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THE VANTAGE POINT



ASTON MARTIN OWNERS CLUB

North America Quarterly Journal

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FALL 2010

Issue No. 28

DB3S/113 and its Lives & Livery
Engagement with Rapide
Evel Kneivel's Lagonda



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THE VANTAGE POINT

Aston Martin Owners Club
North America Quarterly Journal
Fall 2010

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THE VANTAGE POINT

aspires to reflect the values and spirit of Aston Martin: Innovation, Quality, Performance. We are committed to both inform and entertain our membership, but moreover to provide context for connection and exploration, while fanning the flames of our common passion.

The Vantage Point (formerly the AMOC Quarterly) is the official publication of the Aston Martin Owners Club—North America, and published by the AMOC-NA Section East. Statements appearing in The Vantage Point are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the position of the Aston Martin Owners Club or its officers. We reserve the right to edit all materials as necessary and may refuse content that is not Aston Martin Owners Club related, or otherwise not deemed relevant, at the discretion of the Editor. The Vantage Point is published quarterly for members of the Aston Martin Owners Club, a non-profit corporation.

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www.amoc.org

FROM THE EDITORS

AUTUMN WINDS OF CHANGE

The Vantage Point Welcomes Our New Editorial Team

The Vantage Point has had a change in editorial staff. After many years of service to the club and two years of faithful service as editor, Nick Candee has passed this duty on to Gerry Hartung and Bob Epstein. We look forward to working with Nick as advisor and historian when questions arise. We hope to maintain the quality to which this quarterly has risen during the past several years.

The editors have established an email address for contributions, and encourage any members to send in stories and images of events they may have attended. We would also support the interest of any

member to produce articles of interest to the club. *The Vantage Point* ultimately belongs to the members, and with such a diverse membership we aim to produce a publication to serve everyone's interests.

This issue, our first, has a variety of articles that we hope will satisfy the interests of our members. We have articles on race events, local concours, and items of historical interest we hope will keep everyone interested.

We are always glad to receive contributions and suggestions for articles of interest to the Aston Martin community.

Bob and Gerry



BACKFIRE!

Please direct all correspondence for publication to the Editor: vantagepointamoc@gmail.com

To the Editor

Thanks to Jim Hazen and Nick Candee's kind invitation on behalf of the AMOC, I was privileged to attend track day and the banquet honoring Rex and Joyce Woodgate, upon the Club's 40th anniversary of the Lime Rock event. To reunite with my AML, Inc. colleagues, and several members from those magical days, was

icing on the cake. It's amazing how those old friendships require no rekindling decades later, testament that this superb marque is the glue that binds us all together; Aston Martin in our DNA.

Dave Linfoot



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Aston Martin's Roadster, V8, DB9 and Volante.

Photo courtesy of Aston Martin Media



AMOC-NA/EAST

BACK EAST

As our 75th anniversary year draws to a close our section AMOC NA East is going strong. In 2010 we've had a wide range of activities, the most ever for the Club. To say that we all owe a huge debt of thanks to the Area Representatives and

the members who planned and organized so many fun and varied activities is an understatement. Kudos go out to Tom Appleton, Bob Welch and Tony and Debbie Autiello, Henry Matson, Jon Metcalfe, Norb Kaminski, Paul Saatsogou, Russell Glace and Len Levine and John Stinsmen.

I hope you've had a chance to come out to a pub night or a road tour, or were one of the lucky folks who were at Lime Rock 40. It is your Club and we want you to enjoy participating in it. In 2011, we will have even more on tap and hope that you can be with us.

Our activities in 2011 will be assisted by the launch of a new, dedicated website that will serve both AMOC NA East and West. I'm working on it now with the AMOC in the UK. It will be our own site that will be connected to the current AMOC.org. The goal is to launch in the first quarter of 2011. As we progress, more information will be forthcoming.

This issue of *The Vantage Point* is the first under the new Editorial team of Bob Epstein and Gerry Hartung. They have Nick Candee's shoes to fill, and they are off to a great start. I know that Bob and Gerry welcome your ideas, and any budding writers will find a place to have their voice heard.

There was one other transition with this issue of *The Vantage Point*. John David has relinquished the reins as Advertising Director. John has worked tirelessly to generate the revenue that makes this publication possible. Any member who receives *The Vantage Point* is in his debt. We are looking for help with the magazine in the advertising area. If you have time to help with this, please let contact me at your convenience.

I will close by wishing you all a happy holiday season and a prosperous beginning to 2011.

Jim

Chair, AMOC East



AMOC-NA/WEST

OUT WEST

I thank the area reps who volunteer their time to organize events that the rest of us enjoy. It's not easy to please all of the people all of the time; often at the end of an activity there is not the opportunity for a collective "thank you" to the organizer.

So to John Fairclough, John Lavendoski, Larry Fromm, Larry Davis, Augie Kuo and Robin Bolz, thank you for all of your time and effort on our behalf, and be sure to let me know what transpires in your area so that I can mention it in this column.

From time to time we receive an invitation to join other clubs for a day out. One such event deserves mention here. Last month The Candy Store, a club with some very desirable automobiles, invited our members in Northern California to attend a track day at Thunderhill Raceway, where the special guest was five-time Le Mans winner Derek Bell. They arranged demonstration laps: Derek would jump in a participant's car and, with the participant now as passenger, would give a few demonstration laps, along with tips about how to get around the circuit. Dito Milian, who runs the track photography business, www.gotbluemilk.com, was on hand for photo ops, which were printed on site for Derek to autograph.

In September we participated in a fundraiser for the battle against Parkinson's Disease. The city of Danville, California hosts the annual Danville d'Elegance, an exotic car show, concours, silent auction and benefit, all wrapped into one. Former World Champion Phil Hill was heavily involved in the event prior to his death from Parkinson's, as was our own late Richard Green. Both the Hill and Green families still support the event, in part by obtaining auction items donated from notables such as Michael Schumacher, Dario Franchitti, and Carroll Shelby. The event has become so successful that the Michael J. Fox Foundation now recognizes the Danville d'Elegance as the # 1 fundraiser for Parkinson's research in the country. We all hope for success in the fight against Parkinson's disease itself.

We now look ahead to the holiday parties that are in the process of being organized, and perhaps to try and squeeze in another event before then. So to everyone in the club, I hope it's been a very happy 75th anniversary year for all.

George Wood,

AMOC West Chairman



BIDDERS GALORE

BOND DB5 STILL HAS GOLDEN TOUCH

The world famous James Bond 1964 Aston Martin DB5 movie car driven by Sean Connery in *Goldfinger* and *Thunderball* was sold October 27 at auction in London by RM Auctions in front of a packed audience for \$4,608,500. The successful bidder, Harry Yeaggy, is only the second ex-factory owner of the gadget-loaded, cinematic icon. The car's seller, Mr. Jerry Lee, purchased it directly from the Aston Martin Lagonda factory for \$12,000 in 1969 and plans to use the proceeds from the sale to further the charitable work of the Jerry Lee Foundation. This famous Aston will stay in the United States, in Cincinnati.

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The One-77 will be built at Aston Martin Headquarters in Gaydon, Warwickshire. The vehicle has been undergoing a rigorous development and engineering program, with an on-road debut in April as part of the Tourist Trophy where it led a parade of super-cars taking the Trophy from Pall Mall to Silverstone.

Deliveries of the 77 car production run are expected to commence in early 2011.

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GLORIOUS GOODWOOD 2010

Story by Bob Welch



Start of Goodwood Trophy race, which was won by Mark Gilles in ERA R3. Photo: Mike Jiggle.

For anyone wishing to recreate the British motorsport experience from the '50s and '60s, the Goodwood Race Revival presents an unrivaled opportunity to enjoy the sights, sounds, and smells of this most evocative period. Situated in the rolling hills of the West Sussex countryside, Goodwood represents an idyllic image of a storybook Britain, of daring young men tearing around the track in crash hats and overalls amid the smell of Castrol and the sound of screeching Dunlops, while gallant young flyers in Spitfires and Hurricanes turn graceful loops in the Sussex sunshine above. It is well beyond my talent to capture this remarkable event in a few pages, but having have the fortune to enjoy the Revival this fall with fellow AMOC'ers Tom Gibb and Patricia Moynihan, I will endeavor to share a few thoughts and observations.

The story of Goodwood goes back many centuries. The ancestral home of the Duke of Richmond and Gordon (Lord March), Goodwood House is said to have been the first place where the rules of cricket were written down. While horse racing had taken place at the Goodwood racecourse for many decades, the existence of Goodwood as a motorsport race track dates back to the Second World War. The recent book *Westhampnett at War* describes the creation of Westhampnett aerodrome as an RAF fighter base in 1940. Tony Gaze (an Australian fighter pilot, and the owner of an MGJ2) had the idea of racing his fellow pilots around the airfield's perimeter track between missions (apparently flying fighter missions against the Germans during the Battle of Britain was not exciting enough!). Gaze later bought an Aston Martin LM 10, which he described as "a lot faster than the MG." After the war, Gaze encountered fellow pilot Flight Lieutenant Freddie March, who happened to be the Duke of Richmond and Gordon, and

thus the hereditary owner of Goodwood and the Westhampnett Aerodrome. The two got to talking, and in September of 1948 the Goodwood Motor Circuit officially opened. It was the site of many of Britain's greatest motor races, including the Tourist Trophy (or TT) and the "Nine Hours of Goodwood," in which cars raced into the dark country night. Famously, Stirling Moss drove in (and won) his first race at Goodwood, and nearly died in a terrible crash there on Easter Monday 1960. Collins, Hawthorne, Stewart, Surtees and too many others to name made



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Matt Grist brings his Alfa Romeo tipo B up to its place on the grid. Photo: Mike Jiggle.

their names at Goodwood, before the track closed in 1968.

Fast forward 30 years, and the new Lord March (Charles) picked up where his father Freddie had left off. A great enthusiast, Lord Charles March had begun an informal hill climb up the 1.3-mile drive in front of Goodwood House in 1993 as a casual event for friends. The Goodwood Festival of Speed (as it became known) soon drew tens of thousands for three days each June. As the event expanded, it began to focus more on modern Formula One cars and new models from Peugeot and Nissan, and was less directly connected to the heritage of English motoring. Through great effort, Lord March and his team completely rehabilitated the motor circuit so that it became a completely safe and modern track, with one great distinction. From its first running in 1998, the Revival was planned to be an amazing recreation of the track as it was in its heyday, from 1948 to 1968. No post-1968 vehicles were allowed on the track. A Daimler Dart, GT 40, and DB5 serve as the Course cars, and where else in the world would one see a DB4GT Zagato as a Safety Car? Attendees were encouraged to

dress in period clothing, which brought everything from “Mods and Rockers” (think The Who’s *Quadrophenia*) to Bobbie Soxers, to country gentleman in tweeds, and many others wearing World War II uniforms, accurate down to the spats.

Given the strong link with the Royal Air Force and the Second World War, it was only natural that Spitfires and Hurricanes, and young men dressed as Churchill’s “Few” would appear, with their encampment protected by the Home Volunteers of “Dad’s Army.” This year brought a particularly moving tribute on the 70th anniversary of the Battle of Britain. Doing pomp and circumstance as only the English can, the band of Her Majesty’s Royal Marines led the Royal Horse Artillery around the track, followed by eight surviving Battle of Britain pilots (all of whom had flown from Westhampnett during the war) each in a World War II Willys Jeep, with a driver in correct vintage uniform. The crowds rose to their feet in respect and appreciation, as the “Battle of Britain Flight” (comprised of a Supermarine Spitfire, a Hawker Hurricane, and an Avro Lancaster bomber) flew gracefully above. On a gloriously sunny late summer day, it was easy to believe that one had truly taken a “magical step back in time.”

Yet while aviation is a strong tradition at Goodwood, many of us (including we of the AMOC) had come for the cars. As always, the Revival delivered an embarrassment of riches. While each grid contains up to 30 cars of superb provenance and quality, Aston enthusiasts could find no better place to see wonderful examples of our favorite marque. The “March Trophy” race (“for cars in the spirit of the Goodwood nine-hour races, 1952-1955”) featured a 1950 DB2, 1951 DB2, a 1952 DB3, a one-of-a-kind DB3 coupe, and the race-winning Lagonda V12 LeMans. The Richmond Trophy (for 1948-1960 front-engined Grand Prix cars) included such rarities as a Lancia D50, two Maserati 250Fs, two Maserati A6GCMs, two Ferrari 246 Dinos, two 1959 Aston Martin DBR4s, and the fascinating all-wheel-drive Ferguson-Climax Project 99 car (driven in this race by Sir Stirling Moss). Aside from the cars, Lord March is also able to call upon many of the world’s most famous drivers (including many current Formula One and



Attracting much admiration from onlookers was this pair of exquisite Aston Martin DBR4 racecars.



