

ZENITH AWARD



AACA'S PINNACLE OF
ACHIEVEMENT FOR
AUTOMOTIVE RESTORATION



Zenith Award Trophy
Recognizing the most outstanding restoration
of the year at an AACA National Meet.

2017
1928 AUBURN 8-88 SPEEDSTER
RICHARD & BELEN HARDING, BEAVERCREEK, OH

2018
1935 PACKARD 1204 SUPER 8
GREG AND CHERI HAACK, FREEPORT, IL

2019
1931 BUICK 8-94 SPORT ROADSTER
DAVID M. LANDOW, BETHESDA, MD

2020
1958 BUICK CENTURY CABARET
JOE AND JULIET TONETTO, TRAY, VA

2021
1907 LOCOMOBILE 48 BODIED BY FARNHAM & NELSON
JOHN McALPIN, NAPLES, FL

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STEVE MOSKOWITZ



Two years of highly intensive planning by the Mississippi Valley Region have gone into what promises to be a spectacular presentation of this year's Grand Nationals and Zenith Award competition in Bettendorf, Iowa. For members unfamiliar with the Zenith Award, now in its seventh year, ANTIQUE AUTOMOBILE editors West Peterson and David Landow have produced this special program in which Landow's article "The Pinnacle of Achievement for Automotive Restoration," concisely explains the history and workings of the Club's Zenith Award.

While this publication recognizes members who have been fortunate to have been selected to compete for the Zenith Award, the competition is equally a tribute to every AACA member. Each member who has restored an automobile—and thereby saved the history surrounding it—has laid the foundation for the Club's entire awards program. As our members have continually raised the standard for automobile restoration, AACA responded with the creation of the National Awards, and later, the Grand Nationals awards. With so many AACA members being focused upon increasing the quality and attention to even the smallest details of their restorations, in 2016 an additional award program was created to recognize such distinct levels of superior workmanship. The Zenith Award truly represents an important continued progression of the Club's judging and awards system.

Because only two outstanding vehicles are selected from each nationals, a genuine seriousness of purpose is required from the team of judges responsible for selecting Zenith nominees. Nowhere will you find a better representation of the restoration capabilities of our members, and the lengths of perfection and authenticity they are able to achieve, than in the field for this year's Zenith competition. Each vehicle is stunning in every respect and worthy of winning the Zenith Award Trophy.

Since its 1935 founding, AACA has focused on the preservation of antique automobiles and their history. Nowhere is this better conveyed than in the Club's time-tested impartial judging system, today handled by more than a thousand judges accredited through AACA's judging schools. It is a judging system that has continually evolved to meet the needs of the Club's ever-expanding membership, who continue to push levels of restoration authenticity and perfection to a point that would astound AACA's original founders.

It seems like yesterday that Tom Cox first envisioned an AACA award to recognize the best restoration of the year that would be equal in notoriety to the most significant awards that the hot rod and concours communities present with much fanfare. Given AACA's importance to the preservation and restoration of antique automobiles, Tom believed it was paramount to AACA's future that it offer a counterpart award that would garner equal mainstream publicity. The goal was to further introduce the Club to a wider audience, ultimately making our award equally as prestigious as the Detroit Autorama Ridler Award or the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance Best of Show. It is safe to say that we are close to achieving Tom's goal, and many will argue we have already done so, because each year as the Zenith Award has gained further notoriety and significance, news and social media coverage has dramatically increased, thereby increasing awareness of AACA.

AACA and the antique automobile hobby are very diverse. People participate in many ways, including preservation, touring, and restoration. AACA finds each path to be equally important and respects all members' vehicles. The Zenith Award is AACA's way of recognizing those who revel in the challenge of exceeding restoration excellence by seeking to attain an even higher standard of quality while retaining authenticity.

Our sincere best wishes go to this year's Zenith nominees, and to every participant at this year's Grand Nationals. We hope you enjoy this specially printed program. Much appreciation is owed to Mary Bartemeyer and the Mississippi Valley Region in the Quad Cities area for hosting this year's events. Make sure to save the dates for all of the pageantry next year when the Hornets Nest Region will host dual nationals—the Southeastern Spring Nationals and the Annual Grand Nationals—along with the Zenith Award competition in Charlotte, North Carolina on April 4-6, 2024.

My best to all of you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Steve Moskowitz'.

THE PINNACLE OF ACHIEVEMENT FOR AUTOMOTIVE RESTORATION



by David M. Landow
AACA Vice President— National Headquarters and Library

As the Antique Automobile Club of America closes in on its 90th anniversary, its 14 founders would be proud of the organization they originated in 1935. The Club has grown to become the largest and most inclusive—and arguably the most esteemed—general-marque automobile club in the world, distinctions for which AACA leadership

Two-time AACA Past President Tom Cox has always been particularly cognizant of such things. Cox believed there was no better way to express AACA's on-going desire for quality and distinction than with an award that would signify the same. With the intensive media coverage that swirls around the top awards presented annually at noteworthy automotive events, such as the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance, Detroit Autorama (its Ridler Award presented for creativity, engineering, and workmanship), and the Grand National Roadster Show (its AMBR Award presented to America's most beautiful roadster), and given AACA's significance within the antique automobile community, Cox concluded that the Club deserved its own pinnacle award. Discussions began among Cox and AACA

takes great pride and works diligently to sustain. AACA recognizes every marque of automobile, truck, and motorcycle that is factory-assembled and at least 25 years old, regardless of where manufactured. With such an expansive range and period of eligible vehicles, and with an additional year of production becoming eligible every year, AACA now provides its services and events to more than 55,000 members worldwide.

Nowhere is AACA's significance better conveyed among antique automobile enthusiasts than in the hierarchy of Club awards that can be earned, which are signified by various grille badges that are well-recognized and respected monikers for restoration and preservation excellence. AACA could easily rest on the laurels of its well-earned reputation for judging excellence, but expanding and improving the Club, and its many offerings to members, has also always been at the forefront of its goals—a mantra that has served the Club well and has been faithfully carried forward as AACA's leadership has changed throughout the years.



