



NCKCC News

Handcrafted Automobiles

December 2008

Volume 26 Number 12

MERRY CHRISTMAS



HAPPY NEW YEAR

ACTIVITY NOTICES

January 17, 2009 - Planning meeting for next years activities and the 2009 show. Meeting will be held at Wallters residence, 1377 Cuernavaca Circulo, Mt. View at 1:30 p.m. (See page 11)

ANNUAL BRUNCH - PLEASANTON HOTEL

By Vern Hance

The annual champagne brunch was held Sunday December 7, 2008 at the Pleasanton Hotel, starting at 10 a.m. in the Victorian Room.



We had 30 adult attendees and were treated to a sunny and pleasant day. The choice of food was so wide that no one could sample every dish. Omelets made to order were probably the most popular but there were also pancakes, waffles, shrimp, crab legs, ham, prime rib, turkey, salads of every type and deserts galore. And of course the champagne glasses were kept full until you shifted to coffee to wash down those deserts.

We didn't have a business meeting because there was another party in the same room, so after being happily

stuffed, we circulated among our three tables to visit with members and friends.

We did accept the kind invitation of Tom & Irene Wallters to meet on January 17th at their home in Mountain View. Their invitation came immediately after James Wagner announced we were unable to negotiate a meeting room at the Wheelchair Foundation office.

Those in attendance included Steve & Mary Ellen Bales, Al & Pat Bello, Robert & Barbara Bohaboy, Steve & Pam Cameron, Harry Craycroft & Guest, Dave & Joyce DeCato, Vern & Carol Hance with guest Peggy Morrissey, Paul & Ruth King, John Knebel, Chuck & Sue Maddux, Marty & Bette Rosenthal, James & Wendy Wagner, Robert Wagner, Gil Somerhalder, Tom & Irene Wallters and Shane & Carolina Williams with their two children.

With good food and great company, it was a festive and enjoyable way to share stories and renew acquaintances.





DUES ARE DUE FOR 2009

Well, it is dues time again and the prices have not gone up. \$24 per year will keep you a member in good standing and keep you on the newsletter mailing list. Those who have paid their dues each month will be congratulated here, so watch for your last name to appear in this space. Those that don't respond within a reasonable time period will receive a "Goodbye" postcard saying they have been dropped from membership. Don't let it happen to you !

We already have some nice people that have paid their dues in advance, so here are their names.

Bohaboy	Bohr	Clark
Foote	Hunsberger	Knebel
Maddux	Navratil	Penalosa

As the months go by, this system requires you to check a few older newsletters if you are not sure whether you are paid up, but it seems more polite than publishing names of those who are delinquent on their dues. Anyway you can always e-mail Vern at <nckcc@astound.net> to see if you are paid up - or call (925) 938-1442.

BLACKHAWK MUSEUM EVENT - HYBRID CARS

By Vern Hance

I followed the advice contained in our November newsletter and attended a talk on Hybrid Vehicles by Dr. Allen E. Fuhs that was presented on November 22nd at the Blackhawk Museum.

Here is my take on some of the points that were made during the presentation.

In the year 1900 the population of automobiles in New York City, Boston and Chicago totaled 2,300. Among these 17% were gasoline powered, 34% were electric battery powered and 49% were powered by steam engines. The factors that limited their range was the size of the gas tank, the energy capacity of the battery and availability of feed-water for the boiler, respectively. In that era the 1917 Woods Dual-Power car was in fact a hybrid that claimed 48 mpg, could operate on battery power up to 20 mph and, by running the engine also, could attain 35 mph.

Fast-forward to the 90s. The government "Supercar Program" of the mid-90s led to a monocoque 4-passenger design that weighed 1,400 pounds, used a carbon fiber body, had a Cd of 0.19 and got 80 mpg. It never went into production due to ever changing political winds

and reluctance by auto manufacturers to embark on such a massive redesign change with no promise of market acceptance.

Dr. Fuhs pointed out that the more expensive hybrids require a lot more components than a conventional auto which doesn't require large capacity batteries, large motor/generators and complex computer control systems to manage all the interactions. The main reason that hybrids get better mileage is that they can be fitted with smaller gasoline engines that can be supplemented with additional power from the electric motor for hill-climbing or vigorous acceleration, thus matching the performance of conventional gasoline powered cars. Since stop & go traffic represents a large part of most vehicle use, the hybrid excels by using no energy sitting at a stop light and recaptures some of the energy of stopping through the use of regenerative braking. In such city traffic the hybrid easily beats gasoline-only cars in mpg. It is well known that on freeway cruising the benefit of hybrids is small compared to similar sized gasoline powered models.