A DBR1, a Lagonda and a DB3 await their turn to go racing.

LeMans drivers) to join in the fun. One ever-popular highlight is the “Royal Automobile Club TT Celebration.” This is a one-hour, two-driver race in which one driver is an amateur (often a driver-owner) while the other is a professional. The rules specify that each driver must drive at least 25 minutes, and the race pushes the cars and the drivers to their limits.

This year the professional drivers included Jochen Mass, Emanuele Pirro, Brian Redman, Jackie Oliver, Bobby Rahal, and Sussex’s own favorite son (and five-time Le Mans winner) Derek Bell. The brightly colored cars included six AC Cobras, three Ferrari 250 GT SWB/Cs, five Jaguar E-Type Lightweights (including a “Low-Drag” version), three Aston Martin DB4GTs and the Aston Martin Project 212. The final race of the weekend, the Sussex Trophy, featured our favorite, Brian Redman, piloting one of two Aston Martin DBR1s against five Jaguar D-Types, two Maserati 300Ss, and four Lister “Knobblys.”

While some grids feature cars totaling over £50,000,000 in value, the St. Mary’s Trophy races (“for production saloon cars of the type that raced between 1950 and 1959”) allow those of more modest means to have a go. With cars ranging from the diminutive Austin A35 and Morris Minor to the massive Jaguar MkVII, this race is a perennial crowd pleaser. This year the race featured such esoterica as a Czechoslovakian Tatra T603 and a Russian Gaz Volga M21 (done up as a KGB staff car).

On vintage bias ply tires, many of these cars spend much of their time sideways, with the drivers sawing away madly “all arms and elbows,” trying to maintain control. Likewise, the Fordwater Trophy (“for endurance racing sports and GT cars of a type that raced between 1960 and 1966”) featured the most diminutive of sport racing cars (think Austin Healey Sprites in Speedwell and Sebring aerodynamic clothing). The crowd favorite and eventual winner was a tiny white Mini Jem GT in Betty Boop livery, with bright red “lipstick” around the front grill and eyelashes over the

headlamps (it truly had to be seen to be believed).

What distinguishes the Goodwood Race Revival from many other historic motorsports events is the enormous effort that goes into establishing an incredibly detailed environment that re-creates the England of the 1950s and ’60s. Modern ATM machines are cleverly hidden within red telephone boxes, and this year the Revival featured a huge replica of the Art Deco Earl’s Court Motor Show building, which visitors could enter to see 18 “Grand Touring Greats,” ranging from the 1954 Bentley Continental R to the 2008 Alfa Romeo 8C.

The sense of timelessness was enhanced by display signs in front of the cars that conveyed messages such as “New for 1959, the Aston Martin DB4. Aston’s newest and fastest coupe is the ultimate gentleman’s conveyance.” One remarkable achievement this year



Bobby Rahal crashed pal Adrian Newey’s lightweight Jaguar E-Type when a wheel was lost.



The aeroplane show has always added a nice touch of diversity to the event.

was a painstaking re-creation of a 1962 Tesco supermarket, which featured shelf after shelf of items in authentic 1962 packaging. Crowds queued up for all three days to enter and pass through this remarkable living museum. While many of the brands were unfamiliar to Tom Gibb and myself (other than the ubiquitous SPAM) Patricia Moynihan (a native Londoner) was delighted to see picture-perfect packages of Pear's Soap, Fairy Washing Up Liquid and Heinz Beans (I never did ask what "Shredded Suet" was for, but I doubt that it would be part of my heart-healthy diet).

For those who prefer their vehicles to proceed at a more leisurely pace, a "Special Deliveries" parade celebrated "a glorious period of development of the transport of goods, people and services on British roads." These vehicles ranged from a 1919 Harrods Walker electric van (proving in the "green" 21st century that there is truly nothing new under the sun) to the 1929 steam cider tanker, to a 1932 Bedford fish and chip van (with its huge open vat of frying oil, it must have truly been a feast for the senses and operation).

Almost as enjoyable as the vehicles themselves were the driver-owners (many of them had restored these vehicles themselves), who delighted in showing the ins and outs of their pride and joy to all who passed by. Throughout the weekend, musical acts ranging from "Singing Policemen" barbershop quartets to Andrews Sisters impersonators to jazz and swing bands provided a delightful aural background to the festivities. Over 150 stands sold everything from vintage motorsports photographs and magazines, to regimental silver, to handmade custom rocking horses (one of which is owned by the Queen of England).

Looking back over the last 12 years, much credit must be given to Lord March and his team for developing and maintaining what has surely become one of the premier historic motor sporting events in the world. While the Revival has gone from strength to strength, measures have been taken to maintain the quality of the experience. For the first year ever, in 2010 ticket sales were limited to prevent overcrowding, and for the last several years all tickets must be bought in advance. The Goodwood Race Revival also appears to have become a fixture of the English summer social scene, along with Henley and Ascot.

Having been fortunate enough to attend the event many times, I can say that the Goodwood Race Revival clearly has grown in quality and scope with each year. One particular strength is that the Revival weekend provides a huge number of enjoyable experiences for any non-motorhead "civilians" who might join diehard aficionados, making it a delightful family weekend. Goodwood has an excellent website (www.goodwood.co.uk), which gives details of the Revival and the many other exciting events that take place there, and I strongly encourage you to make the trip. I look forward to seeing you there in 2011! 🍀



Spitfires played a leading role at the Goodwood Revival, 70 years after also starring in the Battle of Britain. Photo: Mike Jiggle.



Patricia Moynihan, Tom Gibb and Bob Welch (left to right) all showed off their finest garb.



Just in case you were wondering, that's David Hobbs hidden inside the Austin A40.



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MONTEREY WEEKEND, AUGUST 2010

2010 LAGUNA SECA VINTAGE RACES

Story and Photos by Chet Floyd

August on the West Coast means the Monterey Historics at Laguna Seca for thousands of auto and vintage race fans. For 2010, Steve and Debbie Earle's Monterey Historic Automobile Races were replaced after 36 years with the Monterey Motorsports Reunion.

The changes were more than name-deep, and more than three decades of the Earles' racing tradition were barely acknowledged by the track's CEO/General Manager Gill Campbell: "A new dawn in historic racing." SCRAMP President Dean Fewtrell was "excited as we embark on a new era..." That was it. Turn our official backs on the past. Didn't exist. None of the well-loved recognition trophies like the Monterey Cup and the Tom Senter Memorial Trophy survived, not even last year's trophy nor race results.

The overall theme of the changes seemed to be "More is Better." There were more food booths, more races per day, and many more entrants—630, a large increase from last year's 480.

"More" also meant more Aston Martins racing than ever before. You will have to judge if that meant better. Some veteran entrants like Len Auerbach with his DB4GT were missing this year. And there were a couple of DB4s and a DB2 that were new this year.

"More" also meant more cars per race, owing to the expanded entrant list. Some classes started 40 cars or more. This resulted in controversy among the entrants.

I talked to one owner/driver scheduled for Saturday's IMSA, GTX, etc. cars from 1973 to 1982, who pulled his car after a collision with another car in Friday's qualifying practice. The Earle days were noted for intolerance of contact, with consequences for the parties involved. Current management appeared to relax that policy. Result: unprecedented accidents in Saturday's events and the destruction in an assisted flip-and-roll of the Collier Collection's 1958 Scarab sports racer when famed driver John Morton was caught up in contact with less experienced drivers.

Even Sir Stirling Moss – no stranger to accidents at Laguna Seca, as Aston fans who witnessed his shunt in DBR1/1 several years ago will recall – suffered the loss of his recently purchased (at a record-setting \$1.7m) Porsche RS61 in Friday qualifying. Fortunately, no injuries to any drivers, but Morton was taken to the hospital for observation. That may be a first for this event.

Race management obviously was distressed, and I can only imagine what transpired at the Sunday morning drivers meeting. More than a prayer service, I trust, as Sunday's races came off



Luca Maciulescu's DB2/4 -- love that number!



Rob Burt worrying over the DB2/s gearbox.



An impressive mix of Aston Martins old and new could be found almost anywhere.



John Romano's DB3S takes an outside line in traffic through the Andretti Hairpin.



David Hinton took care racing George Tuma's DB4 around the undulating racecourse.



without a hitch.

AMOC-wise, we had a party at Spanish Bay for the second year. Aston Martin North America and AMOC Section West joined forces again, for a stylish opening to the Monterey weekend. Drinks were served on the Peppoli Patio overlooking the Pacific Ocean, although the weather was not as cooperative as in 2009. Many of us had our first look at the new V12 Vantage, along with Andy Gordon's DB6 Volante and Guy Simpson's DB5, which were all displayed on the lawn.

Guy's organizational talents continued our long-time relationship with our caterer Grapes of Wrath despite new race management pushing us to use their caterers at significant increase in cost. We served 77 delicious meals in our large tent.

For the second year, our Casa Munras barbeque was held in the

new patio at the lobby on Friday. This is turning out to be the place to re-connect with old AMOC friends as folks circulate through on the way to the auctions. We were pleased to see Chris Salyer all the way from Oklahoma – long time no see!

The Saturday dinner at Fandango in Pacific Grove was well attended, although down a bit from 2009. No matter, it gave us a bit more space in our private room and we enjoyed meeting several new members at table. The meal justifies the long relationship we have with the restaurant – it must be going on or passing a decade now.

We ran into Doreen Green as she chatted with Stirling and Lady Moss at the Moss pit. Doreen told us about the prang in practice.

Astons at the track featured Greg Whitten bringing his DBR2 out again, and the first-time appearance here of Luca Maciucescu's DB2/4 from New Mexico. Luca kept his nicely turned-out 1953 car



Herb Wetanson turned up in a rebodied DB4: it is neither a GT nor a Zagato.



Wetanson chased a V8 Corvette for several laps before passing to take over the lead.



Kerry Green, Doreen, Lady Susie Moss and Sir Stirling Moss chat in the pits.



Greg Whitten's immaculate DBR2/2 was a crowd favorite.



Astons of various vintages and models were lined up like thoroughbreds ready to run.



and circulating ahead of the 1951 Hudson Hornet stock car, a sight we have never seen at Laguna Seca. "It is good to be able to tune the car at sea level for a change," Luca noted. This was not Luca's first West Coast appearance, though. He had brought the DB2/4 out in June for the Earle's new Sonoma Historics at Infineon Raceway (formerly known as Sears Point). Luca's enthusiasm for vintage racing is infectious; we hope to see him out here again.

Rob Burt brought his recently restored three-piece grille DB2. Unfortunately, the fresh engine proved too much for the gearbox in practice, and Rob couldn't start in Luca's race. Bad luck for a first appearance.

However, John Romano did grid his 1955 DB3S in this race, looking gorgeous in the lighter shade of Aston BRG. I think this was John's first visit to Laguna, and we hope to see him out there again. It may have been a repeat from 2009 for the car, but the lack of chassis numbers in the program this year make it difficult to tell.

Also not starting was Tom Price's 1961 DB4 Zagato in the GT Cars race from 1955-1962. Unfortunately, Tom had late-breaking scheduling conflicts between racing Sunday and attendance requirements at Pebble Beach. In addition, hub problems in practice convinced him to pull the car from the grid.

There were, however, two other Astons in this race. George Tuma from Germany entered a DB4 driven by David Hinton. David's mechanic reported the car was "running like a champ" at the end of qualifying. David kept the car in mid-pack, but was troubled by apparent suspension issues that consistently smoked the right rear tire against bodywork in Turn 2, the Andretti Hairpin.

Herb Wetanson's DB4 with special bodywork – incorrectly listed by SCRAMP as a "1961 Aston Martin Zagato DB-4" – charged to the front early on and harried Tony Garmey's 1962 V8-powered Corvette until Tony spun about six laps in and Herb cruised to victory. Herb seemed pleased when I interviewed him after the race. He felt that if he tried to pass Tony, contact might result, so he played the waiting game. Herb said he likes Astons; this was his first.

