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EVENTS 2010

APRIL		
Sunday 4th 12.30	Pub Meet @ "The Bulls Head" Meriden,near Coventry
Sunday 18th	AACI Springnationals, Billing Northampton
Sunday 25th	AACUK Springnationals, High Cross, Lutterworth
JUNE	
Sunday 20th	AACI Summernationals, Billing Northampton – CLUB STAND!
Sunday 27th	AACUK Summernationals Coombe Abbey,near Coventry
JULY	
Sunday 4th	Stars & Stripes,Knutsford, Cheshire
Sunday 12th	Americana,Newark,Notts
Sunday 18th	RALLY OF THE GIANTS Knebworth,Herts
OCTOBER	
Sunday 3rd 12.30	Pub Meet @ "The Bulls Head", Meriden,near Coventry
Sunday 31st 12.30	ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Town Thorns,Easenhall,nr Rugby

The above list will be added to as more events are announced.

NEWS LETTER

Front Cover:
1959 Chrysler's
Back Cover:
1959 Plymouth

WEBSITE

Our website has a forum section and I would urge members to register on it. It exists to help us all share information and answer questions and queries about everything to do with classic American vehicles. The club could do with an administrator to manage the forum. If anyone is interested in taking this on please contact me at adam@pre50aac.com. My knowledge of classic vehicles is very poor compared to most members so help will be gratefully appreciated. I will also appreciate any ideas and suggestions to improve the usefulness and relevance of the website.

MEMBERS' EMAIL

At present we do not keep a list of members' email addresses. I would like to put a circulation list together and if members would like to be included in this can you please let me have your address. Email addresses would also be added to the list of members' details held by the membership secretary. These lists are confidential and will never be shared with a third party.

MEMBERS' VEHICLES

In the past we have kept a register of members' vehicles. We do suggest you list your vehicles on your annual membership renewal form, but at the moment this information is not collated into a register. I would be interested in updating this list and circulating the register amongst the membership. Anyone interested in contributing to the list should please send me the relevant information.

THE LIBRARY

Recently I had the pleasure of spending an afternoon with Steve Passmore going through the library. I actually see it much more as an archive; full of interesting pieces of literary history including old publicity material, sales literature, newspaper cuttings, advertisements and a considerable number of technical books including workshop manuals. I think this archive is precious, unique and should be preserved. Much of it will, hopefully, find its way into Multicylinder so we can all see what makes it so special. But, some of the books in the library have come out of stock and I am going to put these back in for members to purchase at the RoG. There are also a number of original and facsimile workshop manuals, especially for 60's muscle cars and I plan to bring some of these to the RoG to see if members would be interested in buying them for their own use.

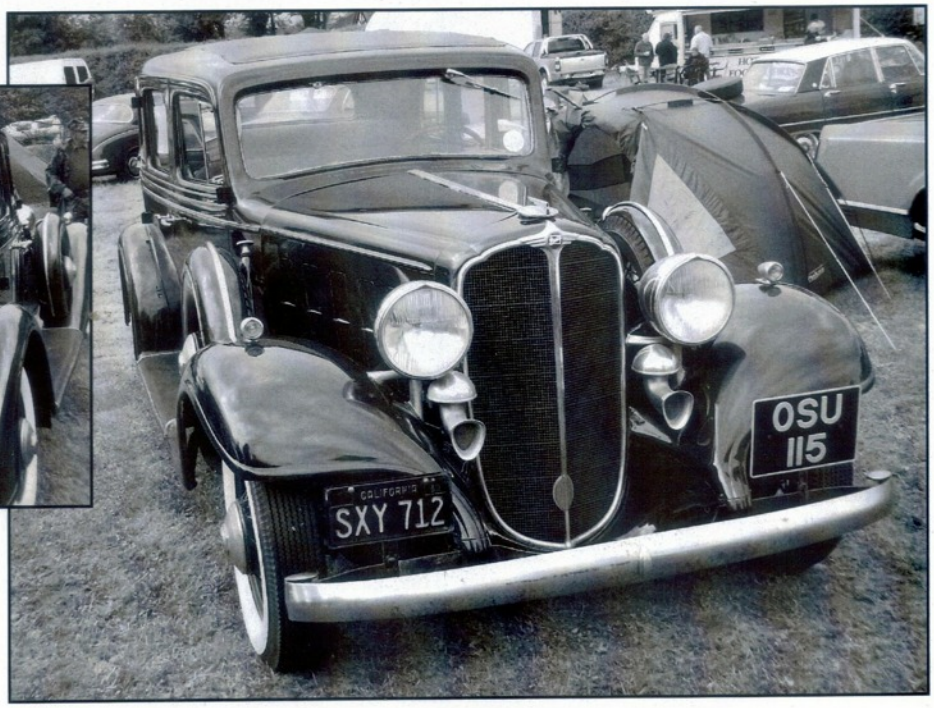
Adam Alexander

APRIL MEET SUNDAY 4TH 12.30

Once again we gather at "The Bull's Head" at Meriden for lunch, a drink and a chat. This historic coaching inn is set near the village centre, on the old Coventry road.

To find it, look for the signs on the A45,between Coventry and the NEC. Meriden is the geographical centre of England.

Last year we had a good turnout of old vehicles.
See YOU there?



Local Gloucester car. 1933 Buick series 50 4 door, imported some time ago and presented as a competition prize by what was Showering Shepton Mallet. Bought as the unused prize form Bath

Touring Africa

Gordon Strauss recalls his days as a tour guide-driver at the wheel of a De Soto Suburban

"Golden Eagle" at the top of Du Toit's Kloof Pass.

Pictures courtesy of Gordon Strauss.

The end of World War II saw an unbelievable spurt in tourism as the ships 1 and aircraft of the war years became available to carry tourists to the far corners of the globe. South Africa, with its game reserves, glorious weather, magnificent scenery, nature life and, even in those far-off days, relatively good roads, soon became the mecca for African tourism.

With great foresight and a lot of pluck and optimism, a 26-year-old ex-soldier, Bill Olds, and his ex-army wife, Zona, sank their service gratuities into the purchase of a shiny new 1947 De Soto Suburban nine-seater to launch Springbok Safaris. The little enterprise prospered and the couple were soon able to buy more De Sotos and then Chryslers - the latter being seven-seaters -and to employ couriers and administrative staff. Eventually 10 De Soto Suburbans, two Chryslers, a number of conventional cars and even a Rolls-Royce and a Cadillac formed the very active fleet. In the late 1950s, a few Mercedes-Benz saloons were tried but they were not entirely successful, having cramped accommodation and requiring expensive spare parts. However, their totally dust-proof bodies were appreciated.

As the popularity of the tours increased, it made good sense to purchase 18-seat and 60-seat coaches. One 60-seater replaced seven safari cars on a tour and the running costs were far lower. During a period of a few years, all the De Soto Suburbans were sold to black taxi operators, while luxury coaches became the standard wear for transporting tourists. The march of progress eventually overwhelmed the small safari touring companies. Springbok Safaris and Atlas Tours became Springbok Atlas Tours, and Transafrica Tours, which owned even more De Soto Suburbans, disappeared into one of the big industrial conglomerates, while Southern Cross Safaris, with one De Soto Suburban, faded quietly away.