Dr. Fuhs also pointed out that miles-per-gallon with so-called plug-in hybrids can be anything you want, since the driving pattern is the key determinant. Theoretically you could achieve "infinite" mpg if you only used

a plug-in for trips that could be accomplished on battery power only. However as the battery range is increased it increases the overall weight of the car which tends to reduce mileage.

On the downside, some safety issues were mentioned. First there are weight differences between high-mileage hybrids and other larger vehicles on the road. When collisions occur the deceleration of the lighter vehicle will be higher than that of the heavier vehicle. However, advances in restraint system technology can largely overcome this issue, as it is doing for smaller conventional vehicles today. Another issue is battery safety itself. Battery powered cars require high voltage and the ability to deliver high current. He pointed out that this is a deadly combination and emphasized that technicians (and owners too) are allowed only one mistake. [e.g. one electrocution !]

Another downside is the limited life of a battery-powered vehicle. He estimated that a battery pack replacement for a Prius would cost about \$3,500-\$5,000, even though they are under warranty for 10 years or 150,000 miles in California. A pure electric vehicle battery pack may cost \$5,000-\$25,000 and a plug-in hybrid may cost \$10,00-\$40,000 to replace the batteries.

Although Dr. Fuhs did not comment on battery disposal problems, I can't help but wonder how we dispose of thousands or millions of such battery packs. Especially, since I can't even throw my digital camera battery into the garbage can because of its toxic hazards.

For those interested in further inquiry, I found a lot of information through Google by typing 1990s Government Supercar Program. With our newly elected "green" President and Carol Browner (Former EPA Head under Clinton) as new Energy Czar you can expect some of the 90s Supercar and Hypercar stuff will be seen again.


Dear Car Enthusiasts:

Please include the following in your publication, bulletins or monthly newsletters.

The Modesto Area A's 43rd Annual SWAP MEET will be at the Stanislaus County Fairgrounds, Turlock, California, on January 24th and 25th, 2009. MODEL A FORD, Antique, Classic Cars, and Automotive Vintage Items only. All swap spaces pre-registered. CARS FOR SALE: \$40.00 for cars 20 years or older, \$60.00 for cars 19 years or newer, (no parts or trailers). Must be driven to space. Pre 1969 models preferred. Admission \$3.00 for buyers. Security on duty Friday and Saturday night. NO FIREARMS OR ALCOHOL. NO DOGS (except Seeing Eye Dogs). For more information please see our web site at www.TurlockSwapMeet.com

Thank you for your help and cooperation in making our past SWAP MEETS such a success.

Sincerely,



Gwen Barber
Swap Meet Publicity
3501 Darlington Court
Modesto, California 95356
(209) 526-1919

This is adapted from a longer article that appeared recently in the Wall Street Journal. Thought it may be of interest to you car folks.

A ROUGH RIDE IN COLLECTIBLE CARS

By Jonathan Welsh

For some, the first sign of trouble was a Daytona Spyder. When one of these rare early-1970s Ferrari sports cars turns up at an auction, high-end collectors typically bid aggressively, even fiercely, to acquire it. But at a recent sale in California, one Spyder failed to fetch the minimum bid.

In recent years, the vintage car market has soared, led by the priciest European models. But now, as the economy worsens to the point where even the wealthiest collectors feel pinched, demand for million-dollar sports cars is starting to skid.

Auction-company executives and others acknowledge the downturn but say that, until recently, it has mainly affected the low end of the market: cars costing up to about \$100,000, many of them American models. And while some insist that Ferraris, Mercedes-Benzes and Alfa Romeos are still holding their value, an increasing number of sellers are looking to unload their cars in a hurry.

Recently, two of Michael Sheehan's clients came to him looking to sell their Ferraris in a hurry — an unusual request. "They needed cash now," says Mr. Sheehan, a longtime Ferrari broker in Newport Beach, Calif. The cars, a \$110,000 1982 Berlinetta Boxer and a \$950,000 1972 Daytona Spyder, wound up selling for about 25% less than they would have sold for just a few months ago.

Mr. Sheehan says he and others saw it as a bad omen when the Daytona Spyder failed to sell during auctions and racing events on California's Monterey Peninsula in August.

Surprisingly, though, there were four Daytona Spyders — which are sleek, shapely two-seat convertibles — up for sale this year by three auction companies. That's considered too many for a car of which only about 120 were made. While one sold for about \$1.5 million, two others sold for between \$1 million and \$1.1 million. The fourth failed to sell because bids fell short of the reserve price.