The performance of that DB4 is obviously, shall we say, "post-works" as we hadn't expected Corvette-eating race action. Also, the lines of the custom body on the un-shortened DB4 donor chassis are suggestive of a DB4GT-Z, but required considerable interpretative license. The unpainted, polished alloy body of this early 1990s conversion is a crowd-pleaser, even though it never appeared in Zagato production.

Pebble Beach offered up two stunning Aston Martins, which Kohei Saito captured on film. The unique Graber-bodied DB2/4 drop-head coupe is now in the U.S., appeared on the field. The unique Rapide Nürburgring racing sedan was on display in the manufacturer's arena for all arriving spectators to see.

And, for sharp-eyed people-watchers in Carmel, Dr. Ulrich Bez could be seen strolling the Tour d'Elegance.

Between several racing Astons at the track, the AMOC trackside luncheon, Pebble Beach, the Tour d'Elegance in Carmel, and the evenings at Casa Munras and Fandango, the AMOC West gang had a great weekend. 🍷



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DB3S AND ITS MANY LIVES— JOHN ROMANO GIVES HISTORY

By Jim Hazen

When I think of the Aston Martin DB3S, I think quintessential 1950s sports racing car. Powerful, light and open. The body shape, designed by Frank Feely, is achingly beautiful and the new, much lighter and better handling chassis by Willie Watson (compared to its predecessor, the DB3) made the car wonderful to drive. And driven they were, by the greats - Collins, Moss, Parnell and Salvadori.

The factory DB3S racers competed against the Jaguar C-Types and D-Types, Porsches and Ferraris at Le Mans, finishing as high as 2nd overall, both in 1955 and 1956. Aston achieved greater success on home turf, with wins at the Goodwood 9 Hours, Silverstone and Aintree. The classic DB3S photo by Patrick Benjafield, shows Moss clipping the apex at Madgwick in DB3S/5 at the 1956 Goodwood Easter Monday Meeting.

In the day, if you were a well-heeled privateer, you could order a DB3S to test your own hero driver ambitions either on the road (not a good idea) or the track. Aston sold 20 of these customer cars, all special orders. These were not the full hot-curry setup, as the engine was not built to full factory race specification, and they had drum brakes. They were, though, plenty fast, and would have been at the front of the grid for almost any race where they competed.

In May of 1956, Aston Martin announced it was going to offer a new body style, a coupe version of the DB3S, for customer consumption. This was surprising since two coupe versions of the factory racers (DB3S/6 and /7) were built for LeMans in 1954. They proved unstable as the front end tended to lift at high speeds. They both crashed and the coupe bodies were written off as the chassis were rebodied as roadsters.

Nick Walker, in his fine book Aston Martin DB2, DB2/4 & DB3 in Detail states that Aston promoted the DB3S Coupe body to customers as “initially laid down” by DB himself. Each had a detachable roof panel that would fit in the car behind the seats. Mr. Walker also muses that the offering of the coupe body may have been an attempt to boost the sales of the remaining DB3S chassis, since the model was coming to the end of its life.

In total, only three DB3S customer coupes were produced – DB3S/119, /120 and the feature car in this article, DB3S/113. According to the AMOC Register /113 came equipped with chrome strips on the side of the body, small spats on the rear wheels and modified front wheel arches. The original owner of /113 was the Honorable Max Aitken. We can assume from the specs that the Honorable Max was more interested in fast touring than driving in anger in a race. The second owner, Maurice Baring, had other ideas, and /113 was run at Silverstone in 1957.

Throughout its life /113 has had several owners, including the late AMOC member Earl Kelton, and was a feature car in Road & Track (see sidebar). It retained its coupe body until the late 1990s. At that time the coupe body was removed and replaced with one in the style of a customer DB3S roadster. Owned by AMOC NA East member Dr. John Romano, today /113 is in virtually concours condition. Earlier this year I had an opportunity to have lunch with John and to talk about what it's like to acquire, prepare and race such a historic Aston. I also wanted to know, what's the story with the body?



TVP – John, I really appreciate your adding some first-hand information on your DB3S.

JR – My pleasure. I always enjoy talking about such a wonderful machine.

TVP – First question: what is the story behind the body and the change from the coupe to the open roadster?

JR – I have the original body; it came with the car when I bought it.

It's stored at the shop that looks after the car. What's interesting with the coupe body for my car is that the original Frank Feely design had cutaway fenders. Max Aikin, the owner, had the cutaway

A CONVERSATION WITH *John Romano*



*ROmano's DB3S/113 at the 2010 Lime Rock Historic Festival.
Photo ©AutoPhotos 2009, Ed Hyman - edwardh@gullwingsearch.com.*

fenders reconfigured and the coves enclosed. That was done so road dirt would not collect in the open fenders when he drove it. When the car was in England at Rex Woodgate's shop (Rex J. Woodgate Automotive Consultants) I thought about having the original body returned to original configuration, which would be to redo the cut-away fenders and close in the sunroof. But that would be messing with the history, so I decided to leave it as is.

Unfortunately, there was some slight damage when it was shipped from England, but nothing that can't be easily fixed. Everything is intact. However, to remove the open roadster body and put the coupe body back on would be a major undertaking. I have all of the interior pieces, but the process of refitting is complicated and time-

intensive. I bought it as an open roadster, and that's what I wanted.

TVP – Were there three DB3S coupes built? I know there were two racers that were scrapped.

JR – There were three customer coupes. One was in Japan in a private collection. That one is now back in England, so both of the remaining cars with the DB3S coupe bodies are in England.

Overall there were five coupes built. The two factory racecars were equipped with twin-plug heads. My car and the other two later coupes came with a single spark plug per cylinder. The twin-plug-head engines made more horsepower, about 240, whereas my car makes about 200.

TVP – I assume that the car handles much better with the open body? The closed body looks somewhat tall and may be top-heavy?

JR – It handles great. I never drove it with the coupe body, but it's lighter and the center of gravity is lower. The DB3S was always known as a very good handling sports racer.

TVP - How did you acquire the car?

JR – Back in 1997-1998 I started looking at cars that I loved as a kid. I was interested in the sports racers from the 1950s. I'd done some racing through Skip Barber. When I started looking, I never intended to vintage race. I just wanted to acquire one of the cars that I loved, if I could find one. I almost bought a Maserati, but held off to do more research. I was drawn to Ferraris, or the Maserati 150S, or a Porsche.

I was at the point of negotiating for another Maserati and I saw my car advertised by Coys. To be honest, I had no idea my car even existed. I had seen it the year before in coupe form. At the time, the market was tight and the car was not selling. The dealer sent it to Rod Jolly and had them fabricate the open roadster body.

TVP – Oh really? Coy's had the body switched?

JR – Yeah, they did it to help sell the car.

TVP – When the new body was made, did Rod Jolly use another DB3S as a guide for the new roadster body?

JR – Yes, I think they used one of Simon Draper's cars as a guide.

When the Aston came back on the market with the open body I decided to acquire it. The decision was not necessarily based on a formal comparison to another sports racer, between two choices. It was the details of the Aston that swayed the decision. It's just such a beautiful car.

I had Chris Woodgate (son of Rex Woodgate) look at the car with the idea that I now wanted to go vintage racing. He



Cockpit view of DB3S/113. Photo © 2011 AlexanderDavidis- www.GTRacerTV.com.

DB3S/113 *Road & Track* '66



In April 1966 *Road & Track* magazine featured an article by Editor Tony Hogg on DB3S/113 as part of their Salon series. At the time the article was written the owner was long-time AMOC member, the late Earle Kelton. In 1966, Earle was then 1st Lt. Kelton engaged at U.S. Military Flight School in Fort Rucker, Alabama. Being a young guy, the DB3S, in coupe form, was his daily method of conveyance.

In the article, Hogg dissects the car and talks about its power, build quality and its purpose as a sports racer. One of the interesting insights was that despite its competition roots, Earl found that with care, it was still docile enough to be driven through New York City traffic. But make no mistake, this was a real rarity and despite being (at the time) an old racecar, DB3S owners were afforded special treatment. Hogg relates how another DB3S owner in Northern California was in need of parts. He called Aston and was put directly through to David Brown himself! Even though he was a bit clueless on the technical needs of the car, DB took the information and the parts were dispatched right away.

Owning a DB3S/113 would have been the pinnacle of cool. One of only three coupes built for customers and the only one in the U.S. It could be used for everyday commuting and for long distance roadwork and

despite its age, it was still a match for almost any modern car it would have met on the road. In a testament to its ruggedness, DB3S/113 was showing over 65,000 miles on the odometer by April of 1966. Try that with a 1950s Ferrari!

What is most interesting are the lovely B&W images of DB3S/113 accompanying the article. In them you can see the striking coupe lines, the drilled competition brake drums, tartan plaid on the racing buckets, the spare wheel that completely fills the boot and a removeable sunroof.

If you are interested to have this article as part of your collection, it can be found in a compilation book called *Road & Track on Aston Martin – 1962-1984*. The book, part of the Brooklands Books series of road test compilations, is out of print, but you can find copies for sale on eBay.

For more on the late Earl Kelton, see the Fall 2006 issue of *The Vantage Point*. That issue contains some nice remembrances of Earl, and an article that Earl wrote in 1977 about an early morning trip from San Francisco to Sears Point Raceway by a pair of DB3S racecars on the road. It's simply wonderful.

Information resources:

Aston Martin DB3S Coupe – Tony Hogg - *Road & Track Magazine* – 1966 – Reprinted in *Road & Track on Aston Martin 1962-1984* – Brooklands Books

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DB3S/113 at Silverstone in 1957, with Maurice Baring Driving. JohnRomanoCollection

was able to verify the authenticity of it and what it needed to be done to make it a racecar again. This car had been a show car for many years so they started from the bottom up and redid the car. The engine was rebuilt with uprated components that addressed some issues with the head. The chassis was cracked-tested. Chris installed new hubs and wheels. The gearbox was refreshed and has an aluminum case. The only thing I didn't do was put on a twin-plug head, which I now wish I had done.

I have to tell you that the first time I raced it, the car was bulletproof! I was smitten. I had the racing bug. Later that year I bought my Porsche 550 A Spyder.

TVP - Really! Now that is a great car, too. How does it compare it to the DB3S?

JR - Well, let's see. The Aston is an understeer car, but it has plenty of power so it can be steered on the throttle. You can trail brake the car because it's light and very nimble. But it is a classic, front engine, rear drive '50s racing car. I do find that it is better on the short tracks like Lime Rock where overall power is less of a factor and handling makes up for the greater speed of the larger-engined cars.

The Porsche, in comparison, is an immensely better handling car. It's much lighter and mid-engined, but it doesn't have the power. You can really toss it around. The DB3S has about 200 hp, and the 550A Spyder is in the range of 135 hp.

TVP - When did you start to race the DB3S?

JR - My first outing was at an event sponsored by Coys, the UK classic car dealer, and it was held at Silverstone. In my race there were about 45 cars in the field. The lead cars were Lotus 15s or

Copper Monacos driven by ex-pro race drivers. They're like little go-karts, very fast. The Aston DBR1s, Ferrari Testa Rossas and Maserati Birdcages filled the next places on the grid. Then came the DB3Ss and cars like it. I was near Mark Knopfler from Dire Straits in his Maserati 300S. I was thrilled.

Now the racing over there is definitely different. Here in the U.S. the organizers of events expect, or actually demand, that the drivers race with restraint. No touching; let alone banging fenders. In Europe, and especially in the UK, the restraints are off. The drivers overall are better, more skilled, but they have a different mindset; they are much more aggressive.

That first Coys race at Silverstone was a real eye opener. I'm there, very proud, with my freshly finished DB3S. At one point as I came into the final corner complex to Woodcote I see ahead a Ferrari Testa Rossa being T-Boned by a Lister Jag! I had to drive over the grass and back onto the track to avoid the carnage. That woke me up to the fact that these boys are playing for keeps!

TVP - I guess so! What about safety? Over here there is a real drive for safety.

JR - When I got to the race I looked in the car and was surprised. I said to Chris, where are the lap belts? There weren't any. He said you don't need belts; you don't have a roll bar. No roll bar, no need for belts. If there is a problem, you'll want to get out. So I would jump in my car and drive as fast as I could with no roll over protection. It would never happen here.

