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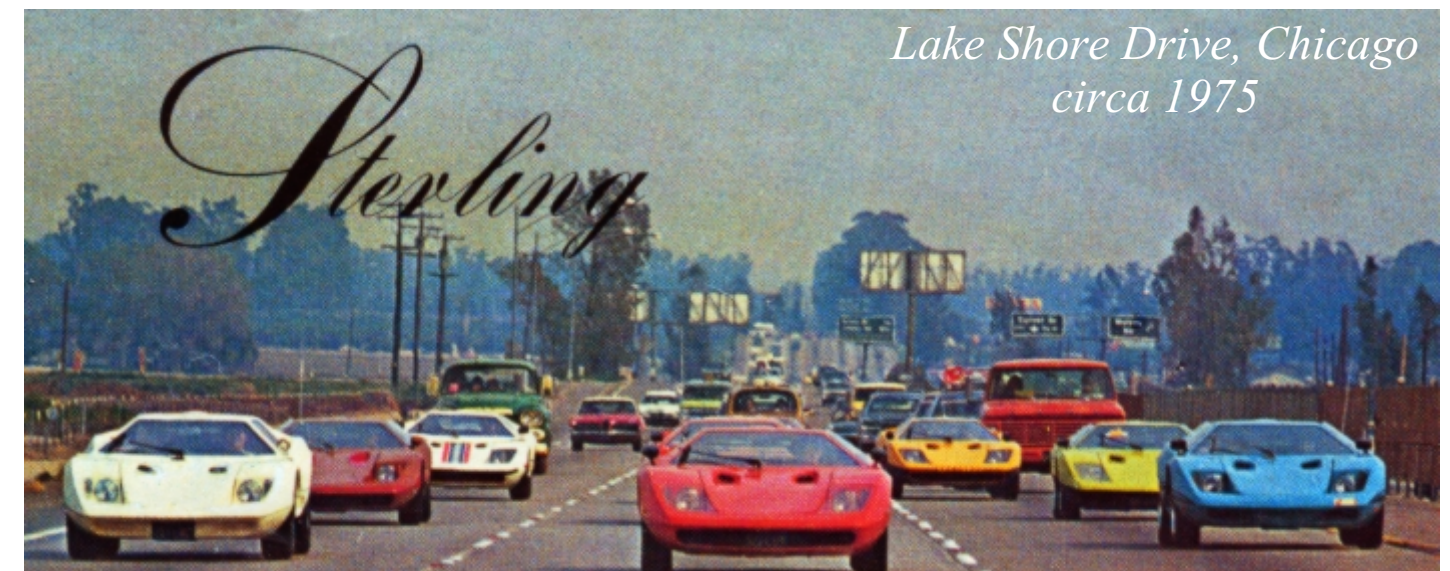
NATIONAL STERLING OWNERS ASSOCIATION

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Letter from the editor

At last! Hopefully this will be our only "double issue" newsletter. The beginning of the year was, and remains to be, extremely hectic, and my time to the club suffered because of it. So far this has been a strange and wonderful new year. Lots of Sterlings coming to auction recently. Our newest members were able to score some good deals - if you followed the Ebay alerts at all. Ahmad scored the biggest deal, in my opinion. The original Norm Rose car - one of the founders of California Component Car - went for a staggeringly low amount. I can't wait for Ahmad to work his magic on this one!

Early in the year I was able to meet one of our members, Bill Jones, who is working on a V6 powered beast. Bill proved instrumental in planning yet another project car pick-up in his neck of the woods. His good nature, generosity, and faith that I would actually show up (!) just proves that our little car club is one of the greatest! We have some of the best people from all walks of life willing to help others in their quest for Sterling knowledge, parts, and general know-how. What a group!



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CARLISLE Events



Starting FEATURE STORY

There's a saying with the East Coast car show regulars: "If it's Carlisle, it's raining." And, true to form, it was, at least from time to time. This would be my second outing with the Sterling to the showgrounds as a participant, this time with Sue, my better half, with me for the three days. The week preceding was a complete mystery with the weather. It seemed that nobody had any idea of what was to come. Predict rain, and there would be sunshine, so we expected the worst and hoped for the best.