It's not the Destination. It's the Journey.

— Ralph Waldo Emerson



Chief Executive Officer Steve Moskowitz about how to create a notable award that would recognize superior restoration achievement and that would be on par—and would enjoy comparable notoriety—to other nationally recognized awards.

Cox and Moskowitz researched the criteria surrounding many other significant automotive awards, and after much brainstorming, they reached a consensus. In 2015, they proposed an awards program to the AACA's board of directors that would be substantially different from—but would be compatible with—AACA's Grand Nationals and National Awards programs, both of which sit atop the AACA awards hierarchy. The two received board approval of an entirely new AACA event where the crème de la crème of automobile restorations would compete for one signature award to be presented for most outstanding restoration of the year—the “Zenith Award Trophy.” The competition would be held annually at each Grand Nationals. Moskowitz explained that “It seemed appropriate to hold the two most significant

AACA events together because each event would bring prestige to the other.”

This year marks the seventh running of the presentation of the Zenith Award Trophy, which represents the epitome of automotive restoration achievement and takes its rightful place alongside America's other most significant automotive awards, and this year's line-up of the top 19 cars shown at 10 AACA Nationals during the 2022 show season promises to be equally as breathtaking as the previous six competitions.

AACA administers 8-10 nationals every year, which are held in locations scattered throughout the U.S., and which range in size from 100 to a whopping 1,250 vehicles. Combined attendance can exceed 4,500 cars, but only two from each nationals are nominated to compete for the Zenith, making the nomination itself one of the old-car hobby's most coveted achievements.





Every Zenith Award nominee will tell you there's a lot more to all of this than just points and awards.

Given that a majority of AACA members are restoration enthusiasts, AACA's board of directors was enamored with the idea of an event solely dedicated to celebrating Club members' best restorations. The big question was how to manage the judging criteria for such painstakingly restored automobiles, crucially important to the Zenith's credibility and success. According to Moskowitz, "We wanted judges that would lend credence to the award, which meant establishing a judging team not only consisting of highly competent AACA Senior Master Judges, but also knowledgeable guest judges that understood concours standards." Zenith judges evaluate each nominated car based upon the quality and authenticity of its restoration, while also, according to Cox, "taking into account the degree of difficulty and certain subjective criteria, such as provenance, historical significance, and rarity—although to a somewhat lesser extent."

Each year, nominees have included a wide mix of cars consisting of brass-era, prewar, postwar, sports, muscle, and trucks, which is a testament to the diversity of vehicles being restored by AACA members, and to their wide range of eras. Moskowitz adds, "An eclectic mix of automobiles have consistently been nominated, as opposed to vehicles all of one genre, which hasn't been by design ... it has just happened that way. It's a great sign that AACA members are doing incredible restorations to different types of vehicles from all eras, and the nominating judges recognize that."

With only two vehicles per nationals selected each year to compete for the Zenith Award Trophy, every nominee will tell you there's a lot more to all of this than just points and awards. Moskowitz sums it up best: "The most fulfilling aspect of competing for the Zenith Award is that every year, all of the nominees are as thrilled for the winner as if they had won the award themselves." Indeed, there is a special camaraderie that develops throughout the day among Zenith nominees. It's a unique esprit de corps and a feeling of common pride, fellowship, and loyalty among a select group of enthusiasts whose scrupulous attention to detail and historical accuracy make each of them winners in their own right, so it is particularly fitting that the Zenith Award program provides that all Zenith nominees receive a slightly smaller version of the 21-inch-tall crystal winner's trophy. The camaraderie among nominees well represents the fellowship found throughout the Club, whose members "come for the cars, but stay for the people."

It is no surprise that for the judges to effectively do their job, a specialized venue is required. Moskowitz recalls that, "When the Zenith Award was first created, for the first few competitions, Grand Nationals sites had already been chosen, so the scramble was on to locate suitable indoor spaces. We wanted plenty of space between each car so that the judges would have room to work, and an indoor venue was necessary to eliminate weather as a factor. Now that we've done this for a few years, a set of rigorous standards for our indoor facilities have been developed." The indoor facility selected for this year's Zenith competition is the Waterfront Convention Center in Bettendorf, Iowa. Its abundant indoor space, air-conditioning, cleaned and polished concrete floors, and its excellent lighting, meet all the high standards expected.

From its new national headquarters housing the largest automotive library in the world, to AACA's tours, nationals, annual convention and trade show, and, of course, its award-winning *ANTIQUE AUTOMOBILE* magazine, AACA offers the very best to its members. While many other antique car organizations have found reason to reinvent themselves, AACA's quest to present the best in antique automobile support and events has remained consistent, as has their recognition of Club members' restoration and preservation efforts with a highly respected and meaningful awards hierarchy that has withstood the test of time. So as you work your latest restoration up through the judging process at AACA Nationals, remember that in addition to the contingent of judges that will review your car for the usual 400-point judging (Junior, Senior, and Grand Nationals levels), be aware of an additional contingent of judges responsible for AACA's National Awards nominations, and especially be on the lookout for the judges tasked with seeking Zenith nominees. With only two Zenith nominees per nationals, a coveted Zenith nomination is an honor aspired by many but achieved by few.

AACA welcomes this year's Zenith Award nominees to Bettendorf, Iowa, and extends its best wishes for every success to all. We congratulate you on achieving so much success with your restoration.

The Zenith Award Trophy will be presented for the eighth time in Charlotte, North Carolina, at the AACA Grand Nationals held on April 5, 2024. We look forward to seeing you there!



ZENITH AWARD TROPHY



Under the direction and supervision of Tom Cox and Steve Moskowitz, world-renown trophy-supplier R.S. Owens was tasked with creating a one-of-a-kind crystal award that would express a “pinnacle” of achievement. Owens had never produced anything like it. The design of the Zenith Award Trophy is exclusive to AACA and is trademarked. The permanent Zenith trophy is housed in the lobby atrium of AACA’s National Headquarters, where it is displayed with all of the Club’s National Awards. Each winner’s name is engraved on the trophy’s base.



