee since its inception.

Concours judges from the PNR include Richard Adatto, Brian Pollock, Peter Hageman, Carl Bomstead, John Carlson, David Cohen, Peter Hageman, Malcolm Harris, Siegfried Linke, David Smith, and Al McEwan. All of these people have been judges at PB for many, many years. For example, Al has been a judge there for 37 years and has shown nine cars starting in 1981. Brian Pollock, David Cohen, Peter Hageman and David Smith have also shown cars at Pebble Beach. We apologize if we missed someone (it would require reviewing 35 years of PB entries to get an accurate list).

Many more of our members have shown a car (or several cars) and even more have simply enjoyed the experience of the Concours.

In 2023, PNR member Al McEwan played a significant role in sourcing Mercedes-Benz S, SS and SSK cars from around the world to fill two very special M-B classes (nine cars in the S Class and twelve in the SS and SSK Class). These cars arrived at Pebble Beach from six countries; ten from the US, six from Germany, two from the UK and one each from Hong Kong, the Czech Republic, and Ireland.

Our sincere thanks to Al McEwan for procuring permission to reprint Johnathan Sierakowski's interesting article on these very rare and seldom seen cars. Also, thanks to Al for sourcing photographs for each of the amazing twenty-one cars that were on the field at Pebble Beach in 2023. Stay tuned. The 2024 field at the Pebble Beach Councous will include M-B cars that were unavailable in 2023.

2017 Pebble Beach Best of Show

Featured on cover of
Autumn 2017 Bumper Guardian

1929 Mercedes-Benz 680S Barker Tourer

Owned by PNR Member Bruce McCaw

1929 710SS Barker
Chassis # 36225
Keller Collection (USA)

Mercedes-Benz S, SS, SSK

By Johathan Sierakowski

Reprinted with permission

The six-cylinder 630K produced by the newly-formed Daimler-Benz was a great hammer of an automobile – a performer but not a sports car – and it was almost fated that this would change. Both the previously-independent Daimler-Motoren-Gesellschaft and Benz & Cie. possessed a heritage of competition, ingrained into their DNA from the earliest days, so a more advanced and refined model was soon envisioned. In 1927, the 680S appeared, and for the next six years, motor circuits and boulevards worldwide would be enriched by its presence and sound.

The 630K underwent some thorough massaging in its transformation to the 680S. The 630K actually began life as the 24/1001/140 Mercedes; it was developed by that marque's brilliant Technical Director, Dr. Ferdinand Porsche, and renamed after the merger of Daimler and Benz, beginning a naming convention based on engine displacement, which lasted for many decades. To transform the 630K, which also took place under the guidance of Dr. Porsche, the engine itself was bored to 6.8 liters and fitted with wet cylinder liners, dual ignition with two spark plugs per cylinder, and dual carburetors, altogether producing 180 hp with its supercharger engaged. While the basic dimensions of the 630K chassis remained, offsets on the front and real axles lowered it, and the engine was moved rearward by 30 centimeters, permitting the drive train to be mounted lower in the chassis. The radiator was shortened to suit, creating the long and low profile of the hood and cowl, which transitioned well to many varieties of low-slung coachwork. The result was a genuine sports car, which absolutely looked and performed the part.

It did not take long for the 680S to prove its worth.

On June 18, 1927, scarcely a month after the new model was first advertised for sale, the Nuburgring held its inaugural race. Rudolf Caracciola and Adolf Rosenberger took to the course, each driving a model S, and finished 1-2. The following month at the German Grand Prix, the 680S placed 1-2-3 at the hands of Otto Merz, Christian Werner, and Willy Walb.

For 1928, the engine further evolved with an increase of displacement to 7.1 liters and the fitment of a crankshaft vibration damper – and it was available in varying states of tune and with competition

superchargers. This new model was aptly dubbed the SS, for Super Sport, which once again promoted itself with aplomb, winning its first two events.

At the insistence of factory team manager Alfred Neubauer, a further evolution at the hands of Ferdinand Porsche resulted in a new model intended to be more competitive in hill climbs. Dubbed the SSK, or Super Sport Kurz to denote its shortened 2,950 mm chassis, it was this model that is associated with the infamous "elephant" supercharger, a monster engaged on demand that produces, now as then, an acceleration accompanied by a screeching howl so piercing that it is unforgettable to those who experience it. Caracciola won with it virtually everywhere he went.

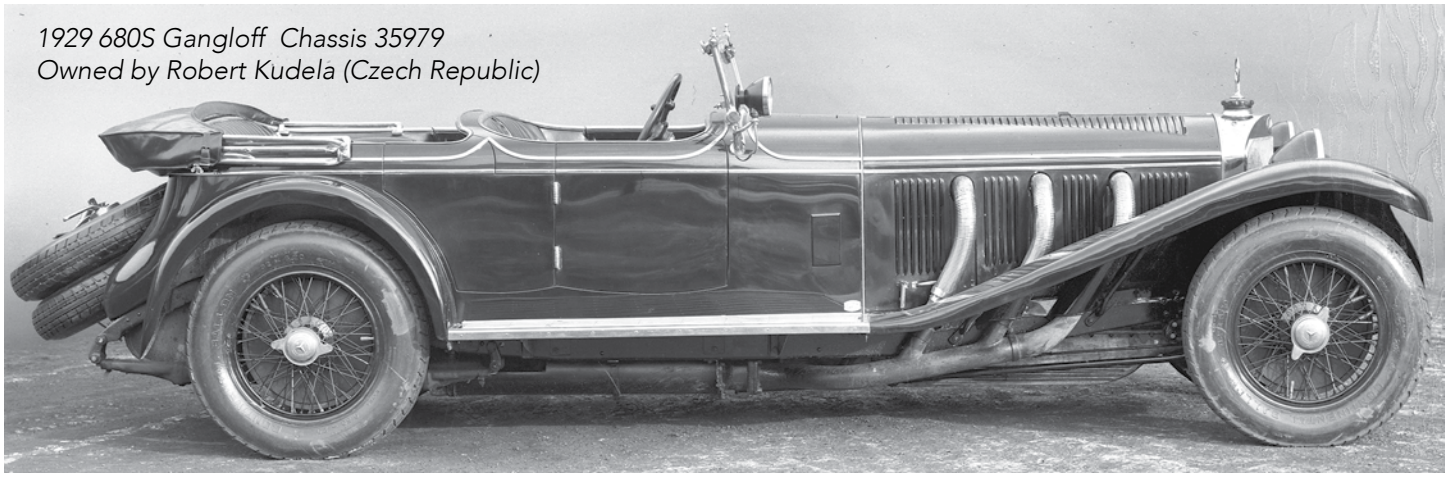
"When speed gets in the blood, one must drive to live." Caracciola once said, and he lived much of his early racing life, and garnered much of his success, in the S, SS, and SSK.

