



The Criterion

NEWSLETTER of the NORTHEAST CHAPTER of the PROFESSIONAL CAR SOCIETY
Fourth Quarter 2013

www.PCSNortheast.com

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1959 Cadillac Eureka Returns to Bogota

No Time Like The Present!

by Bill Marcy

As I watch the years go by, it occurs to me, that life, the economy, politics and the old car hobby itself, all go through cycles. Sometimes the cycles are positive in nature and sometimes the cycles are not so positive, or are even negative in nature. With these cycles, come opportunities to sell for profit, or buy at significantly reduced prices. In the down, or negative cycles, people are most scared to make a decision to buy anything, let alone a luxury, such as a collector vehicle. However, the time to buy, is when the prices are low.

Obviously, if the situation in someone's personal life, is such that they have no money and no ability to make a collector car purchase, then it goes without saying, that my statements have no value. If, on the other hand, you have the desire and the ability to make a collector vehicle purchase, this is an excellent time to consider an investment. Currently, the market for collector vehicles, especially in the lower price segment, are lower than they have been for quite some time. But, as in the past, it is my belief that prices will soon rise and then, just as in the past, bargains will disappear, prices will rise and things will get back to a more stable, or even frantic environment.

I follow a number of collector vehicle auctions on the internet, as often as I can. When you watch directly on the internet, without the commentators points of view, you see the auction, the way it really is. From my perspective, in spite of some high dollar sales, it seems to me that the prices are down and the auctioneers and their respective auction companies are struggling to put deals together. The same is true in most aspects of retail sales, whether it is at a car dealership, an individual sale, or even on a site like ebay. It is the cycle we are in, but nothing lasts forever and history proves this to be true.

Take advantage of the market we are in, if you possibly can. In my opinion, you will be glad you did and you will see the fruits of your collector car investment sooner, than later. If I was in a position to buy some collector vehicles for investment, I certainly would. In my personal opinion, now is a fabulous time to invest in the collector car of your dreams.

Just a reminder that Northeast Chapter dues are due by January 31, 2014. Dues for 2014 are \$15. You can pay by check or money order payable to "PCS Northeast Chapter." Please mail your dues to Jeff Hookway at 64 Mudcut Rd., Lafayette, NJ 07848-4607. If you have any questions, please call me (973) 862-6047 or send me an e-mail hookjch@ptd.net. Thanks

America On Wheels Museum Allentown, Pa.

by Bill Marcy

The morning of November 3, 2013 dawned a bright, sunny, yet brisk fall day. A small group of Northeast Chapter members met at the America On Wheels Museum in Allentown, Pennsylvania, located just minutes from I-78. In attendance were the following Northeast Chapter members in no particular order, they were; Tracy & Fred Goerlitz, Mary & Jeff Hookway, Stephanie & Dan McCann, Roy Garretson, Joseph Bueno and Lucille & Bill Marcy.

We had only planned to be at the museum for an hour, so that we could all be at our Northeast Chapter business meeting at 1:30 PM, as planned. Needless to say, an hour left us little time to fully enjoy all that this amazing museum had to offer. A return visit is definitely something we should consider. The museum opened it's doors officially in 2008. Created on the site of an old abandoned slaughterhouse, it has certainly benefitted the neighborhood and it is an integral part of the revitalization of the downtown Allentown area.

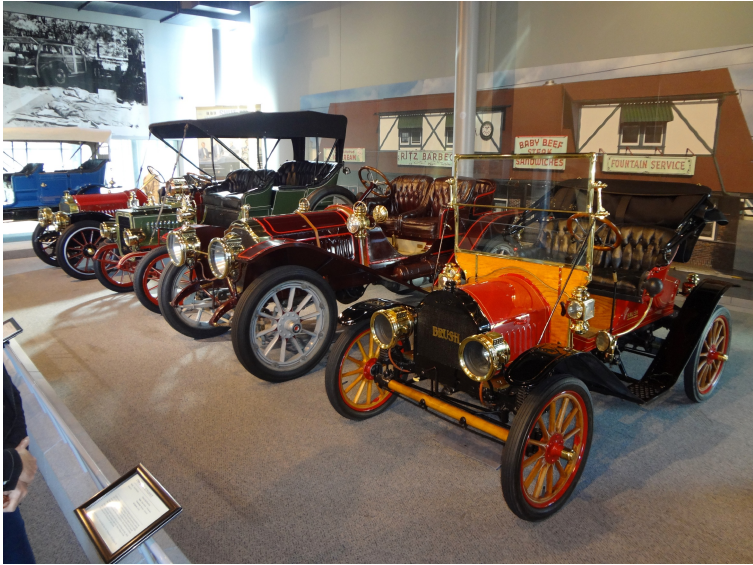
Inside of the museum on display, were a wide assortment of vintage cars and trucks, pedal cars, race cars, a working restoration shop, a library, a café and a constantly changing area for special displays. The vehicles on display are in pristine condition, featuring everything from steam powered vehicles, to early and more modern electric vehicles, brass-era cars and much more!