I was fortunate to serve a long spell as driver-courier-mechanic with Springbok Safaris, driving "my" De Soto to all the favourite tourist haunts of southern Africa and beyond between 1951 and 1957. I joined the company after doing a trip to the Kruger National Park with them at Christmas in 1950 at the wheel of a 1949 Chevrolet.

With the exception of the "Swift" (the new driver's car), the cars were all named after birds of prey and it is surprising how this gave each one its own particular character.

I had my faithful "Condor" which covered many hundreds of thousands of miles, often in company with Jan de Villiers' "Merlin" when we had two-car sorties into wildest Africa. At a later stage I was promoted to "Golden Eagle 2", the newest car in the firm - what a lovely machine, complete with dust cover, tyre chains, etc. However, one disadvantage was that whenever she was left in the garage the other drivers - the boss included - would help themselves to better components like the carburettor or the front seat (more comfortable) or even wheels and tyres. You can imagine the frantic search before each tour to reclaim my unworn "Golden Eagle" parts!

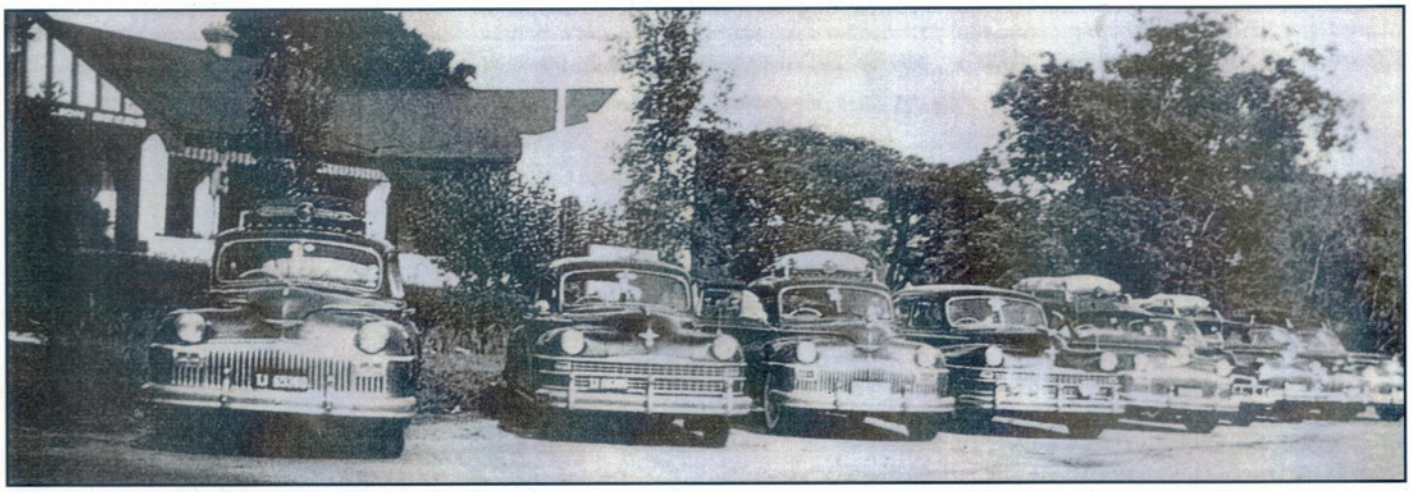
Driving the big Suburbans, with their long wheelbase of nearly four metres, fluid drive giving gentle acceleration, nursing the drum brakes which had to cope with such heavy loads and with very nearly six turns of the steering wheel from lock to lock, felt rather like being captain of a small boat!

The cars proved eminently reliable. Treated with respect - careful warming-up and maxima of 80 kph in high range and 40 kph in low range of the two-range fluid-drive gearbox - they did about 300 000 km before their first engine overhaul and were sold off at about 800 000 km. Our only modification was the fitting of 8-25 x 15 tyres in place of the standard 7-60 x 15 to cope with heavy loads and rough roads.

We normally carried eight passengers (including the driver) and a mound of luggage in the waterproof slipcase on the roof rack and in the boot. Adventures there were a-plenty ... trying to explain to the boss that you had to buy a new tyre because a lion had chewed the tread off one; soldering little bathroom chains to hubcaps so as not to lose them (we had to pay for lost hubcaps); hilarious parties in the Cape or the Eastern Districts of Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe); pushing cars out of the thick, glutinous mud in Swaziland; pouring rain, freezing cold, glorious sunshine ... the memories come tumbling back.

Highlights of the tours were the game reserves and, despite company rules limiting our distances to daily maxima, we saw just about everything. There were five-day tours of the Kruger National Park and 10-day 'round in ten' runs to the Kruger Park, Swaziland, Hluhluwe, Durban, the Royal Natal National Park and back to Johannesburg. The two-week tours went to Cape Town via Port Elizabeth and the Garden Route and to Rhodesia via the Kruger Park.

Rhodesian tour routes varied with the seasons. Winter runs included the Wankie National Park, Victoria Falls and a run through Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), crossing back into Rhodesia at Chirundu and on to Salisbury (Harare). Summer tours included the lovely mountainous Eastern Districts, with the Dannakay Hotel, Umtali and the Birchenough Bridge as highlights. One tended to get stuck with a particular tour, so one got to



A row of outsize "Dollar Grins"... the Springbok Safaris contingent at Witbank during the 1950 Christmas tour.

know short cuts, helpful people at tea and lunch stops and, in my case, artful ways round the Rhodesian petrol rationing of that time. I once did a 3 200km Rhodesian tour on just 27 litres of (official) petrol!

Then there were the special tours. We always had special tours to the Kruger National Park at Christmas and Easter when, with as many as 10 cars and up to 80 people, we really would have fun, particularly as we did our own catering to professional standards. One of our drivers, Tom Donaldson, had been an army cook, and to watch him fry five kilos of bacon and 10 dozen eggs over an open fire with giant frying pans in 20 minutes was an education.

Naturally, setting off heavily laden on a 4 000km tour in a De Soto Suburban with 200 000km on the clock and a strict time-schedule to be maintained had its moments. It was quite astonishing how one would do a full tour without any trouble and then, in the same car a few days later, have the toolkit out 100km from home and never stop working for the whole tour.

Troubles came in series: burst rear tyres, brake problems, broken springs ... On one two-car tour, we had two broken rear leaf springs and two front coils. On another two-car run, we blew tyres with monotonous regularity because of faulty wheel alignment. We finally arrived home with gaiters and patches in six tyres, all eight running tyres showing canvas and one heavily gaitered spare between the two cars.

Then there was the sight of a normally careful Jan de Villiers sailing through a herd of cattle at undiminished speed to pull up beyond them and tell me, in a whisper, that he had no brakes. While he described the scenery to the tourists, I crept under "Merlin" to find that a newly-fitted exhaust had chafed through a brake pipe on the rear axle. Using the handbrake, we crept to the next village and, while the passengers enjoyed an unscheduled tea stop, Jan and I repaired the damage, using a local workshop's facilities.