Aside from the further-lightened SSKL that followed, which Caracciola drove to victory in the 1931 Mille Miglia but no original example of which is known to have survived intact, the SSK was the ultimate development of the S Chassis, and it was those three letters that became, to use an oft-overused but entirely appropriate word: immortal. It was the fitting conclusion to the S series, one that won the German Grand Prix thrice, in 1927, 1928, and 1931; the Tourist Trophy of 1929; the Mille Migla of 1931; and the European Hill Climb Championships of 1930 and 1931, among many other competitions.

Yet to describe these cars solely as winners does not do them justice. These were powerful machines, all but they were also true dual-purpose cars that could carry their driver over the finish line and then on to dinner with no great effort. A total of 145 S, 111 SS and 33 SSK chassis were built, and it was not uncommon for a factory race car to be reconditioned thereafter and sold on into private hands for the street, nor for a chassis to be specifically ordered with dramatic coachwork. While the successor series of eight-cylinder supercharged models produced throughout the entirety of the 1930s and early 1940s represents a wonderful oeuvre of both factory designs and the work of independent coach builders, it contains nowhere near the diversity of coachwork found on the S-series cars.

Leading the pack was Sindelfingen, the factory's own workshop in the town of the same name. Mercedes-Benz offered its own catalog of Sindelfingen designs, replete with factory body styles that could be, and often were, customized or designed from scratch to the tastes of a discerning customer. The roster of available factory coachwork included the two-door Tourenwagen known as the Sport/4, and a competition tourer known as the Rennsport. The latter was often used in competition and later reconditioned to be sold on to private customers; this is notably the case of the Rennsport in the Simeone Foundation Automobile Museum, which was driven to victory by Otto Merz at the 1927 German Grand Prix before eventually being sold as a road car to a private buyer in Los Angeles. Also available were Daimler-Benz's usual broad variety of cabriolets and roadsters, neatly styled and solidly constructed, all of which were successfully designed around the S and SS chassis. The SSK, with its very short wheelbase, was typically mounted

1928 710SSK Chassis 36241 Corsica Drophead Coupe
Owned by Chip Connor, Hong Kong/USA



1929 680S Gangloff Chassis 35979
Owned by Robert Kudela (Czech Republic)

by the factory with their especially close-coupled two-passenger roadster coachwork known as the Sport/2, a legitimate "all-engine" design that announced itself proudly to all comers as a victor.

Yet on any of these chassis, Sindelfingen was also fully capable of producing a fully one-off body if that was what the buyer desired – and the result almost always was spectacular. It was not just "the factory coach builder" but a custom shop of exceptional quality, staffed by highly talented designers and artisans at the top of their craft; they were fully capable of building works of mechanical art that were the equal of anything else built by Europe's independent shops. No customer request was off the table, which resulted in some truly beautiful, genuinely unique creations that met the whims of one's imagination.

Some discerning customers, of course, had longtime relationships or preferences for the work of a favored coach builder outside of the factory auspices. Mercedes-Benz was as much an international brand then as it is today, with active and prolific dealerships in essentially every industrialized nation, and many chassis were sold from the factory without any coachwork, to be clothed by some of the finest names in custom bodywork the world over.

In the marque's home country, foremost among these was Erdmann & Rossi, a Berlin shop of considerable prestige. It produced many bodies for S-series chassis and was especially known for its roadsters with competition-style cut-down doors and exquisitely tailored, balanced lines – design work that looked firmly ahead into a future focused on aerodynamics and cheating the wind.

Coach builders in Germany's border countries also worked their magic on their neighbor's product, Van den Plas, the Brussels firm of considerable talent and renown that produced bodies for virtually every great chassis of this period, created at least one fabulous surviving design for the 680S, with a subtle double belt-line and especially sleek raked and visored windshield accentuated by double rear-mounted spares. Like many of the custom-bodied cars, this example found its first owner in America, specifically in Kansas City.

Gangloff, located in the Alsace region ceded by Germany back to France following the First World War, produced smartly drawn bodies for the platform, with the same long, low lightness of line that accentuated their finest work on Bugatti chassis. They showed a talent for emphasizing a car's length, and therefore the power of its engine, through careful design that would be seldom equaled in-period.

It was Saoutchik, however, that became the best-known French coach builder on this generation of Mercedes-Benz, building creations that were, in Jacques Saoutchik's typical fashion, essentially designed to be memorable. They had a boldness of line and exceptional attention to detail, reflected in exterior trim that could have been formed under a jeweler's loupe, with the eye of a couture house for interiors fitted with costly and exotic Alpina animal leathers – both traits of his former trade as a cabinetmaker. Yet they were also masterpieces of engineering, with panel fit and tolerances second-to-none. He was especially skilled as a builder of cabriolets, or in his parlance Torpedo Roadsters, with disappearing tops ahead of their time that influenced coach builders on both sides

of the Atlantic. They were the star of every auto show and salon that they attended and remain among the most fascinating coach-built Mercedes-Benz creations of the Classic Era.

Yet other coach builders produced truly magnificent cabriolets on this generations of Mercedes-Benz as well. Italy's work on the S chassis was led by Castagna of Milan, which like Saoutchik was revered for the finely hewn touches of its bodies, with magnificent, highly detailed brightwork and use of inlaid woods and contrasting leathers for interiors. Castagna produced an especially beautiful cabriolet with a distinctive split windshield on a handful of S and SS chassis, the results of which can be considered some of its finest work and are certainly among the most beautiful Italian designs of the Classic Era. Legendary entertainer Al Jolson and theater impresario "Roxy" Rothafel were among the fortunate buyers of Castagna bodies on the supercharged Mercedes-Benz. Like the buyer of the Van den Plas cabriolet, they were representative of the numerous Americans who bought a 680S, which with exotic coachwork, seemed especially to appeal to the monied and more flamboyant United States market.