Friday morning 5AM showed promise. Light cloud cover, brightening blue skies - looked like we were going to be ok for the ride. And for the most part, we were. A few showers hit around Harrisburg, but as we edged west, the weather seemed to moderate for the best. We arrived at the showgrounds around 8:30, and already there were several cars on the field, and more lining up to receive their passes and paperwork. This time the Porsche Speedster club members had made it first, with three cars on the field and several more in the lot. And the skies were filling with sunshine. Oh Joy!

Sue and I were wandering back from the vendors section (where I spent more money than I had allowed myself...but that's what shows are for!) to see another regular had shown up. Mark Bidwell from New Jersey, with his Laser 917. Mark and I struck up a quick friendship last year, and he once again parked his 917 next to the Sterling, front and center, which seemed to spark the interest of a Honda Element circling the field. The Element parked, and two gentlemen rolled out and struck up a conversation with Mark and I about the kits. Thomas Noone, and his cameraman Dave were at the show to produce a video piece of old school kits versus the new generation kits, the Cobras, DDR, K-1 and the like. Mark and I were a bit dubious...who was going to see the film? It turns out that these guys pitch television specials to the studios, and generally get most of them to air. This one hopefully will be airing sometime in October. Mr. Noone said that he would email me the dates, times, and channels that it would be on, so you all will get to see yours truly acting stupid!

The video interview was fairly basic, consisting of basic opinions by the car owners concerning the state of the industry, how the old school kits compare to the new, and how an average person can get into the hobby. Which, if aired, hopefully will entice more people to come to the Kit show at Carlisle, and bring out some rare

Owner's Rides



Bill Jones (l) - the "Georgia Tour"
with one very tired author after 15 hours of straight driving



Jon Lowe(l) - the "Pennsylvania Tour"
Jon is from our sister club - Club Nova in the UK. He stopped briefly for a visit while on business here in the U.S.
I'm not sure he liked the chilly PA weather that day!



Mini 18



Avenger GT w/ turbo V6

One of my favorite vehicles though was the Mini Mack, or Mini 18 as it was marketed. It was the owner's second trip to Carlisle in a number of years, and readers of HotVW's magazine will recognize this truck as the cover of one of the 1974 issues. This is body and truck #1, complete right down to the paint and shag carpet in the cap. The owner was having issues with the motor running Saturday, and basically had coasted the truck to it's spot on the field. We rectified that on Sunday morning by replacing the fuel pump attained from one of the VW vendors and reattaching the vacuum advance hose to the carburetor. My feeling was it was a plugged fuel filter screen on the pump, but since he had bought a new replacement, why not put it in? There is value in carrying a set of tools in the car - I have a moderate set that I carry in the Sterling; I also carry a mostly complete kit in the trailer when I travel.

So, with neither one of us familiar with changing a pump, we dove right in! We quickly found out that the replacement pump takes a shorter drive shaft, which fortunately was in with the kit. A few minutes later, and a couple squirts of raw gas into the carb top (fire in the hole!!), the motor sputtered to life, and quickly took a nice even idle - much better than the owner said it had run in weeks. So myself and another participant persuaded him to circle the field, and make a run up the hill to make sure everything was working correctly, and as fate would have it, the truck performed flawlessly.

For those wondering, yes, the stacks are functional! This is a really neat, fairly rare vehicle - only about 18 were ever produced. And, I want one now! Due to the lack of my journalistic prowess, I failed utterly to get anyone's name for the article concerning their cars. Hopefully they will be back next year! During the day, we were visited by yet another club member, Ben Dodd, who actually lives quite close to me. For some unknown reason, his emails were not getting through to me, but that's been rectified - look for a photo expose' on his Sterling in an upcoming issue!

The day grew long, and I was starting to get rather windbeaten and sunburned. By 4:00 Sue and I had enough, and with one last trip to the fleamarket to gather up my newly purchased seats, we set the car into the trailer and headed for the hotel for a quick shower and maybe a nap before dinner. We're such the party animals! The forecast for Sunday was poor - rain and thundershowers all day, so we decided to play that by ear when we woke.