2023 ZENITH AWARD JUDGING TEAM

Chief Judge

Steven Moskowitz, AACA CEO; Senior Master Judge

Terry Bond, AACA Senior Master Judge

William T. Cox, AACA Senior Master Judge

Michael J. Jones, AACA Senior Master Judge

Richard Lentinello, Publisher, *Crankshaft*

John McCarthy, AACA Senior Master Judge

Tim Ohlendorf, Ohlendorf’s Restorations

Robert Parrish, AACA Senior Master Judge

Fred Trusty, AACA President; Senior Master Judge

1911 Thomas Flyer KC 670

David & Patty Peeler, Weddington, North Carolina

1903 Cadillac Model A

Jim & Donna Elliott, Yorktown, Virginia

1928 Ford Model AA

Bob Martino, Skippack, Pennsylvania

1929 Buick Series 50

Daniel S. Burkitt, Cornell, Illinois

1929 Ford Town Car by LeBaron

Stanley & Mary Sorrels, LaPorte, Indiana

1930 Lincoln Model 179

Sky & Susan Johnson, Prescott Valley, Arizona

1935 S.S. 1 Airline

Jim & Lisa Hendrix, Chesterfield, Missouri

1937 Nash Lafayette 400

Nicola Bulgari, Allentown, Pennsylvania

1954 Kaiser Darrin

Edward & Rita Koch, Flemington, New Jersey

1956 Studebaker Golden Hawk

Ron & Fran Bomberger, Lake Placid, Florida

1957 Ford Fairlane Skyliner

Charles J. Musto, Forty Fort, Pennsylvania

1958 Chevrolet Bel Air Impala

Ron & Sarah Jury, Kansas City, Missouri

1964 Ford Galaxie 500XL

Dale Faulkner, Walnut Cove, North Carolina

1964 Amphicar

Keith C. Mathiowetz, Scandinavia, Wisconsin

1966 Ford Mustang

Ray L. Brownfield, Naperville, Illinois

1966 Pontiac GTO

Amy & Roger Stolarick, Flemington, New Jersey

1967 Chevrolet Chevelle SS

Shaun & H.R. Terrell, Lynchburg, Virginia

1969 Pontiac GTO Ram Air III

Bill & Rosemarie Thiele, Marietta, Georgia

1969 Chevrolet Camaro SS396

Bob & Sheila Thompson, Columbus, Indiana



1911 Thomas Flyer KC 6-70 Tourabout
David & Patty Peeler, Weddington, North Carolina

E.R. Thomas began building automobiles in Buffalo, New York, in 1902. The company's reputation for building sturdy quality automobiles was heightened in 1908 when a 1907 Model 35 four-cylinder was pulled off the assembly line and entered in the New York to Paris race, which it won after traveling more than 22,000 miles during a period of six months. The big Model K six-cylinder car was introduced in 1908 with 70 horsepower, cost \$6,000-\$7,000, rode on a 140-inch wheelbase and was dual chain-driven with a 4-speed transaxle.

This KC670 Tourabout is a late 1911 model as designated by the 'C' in KC 6-70. The KC model had several updates over the previous K 6-70 for the 1911 model year. The factory improvements included an enhanced clutch, the addition of a distributor replacing the Atwater Kent spark unit, as well as an increase in displacement to 856 cubic inches that upped horsepower to 90. Despite the quality and celebrity of the Thomas Flyer, chain-drive technology was becoming passé, and the KC 6-70 only remained in production through the end of 1912.

Of the approximately 12 Model K/KS Thomas' known to exist, this is the only remaining Tourabout. It was put into Dearborn, Michigan's Henry Ford Museum in 1939 and resided there until 1968, when purchased for the Harrah Automobile Collection in Reno, Nevada, where a full restoration had begun. During the collection's dispersement in the 1980s, the car was given to Clyde Wade by the Harrah estate as a retirement package. It remained with Wade for nearly 40 years, until the unfinished car was purchased by the Peeler's in 2019. Much of the restoration was completed by David, along with Vintage Cars (paint/assembly) and Justice Restorations (mechanicals).



1903 Cadillac Rear-Entrance Tonneau
James & Donna Elliott, Yorktown, Virginia

Named for the celebrated 19th Century explorer who established the site of what would become Detroit, the Cadillac Automobile Company was established in 1902 after Henry Leland and Robert Faulconer purchased the remains of the Henry Ford Company (Ford's second failed attempt at automobile manufacturing). Leland, a dynamic engineer and businessman, had already made a name for himself in revolutionizing precision production techniques, and it was that experience and expertise that was applied to his new Cadillac, which went on to win the prestigious Dewar Trophy twice, setting the company's claim as being The Standard of The World.

The first models were 2-seater "horseless carriages" with bodies supplied by Wilson Body Co. With the introduction of the Model B a year later, the 1903 style became known as the Model A, but the one-cylinder Cadillac continued to be offered through 1908. During the January 1903 New York Auto Show, orders were accepted for 2,286 cars, and by the end of the 1903 model run (March 1904), 2,497 had been built. The two-seater runabout cost \$750; if the buyer wanted a leather top and storm apron, the cost rose to \$800. The optional rear-entrance detachable tonneau was \$100 and doubled the occupant capacity, while side baskets added another \$17 to bottom line. The car was advertised as having 6.5 horsepower, with power transmitted to the rear wheels by chain-drive through a 2-speed planetary transmission, and had a top speed of 30mph.

It is believed that the original owner purchased this 1903 Cadillac with rear-entrance tonneau from the John Wanamaker Store in Philadelphia, one of the first department stores in the U.S. It was discovered by Jim in the Hershey flea market in 2010, in disassembled condition. He recruited Prueitt Restorations to bring the car back to new condition.