Across the English Channel, customers seeking a bare S chassis via British Mercedes-Benz, Ltd., in London most frequently turned to Barker & Company, the London firm which long held Royal warrants. Barker distinguished itself in its long history by the diversity of its offerings, they were capable of building as conservative or as sporting a body as a client wished, and would be equally successful in the construction of both efforts. Suiting the personality of the 680S, Barker's work leaned towards the rakish – none more so than the fabulous taper-tailed creation they produced for the car owned by renowned aristocratic sportsman Lord Howe, it was a masterpiece composition of competition and road-going design cues.

Supercharged Mercedes-Benz chassis naturally made their way across the Atlantic to the fertile American market. Foremost among the American coach builders to ply their craft on the cars was the Walter M. Murphy Company of Pasadena, California, favored by the West Coast high society for its scarcely adorned but exceptionally clean lines. Murphy produced a pair of especially memorable bodies on S chassis, both boattailed speedsters that reflected a combination of influence from American Jazz Age design as well as the factory's own coachwork – recognition by a peer of Sindelfingen's skill. One was produced on a 680S chassis owned by Zeppo Marx, while the other was built for railroad heir Harold Isham on an SSK chassis, with the short frame only serving to emphasize the brutal good looks of its design. Both were regularly seen around Southern California for decades and were not soon forgotten by anyone who saw them, something that remains true today.

This roster represents only the more prolific and better known firms to work on the S cars. For every Erdmann & Rossi or Saoutchik, there was a firm that produced but one or two bodies of equal grandeur but under quieter auspices. Armbruster, the famed old workshop based in Vienna and best remembered today for their work on the Austro-Daimler, worked their special magic on one such car, a fabulous roadster with cycle-style pontoon fenders and boldly drawn lines. Hibbard & Darrin, the Parisian works established by two expatriate Americans of the Lost Generation, was famed for their all-metal Silentlyte method of body construction. The duo knew how to make beautiful automobiles of dynamic spirit. The now-lost SSK they crafted, an especially low and lean cabriolet sent to South America, was vivid proof.

1927 680S, Sindelfingen, Chassis 35320 Owner: Terry Bramall (England)
Purchased from the Indianapolis Speedway Museum on Bring a Trailer less than two years ago.

Some customers chose more obscure coach builders to realize exactly what the visualized. Count Carlo Felice Trossi was one of the foremost Italian racing drivers of his era and a great enthusiast of fine machines. He also had an eye for design; a sketch sourced from the Trossi family archives and drawn by the Count's own hand clearly depicts the lines of what would ultimately become one of the most famous cars of the prewar era. This initial sketch was refined by Willy White and the coachwork was crafted, presumably by a Turinese coach builder. The result so famous that it is recognizable simply as "the Trossi," is inarguably one of the greatest works on a supercharged Mercedes-Benz chassis, with lines that are aggressive, grandly scaled, yet perfect in proportion. As much as any other body of its era, the extraordinarily beautiful outcome was reflective of the vision of its owner.

In the end, it is the degree to which these cars speak to a modern audience that most commemorates their status as some of the finest ever produced. Mercedes-Benz is the most successful marque in competition at the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance. Since 1950, cars bearing the Star and the Laurel have won Best of Show no fewer than nine times. Five of those cars have been S, SS or SSK chassis, each represented by a different coach builder. So it can be concluded that these cars were, simply, an exceptional basis for the coach-builder's art, a canvas that lent itself to extraordinary proportions penned by the most talented designers of their era, and which were then willed into being by the wherewithal of the most astute automobile connoisseurs in the world.

Then, as now, each was shaped for victory.

1929 710SSK, Murphy, Chassis 36248, Owner: Keller Collection (USA)

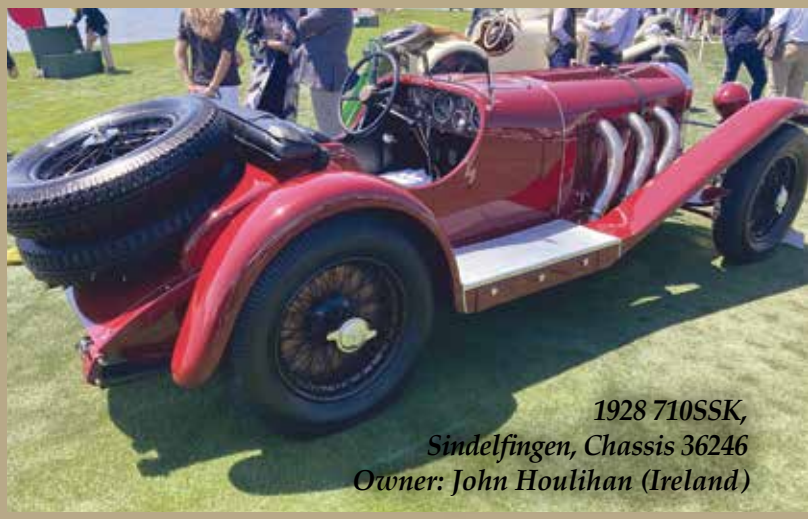
1930 710SS, Cadogan, Chassis 36271, Owner: Markus Kern (Germany)

1928 680S, Sindelfingen, Chassis 35939, Owner: Keller Collection (USA)

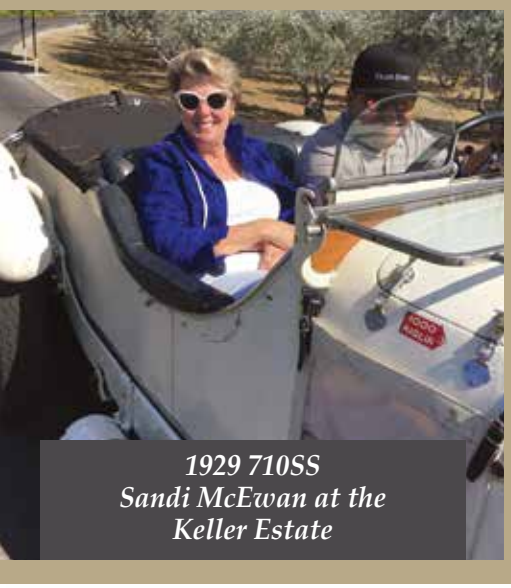
1929 710SSK, Barker, Chassis 36242 Owner: Collier Collection (USA)

1930 710SS, Sindelfingen, Chassis 36260
Owner: Schaefer Family (Germany)

1929 710SS,
Sindelfingen, Chassis 36239
Owner: Keller Collection (USA)



1928 710SSK,
Sindelfingen, Chassis 36246
Owner: John Houlihan (Ireland)



1929 710SS
Sandi McEwan at the
Keller Estate

1930 710SS, Sindelfingen, Chassis 36337
Owner: Auriga Collection (Germany)