On one unscheduled three-week tour -when I only had time to purchase a shaving kit and spare shirt on the way

"Condor" and a striped acquaintance in the Livingstone Game Park in Northern Rhodesia.

Du Toit's Kloof Pass, 1951.

The author on tour at Christmastime, 1951.

to our rendezvous - things became a little awkward when I had to share a room with a passenger (male, of course!). "No, I never have any luggage! - Yes, I always sleep in the altogether - Yes, I always wash shirts, underwear, etc, every night - Yes, it is a fag!" Anyway, we had a memorable and, for me, uncomfortable tour. And so it went on.

Did you know that at full moon when the angle is just right on two or three nights in a year, you can - if you are lucky - see the lunar rainbow over the Eastern Cataract of the Victoria Falls? This quite ghostly apparition I reserved for particularly nice groups of tourists - a thrill they or I will never forget.

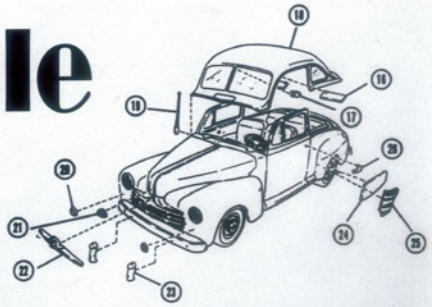
Every day brought new experiences -from the Lancashire gentleman's "Now we'll 'ave that window closed" to the Scotsman's "There's naa watter in the burn!" and many others. What a marvellous extended holiday it all was for me - an experience I would never have missed.

An earlier version of this article appeared in The Automobilist in 1990-91.

Article submitted by Raymond Richards

Ford Cars in Scale

1935 Ford



I had an interesting phone call from Edwin Phelps a few weeks ago. To me he is famous for owning one of the few 1938 Fords in the UK but it was about a toy Ford that he was calling. Apparently he had acquired a 5" long 1935 Ford Tudor that had intrigued him. From his description it seems to be the mysterious toy that occasionally crops up at toy fairs and even less frequently is discussed in the collector magazines. There is enough detail cast into the material, said to be shredded rubber, to be almost certain that it is a '35 Ford Touring Sedan while the underside is marked simply '0717 Toys'. After 70 plus years the rubber has gone quite hard and brittle but in the 1930s there was a short period of rubber toys, intended to not harm furniture whilst being played with but prior to the advent of softer plastics.

Back in 2001 a resident expert at Model Collector magazine suggested that the maker was actually Lilo Toys who were known to make rubber goods in the UK during the 1930s but just why they chose a 1935 Ford for their only car toy is another mystery. It could be that they were following the trend chosen by the US rubber toy makers Auburn, Barr, Seiberling and Firestone who offered '35 Fords in truck, sedan coupe and van forms.

Our discussion then went on to what other 1935 Fords had been made in miniature, so going back to 1935, a well known range of diecast toys in the US called Tootsietoys issued a range of small toy '34 Fords and these only lasted a year before being replaced in 1936 by a similar range modified to represent 1935 Fords. It is thought that the name Tootsietoy was coined by their manufacturer, Dowst Brothers, in response to the UK Dinky Toy range that were being sold in the US. at the time. Several variations of the '35 Fords were achieved from three castings, a Fordor Sedan and a Three Window Coupe were alternatively sold as a Convertible Sedan and Convertible Coupe by simply painting the roof section to depict a soft top while the Coupe was given an alternative rear featuring a solid hook as a wrecker. An open Roadster was also made being subsequently fitted with a seated 'fireman' and sold in a Fire set as a Chiefs Car.

Not to everyones taste but these old toys have a certain appeal, good examples are prized in the US but many suffer from metal fatigue and simply disintegrate, 1 have managed to make some survive (up to now) by filling all the cracks with super glue. Back in the 1970s a US maker called Precision Accucast produced some copies in white metal - easy to identify as they are much heavier, one spin off exclusive to them was a Five Window Coupe.

On one of our earlier US trips I found a HO scale plastic kit for a '35 Fordor Sedan by Mountain States Model Works. It was obviously very old at that point and (for no particular reason) it still hasn't been assembled. This operation seems to have not produced any other HO vehicles, but some S gauge scenic buildings have been recorded. The '35 Sedan was subsequently re-produced by Williams Bros who adopted it into their range of HO vehicle kits. Many years ago I found a HO scale resin kit by Top Models, a French company, and this depicted a '35 Fordor Touring Sedan but marked as a Matford on the packaging. Comparing with the original Mountain States kit it is obviously derived from that but being in resin is to a very poor standard of finish but I eventually managed to make an acceptable model from it.

In the US money boxes were called 'banks' and a whole industry was producing these banks in every form imaginable. A few came in the shape of vehicles, notably by such firms as Banthrico, and during the 1970s a 1935 Fordor Sedan Taxi was among these. Produced mainly of zinc they were Finished to a gold colour and sprayed with a resin coat for protection. It is believed that production followed at intervals and repros subsequently made, according to the hefty tome on the subject by James Redwine (Schiffer 2001) the '35 Sedan was a music box that played "My Way". My example is minus such a device so must be a later cheaper repro, like most it carries the name of the finance house that originally issued it - in this case "Indian Village Federal Savings & Loan Assn. Gnadenhutten, Ohio"

Among the most attractive model '35s must be the Rex Toys 1:43 diecasts that were produced by the Swiss Count Giansanti Coluzzi and called "Les Royales Miniatures". The rest of the range consisted of exotic classics like the V16 Cadillac, 1935 Auburn and Rolls Royce Phantom IV. The '35 Fords were in good company while the colour brochure that came with the models included four variants of the 1935 Lincoln VI2, none of which unfortunately saw the light of day. Count Coluzzi was also behind the mega-expensive Fulgarex range of model railways. Six versions of the '35 Ford were announced in 1989, Touring Fordor Sedan, Five Window Coupe, Sedan Delivery, Station Wagon, Three Window Coupe and Convertible Coupe. All but the last two appeared between 1991 and '94, many of them in a variety of liveries. The same base, simple plastic interior and diecast fender sections were employed for all versions while individual castings are provided for the different bodies.

One has to wonder just how much of the Rex Toys Sedan Delivery was used in the creation of the Tins Toys version, albeit that the latter is slightly larger and obviously aimed at the cheap toy end of the market with its 'pull-back' motor and horrid wheels. The back end is in fact more accurate than the Rex Toys - lacking bumper guards, while the door and rear window follow the size and shape of the real thing more faithfully. Numerous different liveries have been used but I managed to find a "Ford Parts Delivery" example.

Among the last handbuilt models from MiniMarque 43 before the owner Richard Briggs passed away was a 1:43 1935 Convertible Sedan. At $750 these were the most expensive real Fords in '35 and have a special Murray body noticeably different at the rear as interior luggage accommodation was provided behind the back seat. Only 4,234 of the real Convertible Sedans were made, and probably much fewer of the models, at over £100 a go that is understandable. However, for that you got real wire wheels - very delicate, and much interior detail that included all the inner door handles, although the gear lever is located between the front passengers knees! The first issues were of the 1935 Indy Pace Car, then regular 'civilian' examples but the list included a third version in the shape of a Sedan Delivery but their production has not been confirmed.