1928 Ford AA Panel Truck
Bob Martino, Skippack, Pennsylvania

Nine years after the Ford Model T was introduced, Ford heard the concerns of customers needing a more powerful vehicle, capable of hauling heavy loads that offered greater capabilities for work and deliveries. On July 27, 1917, Ford released the Ford Model TT, which featured a heavy-duty frame able to carry an entire ton of payload, and had a factory price of \$600. The TT was marketed in rural areas and urban, drawing many to the truck.

Inspired by the Fordson tractors of the day, Henry Ford thought of a vehicle that could accommodate third-party beds, cargo areas, and more add-ons for a wider variety of jobs. The Model TT served this purpose, but with the creation of the Model AA in 1928, Ford offered a larger more powerful option to drivers. The Model AA had a 1.5-ton chassis and a larger and more powerful engine.

In 1928, York Carriage Co. (est. 1890) consolidated its holdings with York, Pennsylvania crosstown rival Hoover Body Co., forming the York-Hoover Body Corp. giving the new corporation a capacity of 50,000 auto commercial bodies annually. Although the new Ford Model A lineup included a factory station wagon, aftermarket builders were still able to come up with interesting products unavailable from Ford. A simple huckster body was also available that could be installed on a bare Mode A chassis/cowl.

Ford started building its 1.5-ton commercial chassis in late November 1927. By the end of the year, just 99 had been produced. This particular chassis was finished on December 27th, then sent to York-Hoover for the panel body to be built. Ford didn't offer its own company-built panel bodies until June 1928. It is thought that this is the earliest known Ford AA truck. Bob did all of his own restoration work.



1929 Buick Series 50 Sedan
Daniel S. Burkitt, Cornell, Illinois

Buick celebrated its 25th year of automotive production in 1929, and Buick's built during the model year were affectionately known as the Silver Anniversary cars. It was also the first year that Buicks wore styling from General Motors' Art and Colour Section. Among the new design features was a one-year-only distinctive styling element of a 1.5-inch bulge around the beltline. Other design elements included a slightly slanted windshield on closed body models, flowing fenders, a sturdy bumper of two or three bars, three choices in wheels (two different styles of wooden spoke wheels along with the option of wire), and a Buick nameplate placed on the center of the radiator. Closed models received a new dual electric windshield wiper feature and side cowl ventilators. Buick offered a total of 43 exterior color options for 1929.

The Model 50 7-passenger sedan on the 129-inch wheelbase and powered by the Master 309cid/90hp overhead valve straight-six engine was Buick's largest luxury car for 1929. Edward W. Powell, the original owner of this car, was from Mountain Top, Pennsylvania. The car was taken off of the road in 1940, but remained in the family until 1963, when it was sold to Howard A. Smith, who intended to restore the car. He kept the car inside, rotated the engine periodically, but never got around to doing a restoration.

After Smith died, his son sold it to Dan Burkitt's father-in-law in 2010, who further gifted the car to Dan and his family in 2013. Dan immediately began a restoration in earnest, his first on a prewar car. Normally one to build hot rods, it took Dan five years to complete the restoration on the 1929 Buick. When it was finished, Dan became just the second driver of the car during its 90-year existence.



1929 Ford Model A Town Car
Stanley & Mary Sorrels, LaPorte, Indiana

Of the some 1,200 Model A town cars produced by Ford from 1928-1930, all but a handful were built for the 1929 model year. Roughly 20 are known to have survived. Although smaller in size, it has many of the luxury features of its expensive competition: a windowed partition, hassocks, special lighting, lighters and trays, notebook and pen (which retract into the rear arm rests), and luxurious interior trim. Luxurious French Broadcloth upholstery was used in the rear, with leather up front. The body was designed at LeBaron, built by Briggs, and assembled by Ford onto a standard Model A chassis. The cost was a chilling \$1,400, when a standard Briggs Model A town sedan was just under \$700.

This car, painted Madras Carbuncle with Casino Red stripe, was originally ordered from the Lincoln dealer in New York City by Roger Dunscombe. After a year in NYC, he moved the car to his summer home in Plymouth, Massachusetts. Dunscombe's nephew and his friend Fredrick Steinway (great grandson of Steinway & Sons founder) drove the car hard for the next five years. In 1938, Dunscombe gave the town car to Steinway, who moved it to the family's summer home on Cape Cod, and enjoyed the car for many years. He cosmetically restored it in 1983, and his son Robert, continued the restoration.

After 70 years of ownership by the Steinway family, the town car was sold in 2008 to a private collector, from whom Stanley purchased it about five years ago. Stanley immediately set about restoring the car, bringing it back to its original magnificence. In 2022, it achieved the Henry Ford Award at the Model A Restorers Club national meet.



1930 Lincoln Model 179 5-pass. Coupe
Sky & Susan Johnson, Prescott Valley, Arizona

Lincoln's success after Henry Ford took over ownership in 1922 relied on the superb design and engineering of Henry Leland. Ford wisely kept the Lincoln V-8, with its expensive but elegant fork and blade connecting rods, and the advanced chassis in which it had been installed for nearly a decade. Edsel Ford, put in place as president, with an innate sense of design and refinement, gladly took control of Lincoln coachwork, utilizing the finest independent coachbuilders to create elegant, up-to-date, and attractive catalog bodies.

The 1930 Lincoln Model L is equipped with the last year of the original Leland-designed engine, a 385cid/90hp L-head. There were 275 of this highly attractive LeBaron-designed five-passenger coupe built, with fewer than 10 known to exist.

Sky purchased the car in 1989 and became its fourth owner since new. Soon after, his parents celebrated their 50th anniversary. They were transported to the celebration in the newly purchased Lincoln, as they well-remembered the cars of this era when new. He began its restoration in 2006, and lived in three different states during the process. Sky employed Mike Larum to rebuild the engine, Mark Clayton to do the body and paint, and Auto Weave to do the upholstery. After a piece of original upholstery was found under the front seat that had not been exposed to sun, wool basket-weave material was duplicated by a company in Oregon. Sky rebuilt the chassis and reassembled the car, finishing its restoration in 2020.