One of the finalists for
Pebble Beach Best of Show 2023

1928 680S, Murphy,
Chassis 35313
Owner: John Rich (USA)

1931 710SSK,
Barker, Chassis 36046
Owner: Rob Walton (USA)

1928 680S,
Sindelfingen, Chassis 35945
Owner: Hans-Peter Fricke (Germany)

1930 710SS, Sindelfingen, Chassis 36343
Owner: MB Museum (Germany)

Pebble Beach Best of Show 2012

1928 680S, Saoutchik, Chassis 35949 Owner: Craig McCaw (USA)

1928 680S, Chassis 35920 Owner: John Bentley (USA)

1927 680S, Sindelfingen
Mercedes-Benz Museum (Germany)

1930 710SSK, 'Count Trossi', Chassis 36038
Owner: Ralph Lauren (USA)

Pebble Beach Best of Show in 1993

Photo courtesy of The ACD Automobile Museum

The 1936-37 Cord 810/812's featured an amazing array of advanced technology. James & Sherry Raisbeck owned a 1937 S/C Cabriolet (now owned by Craig Devine.)

Auburn Cord Duesenberg (ACD) Museum

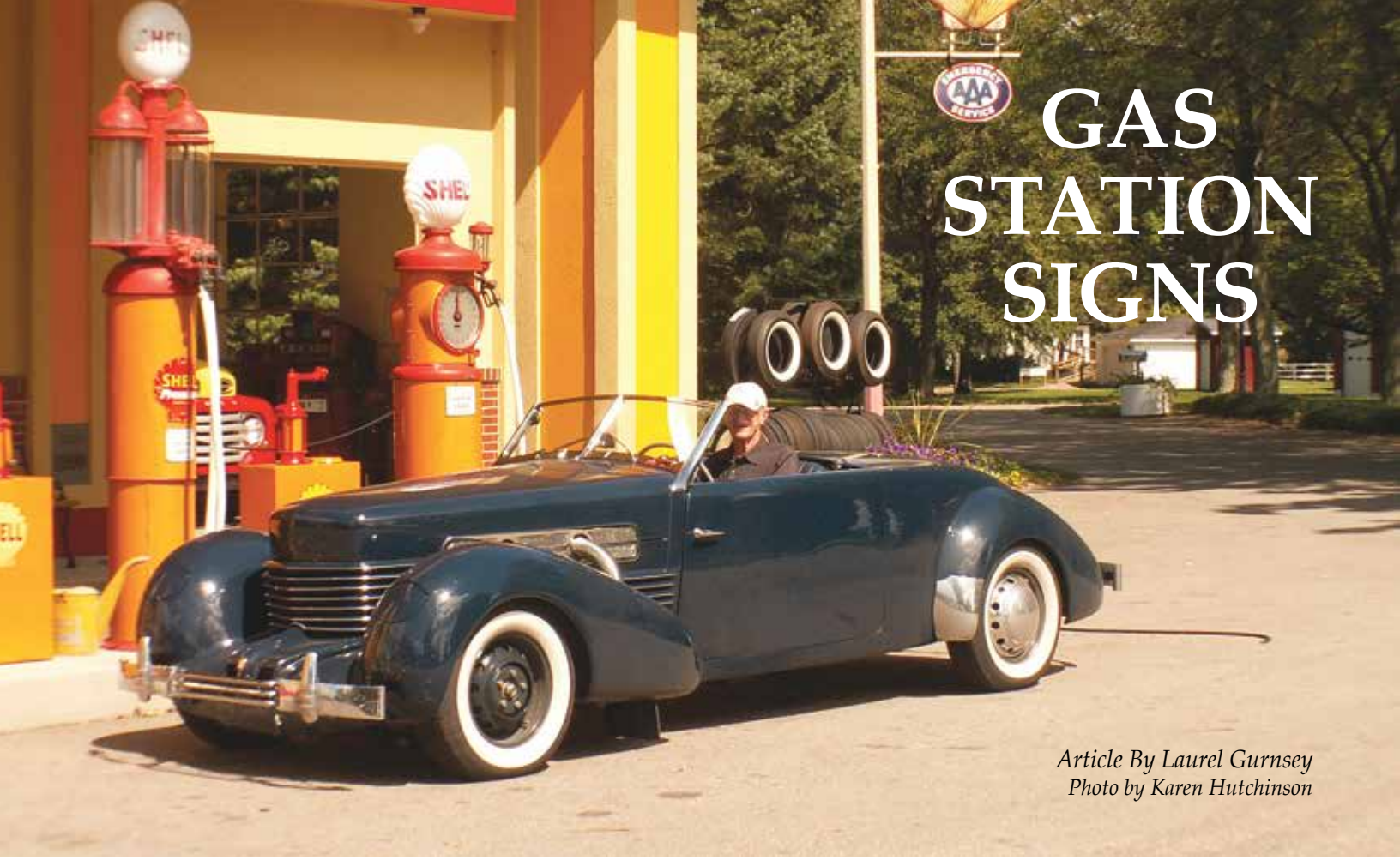
The museum is located in Auburn, Indiana. The building, the museum's largest artifact, was constructed for the Auburn Automobile Company in 1929 after a design by A.M. Strauss of Fort Wayne, IN. It is one of the finest examples of Art Deco architecture in the Midwest. The Auburn Automobile Company Administration Building housed the corporate showroom, executive and general offices, engineering and experimental design departments, design studios, and telephone switchboards until the company's end in 1937. The building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places and was named a National Historic Landmark in 2005.

The museum's magnificent collection of the ACD cars (including this 1933 Auburn 8-105 Salon Cabriolet - the same series as our featured cover car Classic) are displayed on the historic showroom's terrazzo floors, under massive original deco chandeliers and flanked by art deco plasterwork. Despite the grim economic conditions of the 1920s and 30s the ACD company designed and built some of the most iconic autos of the day. Known for long lines, sweeping curves and bold color combinations, the cars featured many art deco flourishes.

Upstairs are more ACD cars as well as significant cars from other Classic Era manufacturers. Exhibits feature the restored designers' drafting rooms, E.L. Cord's office, and several galleries highlighting ACD achievements, including the Raisbeck Engineering Hall of Technology. In the 1930s, this area of the building was home to Auburn Automobile Company's accounting department.