There were other signs of trouble at the summer auto auctions. Mike Regalia was at an auction in Pebble Beach, Calif., in August when bidding began for a Porsche that once belonged to actor Steve McQueen. The auction house's estimate was \$125,000 to \$175,000, though Mr.

Regalia, a Sun Valley, Calif., collector who also restores vintage cars, says he thought it would fetch at least \$200,000. After all, collectors have paid outlandish sums recently for the late actor's property. But the bidding on the Porsche slowed just above \$100,000.

"I realized that the car wasn't going to get anywhere near the number I expected," he says. So he wound up bidding \$125,000 and taking the car home.

In the past year, many collectors who used home-equity loans or other credit to buy the vintage convertible or muscle car of their dreams have had to sell as the housing and credit markets have declined. The same factors have kept new collectors from entering the market. As a result, many staple collector cars like 1957 Chevrolets, 1940 Fords and 1960s Pontiac GTOs are selling for half what they commanded two or three years ago.

According to industry tracker CNW Research, long-established classic cars are also suffering. The price of a 1934 Packard Touring is down 17% on average, compared with two years ago. The 1957 Ford Thunderbird is down 15%, and the 1940 Ford DeLuxe Coupe is down 40%. (See chart on Page 11)

For some collectors, the downturn could be a good time to amass a long-coveted vehicle or two — not just because prices are often lower, but because cars that weren't for sale before are suddenly available. John McCue of Half Moon Bay, Calif., bought a 1958 Mercury Park Lane last summer for \$39,000. The 61-year-old retired software executive says it probably cost him about 5% less than the car's value a year earlier. But since he has pursued the car for years, he knows the former owner wouldn't have sold it then.

"There are those cars that you think will never be for sale, the ones the owners will take to their graves," he says. "Well, now a lot of those cars are changing hands."

While many in the collecting business say there will always be enough wealthy people who want vintage cars, others fear the market could be headed for a repeat of its last crash in 1989, when speculators who had no particular interest in vintage cars drove a steep, if fleeting, run-up in prices. Today, more of the buyers are car lovers, but speculation underpins their motives as well.

"The love of cars never outweighs the love of money" may be more true now in this economic environment.

INSURANCE TIP

At the December Brunch Steve Bales gave me some brochures and business cards from Ron Erskine Insurance Agency, P.O. Box 3505, Long Beach, CA 90803.
Phone (562) 531-2472,
email <ronerskine@sbcglobal.net>

Steve said he was able to get insurance for both liability and stated value damage for a better price than he had been paying. I neglected to ask what his previous insurer was but the Erskine agency features Grundy Insurance.

This is not a recommendation, but since some people have found it difficult to find a company that will insure a kit car, it is offered as a lead.

FOR EXTREME ADVENTURERS

I received this invitation to enter Tooligh's Road Rally from Boston to San Diego in May of 2009. It is billed as a remake of the CANNONBALL RUN. They say only the first 50 entry teams will be qualified, but you can drive any road legal vehicle.

The top prize is \$25,000 and pay outs are promised for the top 10.

The registration fee is \$2,500 with \$1,000 due before March 15, 2009 to hold your spot. No refunds will be made unless another team can be found to replace yours.

Before and after the rally there will be a hospitality room and banquet for the competing teams. Complete information will be provided upon full payment.

For questions, call Bob at (814) 853-7914 after 7 p.m. (eastern standard time) or email <jrk2144@aol.com>

Well, just imagine the publicity for the Kit Car Hobby if you could win such a rally. So start thinking about getting a friend, partner or sponsor to enter.

Here is what Wikipedia says about the Cannonball Run:

"The Cannonball Baker Sea-To-Shining-Sea Memorial Trophy Dash, widely known simply as the Cannonball Baker or Cannonball Run, was an unofficial, if not outlaw, automobile race run four times in the 1970s from New York City and Darien, CT, on the US Atlantic (east) coast, to Redondo Beach, a Los Angeles suburb on the Pacific. Conceived by car magazine writer and auto racer Brock Yates and fellow Car and Driver editor Steve Smith in 1971, the run was not a real competitive race with high risks, but intended both as a celebration of the United States Interstate Highway System and a protest against strict traffic laws coming into effect at the time."

DECEMBER ACTIVITIES AT THE TOWE

Ed “Big Daddy” Roth . . . The Original Rat Fink exhibit — August 1, 2008 – January 31, 2009.

Don't miss your chance to get up close and personal with memorabilia and personal items that explore the life and times of Ed “Big Daddy” Roth, the creative genius of the iconic Rat Fink and the man behind such inventive hot rods as the *Outlaw* (1959) and the *Beatnik Bandit* (1960).