Interesting features include a cigar lighter on a retractable reel that will reach to the back seat, a compressor driven off the transmission that can be used in case of a flat tire, and the rear quarter windows are "drum-driven."



1935 S.S. 1 Airline
Jim & Lisa Hendrix, Chesterfield, Missouri

Just 16 S.S.1 Airline saloons are known to exist of the 624 built by S.S. Cars Limited in Coventry, England. The Airline is a sporting four-seat two-door pillarless design with a sweptback streamlined nature. It features luxurious armchair rear seating as directed by company owner Sir William Lyons to mimic his comfortable office chair. In its August 23, 1935 issue, *The Autocar* asserted that the car "... was from the first, and remains, an individual kind of car by reason of the low build, impressive length of bonnet and the sweeping lines of the wings and bodywork."

This car was specially ordered by its original owner, Charles Randolph Whately of London, with silver paint, light blue interior, and scumble faux wood interior trim, commemorating the "silver jubilee" celebration of King George V. Factory literature touted "Flowing lines of the utmost simplicity characterize this interpretation of streamlining. Luxurious comfort is assured in a beautifully appointed and roomy interior from which unrestricted vision is afforded by unusually long rear quarter lights [quarter windows]." Equipped with a 2.7-liter six-cylinder engine, the Airline saloon price was 365 GBP (roughly 1,800 USD).

The Hendrix purchased this beauty, partially complete, just south of Gloucester, England, in 1996, becoming just its fourth owner. They then spent 25 years exhaustively researching every detail before becoming heavily involved in its renewal by Mann's Restoration. It has been documented by the Jaguar Daimler Heritage Trust, and retains its original engine, chassis, commission tag, molded tool tray, RAG carburetors with consecutive serial numbers.



1937 Nash Lafayette 400 Business Coupe
Nicola Bulgari, Allentown, Pennsylvania

Nash Motors purchased Lafayette Motors in the mid-1920s and used the name from 1934 until 1940. For the first three years, it was marketed as its own separate lower-priced marque. The 1937 model was the first to be sold under the parent marque as the Nash Lafayette 400, retaining its position as the company's economy model, and marketed as the "Thrill-Car" of the year.

The 400 shared styling with its larger kin the six- and eight-cylinder Ambassador, but it rode on a trim 117-inch wheelbase with the reduced length positioned ahead of the cowl where a 90hp Monitor-Sealed six-cylinder flathead engine was positioned. Three- and five-passenger coupes, a two-door victoria sedan, a four-door touring sedan and a stylish cabriolet made up the entry-level Nash line. The shortened front end featured a different radiator ornament with a circular theme, horizontal grille bars, and chrome chevrons on the hood side sweep spear.

Interior of the LaFayette 400 included a dark mahogany-looking instrument panel embellished with chrome strips. The speedometer boasted large figures on a brushed silver dial. Advertising for the new car read, "Nash presents ... a new kind of low-priced car! A car that will enable thousands of former small-car owners to drive a bigger, more beautiful, better-engineered car, yet a car that costs little more than the lowest-priced cars!"

Bulgari and his team at the NB Center in Allentown purchased the Nash in 2020 from a gentleman in New Jersey. Hesitant (and apparently not aware of the Bulgari collection), the seller was afraid the car was going to be hot-rodged. It took the NB Center team 14 months to complete its restoration.



1954 Kaiser Darrin 161
Edward & Rita Koch, Flemington, New Jersey

The 1954 Kaiser Darrin 161 was a fiberglass-bodied two-passenger car designed by Howard "Dutch" Darrin. It was built upon on the compact chassis of the Henry J, and prototypes were introduced late in 1952, several months before the Corvette. It was touted as being sleek boulevard cruiser and featured unusual doors that slid forward into the cowl and front fender bodywork. The Kaiser Darrin was powered by a reliable Willys F-head six-cylinder engine that displaced 161 cubic inches and delivered 90hp. A 3-speed manual transmission was standard, but an optional overdrive or automatic transmission could be ordered as well. Other available options included seat belts, power brakes, power steering, air-conditioning, white sidewall tires, wire wheels, tinted glass, and a heater. It sold new for \$3,668, a few dollars more than Corvette, and as much as a base Cadillac.

Kaiser built 435 Darrins before production was halted due to poor sales and increasing inventory. Howard Darrin bought the unsold cars, including 50 that had been damaged by snow, and sold them at his own dealership in California through 1957. Many were fitted with triple-carburetors or superchargers, and six are known to have received 305hp Cadillac engines and were used for racing.

Ed and Rita had been looking for a Darrin to restore for more than 20 years. They bought car #12 just an hour's drive from Willow Run, Michigan, where it was originally built, still owned by the family of its original owner. It was purchased brand-new in 1955. When the original owner and his son decided to restore the car in the 1970s, they took it apart, but then all worked stopped. It was stored in a dirt-floor barn for 40 years. Ed started work on the chassis and engine, while the body was sent to J&N Auto Body. Once reunited, the car was sent to Master Upholstery, and was completed in 2022.



1956 Studebaker Golden Hawk
Ron & Fran Bomberger, Lake Placid, Florida

The Studebaker Hawk series first appeared in 1956 as a svelte, athletic, powerful, and wholly unique personal luxury car styled by the Raymond Loewy studios. Upon its debut, available Hawk models included the Flight Hawk, Power Hawk, Sky Hawk, and top-of-the-line Golden Hawk. The cars had a long, low stance and upright, aggressive radiator, with subtle fiberglass rear fins. Flight and Power models were pillared coupes, while the Sky and Golden Hawks were pillarless hardtops. Studebaker built 4,071 Golden Hawks in 1956, of which some 700 have survived.

Power in the Golden Hawk came from Packard's 352cid V-8, which delivered 275hp and 380 lb-ft of torque. It was enough to propel the car quickly, and get it to 120mph, making the lightweight Golden Hawk one of the fastest American production cars of the time, but the heavy Packard engine overwhelmed the light chassis at times, and period performance reviews were mixed.

