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NATIONAL STERLING OWNERS ASSOCIATION

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Letter from the editor

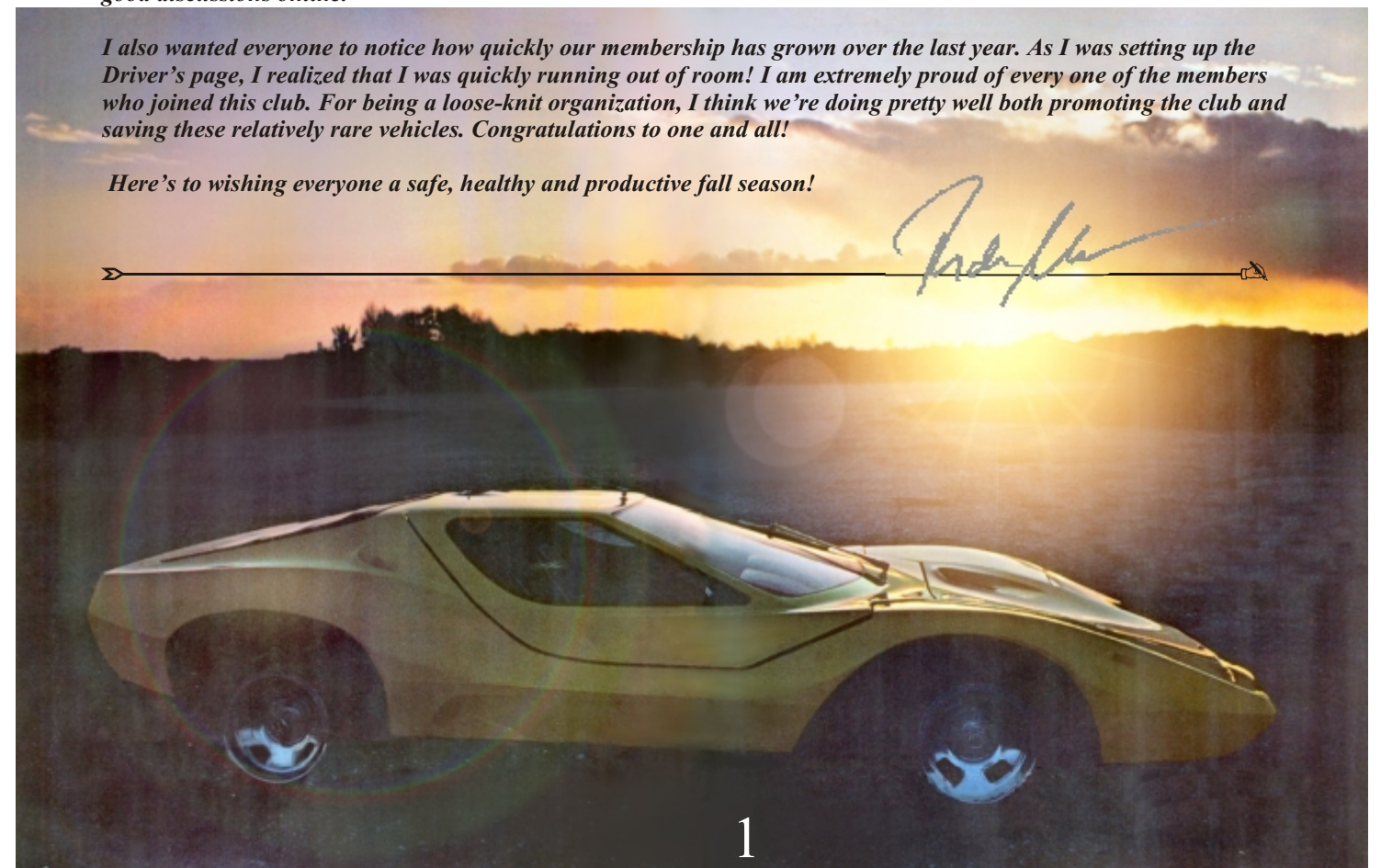
Two steps forward, three back. At least that what it's felt like the last couple months. Mechanical problems on my daily driver and recent minor health issues have invaded my home, so again, a delayed newsletter. Poor Steve S. in New York - I think he thinks I don't like him. After months of planning, we found a date that my wife and myself would be able to go visit and attend a show with him. The Sterling was loaded in the trailer, the weekend was slated to be perfect - all was right with the world. Until mechanical issues with my tow vehicle sidelined the trip. Again. Last year when we tried the same show it rained. One of these days, Steve!