Interestingly, I was in a group that had been pulled off near Copse Corner at the end of a race. I always pronounced it Corpse until I was corrected (laughs). The organizers in the UK are very strict on originality and go to great lengths to make sure their rules are not broken. Some of the cars in our race were to be randomly chosen for a complete inspection.

While we were waiting the '50s F1 race is taking place and a guy rolled a Vanwall at Copse Corner several times. He was thrown out of the rolling car. He stood up, took a few steps and then collapsed. In the end he was OK, and very lucky. They race seriously just like in the day.

I am very happy to have a roll bar and a five-point harness in my Aston now. I'm all for safety, and very much believe in driving training.

TVP - With such a rare car as your DB3S, how do you find parts? I know from my Feltham Aston that engines are not a problem, but do you have trouble getting any of the parts for the car?



The elegantly sleek shape of DB3S/113 is readily evident in this side shot from Silverstone with John Romano driving. JohnRomanoCollection

JR – I have been fortunate. The only real Issue I had was when I broke my rear end at the AMOC Lime Rock event a few years ago. I called Chris Woodgate, and luckily he had one on the shelf. He put it in a crate and sent it over. I was racing by the Fall Festival over Labor Day. Now that said, I was lucky and there was definitely a price to be paid for the convenience.

Also, several of the owners of other DB3Ss will get together and have parts made when they are needed. Even though the numbers are small, there is some economy of scale.

I guess the reason that I have been “lucky,” and I put that term in quotes, is how well the car was prepared when I bought it. Many of the potential issues were addressed when all of that work was done.

TVP – One other question, how would you describe the car in a word or a couple of words?

JR – It's the balls! Can you print that? (Laughs) The car is just the balls, and that's from all aspects: aesthetic – how it looks, it's so enjoyable to drive and the way people react and are drawn to it when they see it. It a very cool car!

TVP – That's great! Thanks for sharing your impressions on your DB3S.

JR– I am very lucky in that I have a number of very different and wonderful vintage racecars. It's hard to pick one over another; they are like my mechanical children, but the DB3S is very special.

When you talk to John his enthusiasm for /113 is infectious, and he does drive the tires off the car. This year at the VSCCA Fall Finale weekend he was turning some very fast laps at Lime Rock and beating much larger more powerful cars like a '60s vintage Corvette and a 1950s Kurtis



The original bodywork of DB3S/113 as it sits today in storage. John Romano Collection

Roadster. If you see /113, resplendent in Aston Martin Racing Green, it is worth taking time to admire.

Many thanks to Dr. John Romano for historical photos of DB3S/113 and to Alexander Davidis and Ed Hyman for shots of /113.

Information resources:

Aston Martin DB2, DB2/4 & DB3 in Detail – Nick Walker – 2004

Aston Martin DB3S Coupe – Tony Hogg - Road & Track Magazine - 1966

Aston Martin Owners Club Register - 2005

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The Aston Martin DB3S Sportscar - Chris Nixon; photography by Richard Newton; published by Palawan - 1996

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LIME ROCK HISTORIC RACE MEETING LABOR DAY WEEKEND

By Bob Epstein

My second favorite car event of the year (first being the Aston Martin Owners Club summer classic) is the Lime Rock Historic Race meeting, which takes place over Labor Day weekend. The event now attracts international entrants, this year including Ivan Dutton, a British Bugatti specialist whose crew ran a team of cars. This year's event had a brief threat from Hurricane Earl that caused some slippery conditions on Friday, but the rest of the weekend was dry, sunny and pleasant. Racing occupies the track Friday, Saturday and Monday, with an ever-growing car show and concours spread around the track on Sunday. Coming from Maine, with three Astons in the state (that I know of), my biggest delight is in wandering through the paddocks to see all manner of vintage racing cars. This year did not disappoint, with an amazing breadth and variety. On the Aston front we were well represented with pre-war, DB2 and DB4 models. The Steel Wings group (Robert Burt, Jack Boxstrom and Jim Hazen) was the focus of most of the Aston group. Luca Maciucescu (DB2) was on his own, having towed from New Mexico, and Herb Wetanson's car (DB4 Zagato replica) was run by KTR. Other AMOC members in non-Astons were Andy Williams, Bob Welch, Bruce Male, Dan Ghose and Stu Forer. Another highlight of the weekend is the Paddock B activity. Vendors set up to sell all manner of car stuff — old parts, books, clothes, toys, and, on occasion, whole cars (one year saw a sorry DB2 on a trailer). My son spent most of his spare time updating his Matchbox supercar collection. This year also saw a food event called "A Taste of Litchfield," with restaurants and wineries present to sell their wares. Bob Welch organized a dinner at Pastore Restaurant on Sunday evening, attended by myself, Hazen and Williams — a most enjoyable evening as we were the last to leave the establishment. Northwest Connecticut for me is one of those special places I love to go, especially when there is a car event involved. This year's event certainly reinforced that for me, and I look forward to going back next year. 🍷



The Rose, Hazen and Maciucescu DB2s under cloudy skies at the Sunday in the Park car show.



Crucial maintenance under way in the Steel Wings Aston paddock.



Steel Wings' cooling modification is evident on Jack Boxstrom's DB4 GT.



Robert Burt in 2-Litre harries Dan Ghose in a Lagonda Team Car.



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ASTONS IN THE MIDWEST

By Henry Matson

The final three events in the AMOC Midwest 2010 season were the Geneva (Illinois) Concours held on August 22, the Chicago British Car Festival held on September 12, and the Lake Forest Sports Car Concours held on October 3. At each of these events the Midwest Area of the AMOC showed between five and eight cars.

The Geneva Concours continued its sunny history on the streets of the town with nearly 200 cars participating. Three of our Aston owners showed their cars, including Jim Causey's DB2 Drop Head Coupe, Charles Piszczor's DB7 Vantage Volante, and Chris Mulvihill's V8 Vantage. Although none of these cars were eligible for an award since they had all won awards in the last three years, Chris Mulvihill's V8 Vantage won the new Youth Judge Award. A new Youth judging was held with boys and girls from 11 to 13 years of age. They were given official scoring sheets and shown how to judge and rate cars by a senior judge. It appears the allure of seeing a real "James Bond Car" is everlasting.

The Chicago British Car Festival also experienced perfect weather. This show, with its people's choice awards, attracted over 500 cars. There were eight Astons at the event. They included Jim Causey's DB4, Wayne Hedien's DB5, Eddie Manelis' V8, John Koziel's DB7 16, Charles Hasbrouck's DB7 Vantage, Craig Schultz's DB7 Vantage Volante, Bob Albert's Vanquish S, and my V8 Vantage. After consuming breakfast provided by Eddie Manelis, we surveyed the huge array of British cars, from a 1930s Bentley that took Best in Show, to all manner of Triumphs, MGs, Lotuses, Rolls Royce, Minis, and TVRs. Two of our Astons got people's choice awards, Wayne Hedien's DB5 and Eddie Manelis' V8.

The sunny Lake Forest Sports Cars Concours was the Midwest AMOC's final event of the year. It's held at our local dealer and primarily features the marques sold there: Aston Martin, Ferrari, and Maserati. There were also a good sample of Lamborghinis and even a Porsche Carrera GT in stunning Guards Red. The club was represented by five Astons, including Eddie Manelis' V8, John Koziel's DB7 16, Craig Schultz's DB7 Vantage Volante, Bob Albert's Vanquish S, and my V8 Vantage, along with two non-member Astons, a black DB7 Vantage and a racing green DBR9 V8 Vantage. At the end of the people's choice style voting, Bob Albert's Vanquish took the award.

As I write, there are still a number of days of good weather left in the Midwest. I hope everyone enjoys them driving their Astons

before the winter descends and most of us retire our cars for the season. Next year we will continue the tradition of a full slate of events for our members to enjoy.



THE AUSTINS WELCOME THE ASTONS

By Len Levin

On Saturday, August 14, a group of eight AMOC members met for lunch at the Blue Bell Inn. It's been an excessively hot summer, but Saturday, the 14th was one of the more comfortable days, with temperatures at about 80 degrees with low humidity. The weather was such that we were able to dine outdoors, in a pretty, secluded dining patio.

After a leisurely lunch, we caravanned the couple of miles over to the Normandy Farms Hotel and Conference Center, where the Austin Healey Club was staging their show and concours on the final day of their "Encounter." This was a significant event, as I was advised that advanced registrations were over 160 persons, which means that while I did not try to count them, there were probably at least 80 Austin-Healeys participating.

Some of the cars came from quite a distance, some being trailered, but in many cases driven the whole way. Some of the Healeys were well used, but most of them were in concours condition. The event was a five-day affair, from Wednesday through the wind-up after breakfast on Sunday, but the Saturday afternoon show and evening banquet were probably what could be considered the final scheduled events.

Much to my pleasant surprise, the arrival of our five Astons in a group created some additional excitement, and we were invited to park inside the show area. Upon doing so, we were very enthusiastically received. The Astons comprised a good spread of our marque, from the DB4 of Mike Staines to the current Vantage belonging to Irv Stein. The other Astons were the Levin DBS, a V8 belonging to Tom Williams, and John Stinsmen's DB7.

A simple AMOC get together proved to be a very enjoyable low key event.





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JESSE ALEXANDER — Photo Journalist of the Golden Age of Racing

By Jim Hazen

When I heard that Jesse Alexander was going to be attending the Fairfield Concours in September I thought that a few minutes for an interview and his agreement to let us include some of his images would make a good addition for The Vantage Point. What I did not anticipate is how moved I would be by this preeminent photographer's work.

For those not familiar with Jesse Alexander, he was one of the seminal motorsport photographers of the 1950s and 1960s, and he is still going strong today. His pictures have been collected in numerous books (more on that later), they have been exhibited in galleries around the world and he has been commissioned by leading auto manufacturers to document racing efforts. In the pantheon of the best, Jesse is in the same company as Louis Klemantaski, Tom Burnside and Peter Coltrin.

But to me, the difference and what makes the work of Jesse Alexander so unique is how he portrayed the motorsport world as he followed it for over 40 years. While his contemporaries' best work concentrated primarily on the action and the cars, Jesse's not only did the same, but his best also focused on the human side. In my opinion, this makes his work much closer to a great photography master like Henri Cartier Bresson. He is a true photojournalist with the uncanny ability to capture movement (fast cars) and at the same time has the sensitivity to capture intimate human interactions.

The examples of this are many. The pictures featured with this article are all of Astons, but if you want to see more, visit his website and buy one of his books. Or you can purchase one of his photos, which are beautifully printed and individually signed. To learn more, go to www.jessealexander.com.



TALKING WITH JESSE ALEXANDER

TVP: In preparing to speak with you, I was struck by how human your shots are. What did you try to portray in your pictures?

JA: I always tried to shoot more than just cars going through corners. There was so much more to the people – humor and friendship in the teams, the struggle of the mechanics to be ready to compete, the beautiful women who were in the pits – whatever I saw I shot, but always looking for the human element.

TVP: What is your most vivid recollection of the Aston Martin racing team?

JA: The first is John Wyer. He was a tough, disciplined leader. He had that famous stare that was very intimidating. Wyer was a man who thought through all aspects of what the team needed to do to win and ruled with determination. The second was Peter Collins, a very fine young man who had great talent and died too early.

TVP: What was the atmosphere like when you were working?

JA: It was very different from today. The atmosphere was both quite fun and deadly serious. The people that I knew well – Phil Hill, Stirling Moss – were like an extended family. Of course there was great danger, but we learned to live with it.

TVP: How did you do your job?

JA: I would travel, follow the racing calendar and take pictures as a photographer for various magazines of the day. I had a Porsche 356 that I used to travel across Europe.

I would arrive a day or so early at a racecourse and scout out the places on the circuit where I wanted to shoot. For a race at a circuit like the Nürburgring, I would have chosen four or five spots where I know I wanted to shoot. The rest of the event I would spend walking around and trying always to be alert to what was going on around me at all times. The camera was an extension of what I was seeing, and you had to be quick.

Another example was the Mille Miglia.





At that event I would wait for the better part of an entire day for cars to arrive at a given spot, and I had to be ready. I only got one chance. After that, many of my pictures came from walking around and observing and getting lucky. A shot would present itself.

TVP: Can you give me an example?

JA: I took a shot of a father with his little boy looking at a passing car at the Mille Miglia in 1955. I had been up on a hill photographing the entrants. As I was walk-

ing back to my car, one of the back-markers came past me and as I turned I saw a wonderfully composed shot of the father and son looking at the passing entrant.