Raisbeck Engineering Hall of Technology Mission

"Gain a fuller understanding of how the Auburn Automobile Company and Duesenberg, Inc. were responsible for many patented innovations that are still on the cars driven today including hydraulic brakes, X-frame chassis construction, front wheel drive, and retractable headlights. Physical and digital interactive exhibits teach how automobile components work. Learn about the technologies and engineering personalities that brought these forward-thinking ideas to consumers in the 1920s and 1930s."



GAS STATION SIGNS

Article By Laurel Gurnsey
Photo by Karen Hutchinson

Sometimes the idea for an article comes out of the blue. Or sometimes even out of the dark.

On our way home from the PNR Christmas lunch, we stopped to visit a friend and by the time we got back on the road home it was early evening. We noticed that in many long stretches of highway the most visible lights were the neon signs advertising gas stations. One of the most prominent signs was for the company "76".

As usual… inquiring minds wondered about the history of gas station signs. Which ones were for the oldest companies? Which ones were the most prolific? And what does a gas station in the empty, dark night really mean to us?

I thought immediately of long road trips when my brother and I were small. A long trip in the car meant of course, pleas for a 'pee stop'. What better place than a service station, which almost always provided a restroom. Most also had, if not a modern, fully-serviced snack shop, at least chocolate bars and coffee.

For any long-distance traveller, service stations were truly a god-send if the gas meter was hovering on **empty**. I remember that famous saying "on a wing and a prayer". The website *Grammarist* defines it as "relying on hope and faith rather than a solid plan or safety net."

Service station signs can be a very welcome sight in the dark… not just if you are in need of gas, but in case you have an emergency, need help, a phone call to 911, or just a friendly face in the night.

So… into Colin's plethora (my favourite word) of car material. And onto the Internet with the help of my friend Mr. Google.

76 gasoline definitely fits the Classic Era. It was introduced in 1932 by Union Oil and of course the 76 number refers to 1776 and the Declaration of Independence. For those more technically minded, it also was the octane rating at the time and still stands for top tier fuel that prevents buildup and engine clogs. The signs are very striking with their bright orange balls and the number in vivid blue. Although the name had been around for years, the orange balls did not appear until 1962, when they were spinning balls, visible on all sides. The spinning has now stopped for energy reasons, but the memory remains.

Actual gas stations have been around a lot longer. When Karl Benz invented the first gasoline-powered automobile in 1885 (information from a most interesting website called NACS) it obviously needed fuel. Commercial oil wells had already been drilled but fuel for the new autos had to be purchased in places like pharmacies and there would not be an actual dispenser pump until 1898.

The Smithsonian Magazine site *The History of Gas Stations* is fascinating. It describes taking the "pharmacy stops" out into the open air. Now drivers could drive their cars right up to the pump rather than going inside with a gas can. In 1913, the first official drive-in service opened in Pennsylvania. It offered full service that include oil fill-ups, tire service, and free air and water. You could even get your windshields washed.

Chevron is another famous logo. A website called *The Way Ahead* talks about the inception of the brand as Pacific Coast Oil in 1879 and then later owned by Standard Oil. For sure around in the Classic Era. But the iconic logo with the distinctive red and blue chevron bars and the name Standard Chevron did not appear until 1911. Standard was dropped from the logo in 1969...becoming simply Chevron.

On a personal note…even in the 1960s here in Vancouver, it almost was unheard of for female drivers to gas up their cars by themselves! It was quite exciting for me to finally fill up my little MG Midget myself and own a Chevron gas credit card.

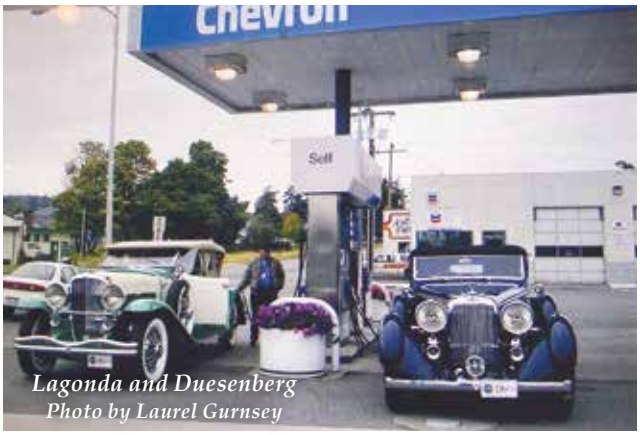
I was delighted to find a photo of our Lagonda at a Chevron station during the 2005 CARavan. Our "pump-mate" is a 1931 Duesenberg owned by Bill and Joann St Clair from South Dakota.

Oh, my gosh, how iconic is the word Shell? The well-known yellow logo is linked to a company crowded with world history. Shell started operations and production in the U.S. in the 1908-1913 time period (pre-Classic) with the winner of the 1907 Peking to Paris motor rally using Shell oil. Arctic explorers used Shell fuel and Bieriot made a cross-Channel flight using Shell Spirit (from the Shell company website.)

During the Classic era, Shell provided the fuel for most Allies in the First and Second World Wars powering both ships and cars as well as planes. Famous British flying ace Douglas Bader was part of the Shell staff. Shell innovation led to fuel advances for the Spitfire.

The Shell logo began very simply and there are various theories at the Shell Global website about the origin. The shell image was first a mussel shell and is now a scallop… possibly because one of the importers had scallops on the family coat of arms. Another theory is that one of the owners just simply collected shells.

There are a plethora of other iconic brands and logos. Dive in and have fun researching. Look up at the sign the next time you fill up your Classic car.



Lagonda and Duesenberg
Photo by Laurel Gurnsey

Source: Wikipedia

Standard Oil gas station, January 1942.
Photo by John Vachon.
Courtesy Library of Congress.

Chevron has a long, robust history that began when a group of explorers and merchants established the Pacific Coast Oil Co. on September 10, 1879. Since then, the company's name has changed more than once - best known as Standard Oil in the Classic Era then finally becoming Chevron in 1969.

During the 1920s and 1930s, the growing highway system encouraged longer car trips and gasoline service stations began to proliferate. Standard service stations attracted motorists by adding such amenities as clean, well-appointed restrooms and drinking fountains. With the introduction of the Standard Lubrication System, as well as Atlas tires, headlight bulbs and standardized battery service, the stations offered a complete one-stop service.