But I was able to meet and greet with Fuzz and his Cimbria a little closer to home. Photos will be in an upcoming edition newsletter. Interesting beast, those Cimbria (Cimbrias?)! Ebay seems to be the place to be for interesting finds. More than a dozen cars have come up on that site as well as Samba and occasionally Kit Car. Since our website lists them, more than a couple people were able to monitor and purchase cars. One even listed our site as the place to be for more information!

Recently, several of our members have jumped on the linear actuator wagon, and ordered parts for their cars, and started installations. Get me some photos and stories, guys! Mike Fabery started an online forum (www.seemysterling.com) that is linked from our webpage, so we can open up our inboxes a little, and have some good discussions online.

I also wanted everyone to notice how quickly our membership has grown over the last year. As I was setting up the Driver's page, I realized that I was quickly running out of room! I am extremely proud of every one of the members who joined this club. For being a loose-knit organization, I think we're doing pretty well both promoting the club and saving these relatively rare vehicles. Congratulations to one and all!

Here's to wishing everyone a safe, healthy and productive fall season!



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www.nationalsterling.com

direct link to forums is:

<http://www1.nationalsterling.org/modules.php?name=Forums>



When one drives a car like this, all one can do is say...

Look at Me!

A narrative by Retta Reed, Paul Hawkins' sweetie and fellow car nut!

"Look at Me": (Or..For The Love of the Sebring)

"Look at THIS!" popped from my IM screen along with a link from Paul to an auction.

"What IS this?" I asked after studying the photos of a car from the Jetson's garage. "It's a Sebring" replies Paul, as he launched into a detailed explanation of the car's history. Paul bids on the car but fails to meet the reserve price. About a month later, he gets an e-mail from the owner asking if he was still interested. The answer was yes, but the price was still out of range, so thanks, but no thanks. The next week, the owner phones Paul with a "final offer".

A reasonable price is agreed upon, and arrangements are made to pick up the car.

And so began an interesting journey!



Owner's Rides



Al Agolio



Dan McGee



Mike Walz



Mike Fabery



Scott Bailey



Nic Bardea

TECH TIPS

Note #5

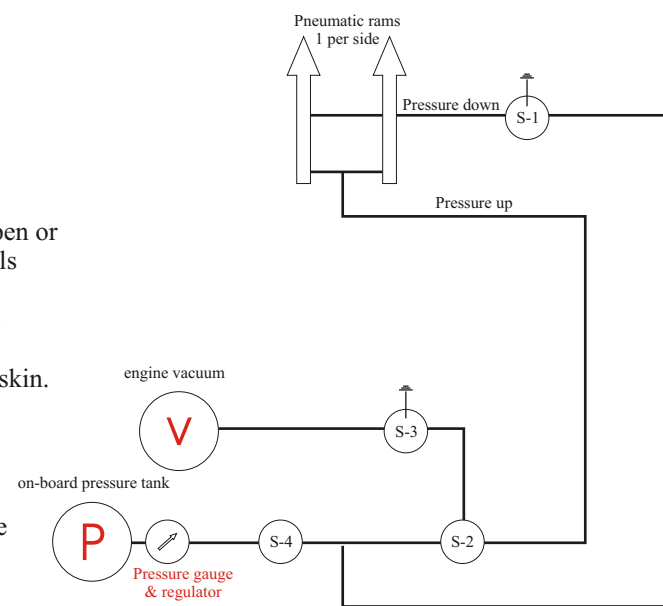
Activation is by one of three methods. Of course, I have a alarm/keyless unlock button on my key chain. I can open or close the canopy with this. Inside the car is an up/down switch that controls the pressurized system. It has an aircraft type flip up safety cover on it to prevent accidental openings while driving. A third system uses a switch to manually trigger the system from out side the car. You can use a key type electric switch but I opted for a magnetic switch mounted under the body skin. The proper strength magnet waved over the right place on the body and the top opens.

Note #6

All four of the relays are 12 volt dc. S4 is the “boss” relay and controls the pressure for the other relays to use. It is a heavier duty than the others.

Relay & air pressure toggle switch description.

S-1 & s-2 are identical. 12 volts dc 100 psi. These are “bleed off” solenoids. That means when the power is turned off, the out side of the relay will bleed off trapped pressure thru a third port. This is important because the system must be able to release the pressure on the up side to allow the down side to work, etc.. S-3 this is an air pressure toggle switch. From the front, it looks like any other toggle switch on the dash but from the back, it has hoses connected instead of wires. This is a bleed-off switch. (see above for description) S-4 heavy duty high pressure 12 volts dc solenoid. This is a simple on/off like the type used for air horns.