Just is this piece was finished I had a day at the huge New Years Eve Toy Fair at the Doncaster Race Course and guess what, another 1935 Ford turned up. Normally I don't bother with competition cars but the coincidence got the better of me, and it was duly purchased. This is a model of the '35 Three Window Coupe that Bill France Sr. (the subsequent founder of NASCAR in 1947) drove in the 1936 Daytona Race. In 1:43 scale it features opening hood, doors and rumble seat with loads of detail, inside and underneath. Apparently there is a non-race version for which I would exchange this in the future, in the meantime I am happy to add it to the collection.

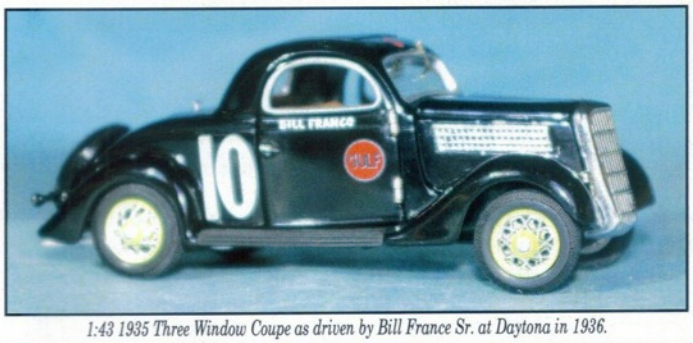
Dave Turner

MiniMarque 43 number 45b, the Murray bodied Sedan Convertible, with real wire wheels. Team Calliber

Tins Toys Sedan Delivery "Ford Parts Delivery" not bad for a cheap toy apart from those wheels!

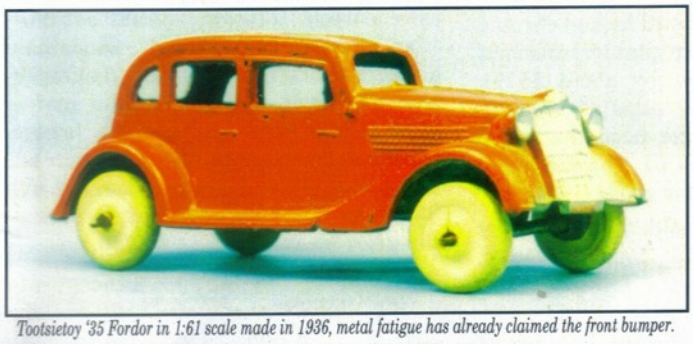
1935 Ford Station Wagon in 1:43 by Rex Toys in 1:43 scale.

1935 Sedan Delivery from Rex Toys "Ford Spare Parts Delivery"

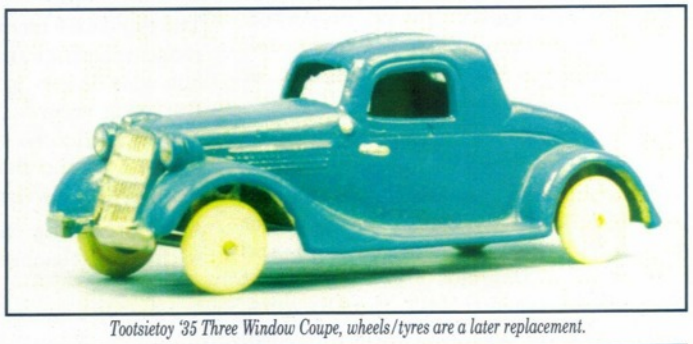


1:43 1935 Three Window Coupe as driven by Bill France Sr. at Daytona in 1936.

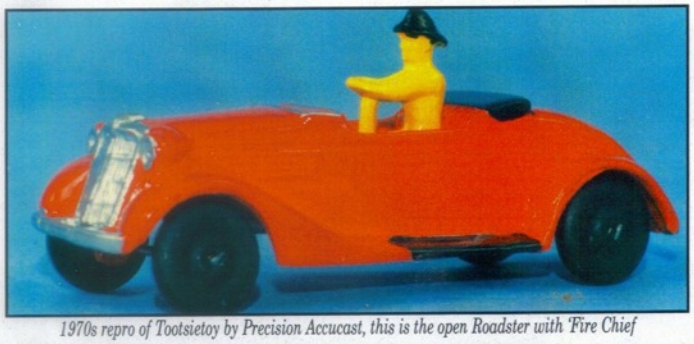
This is the '35 Tudor that Edwin Phelps had just acquired, made in the 1930s by Lilo Toys to 1:36 scale.



Tootsietoy '35 Fordor in 1:61 scale made in 1936, metal fatigue has already claimed the front bumper.



Tootsietoy '35 Three Window Coupe, wheels/tyres are a later replacement.



1970s repro of Tootsietoy by Precision Accucast, this is the open Roadster with 'Fire Chief

The French Top Models 1935 Matford Fordor Touring Sedan, in 1:87 scale made from a rough resin kit.

Rex Toys '35 Fordor Touring Sedan, only needs wire wheels to look perfect.

Rex Toys again, this time the Five Window Coupe.

1950, 1951, 1952, 1953 CADILLAC

Mike Kuschel's 1953 Cadillac Coupe De Ville

Cadillac began the 1950s with carefully considered updates to its basic 1948 design, which was good enough to remain popular through 1953. As General Motors designer Mitchell once noted: "A traditional look is always preserved. If a grille is changed, the tail end is left alone; if a fin is changed, the grille is not monkeyed with."

And so it was: a new one-piece windshield and revamped grille for 1950, small auxiliary grilles beneath the headlamps for 1951, a winged badge in that spot for 1952, one-piece rear windows and suggestive "Dagmar" pointed front bumper guards for 1953. Equally wise, Cadillac gave up on fastbacks much earlier than sister GM makes, switching all of its 1950 coupes to notchback profiles with hardtop rooflines a la Coupe de Ville.

Models also didn't change much through 1953. Still accounting for most sales, the Series 62 offered a four-door sedan, convertible, Coupe de Ville, and a less-deluxe hardtop coupe, all on the usual 126-inch wheelbase.

The Cadillac Sixty Special remained a solitary super-luxury four-door on its own wheelbase, which was now 130 inches versus 133 for 1942-1948. The Series 75 still listed its customary array of limousines and long-wheelbase sedans on a 146.8-inch chassis. Cadillac also continued supplying chassis for various coachbuilders, averaging about 2,000 a year through 1959.

The "entry-level" Series 61 was still around in 1950, but its sedan and De Ville-inspired coupe were demoted to a 122-inch wheelbase (from 126 in the 1940s). Manual transmission remained standard here (and on 75s), but other Caddys now came with Hydra-Matic at no extra cost.