The first owner of the Bomberger car was from Pittsburgh. From there it went to Texas, then to Florida, before Ron made its purchase. He ran it through AACA judging immediately, but knew that it deserved a body-off restoration. Ron was aware of Gerek Brodfuehrer's abilities when he worked for another restoration shop, so when Gerek started Cornerstone Automotive Restorations, Ron looked no further. Gerek had the car for about a year, and completed it in 2022.



1957 Ford Fairlane 500 Skyliner
Charles J. Musto, Forty Fort, Pennsylvania

Ford's line of cars grew substantially larger for 1957, led by the new retractable hardtop Fairlane 500 Skyliner. The sophisticated mechanism to raise and lower the hardtop—originally engineered at the Continental Division—featured 522 unique parts, including longer rear quarter panels, a longer deck lid, and a reinforced chassis. Initially, there were seven motors, numerous power relays and switches, and more than 600 feet of wiring that lifted, folded, and lowered the hardtop into the trunk area.

In 1957, the Dearborn plant hand-built 100 Thunderbird 312cid/300hp V-8 engines fitted with a 4-barrel Holley carburetor and a McCulloch-Paxton centrifugal supercharger in order to homologate the engine for NASCAR. Another 5,000 engines were later assembled for production cars, which are now known as F-code vehicles because of the serial number begins with an F. A special cylinder head was fitted to these engines that kept the compression ratio at 8:5:1 so that it could run on regular fuel.

A total of 20,766 Skyliners found buyers for 1957, the highest-priced model in the Fairlane line-up, but few left the factory with the supercharged engine (estimates range from as few as seven to as many as 30). The supercharged 312 was a one-year-only option, no doubt because of NASCAR's April 1957 ban on fuel injection, superchargers, and multiple carburetors. Ford was the best selling car in America in 1957, overtaking arch rival Chevrolet for the first time since 1935.

Work on this rare Ford Fairlane 500 Skyliner began in 2018. It has undergone a complete frame-off restoration with thousands of hours spent perfecting every last detail and sourcing rare parts from across the nation. Charles has an identical supercharged 1957 Skyliner painted white.



1958 Chevrolet Bel Air Impala
Ron & Sarah Jury, Kansas City, Missouri

The Impala name first appeared in 1958 as the top-model Bel Air sport coupe and convertible. Chevrolet had completely redesigned its product lineup for 1958 and the Impala had a number of unique features to separate it from the standard Bel Air line: From the windshield (A) pillar rearward, the 1958 Bel Air Impala differed structurally from the lower-priced Chevrolet models. Hardtops had a slightly shorter greenhouse and longer rear deck. The wheelbase of the Impala was longer than the lower-priced models, although the overall length was identical. Interiors featured a two-spoke competition-style steering wheel and color-keyed door panels with brushed aluminum trim. Outside, trim features included ribbed body sill panels, large dummy chrome-plated air scoops ahead of the rear wheel wells, triple tail lamp arrangements where other models had just two (or just one on the wagons), and Impala scripts, insignia, and cross-flags emblems. In addition, no other series included a convertible.

The Bel Air Impala was a one-year only product, as the Impala would become its own two- and four-door model line in 1959, leap-frogging over the Bel Air as the premium top-of-the-line model. It quickly became the best-selling model in the U.S. in 1960, and held that position for 10 years.

Ron searched to buy a 1958 Impala for three years, ultimately finding one owned by a gentleman who had owned the car for more than 50 years. The trials of convincing him to sell took another year, as he needed to realize that he wasn't ever going to finish its restoration. Ron promised that he would finish the car and share it with the AACA community. Jeff Stienmetz and his father from Columbus, Ohio, completed its flawless renovation during a 14-month period.



1964 Ford Galaxie 500XL
Dale Faulkner, Walnut Cove, North Carolina

The Galaxie 500XL, introduced in 1962, was Ford's premium full-sized car and was available as a hardtop coupe or convertible. For 1963, the 500XL added a 4-door town victoria and a 2-door club victoria, with an aerodynamic semi-fastback hardtop coupe replacing the club victoria halfway through 1963 that coincided with the debut of a new 427cid V-8 developed to keep up with the Chevy 409 and Mopar 426.

Following an extremely successful year in NASCAR, for 1964 the 500XL continued to offer the 427 powerplant. The Galaxie 500 XL models received special badges, all-vinyl bucket seats in the front, a center console that most often was the home for the shift lever, dual-lens courtesy and warning lights in the doors, polished door trim panels, and rear reading lights in closed body styles.

For cars equipped with the 427 powerplant, such as the R-code top-of-the-heap Thunderbird Super High-Performance 425hp block under the hood of Dale's car, there were crossed-flags/thunderbird emblems on the lower part of the fenders with "427" featured within a thunderbird image.

Dale's XL was purchased from its original Pueblo, Colorado, owner, who drag raced the car during most of its existence. The Pagoda Green Galaxie was restored by Hunter's Specialty in Walnut Cove, North Carolina, and was finished in July 2022.



1964 Amphicar Model 770

Keith C. Mathiowetz, Scandinavia, Wisconsin

The Amphicar is the only civilian amphibious passenger automobile ever to be mass produced. Manufactured from 1961 to 1968 in West Germany, it was designed by Hans Trippel as a unibody steel two-door cabriolet with electrically-welded joints. With its powerplant in the rear, a 1,147cc/43hp Triumph Herald engine driving the rear wheels, it also has twin nylon propellers activated for propulsion when the car is in the water. Top speed is about 6½ knots (7mph) in the water and roughly 68mph on land (the car was so-named 770 for its top speed of 7 knots and 70mph).

The front wheels are used as rudimentary rudder while in the water. A special two-section Hermes transmission, controlled by two shift levers, allows the rear wheels and propellers to be operated independently or simultaneously. Double rubber seals and cam locks on the doors, hood, and rear deck lid prevent water from entering. Front and rear navigation lights are used for nighttime boating. Of 3,878 made, 3,046 were imported to the U.S. equipped with marine navigation lights, bilge pump, and a bilge blower.