And sure enough, Sunday morning we were greeted with sunshine and bright blue skies - but behind the western mountain range (Blue Mountain, for those into geography) the tell-tale signs of the next advancing front were piling up. We did make it onto the field for about five hours. There were periods of very brief shower activity, not enough to pack the car, but the winds became fierce. So bad in fact, that vendor tents were starting to be blown over and trailer awnings were starting to collapse. By 1:00 I had had enough. Neither Sue or I were in the mood to be windblown any more; the skies were rapidly darkening, and many of the vehicles on both show fields were starting to leave. While the awards presentations were often entertaining, they started at 3PM, and frequently did not involve the Kit field at all.

By 1:30 the car was tied down in the trailer, and we were back on our way home. It's always a bittersweet moment when you leave the grounds, especially this year. Though it's only my second time there, there were fewer old-school kits than ever, and it is my hope that it was the weather that held them back. I keep having a suspicion that in a few years the Kit side of the show will be defunct; and the Cobra and Speedster crowds will be merged with the Imports somehow. And that's sad if it does happen. There are some good kits still around, and this show is the only East coast show of it's kind. Pleas have been made to the Carlisle event staff to move the show to later in the year in hopes of better weather, but that will probably never happen. I'm hoping that with whatever video coverage gets shown from this show that it will spark some people to dust off their projects and bring them out for all to see. The hobby hasn't faded, it's just heading in the pre-built direction, leaving the old-school crowds to save what cars we can!

'Till next year -

Traylor



K-1 Attack



DDR SP4



TECH TIPS



We've got a couple great tech ideas this time around. Obviously, our cars were not made for comfort, and back in the day, the 30 ounce Big Gulps just weren't around. Today, we wonder where to put our drinks for that road trip? Unless you have a passenger, there really wasn't a solution unless you turned to the RV and boating industry for those weird, space saving devices. Dennis sent these photos along of his blue Sterling interior (Dennis' car featured in the first newsletter). He had found a website: www.euramtec.com that seems to specialize in the aforementioned fields. And they have a great variety of stuff that could readily be adapted for Sterling use. I'm especially interested in their power mirror controls, since my little homebuild units look just that. Check out their site, though they won't list pricing until you register to the site. It's free (for the moment), so no big deal. Thanks, Dennis!!



This past year has been especially hard on member Steve from New York. He has been the unfortunate recipient of two broken windshields due to the loss of the hood latch mechanism, or, more precisely, the lack of a locking mechanism. Both times he had been on a high-speed expressway, and both times very fortunate that nothing more was damaged beyond the hood (bonnet) and the windscreen. Mike McBride still stocks windshields that Steve says first hand that they are very high quality, and have the sun-band across the top. Personally, I want to know how the old one comes out without scratching the paint! Maybe for another time...

But, the last time in the shop, some creative geniuses decided they had had enough, and designed a rather clever latch that should keep the bonnet in place, since it can only be released by the driver from the inside, much like the modern cars have. Essentially it's a cable operated latch with a lock on the inside of the car. The pictures are on page 9!

(con't on pg 9)



BMW Isetta

Of course, one of the strangest kits that I had heard of but had never seen was the Heb Adams VSE JackRabbit. This bizarre little foray into the kit world is based on a VW Rabbit, hence the name. An all fiberglass tub body, much like a dune buggy, with most of the Rabbit pieces used somewhere on the body, as well as the running gear. Shannon Larratt, the webmaster of Price of His Toys stopped by to talk with the owner and his wife. Shannon has revamped his site and has updated much of it, and has more photos from the show than I have here. For those interested, it's www.priceofhistoys.com



Shannon Larratt (in jacket)

Shannon is one of those unique individuals who has traveled the world, published books and movie scripts, and in general very well spoken and knowledgeable in a variety of subjects.

The Avenger crowd had now come onto the field. It was still relatively early, around 10:30 or so, but the clouds started to look a little threatening. Everyone was hoping for the best, but by 11:00, a few light drops had started to fall. Learning from Friday, I put the T-tops back on the car, shut the windows, and closed the canopy. I ushered our chairs and non-waterproof items either inside the car or under the chassis, and Sue and I headed for an unoccupied tent. While she took the opportunity to make a pit stop I watched the Cobra and Speedster crowds tarp their vehicles.