The Series 61 models still lacked chrome rocker moldings and had plainer interiors, but also lower prices (by about $575). But with record 1950 sales of 100,000-plus, Cadillac no longer needed a "price leader," so the Series 61 was cancelled after 1951, this time for good.

After observing its Golden Anniversary with a little-changed fleet for 1952, Cadillac issued a flashy limited-edition convertible, the 1953 Series 62 Eldorado. Like that year's new Buick Skylark and Olds 98 Fiesta, it boasted features previewed on recent GM Motorama show cars: custom interior, special cut-down "Panoramic" wraparound windshield, a sporty "notched" beltline (below the side windows), and a metal lid instead of a canvas boot to cover the lowered top. A striking piece, the Eldorado was a preview of Cadillacs to come, but only 532 of the '53s were built, largely because the price was a towering $7,750.

Top seller by far: the 1951 Series 62 sedan.

1951 Series 62 Coupe de Ville.

Though "every inch a Cadillac," 1951 Series 61 failed to attract buyers.

Introduced a year earlier, the luscious 1950 Coupe de Ville hardtop served as style leader of Series 62.

1950 Cadillacs earned a reputation as top-notch road cars. Sedans came in Series 62 as well as the lower-priced 61 and larger 60 Special.

Convertibles came only in 1952 Series 62.

Despite a modest claim that it was merely "a special sports convertible built in the finest Cadillac tradition," the new 1953 Eldorado served as the foundation for a heritage all its own. Inspired by a '52 show car, only 532 were built this season—but the splendid name would last for decades.

Military Vehicles at Beltring

1942-46 Ford Pick Up

1938 Dodge D8

1940 Chrysler Royal

Photos courtesy of Mike "Hookey" Joh

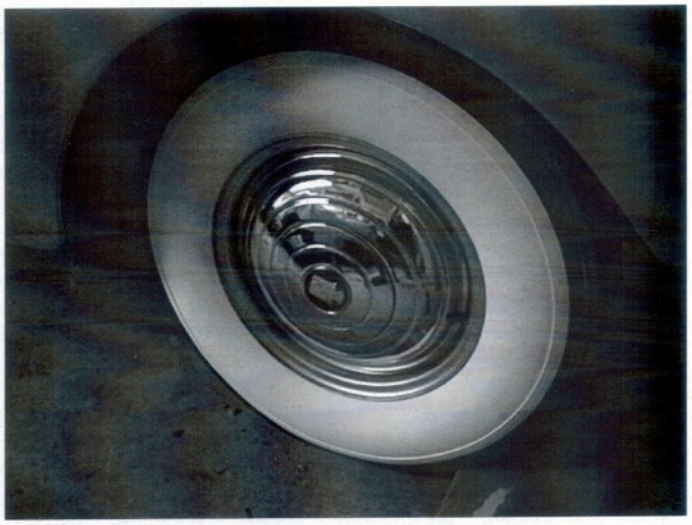
Chevrolet Pick Up

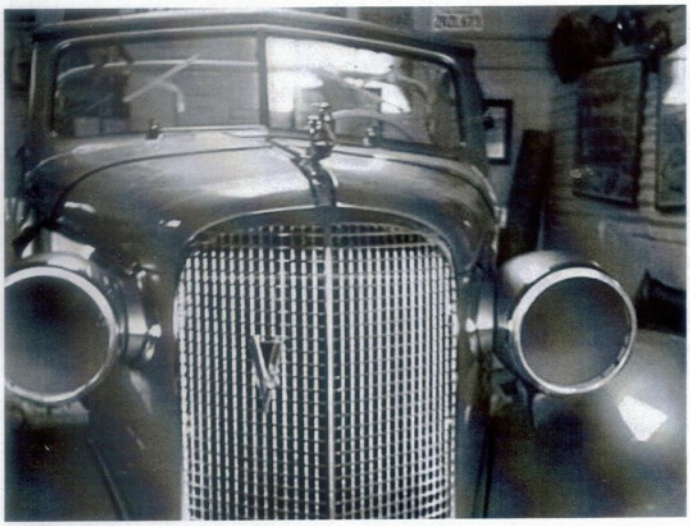
1948-49 Ford F-1 Pick Up

1939 Buick Roadmaster

1938 Chevrolet Master

Steve Passmore's 1937 Cadillac Series 60 Convertible





BRUNO COSTERS 1937 CHRYSLER

At last year's Rally of the Giants I got talking to Bruno Costers who had brought his unusual 1937 Chrysler cabriolet over from Vosselaar in Belgium. This car had attracted my attention because the coachwork had clear European overtones, with its exposed landau irons and folded soft-top which stowed prominently, in classic Germanic style, behind the rear seat. Bruno explained that the coachwork was produced by Tüscher & Co. of Zurich in Switzerland – a company that at the time I had never heard of, but now know so much more about. I provided a brief description of Bruno's car in my Multicylinder report on the Chrysler Corporation vehicles on display at the ROG, but promised myself that I would follow-up with more details in a later magazine. However, time marches on, and since July, an article in Classic American magazine in December featured Bruno's car under the Readers Ride column, while the same month's Hemmings Classic Car magazine ran a feature on a 1938 De Soto S-5 with coachwork by Tüscher. On this basis, was there any point in me pursuing my original plan for an article I wondered? Well, I had my notes, the research I had conducted when I returned home from the RoG, and the extra photo images, so why not?

In my RoG report I mentioned that most American vehicle enthusiasts would immediately recognise Bruno's car as a 1937 Plymouth Six Deluxe, Model P4, convertible coupe, with some tasteful European coachwork, but in Continental Europe, just as in the UK, these cars were marketed as Chryslers. In the UK they were sold as the Chrysler Kew. Bruno explained that Tüscher & Co. specialised in building striking cabriolet bodies for American cars in the late 1930s, and are still in operation today, in Dällikon near Zurich, and now known as Carosserie Tüscher AG. However, now days they are now better known for their bus bodies. I also explained that this car's survival was nothing short of a small miracle given the ravages of the Second World War.

Research appears to confirm that Bruno's car was imported into Switzerland as a rolling chassis sometime in January 1937, as a chassis with engine, transmission, front clip and rear fenders, but minus the bodywork from the cowl back. The coachwork fitted by Tüscher & Co. is very typical of the style that they fitted to any number of American cars during the late 1930s, and interestingly, many of them were sourced from Chrysler, although they would produce cabriolet bodies for other marques, including prestigious European makes from time to time. A build record, which was issued when the car shipped, describes the date of manufacture as 1st December 1936, as well as such details as confirming the car was for export, and lists key numbers, the rear end ratio, details of the wheels and spare tyre, etc. It also came complete with metric instruments. Once the coachwork was complete, it was sold through Automobile E. Epper of Luzern. Whether it had been pre-ordered, no one now knows. Ernest Epper's garage business still trades, and having passed to his son Kurt Epper, and is now run by a third generation in the guise of Steffan Epper. An oval plate confirming the dealer name is still present on Bruno's Chrysler.