A STEP BY STEP SAGA .... THE RESTORATION OF ROSIE

(Rising from the Ashes of the Santa Rosa Fire)

Part IV: Resurrecting the Rear Axle

By Colin Gurnsey

I considered that one of the major game changers for resurrecting Rosie, my 1933 Lagonda 16/80 was the ability to restore the rear axle to correct configuration. The primary piece of "unobtanium" was the differential housing which originally was cast in aluminum. Lagonda used two sizes of axles in the mid-30s and mine was the smaller 2-liter version. I contacted David Ayre in the UK who I knew had acquired a barn full of used parts twenty or so years ago. Fortunately for me, he had two housings which were a bit different from each other, but not knowing which one was correct, he agreed to send me both thus starting my restoration process.

Unused Differential Housing

Pinion Gear and Driveshaft

My first look at the axle suggested it was quite far gone, with all the aluminum parts melted onto or into the casing. Following the fire, the axle was left unprotected from the elements and was very rusty with parts stuck together as if welded. The first step was to disassemble the axle components starting at the hubs and working inward toward the differential. Initially, pulling the half-shafts and the outer bearings proved nearly impossible. It was recommended that I use a slide hammer so I made one out of a one inch diameter piece of rod that I had on hand with a seven-pound sliding weight. Much to my surprise this proved very successful.

Next I made some special tools to turn the lock-ring that retained the shaft to the outer bearing housing. After removing the half-shafts, the crown wheel assembly was pulled out and the axle housing cleaned. The melted aluminum from the original differential housing had to be chipped, cut, and pried out of the casing.

I sandblasted the differential gears and soda blasted inside the axle housing. Before and after pictures are shown below.

Crown Wheel Assembly Before and After

While working on the axle I discovered that the heat of the fire had caused the axle flange on one end to become

While I was finishing-up work on the rear axle, I decided to weigh the rear brake drums. They came in at 46 pounds each. I suspect that once the housing for the crown wheel and pinion melted, the weight of the outer end became greater than the center lifting it and tilting the outer flange in the heat of the fire.

distorted. This was solved by anchoring the flange to a plate tied down to a fifty-ton press, making the end of the housing red hot with an oxy-acetylene torch, then using a long bar on the opposite end, pulling it down until the two end holes appeared to line up. Not very scientific but it almost worked.

Once straightened, assembly of the components commenced. I acquired two new half shafts, four axle bearings and three pinion bearings. New outer axle seals were acquired and put into place and the backing plates re-installed followed by an outer bearing housing. The first bearing housing bolted up tight with ease of movement when turning the axle hub or the pinion. When I tightened up the second bearing housing resistance in turning the axle from the hub or the pinion became more and more apparent as the bolts were tightened. I decided to take the bearing housing off and re-check all the tolerances. I found that the outer axle flange was tilted such that if the bottom edge was "0" the upper edge was plus 150 thousandths. What to do?

I made the holder for the air grinder so that the arm could pivot to allow the tool to reach from the outer edge of the flange to the inner ring of the axle housing. I had to modify the tool holder after this picture was taken to ensure it could achieve this objective.

After consulting with my various friends, we came up with an ingenious way to true up the axle flange. I made a housing for an air grinder that would attach to a rod that fitted the inner bearing and was centered in the outer axle opening. The air grinder pivoted around the flange. By taking off small amounts per pass I gradually trued up the axle flange. When the shafts were re-installed and the housings bolted up the pinion turned both half shafts easily without resistance. Problem solved.

The final stage of the process was to have new brake shoes made up and installed. I also acquired and installed all new brake shoe springs.

This axle runs two sets of brake shoes on each rear wheel. The brakes are cable-operated with the inner shoes operating off the hand brake and the outer shoes operating from the foot pedal.

There are three springs on each set of shoes. One inner and two on the outer shoes above the cam. Note the burned linings and the condition of the brakes after removing the drum.

The final assembly before the drum was installed. The brake linings were riveted to the shoes with copper rivets after the shoes were sandblasted and painted. I found one correct shoe to replace a damaged one. The hubs were sandblasted and electroless nickel-plated.

The Packard Factory

Written by Jim Tait

Located in Detroit, Michigan, the Packard Factory was the World's largest abandoned building. Last active in 1956, at one time, the facility spanned 3.5 million square feet on Detroit's east side. Demolition is currently underway funded primarily by the American Rescue Plan. Two historic buildings will be included in the redevelopment.

In 1899 brothers James Ward and William Doud started the Packard Motor Car Factory in Warren, Ohio. The business soon grew and the decision was made to move to the new automotive center in Detroit, Michigan. Detroit offered both capital and managerial interests that were not offered in Warren. In 1903, Packard did move to Detroit and purchased land on the outskirts of the city to build their new factory.

They hired Albert Kahn to design a new type of building using reinforced concrete and broad window areas to bring in natural light. This was the first building of its type in the automotive industry. The building design allowed for manufacturing on multiple floors and, with large windows letting in light, it made for a better work environment.

The new building opened on October 10, 1903 with 10,000 sq. ft. of workspace. The total property area was forty acres allowing for future expansion. Early 1900 photos show the factory was still evolving in the undeveloped area that would soon be surrounded by the city. Homes and new businesses soon were built because of the over 40,000 workers at the factory's peak. Over the years the building would grow into more than 3.5 million sq. ft. occupying both sides of East Grand Blvd. and at one point there was an enclosed bridge that would connect both sides of the street. The main assembly building was eventually more than two blocks long.

At its peak it would become one of the world's largest auto assembly plants. Its size was due to the fact that Packard did everything on site. From making its own castings, sheet metal stampings, and every aspect of assembly. All assembly areas came together in a final assembly line that stretched the whole length of the building. What came in as raw materials left as a finished car. Many other auto manufacturers had more than one factory and brought the components together for final assembly.

During WWII a building was set up to just make the Merlin engines that were used to power the P51 Mustang aircraft. After the War, Packard never really came back. Strong competition from Cadillac gave Packard a smaller share of the luxury car market. This gave them less money to be competitive and for development of the new V-8 engine. By the time Packard came out in 1955 with its new V-8 engine

along with new styling, it was too late. By the next year Packard merged with Studebaker and moved to South Bend, Indiana. Production ended in Detroit in 1956 closing the plant. This was a hard hit for the surrounding area and everything began to deteriorate. From 1958 until the 90s the building was used by many small businesses and for storage. In the 1990s it was even used for some RAV and Techno parties. The last businesses moved out in 2010 and the building went into further decline. Most of the metal was stripped out and used for salvage adding to further decay of the building.

The city of Detroit became involved with the property in 1994 because of unpaid taxes. The property had been divided into forty-three tax lots some owned by private parties and some by the city. Attempts by investors to buy the property and renovate it failed.