On exhibit, various original art work by Ed Roth and artists from Roth Studios, a collection of over two-hundred and fifty Ed Roth artifacts, many of which are signed, as well as Roth's Finkmobile, a unique five-wheel creation with seating for one. Also included, never before seen handwritten personal letters from Roth, allowing the viewer a better understanding of who Roth really was and why he was able to influence the hot rod car culture both then and now.

“Mr. Ford's Legendary Model T: Car of the Century” — September 12, 2008 – December 20, 2008.

The Towe Auto Museum is proud to host an exhibit commemorating Tin Lizzie's 100th anniversary. The exhibit, sponsored by Ford Motor Company,

celebrates the historical, technological, and legendary importance of the Model T Ford and includes an array of models that illustrate the various uses of the Model T, including a rare 1908 Ford Model T Touring (first year production) and a 1927 Ford Model T Touring (last year production). The Model T was certainly more than “just a car” - it was the car that put the world on wheels! It was used in town, on the farm, and as a social statement. Memorabilia and artifacts showcase the Model T's national and international influence including its place in the world of music and song.

Car Club Cavalcade - December 6, 2008 – January 2, 2009 — The Sacramento Valley Region of the Porsche Club of America will be showcasing some of its members' vehicles. For more information about the club visit www.derporsche.net.

The Museum is open daily from 10am – 6pm, taking the last admission at 5pm. Museum admission: Free for NCKCC members with Club Admission card.

The mission of the Towe Auto Museum is to educate and entertain while preserving and promoting the automobile and its influence on our lives.

FOR SALE

COBRA Ford power, Jag rear-end. Silver w/ black interior. \$21,500 Call Bob Elster 707-938-3254 (1/02)

COBRA-NAF. Ford 289power, 4-speed, Jag posi rear-end. Blue w/ black interior. 5,000 mi. \$23,900 Call Trifam (925) 820-1847 SB-100 smog-exempt (9/07)

FERRARI - TESTAROSSA Spyder. Based on 1989 Corvette with 350 V-8 engine and automatic tranny. **Reduced to \$12,000.** Contact Anthony Ramsinh (408) 268-6554 or e-mail aramsinh@aol.com (11/05)

GATSBY - Ford 351W, auto overdrive tranny, SB100 CA smog exempt. Great driver, awesome condition, continuous show winner. \$29,000 Bill Navratil (408) 374-5277 E-mail bnavra@aol.com (4/08)

MARLENE - 1936 M-B 500K, 2.8 L V-6. auto, Weber carb, MSD, American Racing Baskets, new VDO gauges. Built in 1991 by owner (all receipts avail.) SB-100 smog exempt. Show winner. Asking \$12,000 Call Robert Bohaboy 530-417-2213 or email; robertjb2@sbcglobal.net (9/08)

MANX SR-2 - 1678 cc VW engine with 4-speed stick. New interior in 2002. Built in 1977 by present owner who has all receipts, etc. Includes a spare 1600 VW engine and extra parts. \$5,500. Call Don Wicks (707) 998-9383 or e-mail at dkwicks@mchsi.com (11/05)

MERCEDES SSK (Gazelle) Parts: 4 fenders (brown), windshield, radiator shell, bumpers, interior leather and top (tan), tail lights, supercharger pipes, doors (yellow), latches, hinges, etc. Tim 510-278-3085 (04/05)

PANTERA Factory built, only one known to exist. Red w/ beige interior, Chev engine \$35,000 Call Bob Elster 707-938-3254. (1/02)

PORSCHE 550 Spyder. A Beck turnkey built in 2003. 5,000 orig miles, never tracked, 2156 cc custom 182HP dynoed engine w/ 44mm Webers. Everthing polished or powder coated, ceramic mufflers, 4-wheel discs, custom roll bars, silver-blue, tan interior plus all Beck options. SPCNS smog exempt. Asking \$30,000. Dan Rowland 916-989-4330 or cell 916-367-8502 02/08

The kit car industry on the Internet:

kitcar.com
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- kit cars For Sale by Owner...
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Carl Scott
661-251-2223

"Cars for Sale" ads in the Kit Car Sun are for members only. Rate is \$10 for 12 issues.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2009

- January 17, 2009 (Saturday) at 1:30 p.m. A 2009 planning meeting at Wallters' residence, 1377 Cuernavaca Circulo, Mt. View, California

The January 17, 2009 Planning Meeting is not a luncheon meeting, but Irene said she might cook a pot of coffee and have some cookies as the meeting wears on. Tom says she got a redesigned kitchen recently and wants to show it off! So, have your lunch first and join us with your ideas on how we can improve our activities and our annual show.



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