



Piquing Interest:

What Gives A Car 'Personality?'

It can probably safely be said that all our antique automobiles have a potentially interesting background, if they were only able to tell us. Some, however, rolled through a documented life that set them apart, either by their owners or by some other happenstance of their existence. Two such cars recently came to our attention: a 1910 Chalmers-Detroit in Fairbanks and a 1941 Packard Clipper limousine in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

In the March, 2009 Vernon L. Nash Club newsletter, editor, Ron Allen tells of the Chalmers-Detroit, which has spent its life since 1912 in Fairbanks under varied ownership—but most notably that of the Creamer family. The Creamers gained fame in the region as owners of a local dairy that sold milk to the local residents and military until 1965. Currently, the Chalmers-Detroit is at the new Fountainhead Museum garage in Fairbanks, where it is being restored in preparation for public display. When we visit the museum during this summer's AAMA/VLNAAC joint meet, we hope to have a chance to view the vehicle and get a first-hand account of its background.

We learned of the Packard Clipper limousine from an article by Charles D. Brunt in the *Albuquerque Sunday Journal*, brought in by Dennis Allen. Brunt reports that the vehicle was “. . . almost certainly used by luminaries of the once-top-secret Manhattan Project, including physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer and General Leslie R.



Photo by Scott Hulse

Helen (left) and Grace Goodyear, granddaughters of Robbie and Marianne Robinson, pose with “Pink E,” Rick and Liz Mingo’s 1955 Nash Metropolitan that won second place in the popular vote at the AAMA Fur Rendezvous Car Show at Morrison’s Auto Mall. The little car’s style and color contributed to its popularity. Talk about personality!

Groves, the men who oversaw the development of the world’s first atomic bomb.”

The article reports that David Hoover, curator at the National Museum of Nuclear Science and History soon to open at its new location on South Eubank in Albuquerque, did extensive research on the limo. According to Hoover’s information, the car was “used to transport people from the Lamy, [New Mexico] railroad station—a transportation hub for the clandestine Manhattan Project—to Los Alamos.” It also would have carried “senior Manhattan Project scientists to Trinity Site in the central New Mexico desert for the July 16, 1945 detonation of the first nuclear bomb.” During World War II, these sites were top secret, but today they are tourist

attractions.

The ’41 Packard, which is longer than a Hummer and weighs almost as much, is currently being restored by Steve Haney’s restoration shop in northwest Albuquerque in preparation for its debut as the centerpiece of a Manhattan Project exhibit at the new National Museum of Nuclear Science and History in Albuquerque on April 4.

April Meeting

The April 8, 2009 business meeting will start at 7:30 p.m. at the home of Robbie and Marianne Robinson, 3318 Jerde Circle, Anchorage. For Directions, call Robbie, 333-0693 or Tom, 694-7510.

Edes and Heavens will provide Refreshments.

Running Board Reflections

The ash is falling! But not to worry, the sky isn't. Hopefully everyone was able to keep their cars under cover during the recent eruptions of Mt. Redoubt. Just remember to wash any ash off with running water; never wipe it with a cloth.

With April we're seeing the beginning of this year's club events schedule. A couple of unofficial, last minute events on April 17 and 18 have cropped up, see the schedule later in these pages. The MATI cleanup is also scheduled for this month. Keep a lookout for monthly updated schedules in the newsletter and if you're on the internet, check the club's website for our "Schedule of Events" page.



There have been requests on where to get club logo-wear (jackets, caps, and such). We're gathering the info on that and hope to have some answers at the April meeting. Any questions or suggestions are welcome.

Let's all hope for an early thaw so we can begin cruising around in style.

-Donn Reese



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Letter to the Editor

Dear Tom,

I received my February issue of the Tinkering times and was surprised to see the picture of my grandson, Jason Martin, on the front page. Sorry I had to miss the fun, but the Arizona sunshine has a hold on me for a bit longer.

I was wondering if you could see that Jason gets a copy of this issue. I would certainly appreciate it.

We have gone to a few car shows and some sales, but have not added to our limited fleet as yet. One problem being, I don't have any more inside storage as yet, but who knows? Anything could happen! I saw a couple of beauties that I keep thinking about.

We are enjoying the great weather and the handy medical facilities for yearly check ups, but we still miss home.

Plan to return about April 15 and are looking forward to the shows, pa-



Photo: Scott Hulise

Jason Marten, actor and grandson of Bill and Donna Waldron was featured on the front page of the February issue of Tinkering Times.

rades and the annual meeting with the Fairbanks club.

Keep up the great work with the Tinkering Times. The color pictures are great! See you soon.

Bill Waldron

We all know Bill and his wife, Donna. It was great hearing from them and we look forward to seeing them at our events this summer.

Tom

Tidbits

Roster Reminder

Jan Hall needs your vehicle information sheets for the club roster. If you do not have a photo, get the other information in and do the photo later, when the weather permits.

Jan has generously offered to do vehicle information sheets for shows using the specs we give, so this should be done by June, if possible.

Early Deadline

The May, 2009 Tinkering Times will be published early, because the Cresaps will be going out of state (Mt. Redoubt permitting.) Please submit notices, stories and schedule information before April 18. Thanks!

MATI Cleanup

Diane Allen has announced that the cleanup of the grounds at the Museum of Alaska Transportation and Industry will happen April 25th at 10:00 a.m. The museum will provide lunch for volunteers. Bring gloves and tools.