Keith's Amphicar was sold new by a Hopkins, Minnesota, dealer, then a few years later was traded to the same dealer for a newer model. It sat out back of the store until 1983, when Keith rescued it, with a seized engine and an accumulation of rust. He then stored it for another 23 years before beginning a comprehensive restoration in his own shop, taking 12 years to complete. During restoration, an empty 1960s-era Fred Arbogast Co. Jitterbug fishing lure box was found, proving that this Amphicar was once used by its original owner to enjoy a bit of angling during the car's early days.



1966 Ford Mustang

Ray L. Brownfield, Naperville, Illinois

Ray has been enamored with Mustangs since the first one was introduced in April 1964. With the distinct possibility of being drafted, he put off his wish to purchase one. Upon reading an article in the Chicago Tribune regarding future collector cars, he immediately searched for an early convertible. He located one on a used-car lot in 1982, and took it home. He quickly discovered the amount of rust it had when he proudly offered his wife a ride. Her foot went through the floorboard, and the door would not shut properly. Nonetheless, Ray shored-up the structural weaknesses and drove and enjoyed it for four years, attending car shows and contemplating how he would fix it up to be a better show contender.

During the next four years, he began an extensive restoration beginning with Mustang restorations in Dundee, Illinois, then Old Coach works in Yorkville. The car was fitted with OEM quarter panels, door skins, trunk floor, shock towers, and the entire underside.

He researched the car's history, and discovered the car was assembled on August 30, 1966, its production number is 103,443 out of the total of 607,568, and it was delivered new to Des Moines, Iowa. It is equipped with the base 200cid/120hp six-cylinder engine, Cruise-O-Matic transmission, AM radio, manual steering, manual brakes, and power convertible top. Its original owner lived near Peoria, Illinois, and paid \$2,252.86 (including \$253.61 of options). He worked for Caterpillar and used it as his year-round commuter car. Ray is just its second owner.



1966 Pontiac GTO Convertible
Amy & Roger Stolarick, Flemington, New Jersey

As had been done since the early part of the 20th century, the performance-car concept was created by mating an intermediate- or small-sized body/chassis with a large-displacement engine to create a hot street machine. In the early 1960s, that type of car became known as a “muscle car.” Faced with corporate restrictions, Pontiac executives had to be creative in their efforts to push through a hot V-8 engine for its newest performance vehicle, the GTO, making every attempt at extracting as much horsepower as possible from it ... such as a triple-carburetor intake set-up.

For 1966, the Pontiac A-body platform received a complete body style change and for the first time the GTO was no longer a Tempest LeMans high-performance option package. The GTO was now a full-fledged model. The revised body had gentle curves with seductive and sensual side panels featuring a coke-bottle waist and louvered taillights. It was remarkably fresh, yet unmistakably GTO!

Amy’s convertible is painted Barrier Blue, a one-year-only special-order color that is accented with a factory-correct blue convertible top and blue interior. Only one other car is known to exist with this triple blue combination. The car was originally purchased by a dealer in Massachusetts to be displayed in the showroom and was ordered with Pontiac’s famed tri-power featuring three double-barrel Rochester carburetors that made 360hp at 5,200 rpm and 424 lb-ft of torque at 3,600rpm. Amy’s triple-triple is also equipped with a four-speed M-21 gearbox and 4.33 rear-end gears, heavy-duty cooling with seven-blade fan, and power steering, brakes and top. It was restored by Brian Semancik of Speedo’s Paint & Body and was finished in 2018.



1967 Chevrolet Chevelle SS 396 Hardtop
Shaun & H.R. Terrell, Lynchburg, Virginia

The Chevelle SS 396 became a series of its own in 1966, built upon the redesigned Malibu sport coupe and convertible bodies. In a departure from the boxy body of the 1964-'65 models, the second-generation Chevelle looked lower, wider, and much more contoured with a subtle coke-bottle shape. Its reinforced frames and revised front suspension featured higher-rate springs, re-calibrated shocks, and thicker front stabilizer bar. Super Sport cars received simulated hood intakes, blacked-out grille, rear valance with SS 396 badging, bright metal wheel-well and trim moldings, and red-stripe tires.

The 1966 and 1967 SS 396 models were the only two years of the strut back two-door sport coupe. The 1967 model is differentiated by a new front-end design with the fenders having a protruding edge, and a grille that jutted forward. The tail lights wrapped around the quarters and were squarer as opposed to the long rectangular versions from the previous year.

The performance engines available included a trio of 396cid V-8s ranging from 325 horsepower to 375. For 1967, the 375hp L78 engine was dropped from the lineup, leaving the standard 325hp and the optional L34 350hp (a few dealers installed the 375hp L78 engine on their own).

The Terrell’s Nantucket Blue sport coupe is equipped with the L34 350hp 396, mated to an M20 Muncie four-speed gearbox, gauge package, power drum brakes, and SS full wheel covers. It was restored by Shaun and H.R. and was completed in 2017.



1969 Pontiac GTO RA III Hardtop Coupe
Bill & Rosemarie Thiele, Marietta, Georgia

The Pontiac GTO, around since 1964, was already quite popular when the second-generation version arrived in 1968. They remained popular, with some 87,000 built for 1968 and another 72,000 for 1969. Its name was inspired by the iconic Ferrari 250 GTO, which was an Italian abbreviation for Gran Turismo Omologato (grand tourer homologated). For 1969, the options list “lets your rig yours up like nobody else’s business.” Pontiac touted the “Great One” as looking like a “French curve on wheels,” in addition to stating that it “handles like it were an extension of your mind. You want to negotiate a snaky piece of blacktop? It does so. With finesse. You feel like biting off Lookout Mountain at the knees? It does so. With alacrity.”