TVP: Was there one person who you felt close to who you admired?

JA: Phil Hill. Phil was a man of many interests – classical music, art, fine food. He was a real gentleman.

TVP: Do you think it is possible to do what you did today?

JA: No, absolutely not. The events are more controlled and access to the drivers is limited. The whole atmosphere is now all about the commercial presentation.

TVP: What are you shooting these days?

JA: Birds. They are beautiful creatures, and I find they are just challenging as racecars. 🐦



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JOURNEY TO HALF MOON BAY

By Karen Stanway, Photos by Augie Kuo



Left to Right: Tony Blevins, Anni Lai, Joe and Lisa Viso, Rick Baker and Ana Fernandez Leon, Martin Morris.

Sixteen Aston Martin Club members had a wonderful day out on Saturday, September 18th. We started the day meeting at the downtown Los Gatos Luxury Cars showroom where Chris Coster had arranged a scrumptious breakfast. A V12 Vantage replica (modified from a V8) was viewed from every angle by wishful members thinking how good they would look in it streaming down the back roads and letting it rip along the straights. Augie Kuo took pictures worthy of a sales brochure, showing admiration for all the details (see pics).

After a visit with Adam Wittmayer and the crew of the dealership, our grand day out started with an inland drive through Saratoga onto Hwy 9 and winding through a bit of fog and beautiful landscape of trees and views. We enjoyed the switchbacks and gear changes up to Hwy 35 where we were





Left to right: Stuart Slamowitz, Rick Baker, Debbie Slamowitz, Ana Fernandez Leon.

able to practice our agility in avoiding adding a biker or two to the front bonnet! Although sharing the road slowed our progress, it was fabulous to drive all the way from Los Gatos to Half Moon Bay without touching a four-lane highway. There is something about looking down the road at a line of gorgeous Astons, all in different colors with various lovely haunches and hearing the purr of the engines as we worked through the gear changes that was just plain fun.

Our first stop in Half Moon Bay was at the Ritz Carlton. The greens made a fabulous photo opportunity. Tony Blevins and Anni Lai were able to show their British pride with Anni sporting a Union Jack dress and white boots that Nancy Sinatra would have been proud of. Tony complimented Anni in an Aston racing shirt and blazing British belt medallion (we won't mention the plaid sear sucker shorts...). Up and down the ranks we shared modification stories and new Aston purchases: gear boxes, stereos and plum upholstery.

We continued on a short distance down the sunny road to Cameron's Pub where we found two double-decker London



buses and other British memorabilia on display. Fish and chips and fresh-grilled burgers tasted pretty good - not to mention the 35 beers on tap! It was a lovely and casual way to end the drive and have a chance to visit with other club members.

Thanks to Augie Kuo and Tony Blevins for organizing such a lovely day. A touch of class, a bit of casual and a lot of good times! 🍷



Parham and Sheerin Ziapour, Eric and Francie Christenson.

RADNOR HUNT CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE

By Len Levin

Held on Sunday, September 12, the day was a rare day of rain in a summer that has been one of drought. However, the rain ended by 10 a.m., and it did not appear to have a severe impact on the show, either in terms of cars exhibited or spectator attendance.

The show featured the Studebaker marque, as well as body designs by Pininfarina. The show is advertised as the 100 cars of Radnor Hunt, and about that number appeared to be there.

AMOC members had a presence with two cars, a 1967 Lancia Flaminia Super Sport Zagato, shown by Ken Swanstrom, which won the Chairman's award, and a 1966 Aston DB6 Shooting Brake, shown by Dave Van Schaick.

Additionally, a just-restored DB4 GT was shown by a Lamont Dupont III, who does not appear to be an AMOC member. The restoration was first rate. 🍀



Member Ken Swanstrom's Lancia Flaminia Super Sport Zagato won the Chairman's award.



Shaking off the morning's rain was member David Von Schaick's 1966 DB6 Shooting Brake.

BUCKINGHAM CONCOURS

By Len Levin

Held on Sunday, September 19, just one week following Radnor, this was an unthemed general show. The show presenters claimed 200 cars. The weather cooperated, offering a day of brilliant sun, low humidity and temperatures near 80 degrees. Four AMOC members were in attendance, all showing cars. NJ Area Rep. Paul Saatsoglou showed a Virage and NJ member Wilfred Wong showed an almost identical Virage. This was rather amazing to me, as the Virage is rare among production Astons, and yet here were two of them, side by side. These are beautiful cars, and are presently substantially undervalued.

Show rules provide judging for cars 25 years old or older, so the two Virages were for display only. That certainly did not prevent Paul and Wil from enjoying a complimentary hot breakfast, as well as beautiful weather and some great cars.

In the Foreign Exotic category, Ken showed a Fiat Abarth 750 Zagato, which won the Best in Class award. I showed the Aston DBS. 📌



Above: Len Levin, Ken Swanstrom, Wil Wong and Paul Saatsoglou in the breakfast tent.



FAIRFIELD COUNTY CONCOURS 2010

By Andy Williams

Now in its seventh year, the Fairfield County Concours has arrived as a major East Coast car event. Attracting the best cars from around the country, the Westport, Connecticut show also featured a Bonham's auction, and photographer Jesse Alexander was a special guest.

A meeting with the show organizers last February led to their agreeing to have a special Aston Martin display, in light of the 75th anniversary of the AMOC. That is, if I could get six to ten significant cars. Little did I know the response would be strong enough to make Aston Martin its own judged class.

As in 2009, there was a special "club day" on September 11, the day before the concours. While the Mercedes and Porsche clubs were out in force, the 13 Astons in attendance easily outnumbered not only the Maserati folks, but the Ferrari club as well. Under a clear blue sky, members conversed with one another and attended seminars on topics ranging from car valuation to vintage racing. There was a good mix of cars from the 1950s and '60s on, up to current Vantage V8s and DB9s.

Saturday evening, a dinner was held at Madonia restaurant in Stamford. Following cocktails at 6 p.m., eight of us moved on to a private room for dinner at 7 p.m. With great food and wonderful conversation after a day with the cars, it was almost more Aston Martin overload than anyone could handle.

For Sunday's concours, another 13 cars were displayed, including four that the show organizers had registered. I tried to get at least one good example from each decade from the 1930s to the present, and a decade may have been missed, but overall it was a great presentation. The organizers strategically placed us in front of the Miller Motorcar tent so spectators had the opportunity to see everything from a pre-war Aston up to the latest Vantage V12 and Rapide. Kudos go to Richard Dillenbeck for bringing his 1937 15/98. Richard drove the open car well over an hour each way under questionable skies and despite chilly weather. Ironically, I was sans Aston Martin on the day as the organizers had asked me to show my Jaguar XK120 fhc.

At the end of the day, top honors went to Elliot Smith's freshly restored DB 2/4 MK III convertible. Karen Acker's fine DB5 took second, while Jim Utaski won a



"senior" award for his great DB5 convertible. There was much speculation as to what this award meant, causing Jim's wife to comment, "well, at least you didn't get the assisted-living award." It was subsequently revealed that this was a special award, sponsored by Miller Motorcars, for

the most exciting open vehicle, and one of the top prizes of the day.

Wayne Carini was present during the event, with his crew filming the Sunday activities for an episode of "Chasing Classic Cars." If you catch it on HD TV, you might just see some very fine Aston Martins. 🍷

Ecurie Bertelli

Vintage Aston Martins



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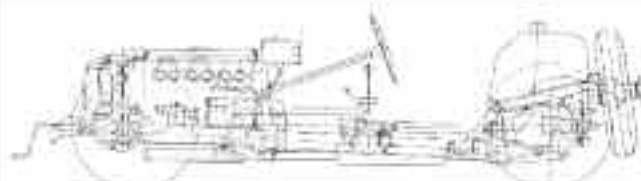
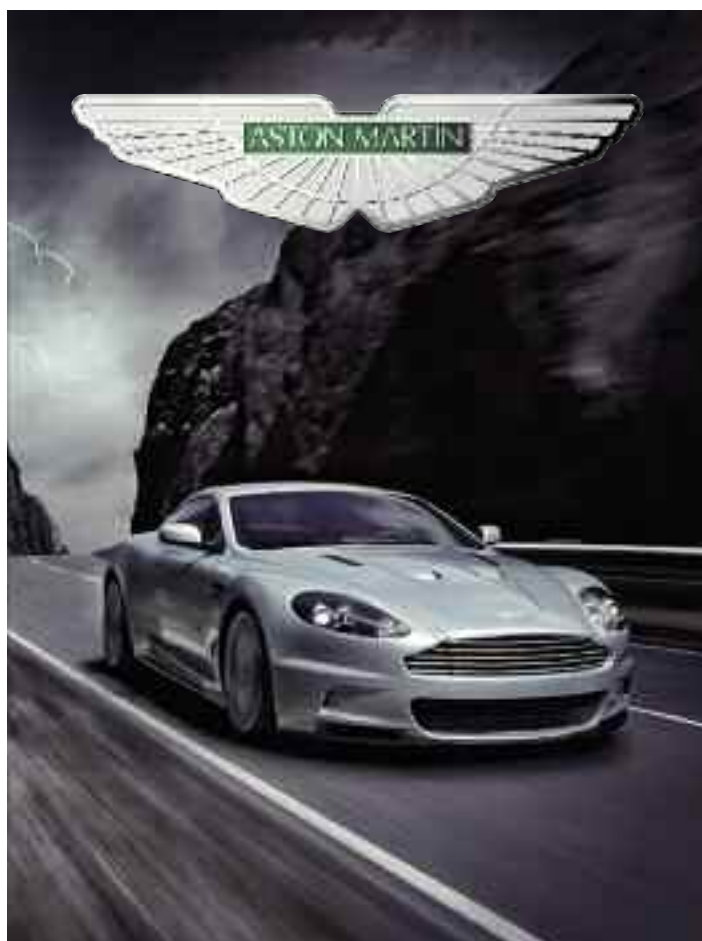
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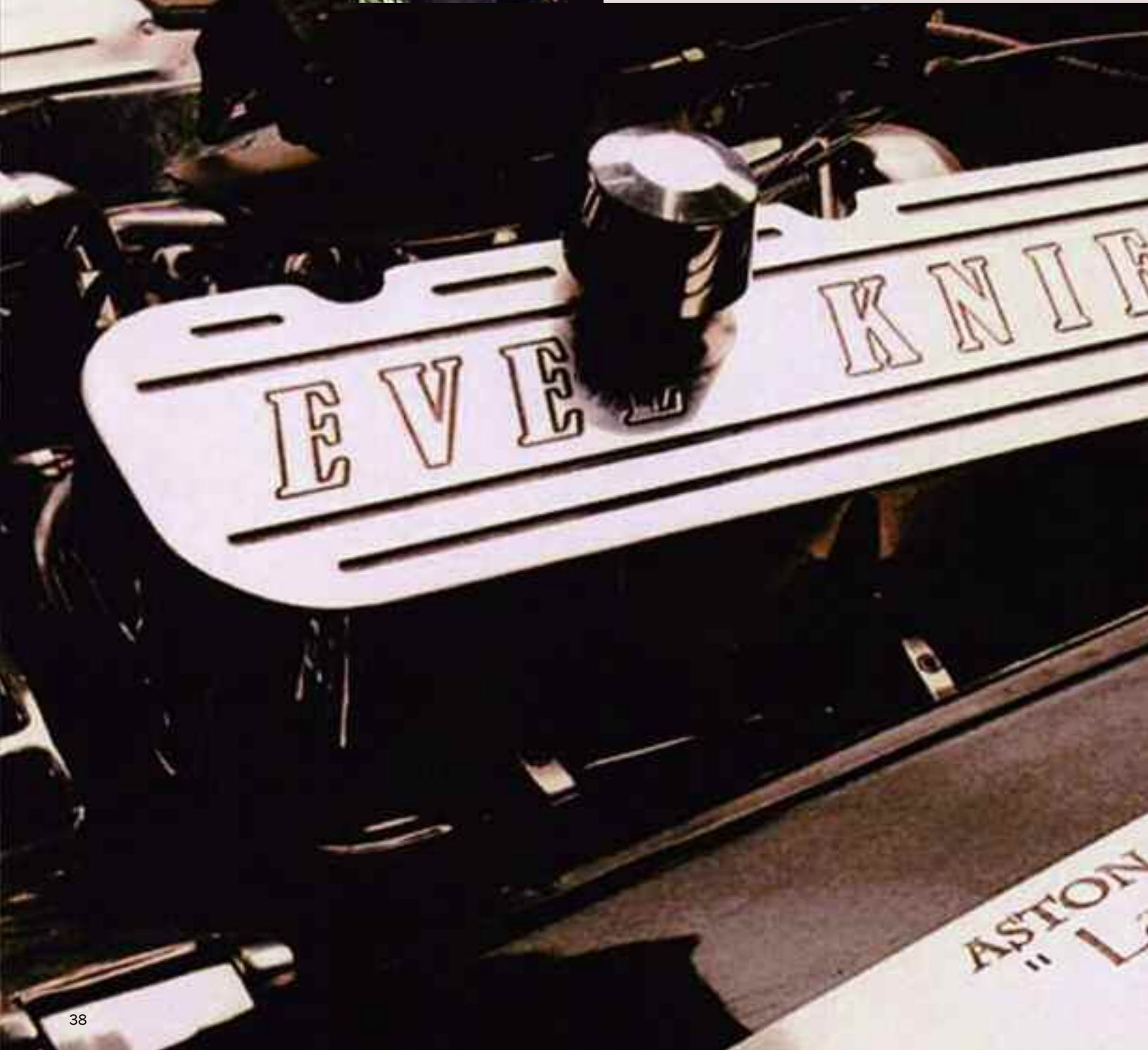
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LEGENDARY DAREDEVIL