Rondy Show P.S.

In our March issue, when we reported on the Fur Rendezvous Car show, we neglected to reveal the outcome of the popular vote.

First place went to Art and Tam Isham's red 1963 Corvette, and Second place went to "Pink E," Rick and Liz Mingo's 1955 Nash Metropolitan (which was quite a favorite with the kids.)

On another note, show coordinator, Kurt Rein, passed along a compliment from Rick Morrison, owner of Morrison's Auto Group. Mr. Morrison particularly passed along kudos to our group for being easy to work with, not demanding too much and cleaning up after ourselves. We appreciate the nice comment and will keep up with those good attributes in hopes of being asked back to such an outstanding venue.

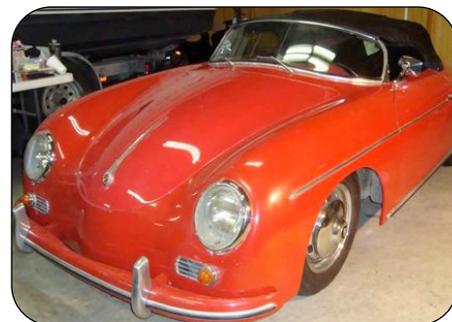
2009 Schedule of Events

- April 8–7:30 p.m. Regular Meeting; Robinson's Club Room 3318 Jerde Circle, Anchorage (Refreshments: Edes and Heavens)
- April 17–1950's cars at Den'ina Center (Steve Halloran, ACVB, 257-2323)
- April 18–Kid's Day at Den'ina Center (Donn Reese, 245-7203)
- April 25–10:00 a.m. MATI cleanup (Diane Allen, 345-6355)
- May 9–9:00 a.m. First Adopt-A-Road (Robbie Robinson 333-0693)
- May 10–Mother's Day Run (Scott Hulse, 349-8106)
- May 13–6:30 p.m. Rolling Meeting (Chair ?)
- May 16–Early Bird Shakedown Cruise (LeRoi Heaven, 376-5679 and Jim Ede, 376-4631)
- June 10–6:30 p.m. Rolling Meeting (Chair?)
- June 12–Colony Days Car Show, Palmer
- June 13–Colony Days Parade (LeRoi Heaven, 376-5679)
- June 12,13,14–AAMA/VLNAAC Joint Meet, Fairbanks (Howard Hansen 345-1268)
- June 17–1:00 to 2:30 p.m. Day Break (Dennis and Diane Allen, 345-6355)
- June 24–1:00 to 2:30 p.m. Serendipity (Dennis and Diane Allen, 345-6355)
- July 4–Parades (TBA)
- July 8–6:30 p.m. Rolling Meeting (Chair?)
- July 10–Bear Paw Car Show, Eagle River (Just show up.)
- July 11–Bear Paw Parade (Chair?)
- July ?–Adopt-A-Road (Chair?)
- August 2–Jay Ofsthun Car Show, Park Strip (MSSRA event)
- August 12–6:30 p.m. Rolling Meeting (Chair?)
- September ?–Adopt-A-Road (Chair?)
- September 5–Palmer State Fair Parade (Chair?)
- September 9–7:30 p.m. Regular Meeting (Refreshments?)
- October 14–7:30 p.m. Regular Meeting (Refreshments?)
- November 11–7:30 p.m. Regular Meeting (Refreshments?)
- December?–Christmas Party (TBA)

VLNAAC Raffle

Our sister club, the Vernon L. Nash Antique Auto Club of Fairbanks, is raffling this car. The drawing will be the evening of the Golden Days Parade, July 25, 2009. Three thousand tickets are offered at \$5 each or five for \$20.

Tickets are available at Larson's Locksmith and Security located at 1249 Noble Street in Fairbanks (phone 907-452-5625) or from VLNAAC members.



Win this classic 1956 Porsche Speedster Replica being raffled by the Vernon L. Nash Club of Fairbanks.

Birthdays

Joe Rath—6th

Marcy Cresap—7th

Leroi Heaven—10th

Kathy Centoni—12th

Diane Allen—14th

Wilma Vinton—15th

Nathan Dennis—22nd

Lee Truesdell—22nd

Richard Combs—25th

Marion Benam—27th

Anniversaries

Ken and Peg Stout—18th

Ken and Doris Holland—22nd

Den'ina Center Shows Offered

We have been invited to participate in two consecutive shows at the Den'ina Center in Anchorage.

Steve Halloran of the Anchorage Convention and Visitors Bureau is hosting a 50's celebration on April 17 and has asked if any of our members would be willing to show their 1950's vehicles.

The date is April 17, the location will be third floor of the Den'ina Center. If you have an appropriate car and want to participate, call Steve Halloran, 257-2323.

KidsDay is the occasion for the second show, and we have been asked to supply a few vintage cars to be on display during the event on April 18 at the Den'ina Center from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The Alliance For Youth presents

KidsDay to help youth, parents and the community understand the importance of ensuring that all youth receive the five fundamental resources they require to help them grow into caring adults. The Five Promises are: Caring Adults, Safe Places, Healthy Start, Effective Education and Opportunities to Help Others.

Over 20,000 youth and family members are projected to attend KidsDay this year. Over 100 youth serving agencies will provide free interactive activities for kids while also sharing their message about services available to children, youth and families.

KidsDay provides an educational experience and a safe, fun and free event for families. A few of our cars could be a nice addition.



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