By 2022, as most of the lots were now owned by the city the decision was made and demolition was started. They started on the worst areas which had collapsed. This included the bridge over East Grand Blvd. which had collapsed in 2019. The hope was that after the demolition the area would be rebuilt and would help stop the deterioration and high crime of the area. They planned to save two of the buildings along East Grand Blvd. as part of the redevelopment.

We visited Detroit in 2022 and 2023. It is a city that is on the rebound with many areas seeing new buildings and new growth. We visited the Packard Factory which was like visiting a ghost town. So sad to see the abandoned houses and buildings in the area. We hope the Mayor's plan works to preserve part of the factory for history and that the remainder of the area can be redeveloped. So far this seems to be happening. The new businesses that have moved into the area seem to be doing well.

"Ask the Man Who Owns One."

By Karen Hutchinson

Packard's early effort to "prove" their vehicles was done on Detroit's crowded, twisting, and patrolled roads. This limited the types of experiments that test drivers could safely perform. In addition, there was significant concern about the competition seeing Packard's developmental projects.

In 1926, Packard purchased 320.68 acres in Shelby Township, Michigan, just twenty miles north of their flagship factory. The following year they purchased 107.32 additional acres, and in 1928 they purchased another 76.18 acres. In total, they purchased 504.18 acres, at a total cost of $175,845.95, to build their new testing facility.

Designed in the Tutor Revival Style by Detroit architect Albert Kahn, the Proving Grounds consisted of a 2.5-mile (4.0 km) high-speed concrete oval track with timing tower, miles of test roads of various conditions, an airplane hangar (Packard was also involved in developing aircraft engines, and used the track's infield as a landing strip), a repair garage, and a gate house/lodge that housed the Proving Grounds manager and his family. The lodge building also had garage space for eight cars, plus dormitory rooms for visiting engineers.

In 1956, when Packard's future was in serious doubt, the Proving Grounds were sold to jet-engine maker Curtis-Wright. Ford then purchased the property in 1961 for car testing and parts production. In the 1990s, Ford made plans to sell the land to developers. At that time, Packard Motor Car Foundation was formed to save the historic property. They were able to convince Ford to donate 14.5 acres for preservation. In 2000, the Packard Proving Grounds were added to the National Register of Historic Places. Today, the site is part of the MotorCities National Heritage Area established by the Department of Interior's National Park Service and is open to visitors.

Raymond Loe's 1934 Auburn Model 850Y Cabriolet

Editor's Note: This rare Auburn was featured almost twenty years ago in the 2006 Bumper Guardian and is reprised here. Don Elmer's 1933 Auburn 8-105 Salon Sedan and Raymond Loe's 1934 Cabriolet were both "rescued" from dire circumstances. Each required extensive restoration that was done primarily by the owner. Both of these men took extraordinary measures to bring these beautiful and historically significant cars back to life!

I rescued this Auburn in 1989 from a sure date with a scrap yard after having been left uncovered, out-of-doors for over twenty years in a Southern California open field. The lower body was in an advanced state of rust and the engine was frozen solid. Termites had destroyed the wooden supporting structure and all of the interior. It was a disaster!

My first action was to disassemble what was left of the car by removing every last bolt and nut in preparation for a full "frame off" restoration. I then determined the condition of each component and cataloged those that could be salvaged and then began to search for the remaining missing parts. This process took several years before I could actually start working to restore each of the many individual parts and then reassemble the car.

Being comfortable with automobile mechanical work I began by restoring the frame, wheels, axles, brakes, springs, etc. until I had a rolling chassis assembled. Overhauling the engine, transmission, free wheeling and two speed differential assemblies came next, all requiring complete tear-down and rebuilding to their original specifications. This process took several more years of my spare hours while continuing to work full time.

Although time consuming, the mechanical work went well, however, restoring the body and interior presented challenges where I had no personal expertise. In addition to having to replace all the structural wood eaten by termites, much of the lower body, doors and fenders were rusted through (as in "Swiss Cheese") requiring extensive metal replacement as well as damage repair before assembly and painting could begin.

My solution to this dilemma was to enroll (as a non-credit adult) in a local high school auto body shop class where I received instruction in metal cutting, welding, shaping, filling, sanding and painting. This took over two years during which time I brought parts of the car body to class and applied my developing skills under the watchful eye of a very patient instructor. I completed my school tenure after having restored all of the sheet metal and wood as well as assembling and painting the body before "graduating."

After that very satisfying experience I reassembled the entire car at home and brought in a local upholster to complete the interior. I retired from work and in 2002 moved to the Pacific Northwest where I had the convertible top made to complete the restoration.

This car is a "driver" and as such we drove it 3,000 miles from Seattle to Auburn Indiana in 2004 to participate in their Labor Day Auburn Cord Duesenberg (ACD) Club festival. During that visit our car was awarded certificate number A-433 by ACD club officials declaring it to be "A Certified Original Auburn Automobile". Although we prefer driving on lesser traveled roads the original two-speed Columbia rear axle overdrive system makes driving this car at freeway speeds with lower engine RPMs reasonably comfortable.

It is one of only four 1934 Model 850Y Cabriolets listed in the current ACD club records.

It would have been a lot easier to have let this Auburn go to the scrap heap but, it was a rewarding project and I am pleased to have been able to save a very rare Classic Car.

I made the decision in 2022 to donate my car to LeMay's America's Car Museum (ACM). As part of the ACM collection, my car that was once abandoned in a Los Angeles backyard will be preserved for generations to come. If you are interested, the car prominently displayed on the ramp with several other Full Classics donated to the museum by PNR-CCCA members.

1934 Auburn Model 850Y Cabriolet

Serial No. 2436F - Engine No. GG1585

Designated a "Full Classic" Car by the Classic Car Club of America and certified in 2004 as “A Certified Original Auburn Automobile” by the Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg Club.

Specifications:

- Engine - Lycoming straight-8 cylinder flat head - 115 hp, 280 cu/in. disp.
- Transmission - Detroit floor shift three speed w/freewheeling (locked out).
- Differential: Columbia two speed overdrive with steering column vacuum shift.
- Chassis: Wheelbase 127 in. - Frame is 6” x 2.5” steel reinforced box “X-plus A”.
- Brakes: Bendix 12” hydraulic internal expanding drum style - non powered.
- Body: Central Mfg. 18 gauge welded steel with wood frame reinforcing around door and top openings. Body is bolted directly to frame.
- Cost: Base price in 1934 for this “Custom” model cabriolet was $1,045.00

Klassic Korner for Kids

1933 Chicago World's Fair: "A Century of Progress"

The Chicago World's Fair – also known as the "Century of Progress International Exposition" – took place in 1933 (the year of our featured Auburn) and 1934. Celebrating the city of Chicago's centennial, the theme of the fair was technological innovation and its motto was "Science Finds, Industry Applies, Man Adapts."