According to Bruno, and confirmed in the Hemmings article, the national coachbuilders association petitioned their government to give them exemption from the very high rates of import duty applied to non-Swiss manufactured vehicles. The government cooperated, providing a 40% reduction in import duty as long as a substantial amount of the vehicle was built locally. This was a lifeline to the beleaguered coachwork trade which was already reeling from the impact of the Great Depression, as import duty on a new vehicle often outweighed the price of the car its self. With this change in regulation, it was possible for the middle classes to order a vehicle with custom coachwork, manufactured and fitted locally to suit their tastes, for the price they might have originally paid for a normal sedan.

Fritz Tüscher, having apprenticed in Paris, returned to his native Zurich to found his business in 1909, specialising horse-drawn carriages. His elder brother, Adolf, who already had a similar business, joined forces with Fritz in 1917 to form Gebrüder Tüscher & Co. In 1919, Adolf's son, Adolf Jr. also joined the business, and in this same year, Tüscher received an order from the Swiss postal service for a number of self propelled postal busses, built on Martini truck chassis. This event was a vital catalyst in the move away from horse-drawn vehicles and by the mid-thirties Tüscher had turned its attentions to producing custom coachwork for mid-priced American cars. These offered greater potential sales opportunities than might be expected by specialising exclusively with European luxury marques. After all, American cars still offered plenty of space and the guarantee of a six or even an eight cylinder engine. Thus Tüscher became renowned for building open cars for all season use, with either two or four-doors. Styled by Hans Dinkel, the heavily insulated soft tops ensured that these cars could be used year round in Switzerland. As well as the subject of this article, and the aforementioned 1938 De Soto, Bruno Costers knows of only two other American based Tüscher cabriolet survivors.

Bruno Costers spent many years as a very successful new car salesman, and during that time usually had some older vehicles in his personal collection. Tiring of the daily toil, he now chauffeurs Johnson & Johnson staff around in a modern BMW while tinkering with his collection of older vehicles which includes a 1924 Humber and a 1979 Rolls Royce Silver Shadow. One of his earlier cars had been a RHD 1937 Chrysler Kew, and through this ownership, Bruno came to know of the Cabriolet that is the subject of this article. Bruno remained in touch with the owner over the years, and eventually purchased the car in 2006, making him only the third owner. The car had originally been discovered by a French car museum in a barn in the south of France. At that time, it had French number plates, and the registration included the region 74 which is the Chamonix area near the border with Switzerland, so Bruno speculates that the car was owned and based in southern France, even if built and sold in Switzerland. Bruno also wonders whether the car might have been commandeered by the Germans, as a military style serial number 203 853 can still clearly be seen, stencilled on the under side of the car's hood or bonnet.

The car was sold on by the car museum to someone in the Paris area, and then purchased by a Dutch car dealer. From here it passed to the enthusiast who Bruno eventually bought the car from, and it was this Dutch enthusiast who restored the car to broadly the condition it is now. Originally, black, the car was painted a pale silvery green hue during restoration. Bruno has been told that this was a colour available from Chrysler in 1937, but your author questions this, as he was told once that the first American manufacturer to offer metallic paint was Graham-Paige with their 1938/9 "sharknose" model, but I'm happy to stand corrected if any member knows differently. Anyway, Bruno is considering returning the car to its original colour when the time comes for a repaint.

The current silvery green colour contrasts nicely with the bright red, leather upholstery, and the Chrysler is still powered by its original 201 cu. in. straight-six, rated at 82 hp/145 lb. ft. of torque, which is mated to a three-speed manual transmission with original Borg Warner overdrive. To your authors eyes, the two-door cabriolet coachwork has more balanced look than the 4-door style, illustrated by the surviving 1938 De Soto which now resides in the USA, despite being built on a relatively short 112" wheelbase. Both, though, exhibit the graceful lines

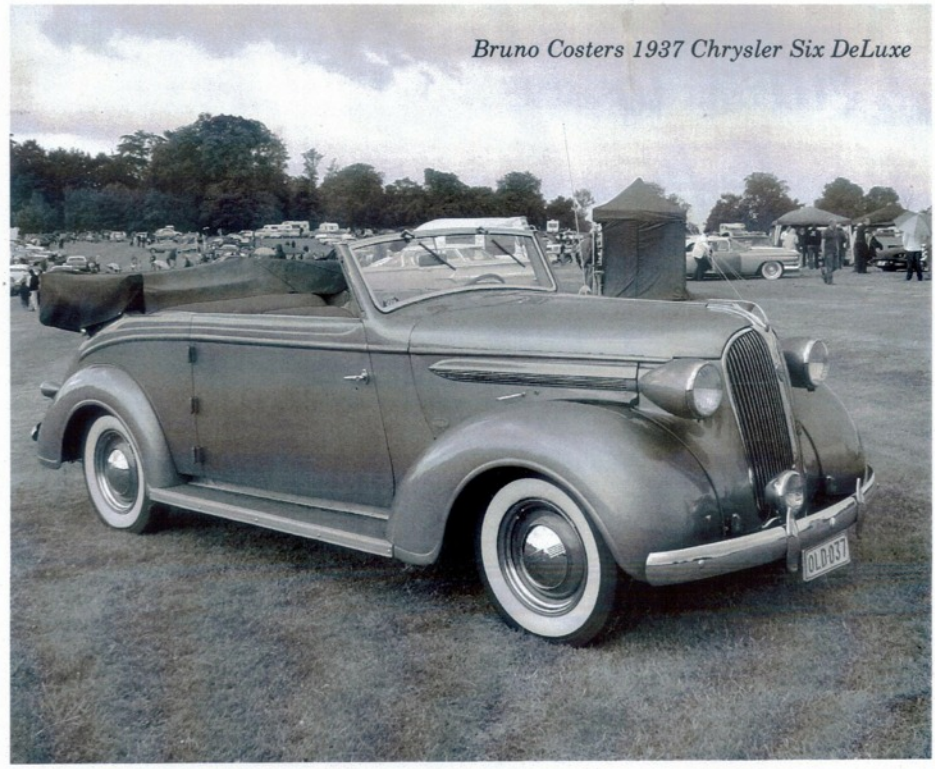
that were a feature of coachwork styled by Hans Dinkel for Tüscher. Both cars have rear mounted spare wheel and tyre, with a similar metal cover. This '37 Chrysler differs from the standard Plymouth P4 in other ways though, most notably the "suicide style" doors that hinge from the 'B' pillar, compared with the production car doors which hinged from the 'A' pillar. Interestingly though, the Cabriolet still seems to employ the same, exposed hinges as the production model, just repositioned.

Among the extras, which include a heater, the cabriolet is fitted with an American Bosch radio. The in-dash, Bosch Model 536 has been fully restored and is in working order. A very rare extra, American Bosch listed its first motor car receiver as a Model 80 in 1929. Later, the company would change its name to United American Bosch. The radio controls fit compactly in the centre of the dashboard, while the main radio case and integrated speaker fit under the dash, on the diver's side, down close to the footwell.