EVEL KNIEVEL'S 300,000 MILE LAGONDA

By Robert D. H. Aft



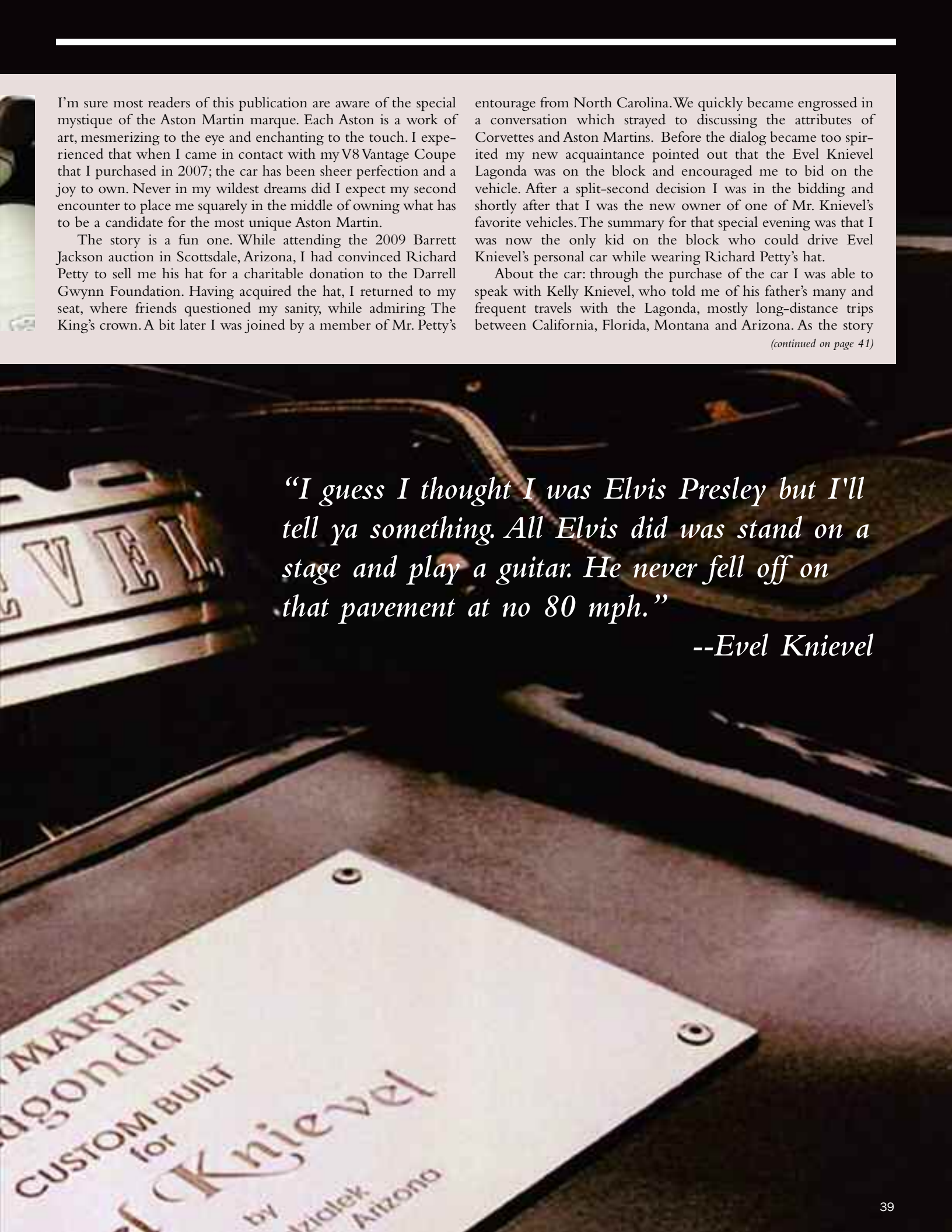
I'm sure most readers of this publication are aware of the special mystique of the Aston Martin marque. Each Aston is a work of art, mesmerizing to the eye and enchanting to the touch. I experienced that when I came in contact with my V8 Vantage Coupe that I purchased in 2007; the car has been sheer perfection and a joy to own. Never in my wildest dreams did I expect my second encounter to place me squarely in the middle of owning what has to be a candidate for the most unique Aston Martin.

The story is a fun one. While attending the 2009 Barrett Jackson auction in Scottsdale, Arizona, I had convinced Richard Petty to sell me his hat for a charitable donation to the Darrell Gwynn Foundation. Having acquired the hat, I returned to my seat, where friends questioned my sanity, while admiring The King's crown. A bit later I was joined by a member of Mr. Petty's

entourage from North Carolina. We quickly became engrossed in a conversation which strayed to discussing the attributes of Corvettes and Aston Martins. Before the dialog became too spirited my new acquaintance pointed out that the Evel Knievel Lagonda was on the block and encouraged me to bid on the vehicle. After a split-second decision I was in the bidding and shortly after that I was the new owner of one of Mr. Knievel's favorite vehicles. The summary for that special evening was that I was now the only kid on the block who could drive Evel Knievel's personal car while wearing Richard Petty's hat.

About the car: through the purchase of the car I was able to speak with Kelly Knievel, who told me of his father's many and frequent travels with the Lagonda, mostly long-distance trips between California, Florida, Montana and Arizona. As the story

(continued on page 41)



"I guess I thought I was Elvis Presley but I'll tell ya something. All Elvis did was stand on a stage and play a guitar. He never fell off on that pavement at no 80 mph."

--Evel Knievel



EBAY FIND OF THE DAY

EVEL KNIEVEL'S BIG-BLOCK 1984 ASTON MARTIN LAGONDA

by Chris Paukert



laden interior, along with the sheer scale of the thing (over 17 feet long) must've made it look like an aluminum-skinned spaceship when it hit the show scene in 1976. Launched with a 5.3-liter Weber-carbed V8 (and clunky Chrysler three-speed automatic), the performance didn't completely deliver on the Lagonda's avant-garde visuals, even though it was capable of 140 mph. Naturally, the Lagonda's habitually troublesome electronics didn't stop at least one Autoblog staffer from falling in love with its impossibly futuristic collection of angles.

It would seem that the author wasn't alone, either, as legendary stuntman Evel Knievel (best known for jumping his motorcycle over all and sundry) had a 1984 example heavily customized. Brooming the factory drivetrain [after 300,000 miles? Ed.] Knievel had a 502 big-block Chevrolet V8 shoehorned into the engine bay, along with an R-700 tranny and chromed side-exit

exhausts. Knievel then had the exterior redone in "Dark Blood Maroon" and reworked the interior in cream leather with matching maroon accents, sourcing many bits from Rolls Royce. The result appears to be a car that rectifies shortcomings of the original Lagonda (relative lack of power, glitch-prone interior electrics, etc.). Of course, the reliability issue remains an open question, and Chevrolet driveline or no, we can't imagine this thing being an inexpensive proposition to sort out if it's in a bad way.

Not that it's cheap to begin with. The asking price for Evel's is a stout \$149,999. But hey, the Lagonda is arguably the Godfather of ICE (In-Car-Entertainment), having had color televisions as options (front and rear, thank you) as early as 1983, and a CRT-equipped multilingual talking dashboard by 1984. We're still waiting for P. Diddy to cotton on and use one in his next video.

Pricy though it may be, with the storied daredevil Knievel putting the car up for sale on account of his recent stroke and Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis diagnosis, perhaps the buyer will have a chance to help a legend out — and that's got to be worth something.



TOY STORY

BARRETT JACKSON CATALOG 2009: 1984 ASTON MARTIN LAGONDA

Evel Knievel drove this 1984 Aston Martin Lagonda cross country countless times in 19 years, putting over 300,000 miles on the original engine. This vehicle was synonymous with Evel's flamboyant image, and in 1999 the Johnny Lightning toy company created a die cast collectible replica capturing every detail of this original car, including the custom side pipes and vented hood. Even though this was a luxury sedan vehicle measuring over 17 feet long, the car was heavily customized by Galpin Aston in California and features a 502cid big-block Chevrolet V8 engine, R-700 automatic transmission, cream leather upholstery and a mirrored finish on the underside of the hood. In addition, the engine has many custom details reflecting the Evel Knievel flair. This Lagonda is absolutely a one-of-a-kind creation. Plus, Evel actually changed the paint color in 2001 from the original black to an Oxblood Maroon because "he always wanted to see this model car in this unique color."

Robert Craig "Evel" Knievel (October 17, 1938 - November 30, 2007) was an American motorcycle daredevil, an entertainer famous in the United States and elsewhere between the late 1960s and early 1980s and a legendary Icon today. Knievel's nationally televised motorcycle jumps, including his 1974 attempt to jump Snake River Canyon at Twin Falls, Idaho, represent four of the 20 most-watched ABC's Wide World of Sports events to date. His achievements and failures, including his record number of broken bones, earned him several entries in the Guinness Book of World Records.



(continued from page 39)

goes, Evel had a trailer that he pulled with the Lagonda. Sadly, the trailer fell into disrepair and consequently to its demise. A toy company, Johnny Lightning, commemorated Evel's Lagonda in a scale model in its original black paint. Through internet research I have found pictures of the car with the F-15s flown by the Thunderbirds as well as with the pilots of the fighter jets. Iconic. I was told the car traveled some 300,000 miles [on its Aston V8 engine?] before undergoing a transformation that might bring pause to the Aston Martin purist.

For the Lagonda's second life, Evel elected to redo the interior with a sumptuous Rolls Royce leather interior, done at Galpin Aston Martin in California. To boost the horsepower, a Chevrolet 502 cubic inch V8 engine, coupled with a complementary robust transmission, was shoehorned under the hood by Al Kurdzialek. Once the mechanicals were completed, the car was adorned with a deep burgundy paint job. With some aerodynamic modifications, and a set of side pipes to awaken the senses, the makeover was completed to Mr. Knievel's tastes.

Recently, The "Evel" Aston had its first outing at the Essex Car Club's show in Essex, Connecticut. The car's unique shape drew many viewers whose initial curiosity was rewarded by finding the identity of its notorious celebrity.

So, what's it like to be the car's curator? Well, it's a lot of fun. I had the opportunity to meet David Richards at Le Mans 2009 and couldn't resist telling him about the car. Mr. Richard's astonishment piqued at hearing of the car's lengthy travels and I elected not to share the fact that the car now sported the heartbeat of an American beast. Another part is getting to share time with a vehicle that was such a close part of such an interestingly American icon and personality. 🍷



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ENGAGEMENT WITH RAPIDE

By Eric Stephans

The alarm went off at 3:30 a.m. Since we had been up late packing, we felt like we had just gone to sleep. Our flight from Los Angeles to Miami was at 6 a.m., so at least we really didn't feel that rushed. We headed out the door to our awaiting taxi after anticipating this vacation trip for many months. The plan: fly to Miami for two days, then fly out to the Bahamas to enjoy Dawne's family for another eight days. I was tired and excited at the same time. You see, I had a big secret in store for Dawne. I had stashed it in a side compartment of her purse that morning before we left for the airport.