The Thiele’s Midnight Green hardtop coupe was fitted with the Ram-Air III package, a 400cid/366hp V-8 that was installed in only 1,249 non-Judge GTOs built that year. Only 135 are known to have survived. The GTO is also fitted with four-speed manual gearbox, functional hood air scoops, hood-mounted tachometer, front disc brakes, mag-type Rally II wheels, dual exhaust, concealed headlamps, and the Enduro front bumper.

The car spent its entire life in California until the Thieles purchased it in 2013. It was amazingly rust-free and retains all of its factory sheet metal. It received a full body-off restoration by Jon Zin and the Thieles from May 2019 to July 2021, during which time most of the parts used were either NOS or factory-process refurbished originals. In an effort to make sure everything was done correctly, no fewer than nine GTO experts were consulted.



1969 Chevrolet Camaro SS/RS 396 Coupe
Bob & Sheila Thompson, Columbus, Indiana

A total of 230,799 Camaros were built in 1969. The SS option was ordered on 32,932, of which 12,904 were equipped with the 396 engine: 6,752 with the 325-horse L35; 2,018 with the 35-horse L34; and 3,823 with the 375-horse L78. The Rally sport option included a special grille with vacuum-operated headlight covers, front valance-mounted parking lights, lower body side molding, wheel-opening moldings, rear valance-mounted back-up lights, and RS emblems on grille, fenders and fuel-filler cap. The RS option could be ordered by itself or in conjunction with the Super Sport or Z/28 packages, as could the Endura (rubber) front bumper.

Bob’s SS/RS Camaro has the 375-horse V-8, with the factory smog equipment intact. Amenities on his car include the Muncie 4-speed manual gearbox, power steering and power front disc brakes, fresh air “on demand” (the engine breathes “normally” through the snorkel on the air cleaner, until the throttle is fully opened, which allows the engine to breathe through the cowl induction at the rear of the hood, bringing in fresh, cooler air for the carburetor), chambered exhaust, and a locking differential. In addition, it is equipped with the Endura front bumper, and tinted glass.

The car has the deluxe black vinyl interior with black and white houndstooth cloth inserts on the seats. The center console features fuel, oil pressure, ammeter, and temperature gauges, which coincide nicely with the speedometer, tachometer, and clock behind the wood-grain steering wheel. The car rolls on F70 x 14 Firestone Wide Oval white-lettered tires, wrapped around the optional SS wheels.

Since purchasing, Bob has done quite a bit of work to bring the car up to show condition, including the paint, carpeting, engine detailing, etc.

PREVIOUS ZENITH AWARD
COMPETITIONS

2017 WINNER 2017 RUNNER-UP



1928 AUBURN 8-88
Richard & Helen Harding, Beavercreek, Ohio



1942 CADILLAC SERIES 62
Steve Cooley, Homosassa, Florida

2018 WINNER

2018 RUNNER-UP



1935 PACKARD 1204 SUPER 8
Greg & Cheri Haack, Freeport, Illinois



1953 NASH-HEALEY
Ed & Rita Koch, Flemington, New Jersey

2019 WINNER

2019 RUNNER-UP



1931 BUICK MODEL 8-94
David & Susan Landow, Bethesda, Maryland



1957 DUAL-GHIA 146
Chris Armstrong, Nantucket, Massachusetts

2020 WINNER



1958 BUICK CENTURY CABALLERO
Joe & Julie Tonietto, Troy, Michigan

2020 RUNNER-UP



1933 AUBURN 12-165
Calvin High, Willow Street, Pennsylvania

2021 WINNER



1917 LOCOMOBILE 48
John McAlpin, Naples, New York

2021 RUNNER-UP



1930 RUXTON MODEL C
Cal & Dave High, Willow Street, Pennsylvania

2022 WINNER



1929 DUPONT MODEL G
Lammot J. du Pont, McLean, Virginia

2022 RUNNER-UP



1928 AUBURN 8-115
Richard & Helen Harding, Beavercreek, Ohio

CALENDAR



2023

July 16-22, 2023

Founders Tour

(1932-1998)

Ontario, Canada • Ontario Region

905-305-7747

July 26-29, 2023

Special Eastern Spring Nationals

Hamilton, N.Y. • Rolling Antiquers Region

607-334-2907

August 10-12, 2023

Grand Nationals

Bettendorf, Iowa • Mississippi Valley Region

309-373-2169

August 16-19, 2023

Vintage Tour

(1931 and earlier)

Presque Isle, Maine • Maine Region

207-768-1033

September 14-16, 2023

Special Central Divisional Tour

(Up to 1998)

Piqua, Ohio • Southern Ohio Chapter

937-689-6901

September 25-29, 2023

Western Divisional Tour

(Up to 1998)

Santa Barbara, Calif. • Santa Barbara Region

805-637-8861 AACACaliforniaTour@gmail.com

October 3-6, 2023

Eastern Fall Nationals

Hershey, Pennsylvania • Hershey Region

717-566-7720

October 22-27, 2023

Revival AAA Glidden Tour®

(Pre-1943)

Thomasville, Georgia • VMCCA hosting

Blanche@rose.net

2024

February 8-10, 2024

Annual Convention

Chantilly (Washington D.C.), Virginia • 717-534-1910

March 17-23, 2024

Founders Tour

(1932-1999)

Louisiana • Louisiana Region

337-581-7776

March 21-24, 2024

Winter Nationals

Guaynabo, Puerto Rico • Puerto Rico Region

787-635-8976

April 4-6, 2024

Dual Nationals: Southeastern Spring & Annual Grand Nationals

Charlotte, N.C. • Hornets Nest Region

704-847-4215

June 20-22, 2024

Eastern Spring Nationals

Saratoga Springs, N.Y. • Saratoga Region

518-863-4987

July 10-13, 2024

Western Divisional Tour

(Up to 1999)

Big Horn Mt., Wyoming • Nebraska Region

September 12-14, 2024

Western Fall Nationals

Loveland, Colorado • Poudre Valley Region

970-686-9291

October 8-11, 2024

Eastern Fall Nationals

Hershey, Pennsylvania • Hershey Region

717-566-7720