With war in Europe looming, neutral Switzerland would loose its access to the Atlantic Ocean via France, and would be forced to cease production of custom coachwork on American chassis. After the war, full import duty was once again imposed by the Swiss government, and Tüscher would once again concentrate on commercial vehicle bodies. The Standard Catalog of American Cars 1805 – 1942, lists 1,729 P4 chassis sales in 1937, and while this number pales into insignificance compared with the overall production figure of 478,350 units, it does nevertheless, suggest that custom coachwork fitted to these inexpensive base cars was not uncommon. However, survivors with coachwork by Tüscher are rare indeed, and its highly likely that this was the first to grace our shores.

Geoff Mitchell

Bruno Costers 1937 Chrysler Six DeLuxe



Bruno Costers 1937 Chrysler Six DeLuxe

1938 DeSoto S.5

Letters to the Editor

Thank you for the excellent Feb. mag I liked the article about Studebaker trucks especially. Actually there was 1949 film, which featured a Stude 6x4 starring Richard Conte hauling apples to San Francisco produce market with another trucker driving an ancient Mack? The film was called "Thieves Highway" The Studebaker was ex. US army. Still had stars on the doors. ...I think that there are a very few still in enthusiasts hands In UK also. In the January issue there was a lovely photo of a Ford V8 estate It reminds me that when I was working for Dad in the fruit trade in Bath around 1950 a Mr Harris of Harris Motors of Fishponds, Bristol had several LHD V8 Pilot estates for sale They were originally for the Persian Oil Co but it was nationalised and they were never sent. I think that they had all metal bodies. Dad never bought one he was a Jag man. I thought they were super!

Phil Hughes.

Hi Phil,

I'm sure Mike Sandy who wrote the Stude truck article will really appreciate your gratitude.

Regards

John.

Dear John,

Thank-you for publishing my letter. I should have been clearer about what I own.

I have a 1963 Dodge Custom 880 2dr hardtop and a 1972 Torino wagon (with 30k original miles). I drive them as regular cars, one in the summer one in the winter.

The Torino is NOT a Gran Torino and has a different front end. It is the most basic wagon with only an auto and a V8 as options (though I'll have to check if the V8 was an option)

Some pictures better than others, nothing recent from the Dodge.

I can provide you with more pictures and info (I have to stop myself going on) if you wish to publish any. Something with original caps on the Dodge maybe? A wider view of the wagon. I'd be very happy to write a small piece about the cars and do a better edit. (I am a photographer and sometimes writer) Let me know your thoughts.

Ben Dunbar-Brunton

Hi Ben,

I would be very grateful of further details on both your American iron, please send photos & write up and I will publish your article in the following month's edition of multicylinder. Thanks in advance for your forthcoming contribution and support, much appreciated.

Cheers

John

Yes, John, it's me again,

As far as I'm concerned, you really surpassed yourself with the latest 'Multicylinder'. I'm sure not many readers will even be aware of **Durant** cars or even of 'Billy' Durant himself, but to me it is a subject close to my heart since I bought my 1916 Dort tourer and researched its background. The beginning of General Motors is well known. Durant having started it by making a success of Buick cars. He was only able to do this by the steadying influence of his partner Josiah Dort keeping a tight control of their very successful **'Durant-Dort'** horse-buggy business, allowing Durant the financial freedom to start his car empire. The story of how Durant's wild acquisitions spree nearly broke GM causing his ousting, then the way he re-took the company on the strength of his success in starting the Chevrolet marque and his manipulation of both companies shares is a fascinating read. After a while he was ousted a second time for the same reason of over acquisition, finally starting his own car company, as featured by you. It was great for me to see this third, lesser-known phase of his car-producing adventures featured by you in the mag,-- on the front cover too. It was good to see all the different Durant models and the year by year breakdown of these and other models he made, stated so succinctly--well done, you made my week.

The mid-page dashboard comparison was an original and interesting idea, and that GMC *L'Universelle* van prototype you uncovered was another interesting rarity.

Luke Arnotts 1939 Cadillac V16. Wow! Looks great from the front; what a lucky bloke he is to own such a rarity. I wouldn't want to pay for its petrol though.

Finally I see new member Ben Dunbar-Brunton was moved to comment on my letter about the club's car cut-off date. Yes, as it happens I suppose I am old at 62 though young at heart, (still going to Glastonbury each year), but strangely, unlike most people who only seem interested in the cars of their youth, I have <u>always</u> preferred to go back to earlier periods in my car interests. The whole evolvement of the motorcar and the impact it made before WW2 makes proper vintage cars much more interesting to me. I suppose I like social history as much as I like old machinery. Give me eccentricity over mass produced muscle any day;-- and Ben - you say you have *'a 1972* ***vintage*** *car'*-- sorry, no such thing mate! (only teasing).