Just as quickly as the rains had started, they tapered back off, being pushed out by rapidly rising winds. Oh boy...here we go again! We battened everything down as tight as we could, and actually tried to enjoy the rest of the day which was brightening by the moment. By 1:00 there was a reasonable amount of sunshine, and the crowds finally came to Carlisle!

Several vendors were test driving their cars to drum up what business there was. DDR Concepts from the Dominican Republic was there with their (McLaren) F1 supercar, Factory Five was driving both a Cobra and a Daytona around, and K-1 Attack had a complete car, not only for sale, but probably received the most attention from the crowd throughout the day. Our film crew had both the K-1 and the DDR owners for interviews, and the K-1 attracted by far the most attention while sitting on the interview field - even more than the Sterling and the Laser - and that's saying quite a bit!

(con't on pg 6)

The 917's details



Friday was rapidly drawing to a close. Windblown, and actually a little sunburned, Sue and I retired off the field around 5:30. Some of the participants were lining up for the annual show cruise around the town; we briefly considered it, but were too tired and the weather was still too unpredictable.

Saturday started off with Sue peeking out the curtains of the hotel room. "Well?" I asked, slightly muffled because I was still under the covers. "Sun. Blue sky," was her reply. And, it was only 6:30. Good enough! Up and out to the field. We were to meet fellow club member Dave Aliberti at one of the food vendors at the food court for breakfast. Dave was with one of his buddies, also involved in the car industry, and together the four of us had a hearty artery clogging meal of pancakes and assorted breakfast meats. From there, we perused the fleamarket spaces for deals. Though I had found several things I needed for my Manx project Friday, I was game to keep looking for other deals. Which I found: a pair of seats, supposedly from a Triumph GT6. They need recovered and new foams, but will fit the Sterling dimensions perfectly.



BruBaker Box



Empi Imp

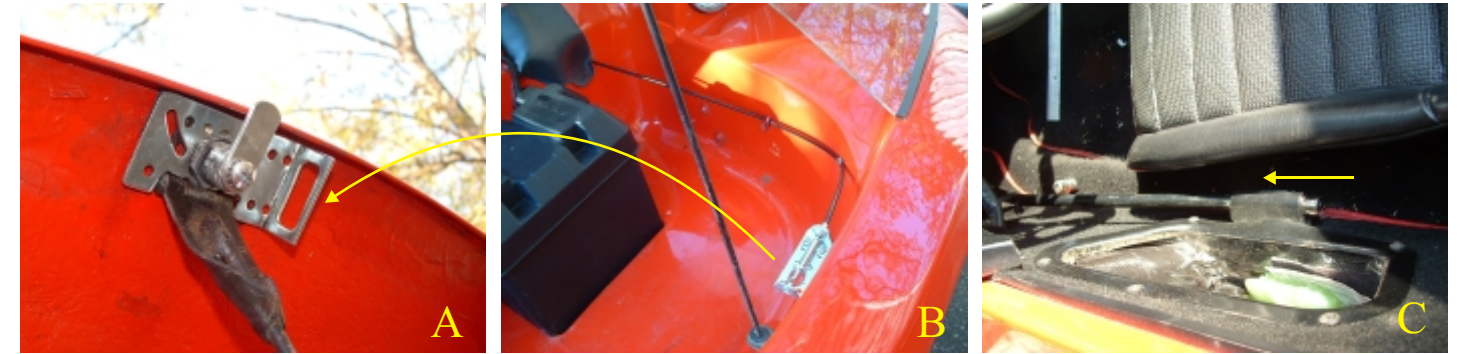


Grinnell Scorpion

As I get them together and installed, I'll post photos with dimensions. They should allow plenty of leg room while still supporting my lower back. And, they recline as well as fold forward. Score!

Sue wanted to wander to the Import field to see one of her favorites: the BMW Isetta, and there were quite a few out to play! A handful of VW Beetles were nearby, which was somewhat disappointing, since this year was supposed to be the 'big' VW aircooled get-together for the show. Sadly, only a few showed, with a few buggies thrown into the mix. The green Empi Imp showed again this year, looking cleaner than ever, if that's possible, along with the Brubaker Box that was on the field last year. The FireAero rolled in early, closely followed by a Grinnell Scorpion. I must admit, the Grinnell looked awfully good, but that open cockpit could get damp in this weather!