Operation

S-4 is activated for both pressure up and retract down. It is the main “work horse” of the system.

Up

S-2 (+s-4) is activated to pressure the canopy up. When released, the pressure trapped in the cylinders will bleed off thru the bleed port in s-2 into s-3 where it will bleed off thru the bleed port and be gone. At this point, the canopy is up but only held there by the OEM lifter helpers. The canopy can be pulled down by hand.

Down

S-1 (+s-4) is activated to pressure the canopy down. When released, the pressure trapped in the cylinders will bleed off thru the bleed port in s-1 and be gone. At this point, the canopy is held down by gravity.

Locked for travel

(Motor must be running for this step) toggle switch valve s-3 is flipped to “lock”. Engine vacuum is supplied thru s-3 and then thru the bleed port of s-2 into the pressure-up side of the pneumatic cylinders. However, since this is a vacuum and not a pressure, it will pull the cylinders down and secure it for travel.

Note: even if the toggle switch is set to “lock for travel”, the canopy can be raised by pressure. When the up system (s-4 + s-2) is activated, the bleed port in s-2 is closed. This will stop the vacuum supply from reaching the cylinders and supply pressure instead. When the up system (s-4 + s-2) is released, the canopy will retract back to “locked for travel”. (if the motor is running) the pressure trapped in the up side of the system will bleed into the motor and cause it to cough once.

Note: you will need to retain the stock hydraulic lifter supports to slow and dampen the lift/retract cycles. A rubber bumper on each side will stop the clank when it tops out.

Really, really super important note: this system has no safeties. If a hand or leg or head is in the way, the canopy will close on it. On the flip side, it should be interesting to see when some person is peering into the windows while it’s parked some place and you remotely raise the roof!

In a worst case scenario (electrical systems failure, pneumatic systems failure, vehicle mishap, etc.): The system will release and the canopy can be opened. Stalled motor...no vacuum...canopy is unlocked. “Locked for travel” is not dependant on any electrical systems.

Sources for pneumatic parts: www.clippard.com

At sunrise on a sparkling summer day, we head out for the four hour drive to Illinois from Kentucky. We stop to stretch our legs as Paul calls for final directions and confirmation. Pulling into the seller's driveway, we see it for the very first time....a white Sebring in the center of the yard with the canopy raised towards the sky. Paul smiles..... "Look at THAT!"

Paul slowly circles the car.....again....and again....and AGAIN... meticulously searching for every positive and negative point. The seller begins to get a bit agitated and almost talks his way out of the sale... "Do you want it or not?..... it's an old car....it needs lots of work..... what do you expect?"

Paul doesn't respond...anyone can see he is not really "with" us - he's seeing the car as it can be... will it be worth the effort and the money?

The answer was YES.... so paperwork done, transaction completed, we head back. We stop to fill up with gas and get our first taste of what it will be like to own a Sebring. Raising the canopy draws stares from all over the parking lot! People coming over to ask “what is that?”

And Paul, with a huge grin on his face, looks at me and says jokingly "Look at ME!"

Since that day, we've spent many hours restoring the beauty of this unusual car, starting with a good bath and over 40 hours hand buffing and color sanding the body. We took it to our first show (Circle Yer Wagens XXII) still running on the GEX 1600 Type III 1600cc engine. We met many people who recognized the body style, many others who were intrigued, and simply had a blast!! At the end of the weekend, we found ourselves with a 1st place trophy and were later shown in Hot VW's magazine. What a thrill!!

In the year since then, we've replaced the underpowered 1600 with a fresh 2054 with dual 44 Webers and a Kennedy clutch. We've removed the drum brakes and replaced them with 4-wheel disc brakes where I was awarded the job of hand-painting the rotors and calipers. We've added a spoiler, DVD player, Empi shifter, new steering wheel, and repaired the headlights. We've also ended up with 2006 Corvette wheels and tires.

So far, it's been a labor of love... lots of frustration but lots of fun! But the real reward comes when another car buff stops and takes that slow, thoughtful walk around it, nodding to themselves. Or when someone circles all the way around the block to stop and ask questions or take pictures. Or when someone drives along side us on the interstate for miles, simply smiling!

"Look at ME" indeed!

