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NEWSLETTER

GTO Association of Maine July 2012

President's Message

Well summer is here and 'cruisin' and 'cars shows' are happening! My job required me to travel to Newport, RI one Sunday in June. I arrived around 3 pm, apparently just as some local car show was breaking up. Coming at me in the northbound lanes of Rhode Island Route 114, were about a dozen Ferraris, Mazarottis and Lamborghinis. All zigging and zagging and having fun. It was pretty cool to see.

Then on June 24th, GTOAM had our own outing at Gail and Don Winchell's home in Standish. Don and Gail were kind/crazy enough to treat everyone to a free lobster feed. It was delicious and we certainly are very grateful for the wonderfully generous act on their part. Thanks again, Don and Gail. Then traveling home on Maine Route 114, in our '70 Goat we came to a 4 way stop intersection.....and wouldn't you know that a black '70 Goat arrived at the intersection at the same time that we arrived. He waved and then "chirped" his way across the intersection. Boy, how I

love summer. Hope your summer is going equally as well.

Keep the fun times coming by planning to attend our next GTOAM outing at VP Mike and Vicki King's place in Winthrop. See details in this newsletter. Hope to see you out on the roads or at the car events.

Prez PJ

NEXT EVENT **August 19th, 2012**

Potluck

Who: Mike the King and Vicki the Queen
Where: Farmingdale, Maine
When: Sunday, August 19th, 2012
Arrive: Around 11 AM
Eat: Pot luck around noon (all if you want to bring some food, or just bring it!)

Directions: The Castle is between Manchester and Hallowell at 440 Outlet Road, Farmingdale. Use GPS<MapQuest or use Maine Gazette, or call Mike at 724-3574 (home) or 485-7248 cell.

Last Event Lobster Bake!

A ~~good~~ great time was had by all at Don & Gail Winchell's Lobster Bake. As we arrived we were greeted by the sight of a beautiful new log home, post & beam barn,



the line up of Don's cars,



a great mountain view, and Tupelo the horse.



The weather couldn't have been better with a nice day that wasn't even too hot. We spent the day catching up with old GTO acquaintances and of course enjoying the lobster that Don and Gail provided. All too soon it was time to go.



Thanks to Don & Gail for hosting this event and letting us enjoy your beautiful place

Five Future Automotive Collectibles: If you've got one of these cars, you could be sitting on gold

By Rob Sass – Hagerty Insurance May 04, 2012

Car people of a certain age have all had one of those “I wish I’d had a crystal ball” moments while watching a 1960s muscle car sell for huge money on a televised auction. With some cars, you can ditch the crystal ball; it’s just a matter of time before a new generation of collectors recognize them for what they are and pay up accordingly. Here’s our list of future blue chippers:

1. **2009 Pontiac Solstice GXP coupe:** The Solstice coupe was a particularly sad story from the saddest part of GM’s long history. The original Solstice convertible was an attractive two-seat sports car that suffered from a serious case of bad packaging. When the top was down, there was barely enough room for a toothbrush in the trunk. The gorgeous fastback hardtop coupe version addressed this lack of storage while still retaining the open air feeling of the convertible by virtue of a lift off roof panel. Just 1,200 or so were built before GM offed the Solstice, the plant it was built in, and Pontiac itself.
2. **2009 Pontiac G8 GXP:** Another heartbreaker from GM. While four-door sedans generally

don't get the love from collectors, we're betting this one will buck that trend. The G8 was a rear wheel-drive sedan from GM's Australian Holden division. Imported as the G8, a little over 1,800 G8 GXPs were built with a 415 hp Corvette derived V-8 and an available Tremec 6-speed gearbox. The G8 GXPs performance stats put '60s muscle cars to shame — 0-60 in 4.5 seconds and a quarter-mile time of 13 seconds flat. It was a half-price BMW M5 that never had a chance to find its market.