I would also like to say that in addition to being a very enjoyable museum to visit, with a fabulous array of vintage cars and trucks, it is amazingly well kept! In addition, there were many other people enjoying the museum and all of it's offerings.

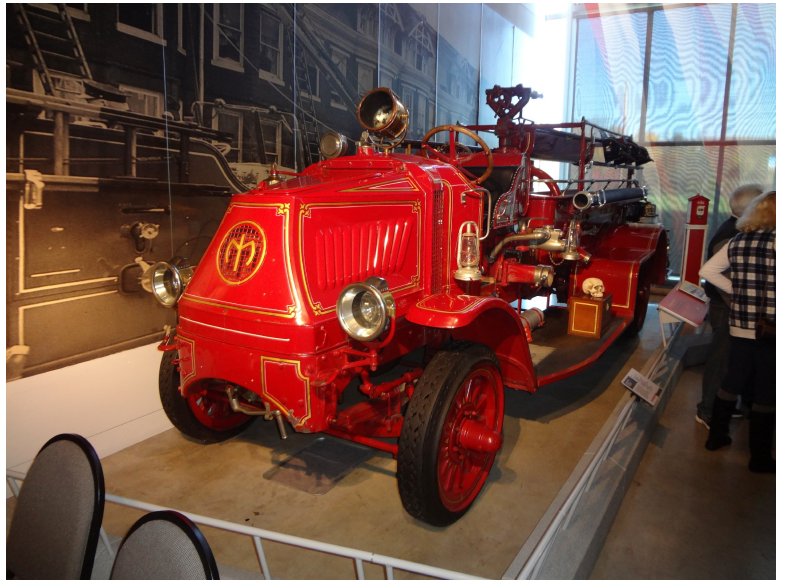
If we had set aside two hours for the museum tour, I think we would have enjoyed our visit even more, than we did. But, now we know for next time.



From left to right; Roy Garretson, Bill Marcy, Jeff Hookway, Lucille Marcy, Mary Hookway, Fred Goerlitz, Dan McCann, Stephanie and Joseph Bueno



Vehicles on display at the
America on Wheels Museum



The following message was received from Ann Keel

Greetings,

My hope is that someone in the PCS will be able to purchase my son, John's, collection of cars. I really love these beautiful cars and I'm sadly not able to keep them any longer. These cars deserve to have someone give them a good home, to drive them to PCS meets and take care of their legacy.

Over the years, I have had many people offer to buy "Ravenna" a stunning 1973 Cadillac Superior Crown Sovereign Combination car for a lot of money; especially since the six page feature article in Car And Driver about my son John. Then a documentary film was made about him called "The Boy Who Loved Hearses" produced by Film 101 Productions. Both of these have attracted a lot of people to take an interest in my dear son's life.

Someone (not a PCS member) offered me \$50,000.00 (for just Ravenna) on the spot, he said he was intrigued about John's story in the May 2004 Car And Driver magazine. This guy wanted to cut up Ravenna and make this beautiful coach into a hot rod!

So dear PCS friends, I offer the John R. Keel collection of 4 cars to you for the price of \$50,000.00 for the whole collection. Also included will be an autographed original copy of the May 2004 Car And Driver magazine and "The Boy Who Loved Hearses" documentary.

This collection consists of four cars that John affectionately named:

- * Ravenna ~ 1973 Cadillac Superior Crown Sovereign Landau Combination
- * Zerelda ~ 1973 Cadillac Superior Hearse
- * Mona ~ 1972 Cadillac Superior Fleetwood Limousine (not currently running)
- * Delta ~ 1976 Oldsmobile Delta Royal 88

If you are interested in learning more about these cars, please read below to find out more detailed information about each car and attached are some current pictures taken last week. I was only able to attach six pictures but there are many more available upon request and I can email you detailed pictures of each individual car you are interested in.

If you have any questions, feel free to email me or call me on my home# after 6:00 pm Eastern Time.

Sincerely,

Ann M. Keel

AnnLovesPalmTrees@gmail.com

989-486-1470

p.s. Congratulations to Evan Butchers as the latest recipient of the John R. Keel award for youthful enthusiasm at the recent PCS meet in Milwaukee!

Pride of Bogota Returns!