Usual regards

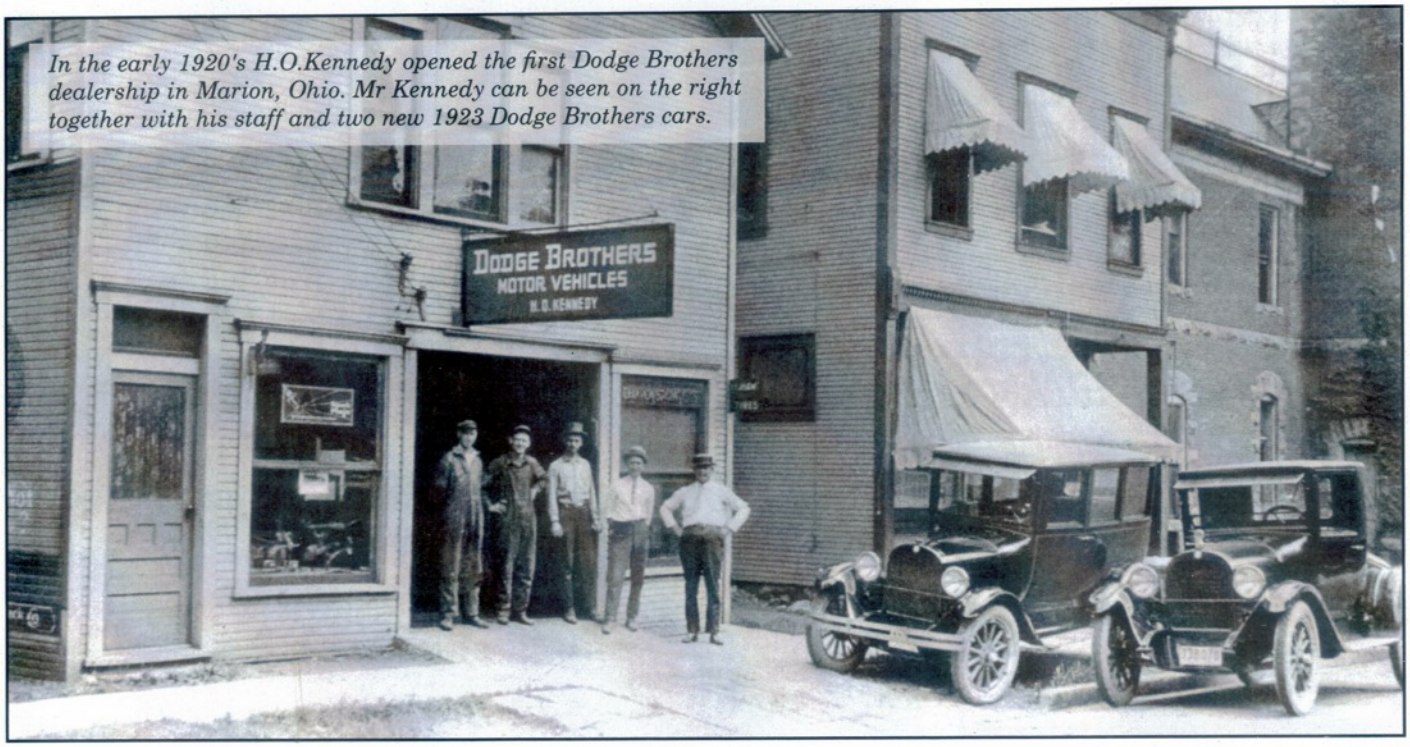
Barrie Cannon

Hi Barrie,

Having decided to produce the last mag in B&W throughout I envisaged a wad of complaints and in actual fact the opposite happened, it just goes to show that our members really do prefer to read the detail rather than look at coloured photos. Although the pictures I selected were original B&W photos anyway.

Cheers

John.



In the early 1920's H.O.Kennedy opened the first Dodge Brothers dealership in Marion, Ohio. Mr Kennedy can be seen on the right together with his staff and two new 1923 Dodge Brothers cars.

IMPORTANT 2010 RENEWALS

Please note that the new mailing list will be sent to the printers early March, so to all our members who still need to renew their membership, please complete the enclosed form. Kindly note that if you haven't renewed your membership by the end of February it's likely that you may not receive the magazine after February 2010. On behalf of the committee thank you in advance for your continued support and co-operation.

Cars & Parts Wanted

WANTED CARBURETOR
for Buick 1938
Model 40 Special

Please phone

Peter on 0208 925 7168
(Evenings)

WANTED
A pair of 'landaulette-bars'
(like old pram-hood side-irons)
- see photo.

to give my Hupp model 'A' the 'false-cabriolet' look.
They can be folding or dummies, Ideally 23 inches long, or close.
phone **Barrie Cannon** (Essex)
on **01708-344871**

Cars for Sale

1939 Packard Sedan

A lot of work has been done on this car over that time and it goes beautifully. Being 1939 it was the first year that Packard introduced the overdrive, which makes this model quite suitable for motorway driving. But after many years since the last repaint it is only fair to say that any fastidious new owner might well think it could do with some fresh paint. But it is mechanically sound and solid, and should give no trouble. Coming from a desert state [proper LHD], there is no rust. Any micro blisters here and there are on parts where it was not possible to take areas back to the bare metal, all those years ago.

Apart from that it's a wonderful example in original colour. Possessing a 12 volt conversion, means there is no problem restarting when hot. [The improved speed of the starter motor sucks back vapour that would otherwise vent away under heat on the slower 6 volt unit, with today's modern fuels]. Original electrics kept. Spares avsailable for this model [with or without the car] are back axle, half shafts, diff and brake items. 4 slave cylinders, extra rubber brake seals, and a proper hub puller to mate onto rear axle studs, a head gasket and bits from remaining de-coke set. Packard will be at ROG, might save you a journey.

Telephone Michael McKibbin on 07812 835204

BUICK PARTS - 1950

Radiator £35, 3 piece rear window from sedan body £45, L&R bottom wishbones £10, dash chrome radio centre panel £45, 4.1 complete diff with torque tube £65, half shafts,

1953 parts

16 hyd lifters £20, rubber spark wire tidies £5, part gasket set V8 £15, Fly wheel drive plate for Dynaflow £25, torque ball boot £8.

Misc stuff

Chrome & aluminium sun visor for split screen £125, 49 license plate (NH) £8, 2 US gal Gas can vintage style £20, 1947 Buick clutch friction plate £20, 1956-64 Chrysler engine mount at rear of trans for V8 £18, 2 nice odd chrome tail exhaust tail pipes £15 each, vintage metal/chrome 50's flash light £15, few Appleton spotlight parts £20, Buick NOS engine 160 deg thermostat £8 part number 1391014 (20's-30's??), brand "Snapin" valve silencers for tappets £18, Buick parking only sign £8, 1 green traffic light £20,

Contact Paul 07929 119058

Timing Cover Set

(Felpro, NoS...unopened)
covers Dodge/Ply.6 (218) '46-47
DeSoto 6 (218/241/251/265) '46-47
Chyr.6 (218/241/251) '37-47
Dodge Truck 6 (228)
asking £14.

Cyl.head Gasket set

(Payen, NoS)
for 1933 Chyrsler 6/Dodge 6
only just opened to photograph/check contents - asking £30
email: **taitcc@btinternet.com**
or Tel. **01206263974** (Essex)
Colin Tait

1959 Oldsmobile Rocket 98 Scenic Coupe

394 cu in V8 engine,

Good Chrome, Good Paint, Good Interior, came to England in 1991 only 2 owners since!! The car has been garaged as well.

This is a very rare car, and is believed to be the only one in England, a nice example of a car of its age (50 Years old) loads of history, MOT March 2010, new water pump fitted.

Drive it away for £25000

If you are interested ring

Clive on **01983 533700** or **Mobile 0784 9919286**

1953 Kaiser Manhattan

Off the road for over 25 years. Rare car with V5C. 62,000 Miles. I bought this car in 1983 and started a frame-off restoration on it. Due to other projects and business, I did not get it past the painted stage in the late 1980s and it has been stored ever since. I sold it to a friend a few years ago, but now he does not have time to finish it, so it is looking for a new home. Most parts are with it - please call for further details. Car is in Dorset, but delivery can be arranged with another friend of mine. Offers in the region of £3,000 considered.

David Angel 01935 83456

Plymouth
today's best buy... tomorrow's best trade

...AND THIS MORNING IT BROUGHT HOME THE GROCERIES

Routine household chores or a family celebration—it makes no difference to the versatile Plymouth station wagon. This combination of brawn and beauty is the biggest wagon in Plymouth's field, with 95 cubic feet of cargo room.

It has the longest floor space in its field with tailgate up. The longest wheelbase (122 inches). The most front headroom and legroom. Nine-passenger models offer a roomy rear-facing third seat; all models feature a roll-down rear window. No wonder Plymouth wagons are more popular than ever!

Drive this glamorous beauty and see for yourself. Discover Plymouth's luxurious Torsion-Aire Ride (no extra cost). And its exciting options, like new Swivel Seats and the sensational New Golden Commando 395, biggest V-8 engine in the low-price field. See your dealer. Take Plymouth's convincing "Two-Mile Try-Out"—today!

PRE 50 AAC

Est. 1965

PRE'50 AMERICAN AUTO CLUB

(INCORPORATING THE Ford REGISTER)

1920's '20 Stutz

1930's '33 DeSoto

1940's '41 Cadillac

1950's '54 Chevrolet

1960's '60 Dodge

1970's '75 Ford

1980's '83 Chrysler