3. **2008-09 Ford Mustang Bullitt Edition:** In the collectible automotive world, all things associated with Steve McQueen have some added luster. Ford made a lot of fans of the 1968 action film "Bullitt" very happy when they released a special edition of the Mustang designed to resemble the green 1968 Mustang driven by McQueen's character Lieutenant Frank Bullitt. It wasn't the first time that Ford tried to capitalize on the film (there was a 2001 Bullitt Mustang), but this version of the Bullitt Mustang was by far the most seriously retro, and future collectors will prize good examples.
4. **2005-06 Ford GT:** OK, we're cheating just a little bit here. In point of fact, although it's only been out of production for about five years, the GT is already rather collectible. Just over 4,000 of these world-class supercars were built, essentially to commemorate Ferrari's 1966 thrashing at the famous Le Mans race at the hands of the car's inspiration — the Ford GT40. A dead-ringer for the original 1960s race car (complete with racing stripes), we're guessing that the \$200,000 or so these cars bring now will look like chicken feed 20 years from now.
5. **2002-05 Ford Thunderbird:** This retro-cool re-imagining of the classic 1955 Thunderbird was actually a pretty competent car that shared its underpinnings with both Lincoln and Jaguar. More of a boulevard cruiser than a sports car, the car perfectly captured the spirit of the original T-Bird. How the same people who came up with the Bullitt Edition Mustang could have resisted an "American Graffiti" version of the T-Bird in white is beyond us.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

We're trying something different this year with a rotating newsletter editor. PJ did the last one and Charlie is doing this one. It's an easy way to contribute without getting stuck with an ongoing responsibility. If you can step up and do just one please contact PJ to volunteer. Thanks!

NEW MEMBERS

Ken Hinckley of W. Gardiner
Linda & Bill Kelley – Bridgton with a 70 GTO
Convertible
Welcome!

DUES

Are you up-to-date?

Please, if you haven't paid your 2012 dues yet send your check of \$10.00 (or \$20.00) for two years. If you are unsure if your membership is current, just check the GTOAM roster at the end of this newsletter to see if you have "2012" under "Status". Remember this is our only source of income other than the sale of tee shirts and hats. In saying that lets try to gain new members. Remember we accept any and all Pontiacs not only GTOs. And we welcome any and all new members that have an interest in Pontiacs. You don't even have to own a car to join.

GTOAM EVENTS FOR 2012

19 August: Cookout at Vicki and Mike King's in Winthrop

TBD (fall): Our Foliage tour

PONTIACS FOR SALE

FIEROS: 1985, 1986 & 1988
GRAND PRIXs: 1998, 2001 & 2004
BONNEVILLE: 1997
FIREBIRD: 2002

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Rose Huntington

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Pontiac History

Excerpt from Car Directory – History of Pontiac

<http://www.cars-directory.net/history/pontiac/>

The horsepower era: 1961-1970

The 1961 models were again drastically reworked. The split grille returned, as well as all-new bodies and a new-design perimeter frame chassis for all full-size models (which would be adopted for all of GM's intermediate-sized cars in 1964, and all its full-sized cars in 1965). These new chassis allowed for reduced weight and smaller body sizes.

But the complete departure in 1961 was the new Tempest, one of the three B-O-P (Buick-Olds-Pontiac) "compacts" introduced that year, the others being the Buick Special and Skylark and Oldsmobile F-85 and Cutlass. (And toward the end of the 1961 model year, a fancier version of the Tempest called "LeMans," a misspelling of the famous 24 Hours of Le Mans auto race in France, according to lore, at first accidental and then deliberate, as it was drawing attention.)