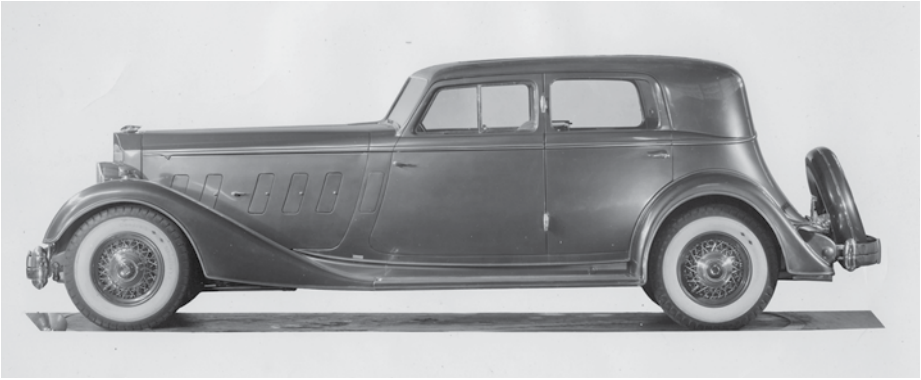
At the time of the Fair, the American automobile business was booming and automobiles were transforming the way the American public lived.

Detroit's Big Three automakers each created massive buildings on the fairgrounds showcasing their products and history.

- *Chrysler Corporation's pavilion and grounds covered over seven acres of land. It included not only the Chrysler Building, but sunken gardens, the Cyclorama, display areas and a race track. The building – considered one of the great showpieces of the Fair – was described in period literature as "belonging to the modern idyllistic school of architecture."*
- *General Motor's Chevrolet division set up a complete assembly line. It was possible to place an order for a new Chevrolet at your hometown dealer, travel to the Fair, watch your new car being built, and drive it home. The first Chevrolet built was awarded to a lucky ticket holder from among 400,000 Chicago school children. The winner was an eight-year-old girl named Dorothy Maciejewska. Her family had never owned an automobile!*
- *The Wonder Rotunda was constructed by Ford Motor Company, "to show the how of progress" according to Henry Ford. The centerpiece building, designed by Albert Kahn, spanned 900 feet long, 213 feet wide, and rose to a height of twelve stories. Ford's exhibit contained five main areas of display focusing on innovations in design and manufacturing. The most elaborate display was the "Roads of the World" outdoor park - an oval roadway, broken into twenty-one sections, telling the history of road construction around the world.*

For Classic Car enthusiasts, the Travel and Transport Building, showcasing the best and, frequently, most expensive automobiles that America had to offer was surely a "must-see." Independent American automobile manufacturers exhibited their "dream cars" with great fanfare including:

- *Packard's advanced V-12 Formal Sedan known as "The Car of the Dome" (for its central position in the building.) This car was named "Best of Show." (See sidebar pg 29)*
- *Duesenberg's one-off Model SJ Torpedo Sedan, nicknamed "Twenty Grand" for its cost in 1933 dollars.*
- *Cadillac's sleek fastback Aero-Dynamic Coupe with 16 cylinders.*
- *Lincoln's rear-engined concept car, a precursor to the Lincoln-Zephyr (which went into production in 1936 with a front engine.)*
- *Pierce-Arrow's modernistic Silver Arrow, with the byline "Suddenly it's 1940!" The streamlined design with gleaming silver coachwork, flush-fitting doors with door handles inset out of the airstream; and a "step-down" interior that was three years ahead of Cord was a sight to behold.*
- *Nash's"Tower of Value" presented an "endless chain of cars in a tower of glass." Stacked nine to a side, Nash Sixes and Eights rotated vertically in a plate-glass, 80-foot-tall tower topped by a neon sign.*



1933 Packard "Car of the Dome"
Best of Show 1933 Chicago World's Fair.
File photograph - Packard Company

Inscribed on photo back: "Packard 1006 twelve, tenth series, 12-cylinder, 160-horsepower, 147-inch wheelbase, special "Car of the Dome" show car (modified Dietrich Inc., five-person sport sedan, body type #3182), modifications by Packard, note first series update: 1934 eleventh series bumpers, 1934 eleventh series front fenders, bail cap replacing pelican emblem, retained tenth series hood louver door hardware, retained tenth series fore-door windows, retained tenth series tail lamp housings, exhibited: retaining its special metallic bronze gold coloring, this car continued to be part of the special Great Dome display in the travel and transportation building at Chicago's "A Century of Progress" international exposition.

As a result of the streamlining (later described as art deco) on display at the 1933/34 Chicago World's Fair, the style entered the public consciousness creating sufficient demand for companies to invest in the wonderful new designs that were seen in children's tricycles in the mid-thirties.

American National Company, produced the "streamlined" Sky-King tricycle from 1934 to 1941.

Calendar of Events

2024 PNR CCCA Sponsored & Regional Events

Black type: PNR sponsored event

Jun. 22	**Coming-Out Party** **Contace: Brian Rohrback**
Jul. 4	Yarrow Point Parade Contact: Al McEwan
Jul. 14	Mercer Island Cruise & Car Show Contact: Tom Alberts
Jul. 21	Forest Grove Concours Contact: Jerry Greenfield
Aug. 5	**Motoring Classic Kickoff** **Contacts: Larimer & Howard**
Aug. 18	Pebble Beach Concours
Aug. 31	LeMay Family Collection Show Contact: Jake Grotte
Sept. 7	LeMay ACM GALA
Nov. 6	**PNR Annual Meeting**
Dec. 15	**Holiday Party and Awards**

2024 CCCA NATIONAL EVENTS

Grand Classic®

May 31 - June 4 . . . . . CCCA Museum

June 28 -29 . . . . . Metro Region

Sept 26 - 28 . . . . . Ohio Region

CARavans®

May 13 - 24 . . . . . Best of the West
Northern California Region

July 10 - 14. . . . . Mini-CARavan
Ohio Region

Sept 7 - 14 . . . . . New England
New England Region

Sept 15 - 2 1. . . . . Virginia Hospitality
Colonial Region