As members of the Professional Car Society, it is fairly safe to say, that most of us are just fascinated with professional cars and their individual histories. It seems that we have a number of members who know the history on many of the professional cars owned by our membership. It is this obsession with preserving the history and originality of our beloved cars that makes this story all the more interesting.

On Saturday October 5, 2013, we actually saw the history of a particular 1959 Eureka Cadillac ambulance go full circle. This particular ambulance served The Bogota Volunteer First Aid Squad in Bogota, New Jersey. Placed into service in September 1959, it responded to it's first call on September 21, 1959. The last call was answered on July 14, 1969. In the years of service to Bogota First Aid Squad, the ambulance logged 29,252 miles and answered 2591 calls. Those are fairly impressive numbers, when you consider that Bogota consists of only one square mile.

Just as impressive as it's numbers, is the sight of this behemoth ambulance. To begin with, it was one of only three Eureka Hi-Boy ambulances built in 1959. Not that anyone knew it at the time, but this is perhaps the most iconic year in Cadillac history. Laden with lots of chrome and emergency lights, it's iconic tailfins, bullet tail lights and it's very tall roof height, not to mention the gorgeous deep green body and white roof, this ambulance is simply breathtaking!

When the ambulance in this story was taken out of service in July of 1969, nobody seems to know where it went, or exactly who owned it. In 1995, PCS member Neal Parish of California found it and he knew that he had to own it, in spite of the fact that it needed a restoration. Finally, in the late 1990s, the ambulance was placed into a shop, for a long overdue restoration. The restoration cost a whopping \$65,000! In spite of the hefty price of the restoration, it was apparently not complete, as I have been told that the rear compartment was not finished. In the years that followed, between other demands on his time and a general lack of mechanical ability, Mr Parish placed the ambulance For Sale. It seems that the Eureka ambulance did not sell quickly. Over time, perhaps a couple of years and several price reductions, a deal was finally made with a buyer from Switzerland.

Enter Edwin and Irene Otten from Fully Switzerland. Two wonderful and generous people, who want to share the joy that their ambulance brings to anyone who sees it. As avid Cadillac collectors and enthusiasts, the 1959 Eureka was a good fit. It would now be stable mates with two 1959 Eldorado Biarritz convertibles, three 1959 DeVille six window sedans and a 1956 Series 62 convertible. The Ottens are active members of the Cadillac LaSalle Club and several European Cadillac clubs. As Cadillac lovers, they sought to complete the restoration of the rear compartment. From some pictures and diagrams that Edwin found, he was able to reconstruct the cabinetry to the original appearance and specs. A period-correct stretcher was obtained after an exhaustive search. The ambulance was now completely restored.

Edwin and Irene love to drive their ambulance. To date, they have driven it about 10,000 miles to France, Holland and all over Switzerland. On October 7, 2013, they will be part of a Cadillac rally with over a hundred other Caddies from Europe. They will depart from Jersey City New Jersey and tour many destinations over the next ten days, when the rally will end in Miami Florida. When they were asked what their best memories with their ambulance are, they said that their best enjoyment is when they are driving it. They love the looks and reactions they get while driving it. However, Edwin said that the most enjoyable thing they have done with the Eureka to date, was bringing it back to Bogota for the parade and reunion.

None of this would have ever happened without the efforts of Ray Dwyer, a member of the Bogota First Aid Squad for thirty five years. Back in The Nineties, Ray was able to confirm with Neal Parish that in fact, this was the Ex-Bogota ambulance. Ray became a friend of Neal Parish and subsequently a friend of Edwin and Irene Otten. Ultimately, Ray Dwyer was a key player in identifying this historic ambulance and reuniting it with the town of Bogota, the residents it served and the squad itself. And of course, the efforts of Edwin and Irene Otten, for bringing their ambulance from Europe to America.

Now, that is preserving history!

Special notes; I had the pleasure of meeting Edwin and Irene Otten and Ray and Jennifer Dwyer. I have not yet met Neal Parish. I would like to thank everyone named here, for their respective contributions to this story. Information in this story has been gathered over time from the PCS Message Board, Conversations with people involved and from the Bogota First Aid Squad website and is presumed to be reasonably accurate.





UPDATE

As you already know, when Edwin and Irene Otten left New Jersey, they were part of a rally that continued on all the way to Miami, Florida. In total, there were 164 vintage vehicles in the rally, every single vehicle and their respective owners and occupants came all the way from Europe.

The Ottens said they had a wonderful trip, with the only problem for them, being that the 1959 Eureka had a little trouble climbing part of the Blue Ridge Parkway. In the end, ten of the initial 164 vehicles starting out, did not finish. Quite an amazing accomplishment, to say the least.