TECH TIPS *(Con't)*

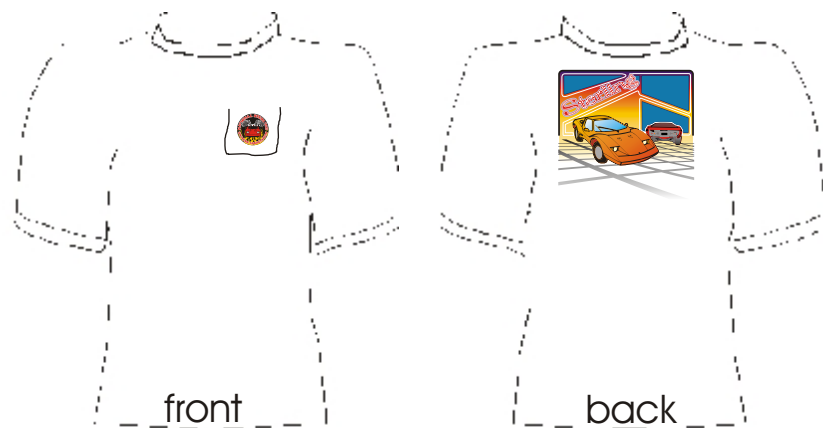


This pin (B) gets pushed by pushing and locking the cable (C) through the lock plate attached to the existing hood lock (A). Any specific questions can be directed to Steve at superpuppy1@excite.com Pretty clever idea!



FOR SALE

This may or may not be a recurring page, it depends on what kind of requests I get. I still have quite a few shirts available for anyone that wants them. Shirts are a grey pocket T by JerZees with the club logo on the pocket and your choice of imprint on the back. The imprints are color transfers, not silk-screens. I have had scattered reports of these images fading - mine have a little, and I think that is attributed to the actual 'grey' of the shirt. I have white work shirts with similar transfers and have had no problems, so I think any subsequent orders will be white shirts. T's are \$15 each plus shipping - just email or call the number at the bottom of page 12.



How's this for an original old-school item? Steve from New York (superpuppy) has, what we believe to be, an original Sterling issued car cover. He is currently looking into having reproductions made from a local vendor, as he already has several people from the Nova site interested, including me. Contact Steve direct if you want in on one of these covers! Style and fabric to be determined at a later date, of course!

*Update!! Covers are available through California Car Cover:
www.calcarcover.com*

Go to the selection menu, and enter Sterling, then GT for the model!



old-school kits. But I momentarily digress. As Noone and Dave were setting up their equipment, the rain gods decided to let loose. A few drops at first - just enough warning for me to throw the not-quite waterproof T-tops on and head to the trailer. As the squall line hit, Sue gathered the chairs and headed for a nearby vacant tent. I quickly secured the car in the trailer, and drove to the field in my truck to retrieve my now somewhat damp partner.

We were second-guessing how long this was going to last. Cars on the Import field were leaving; I had to towel off the Sterling and clean up the drips on the interior, so we decided to sit at the trailer and have lunch while I tended the car. And, as fate would have it, a half hour later the squall blew through, and while not quite clear, the skies were a much better color than earlier. Maybe we'd luck out after all!

I dropped Sue and our supplies back onto the field, retrieved the Sterling from the trailer, and tried again. The problem now was the wind. Lots of it. Carlisle is located between two mountain ranges, and that can cause some problems as storm fronts pass through. While gusty, it wasn't all that bad, and the sun actually poked through from time to time, so now it was time to start the interviews!

I was up first, the cameraman taking all kinds of video of the Sterling (don't take a close look at the motor...) and finally a sit-down Q&A session. I won't go into the details, hopefully everyone will get to see the edited product. Mark was up next with the Laser, and probably scored some brownie points with his detailed engine bay!

(con't on pg 4)



Mark trying to keep his hat on while being interviewed by Thomas Noone