Our story together started back on July 5, 2005. It was my first day working with the Aston Martin brand. I had just been hired as the service manager for

the newly appointed Aston Martin Tyson's Corner store, 20 miles west of Washington, D.C. My first day began by familiarizing myself with the dealership. Phillip Jones, Aston brand manager, led me around, introducing me to technicians and support staff in service. Then we headed to the showroom to see the cars.

As I walked into the showroom, directly in front of me were three Aston Martins, a Vanquish S and two DB9 coupes. They were absolutely gorgeous. I looked to my right and noticed a lovely young lady sitting behind the desk. Phillip introduced us and in his wonderful British accent said, Dawne Czarny, I would like you to meet our new service manager, Eric Stephans. Our eyes met. I was completely taken by her beauty and charm. I quickly collected myself and said, it is lovely to meet you, Dawne. She replied, it is a pleasure meeting you as well, Eric. How was I to know that a year later we would begin a romance that would take us throughout Europe and across the United States?

Three years into our relationship I was offered the service director position at Aston Martin of Beverly Hills, and I promised her that if she went with me, I would make her an honest woman. Once Bruce Frederick, president of the O'Gara Coach Company, "Aston Martin of Beverly Hills," found out who Dawne was, he immediately hired her as a sales associate.



ON TO VACATION IN MIAMI, FLORIDA: Because of our close relations with the Aston Martin brand family, I asked Julian Jenkins if it would be possible to use a Rapide for this occasion. He graciously agreed with one stipulation. "Eric, she had better say yes!" I told Dawne about the use of the Rapide so she would not suspect anything. If we would have just shown up in Miami and gone to pick up a Rapide, I think she would have figured it out. I told her that I was unable to attend formal Rapide training and I was being given this opportunity because the press fleet was not being utilized that weekend.

The trip from Marina Del Rey to LAX only takes 20 minutes. On the cab ride I thought about just how clever I had been leading up to this point. You see, I had Dawne's engagement ring made for her a month earlier. Once I got it home I had no clue where to hide it. I walked all over the house until a brilliant idea hit me. What better place to hide jewelry from a woman than in her own jewelry box. The ring box was camouflaged nicely amongst all the empty fuzzy jewelry boxes in the bottom drawer. So when we left for vacation I retrieved the ring and stuffed it in a side compartment of her purse. My original plan was to grab it out of the jewelry box and stuff it into my luggage. As I was walking out of our bedroom, I spotted the white purse she had bought just for this. It





had two unusual outside zipper pockets — clearly trendy and not very functional. I opened the one on the left side and tossed in the ring box. It was quite risky, but funny at the same time. She was actually going to carry her own engagement ring through airport security.

At 4:45 a.m., the taxi arrived at the terminal. We were feeling pretty good about being 75 minutes early for a 6 a.m. flight. Once inside, it became clear that we had seriously underestimated the time necessary to get through security. The line was ridiculously long with only one section open. As we approached the escalator leading up to the security checkpoint Dawne was notified by a TSA officer that she could only carry two bags. The guard told Dawne she could not have three carry-on items, pointing to a sign that clearly stated so. Dawne began an argument she was not going to win. After a short verbal sparring match, Dawne stepped aside and began removing everything from her purse. I was wondering what she was doing. Then she placed the purse on top of the trashcan. I picked it up immediately and said, “What are you doing?” She replied I am throwing my bag away. I said your new white purse? She replied, no silly, I’m going to throw away my beach bag! It was only nine bucks. So by moving everything out of my purse I can stuff it into my carry on. Once she had removed everything and stuffed it into her carry on we headed up the escalator to the end of the security line.

After an eternity, we got through security. I looked down at my

watch; we were cutting it very close. We ran all the way to our gate. Once we boarded we began to relax. We left the gate on time and were soon airborne. Dawne dozed off in my lap. I started thinking back to the beginning of our Aston Martin experience and the trip that solidified and defined our relationship.

In the spring of 2006 Dawne and I were sent to Sebring, Florida for the 12-hour race, and the debut of Aston Martin’s DBR9 GT1 racecars. We were very excited to be part of it. We were hosting a couple of our clients there. During the race I asked Dawne if she had ever been to South Beach in Miami; she had not. After the race I said, let’s head down there for a few days. She agreed and we headed south from Sebring. Once in Miami, I could tell that Dawne was enjoying herself. From the magnificent Art Deco hotels along Collins Avenue to the wonderful shops and restaurants down Lincoln Boulevard, South Beach has a great vibe. We made it one of our favorite places to hide from the world.

Flash forward to 2010: We landed in Miami just after lunchtime and taxied to our gate. As the flight attendant swung open the cabin door we felt a rush of humid South Florida air entering the plane. I had not experienced humidity in a few years and was kind of looking forward to it, a nice change from the arid desert climate of Southern California where we lived now. We collected our luggage from the baggage carousel and exited the terminal. The bright sunshine and lush greenery reminded me of why I love Florida. After walking about 20 feet my shirt turned wet



from the humidity and I was reminded of why we moved to Southern California. You have to love Florida in the summer.

I hailed a cab and we headed off to pick up the Rapide at the fleet management company for Aston Martin (and other manufacturers) hired by AML to manage the press and marketing drives for the brand. Once we arrived we spotted our Rapide just inside the garage. It was Casino Royal with Obsidian interior, accented with gray stitching. As we walked up we noticed immediately how exact the fit and finish was. This was my first time seeing the Rapide in person and it was stunning! Compared to its competitors, it was much more aesthetically pleasing. It immediately evoked that feeling one gets when you see an incredible piece of art work. I was truly moved by its beauty. After an extensive walk around, I signed my life away and we were off to South Beach.

On the road Rapide showed me why everyone was so excited. The fitted Bilstein suspension ate up the uneven concrete of South Florida side streets. We entered the highway and the 470 hp, 6-liter power plant accelerated the Rapide from zero to 60 in just under five seconds. Not bad for a car weighing more than two tons. This was my first experience behind the wheel of the Rapide. I thought back to the original concept car we saw pictures of in 2006. I remember seeing it fitted with an amazing glass-paneled roof. It made the cabin look so expansive. I brought along my original concept Rapide press kit sent to dealers after the car was unveiled for comparison. When the Rapide was first shown, it was just a

concept, but unlike concepts from other manufacturers, it could actually be driven. The production version seemed so much more refined than the concept. Dawne and I were very impressed at the handling and smooth acceleration.

With rapid progress we were on Collins Avenue headed into the circular drive of the Loews Hotel in the epicenter of South Beach. As we pulled in we created quite a buzz. The valets scrambled to open the doors for us. As we exited we looked at each other and smiled. We had been at the Loews for a total of two minutes and the Rapide was already drawing a crowd. As we walked toward the lobby, several people stopped us to ask about the car. After a brief Q&A session we entered the beautiful lobby. We looked back: the valets had parked the Rapide right out front. It was still drawing attention as we walked up to the reception desk. I had called ahead and informed the staff of my diabolical plans, so they were all in on it. Since we had stayed at the Loews several times before they were gracious enough to upgrade us to an upper floor suite — a very nice surprise.

After check-in we went up to our suite, and we stepped inside. I knew right away this was where I was going to ask Dawne to be my wife. The suite was incredible; it had recently been remodeled. All the furniture, fixtures, carpeting and you name it had been replaced. My eyes were instantly drawn to a love seat sitting off to the left side of the huge sliding glass doors to the balcony. The balcony offered an amazing full ocean view. You see, my original plan was to drive Dawne down to Marathon Key in the Rapide and ask her to marry me at a resort we had stayed in before. Now that the Loews had made that plan obsolete; it was time to put this new plan into high gear. I called the concierge and requested a 7:30 p.m. reservation at Emerald's restaurant, located next door on the Loews property. At 7:20 p.m. we were dressed and headed down to the Lobby and over to Emerald's.

Inside the restaurant the maitre d' seated us at a lovely table. Moments later a server handed us menus and discussed the specials of the evening. Then the sommelier came to suggest wine. We chose a lovely 2005 Silver Oak, Alexander Valley Cabernet Sauvignon. Once we finished our dinner and declined desserts, the sommelier came back to the table carrying two crystal red wine glasses. He suggested that we take the unfinished half bottle of Silver Oak back to our room to enjoy. I had excused myself from the table earlier and made that request of him. Dawne absolutely loved that idea. In the elevator up to the room, she remarked at how nice it would be to enjoy the wine on our balcony overlooking the ocean. Then we could walk down to Lincoln Boulevard for dessert and coffee. I could not believe how well this was going. Once we returned to the room I poured two glasses of wine. I turned around and Dawne had just set her purse down on the love seat. I handed her a glass and we toasted. A few moments went by and I insisted she take a seat. She looked at me kind of funny, then sat down. I then asked her to reach inside the left zipper pocket of her purse. She said why; there's nothing in those pockets. Again I said, just unzip the left one and hand me what is inside. She turned, unzipped the pocket, reached inside and felt the little fuzzy black box. Her eyes immediately lit up and she began to jump up. I told her to sit back down and hand me the box. She had the biggest smile I have ever seen on her face. I got down on one knee and said, Dawne, I loved you then, I love you now and I will love you always. I want you to be my wife. I opened the box and placed the ring on her finger. I guess I did well, because she looked at the ring in amazement for about ten seconds before saying anything. Then she said you have to ask me! I said what do you mean? She said you have to ask me. Then it hit me, I really did not ask her to marry me. So I got back down on my knee and said, Dawne will you be my wife? She looked at me and said "Yes."

We arose early the next morning and headed down to Marcell's



Hotel for breakfast, one of those marvelous art deco hotels from the '30s, with a huge open-air front porch dining area that is perfect for people-watching. After breakfast it was back to the Loews to retrieve the Rapide. We were both looking forward to the drive down through the Keys. From Miami to Key West is approximately 165 miles through some of the most eclectic areas in the states. We headed out onto A1A South and were soon on the causeway. The weather was typical South Florida summer, scattered thundershowers with massive breaks of sunshine. Between Key Largo and Islamorada Key we hit a torrential downpour — a literal deluge of water for over 10 minutes. I commented to Dawne that it felt more like Aston Martin wet weather testing than a familiarization drive. Despite the monsoon, the Rapide's handling and performance were barely affected. Soon we were in Marathon Key, pulling up in front of the Key Fisheries Restaurant. One of those great places where the locals eat, it sits atop a fishing pier with covered open-air seating all the way around. While you eat you are literally surrounded by schools of giant tarpon. If you love fresh fish, and peel-and-eat Key shrimp, you will love this place. We pulled the Rapide right up under the sign out front, a great photo opportunity. After lunch we were back on the road and heading to Big Pine Key. We were really enjoying the Bang & Olufsen entertainment system. The surround sound was amazing, even in the larger cabin of the Rapide. I was utilizing the multi-position driver's seat settings, including the new cool-seat option. Soon we were heading into Key West. Our first objective was to

get down to the U.S. zero-mile marker, the southernmost point in the continental United States. We had a few sights we wanted to revisit: Hemingway's house, Southern House, the shops along Duvall Street and, of course, the Key Lime Pie Factory. Yes, that's right, the main reason for coming down to the Keys was the seafood and the Key Lime Pie Factory!

After we entertained ourselves playing with Polydactyl kitties at Hemingway's house and watching locals walking up and down

*In the words of Julia
Roberts from the movie
Pretty Woman, "This thing
rides like it's on rails."*

Duval Street, we enjoyed a Key West sunset. It was time to depart and head north to Miami. As we left Key West, it was Dawne's turn behind the wheel. As a former Aston Martin sales associate who had sold and driven everything from DB7 to DBS, I wanted to know how she felt about the Rapide in her own words.

Dawne: *When Eric told me that I would have the opportunity to drive the*

Rapide, my first thought was, I have already driven a DB9. How different could it be?! I figured maybe a little slower from the weight of the extra two doors and maybe a little less agile from the length. Well, halfway into the two-hour drive, and the notorious Florida weather, I was truly surprised. I was behind the wheel, sitting comfortably in my air-conditioned seat, yet felt like I could have been on the track at Ascari. In the words of Julia Roberts in the movie Pretty Woman, "this thing rides like it's on rails." The car molded to me like a hair dryer on a shrink-wrapped package. I was in love...with the Rapide (and Eric).