— Retta



Con't on page 4



74x94mm 2054cc New As41 mag case Chromoly head studs New 74mm 4140 crank CB Unitech " I " beam rods
 Engle 120 cam / C.B. straight cut gears Scat lifters Lightened flywheel 8 dowel Chromoly gland nut
 30mm alum oil pump. Full flow steel cover Mahle piston kit w/teflon buttons Stage 2 42x37 ported/polished heads
 Scat solid shafts w/Scat swivel foot adjusters Empi finned aluminum valve covers New 009 dist/55 amp alternator/pulleys,belt/elec ignition
 New dual 44 idf webers/Port matched manifolds 1-5/8 Coated Bugpack Merged w/dual mufflers
 Bergmann shroud kit Kennedy pressure plate and clutch

Drivers' Spotlight: Ben Dodd's Sterling

Its a 1970 Sterling built in 1977 by Sterling component cars of California. It is titled as a 1970 Sterling and has less then 23,000 original miles. The engine is a 1972 VW 1835 cc Type III. It was rebuilt in 1998 and runs excellent. The car has dual exhaust and duel Webber carbs. The transmission is a 4 speed and was rebuilt in 1999. It has Air conditioning, power mirrors, keychain remote roof opener, removable side and rear windows, rear wing, interior dome light, map light, adjustable seat with padded seat covers, new carpeting, and new wiring.

The interior is in excellent condition. It has a leather wrapped steering wheel and leather shift boot(not shown in pic). The car has never been in an accident. It was originally yellow. It was painted black in 1991. The paint has started to chip in some places, but I have used touch up paint. The paint is 7 on a scale of 10. I have the original rear louvers, all receipts back to 1977, and original build manual. When I first got the car, it had surface rust up near where your feet touch the floor on both sides. I sanded it down, primed it and painted it black before I put the carpet down. There is no visible rust on the car.

The floor pan has been lowered. The reason you can not see the lowered pan is because the previous owner did something very clever before he had it painted. He fiberglassed the bottom of the car on the sides to hide the lowered floor pan. He also added the Testorossa style vent louvers in the air intakes near the rear wheels. The rear spoiler and deck are painted flat black. This was done because the original rear deck louvers were flat black. The spoiler is an Olds 442 style. I took off the louvers because it provides better visibility and I think the car looks nicer without them.



*This may be a recurring section in future newsletters.
 If you would like to feature your car, but don't have enough
 info for a full length Feature Story, this section is for you!
 Send over a photo or two and a brief bio, and I'll get it in!*

TECH TIPS

This issue's tips come from Mac McGraw, describing a pneumatic system for powering the canopies of Sterlings and Sebrings. Text is as Mac provided, there may be some missing details (such as total piston stroke), so for clarification contact Mac and/or I'll add corrections in a later issue.

Pneumatic powered canopy lifter system

Parts list

- *two pneumatic rams-3/4" to 1" piston stroke
- *pressure hose----1/8" id
- *pressure tank-metal, pvc pipe tank, etc
- *pressure gauge with limiter type regulator
- *(1) pressure solenoid-simple on/off type-12 VDC
- *(2) pressure solenoid-on/off with slave side bleed off. 12 VDC
- *(1) pressure toggle switch-on/off with slave side bleed off
- See construction notes regarding activation preferences.
- *(1) DPDT switch-on/off/on-spring loaded "on's" automatically- returns to off
- *misc. wire

Construction notes

Note #1

A 1" piston pressurized to 100psi will lift 100 pounds...per cylinder. Air flows a lot faster than hydraulic fluid. You must use a limiter type regulator to control the air flow or you risk launching your canopy into the neighbors back yard! A limiter type pressure regulator is the cheap kind that does not really control the pressure...only the amount of air allowed to pass. I used this type to get that initial push but then it drops down to 30 to 40 psi for the lift/retract. Mine has a pressure gauge on it so I can monitor the available pressure.

Note #2 The onboard pressure tank can be anything that will fit into your space and hold pressure 100 to 150 psi. The more pressure available, the more lifts/retracts you get. My system has an onboard air compressor to keep it topped off but also a fill valve to refill it with a standard tire inflator like at a gas station.

Note #3 My system pressures the canopy up and also down but I did not design it to be held down with pressure. I use engine vacuum to hold it down. It is on a switch so I can "release" the vacuum and sit with the top up while still idling. When the motor is running, I can pressure the top down or vacuum it down, depending on which way the switch is flipped. I decided to use engine vacuum to hold the top down while driving for a couple of reasons. It's free from the motor and pretty unlimited. And in an accident, it's more than likely that the motor is off or soon will be. Motor off = canopy released. If for some reason I need to secure the canopy from inside with the motor off, I can still pressure it down.

Note#4

My pneumatic cylinders did not have an appropriate mount on the bottom end. So I removed the tail caps, drilled & tapped them and installed a rubber stud type shock mount. It gives the cylinder enough flex to swing thru it's arc of operation. Heim ball joints were used on the top end.

Con't on page 6