If you have not had the opportunity to drive the new Rapide, Dawne and I highly recommend that you contact your local Aston Martin retailer and schedule a test drive today. 📍



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2010-2011 AMOC NORTH AMERICA EVENT SCHEDULE

Please contact your Area Rep for additional details and information.

December

NY 3
New York Christmas luncheon Perigord restaurant.

CA 5
California AMOC West/So Cal Lunch at Gulliver's.

MA 23
Massachusetts AMOC Pub Night at Jacob Wirth's Restaurant, Boston.

January

MA 20
Massachusetts AMOC Pub Night at Jacob Wirth's Restaurant, Boston.

FL 21
Florida AMOC at Cavallino "Tour de Palm Beaches" starting at The Breakers, ending at the Cavallino Yacht Hop Party at Rybovich.

IL 22
AMOC Winter Warm-Up – AMOC Members Dinner. A dinner while your Aston sleeps to renew old club acquaintances or make new ones. Held in the Chicago area.

FL 23
Florida "Classic Sports Sunday" benefits American Society for the Blind at Mar a Lago Estate in Palm Beach.

CA 30
California AMOC West/So Cal at the Petersen Museum, Lunch at Tom Bergins.

February

MA 24
Massachusetts AMOC Pub Night at Jacob Wirth's Restaurant, Boston.

March

FL 11
Florida Amelia Island Concours AMOC Meet & Greet Lunch Friday 11:30 a.m.

MA 24
Massachusetts AMOC Pub Night at Jacob Wirth's Restaurant, Boston.

May

NJ 22
New Jersey "Spring Drive at the Jersey Shore" brunch at the Avenue Restaurant, Long Branch.

June

IL 5
Champagne British Car Festival – Bloomington, Illinois. All-British car show held in central Illinois.

WI 19
Sussex British Car Field Day – Sussex, Wisconsin. All British car and motorcycle show.

CT 24-26
Connecticut Lime Rock Classic, Troutbeck Resort, Amenia, N.Y.

July

WI 16
Kohler International Challenge – Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin. Our premier event. Concours with drinks and hors d'oeuvres in Elkhart Lake, sponsored by the AMOC and Lake Forest Sports Cars.

IL 23
AMOC Open House – Lake Forest. Informal meet held at John Koziel's home at 415 W. Everett Avenue, Lake Forest.

NJ 31
New Jersey "Mid Summer Drive", brunch at the Jasna Polana Club Princeton.

August

WI 20
American Le Mans Series – Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin. ALMS Race at Road America.

IL 28
Geneva Concours d'Elegance – Geneva, Illinois. Formal concours on the closed streets of Geneva.

September

IL 11
Chicago British Car Festival – Des Plaines, Illinois. All-British car show.

October

IL 2
Lake Forest Sports Cars Concours d'Elegance – Lake Forest, Illinois. Informal concours for Ferrari, Aston Martin and Maserati cars at our area dealer.

Ongoing AMOC Pub Night (Midwest) – Continuing our 4th Thursday of the month informal meetings at a pub spot for dinner and conversation. Restarting on February 24, monthly through October 27. Lago Estate in Palm Beach, FL

SUNSHINE, SPEED AND A SURPRISE: The 1959 Grand Prix of The United States

By Joel E. Finn, Garnet Hill Publishing Co. Inc. Roxbury, CT, 2006, printed in Hong Kong. Hardbound, dustcover, 239 pages, lavishly illustrated with 330 black & white photographs. ISBN 0-9647769-2-8. Large, landscape format, approx. 12" x 9" x 3/4". Seven chapters and appendix: Chapters as follows:

Introduction

1. United States Racing Background
 2. Sebring - Dream to Reality
 3. 1959 F1 Prospects and Races
 4. The Formula Junior Race
 5. The Compact Car Race
 6. GP Problems & Practices
 7. The GP Race
- Appendix - Lap Charts

Expository writing: there is a school teacher and a college professor somewhere here or in the hereafter who takes pride in their former student, Joel E. Finn, for his clarity of expression. Mr. Finn is able to marshal data, and interweave anecdotes and his first-person observations into a compelling and clear narrative on what resulted in and at the first U.S. Grand Prix, at Sebring in late 1959.

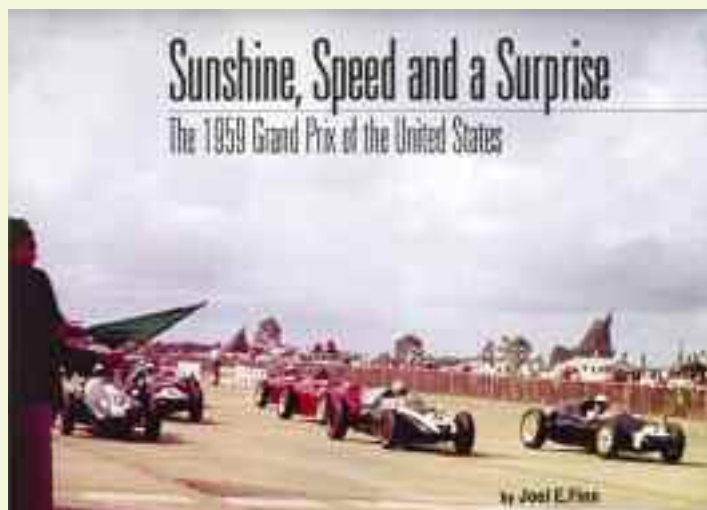
Let the past be prologue (or foreplay) as Finn traces how Alec Ulmann built up Sebring as a must-do event for French, British, Italian, German and American teams (among others) in the early 1950s, and then angled for the first Formula 1 event here.

Sebring, such an exotic name in the 1950s [and now], far away in Central Florida from the northern climes, and a racing destination before Eisenhower's Interstate system was completed, back when propeller-driven aircraft needed a fuel stop to get from the Northeast to Florida.

How to approach *Sunshine*? This is not a little paperback to read in the morning while straphanging your way into the financial district: the landscape format begs for a comfy armchair, or a table as you take in the broad horizons of Sebring in the superb photos. You recall how you learned to skim a book by scanning the table of contents, and zoom over the pages before reading word for word? Such a technique is useful here, both to absorb the scholarly detail, and to appreciate the excellent visuals. As editor of the Aston Martin club magazine for North America, I appreciate photos rich in texture and content, and in this book one can revel in images so rich in pictorial "real estate" that many could be candidates for a magazine cover.

Sunshine's first half outlines how Alec Ulmann scored the first USGP event for the end of the racing season in 1959. Then the second part of the book describes what a three-ring circus the actual weekend was:

- Compact Car race
- Formula Junior race
- F1 race



Just as you are getting the cars and teams sorted out, Finn weaves in some of the social context: rivalry with Bill France and NASCAR, cultural clash between Americans and Europeans, a bit of the clash in American culture. The hottest part of *Sunshine* is the sense of "who is who" in late 1950s motor racing; as an Aston guy I am pleased to find accounts of George Constantine and Rex Woodgate on scene, with Constantine taking a remarkable drive in a... Corvair! Local Sebring lad Reggie Smith appears (the Spring 2010 AMOC magazine just reported his 1983 Sebring race in a Nimrod Aston to gain the best Nimrod finish in any IMSA setting).

Formula Junior race gives context to cars we now see in VSCDA and VSCCA events.

The F1 race account is superb, with Brabham's sweaty push of his dead racecar over the finish line, even as the young Bruce McLaren scores his first F1 victory after the famous guys break along the way. [Vintage racing mantra: "to finish first, first you must finish."] The Brabham desperate push of a dead car inspired at least one movie scene that I recall from childhood!

Joel Finn was credentialed as a race worker, and combines his first person accounts with superb research. Anyone who has attended a motor race, even today with in-car cameras and simultaneous screens and reporters, knows how hard it is to get the "real story" beyond what might come out of the timing and scoring booth - the "fog of war" is lifted in this narrative by Mr. Finn's craft not just as a witness, but as a solid researcher. Let's give this paper an A+, and a star position in a complete motorsport library. 📌

Reviewer: Nick Candee attended his first motor race at the Milwaukee Mile in the early 1950s, getting grit in his eye, and the seductive smell of methanol in his nose. His first AMOC and VSCCA event was Mount Equinox 1973, which he reported in the WEST BEND NEWS, and he has been vintage racing with and writing about Astons since.

INSIDE THE ARCHIVES Reviewed by Jim Hazen

By Jesse Alexander. David Bull Publishing, Scottsdale-2010
Hardcover, 11" x 13", 96 pages;
43 black-and-white and 35 color photographs.
ISBN-13: 978-1-935007-10-4
\$75.00

As I've built a library of auto related books over the years there are a few that I cherish over others. These are the ones I'll never part with. Inside the Archives by Jesse Alexander joins that list.

This newly published work from David Bull Publishing is beautifully rendered and its large format makes the photos come alive. And what photos these are! Taken over the period from 1953 to 1966 in such diverse venues as Monaco, LeMans, Casablanca, Indianapolis and the Bonneville Salt Flats, they are both spectacular in detail and of a period that is long past. Words simply cannot do justice to this fine work, but here goes.

As with Jesse's other works, it is not just the cars but also the people that make these images so special. The diversity of shots includes: Drivers and crew surrounding a salt covered hot rod at the Bonneville Flats during Speed Week; A young Sicilian boy stands at the back of an open trailer to watch the Porsche Team unload their cars in the town of Cefalu before the 1960 Targa Florio; Bright red Maserati racecars moving slowly through a crowd of onlookers as they make their way to scrutineering for the 1955 LeMans 24-hour race. And these are just a few of the shots in the first dozen pages.

Of the Jesse Alexander photos featured in this issue of *The Vantage Point*, the color image of the DBR1 racecar at the Nürburgring and the shot of Stirling Moss jumping down from the pit wall to take over the DB3S are part of *Inside the Archives*.

If I had to pick a favorite, I would have to choose the picture on pages 56 and 57. It's a masterful shot of the American driver Phil Hill conferring with his Belgian driving partner Olivier Gendebien. On the verge of winning the 1958 LeMans 24-hour race for Ferrari, they are covered from the neck down in rain gear as they were pelted with torrential rain the night before in an open car. The racing driver and journalist Denise McCluggage crouches on the pit wall above them, camera ready, and all around looking down are spectators, each looking at a different angle, each with their own thoughts. A wonderfully composed work that is completely public but filled with intimate moments.

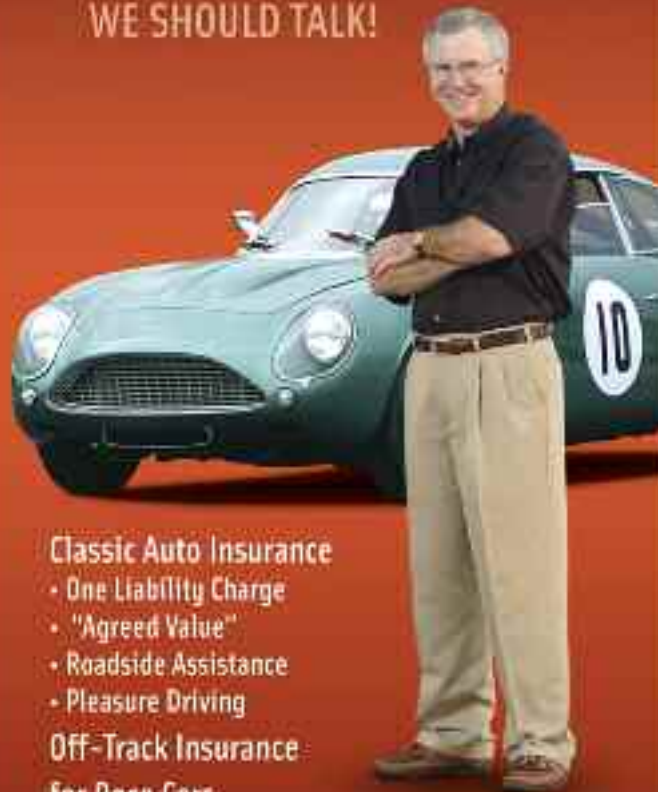
If you like cars, if you are interested in photography or if just appreciate the work of a master craftsman, *Inside the Archives* by Jesse Alexander is a must for your collection. I highly recommend it.

To obtain a copy visit <http://www.bullpublishing.com>.



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