Unlike their frame-based siblings in each brand's lines, all three were unibody cars, dubbed the "Y-body" platform, that combined the frame and the body into a single construction, meaning they could be comparatively lighter and smaller. All three put into production new technology that GM had been working on for several years prior, but the Tempest was by far the most radical. A seven-foot flexible steel shaft, rotating at the speed of the engine, delivered

power from the front-mounted engine to a rear-mounted transaxle through a "torque tube." Because it was curved when installed, the so-called "propeller shaft" was dubbed "ropeshaft." The design's father was none other than DeLorean, and its advantage was two-fold: first, the car achieved close to a 50/50 weight balance that drastically improved handling; and second, it enabled four-wheel independent suspension -- a feature that no other American car could match save the Corvair.

And though the Tempest's transaxle was similar to the Corvair, introduced the year before, it shared virtually no common parts. GM had planned to launch a Pontiac version of the Corvair, but "Bunkie" Knudsen -- whose niece had been seriously injured in a Corvair crash -- successfully argued against the idea. Instead, DeLorean's "ropeshaft" design was greenlighted, and Pontiac embarked on a brave new experiment.

Contemporary rumors of the ropeshaft's demise due to reliability problems are unfounded; the ropeshaft's durability and performance had been proven in tests in full-size Pontiacs and Cadillacs in 1959, and only adapted to a smaller car in 1960. The Tempest won the Motor Trend "Car of the Year" award in 1961 -- for Pontiac, the second time in three years. DeLorean's vision has been further vindicated by the adoption of similar designs in a slew of modern high-performance cars, including the Porsche 928, the Corvette C5, and the Aston Martin DB9.

Unless customers checked an option, the Tempest's powerplant was a 194.5 ci inline-four-cylinder motor, derived from the right bank of the venerable Pontiac 389 V8, enabling it to be run down the same production line as the 389, saving costs for both the car's customers and Pontiac. Pontiac engineers ran early tests of this motor by literally cutting off

the left bank of pistons and adding counterweights to the crankshaft, and were surprised to find it easily maintained the heaviest Pontiacs at over 90 miles per hour. In production, the engine received a crankshaft designed for just four cylinders, but this didn't completely solve its balance issues. The engine gained the nickname "Hay Baler" because of its tendency to kick violently, like the farm machine, when its timing was off.

The motor to get was the option: the aforementioned Buick 215 V8, ordered by less than two percent of its customers in the two years it was available, 1961 and 1962. Today, the 215 cars are among the most sought-after of all Tempests. In 1963, Pontiac replaced the 215 with a "new" 326, an iron block mill that had the same external dimensions and shared parts with the 389, but an altered, reduced bore. The car's body and suspension was also changed to be lower, longer and wider. The response was that more than half of the 1963 Tempests and LeMans (separate lines for that one year only) were ordered with the V8, a trend that did not go unnoticed by management. The next year, the performance V8 option was badged as the now-famous GTO. The Tempest's popularity helped move Pontiac into third place among American car brands in 1962, a position Pontiac would hold through 1970.

In 1961, Knudsen had moved to Chevrolet and Estes had taken over as general manager. Estes continued Knudsen's work of making Pontiac a performance-car brand until 1964, when DeLorean replaced Estes as general manager, and he too continued in the same direction. Pontiac capitalized on the emerging trend toward sportier bucket-seat coupes in 1962 by introducing the Grand Prix. Although GM officially ended factory support for all racing activities across all of its brands

in January 1963, Pontiac continued to cater to performance car enthusiasts by making larger engines with more power available across all model lines. For 1963, the Grand Prix received the same styling changes as other full-sized Pontiacs such as vertical headlights and crisper body lines, but also received its own distinctive squared-off roofline with a concave rear window, along with less chrome and more emphasis on bodylines.

For 1964, the Tempest and LeMans' transaxle design was dropped and the cars were redesigned under GM's new A body platform; frame cars with a conventional front-engine, rear-wheel-drive layout. The most important of these was what is now considered by many to be the original muscle car, the GTO, short for "Gran Turismo Omologato," the Italian for "Grand Touring, Homologated" used by Ferrari as a badge to announce a car's official qualification for racing. In spite of a GM unwritten edict against engines larger than 327 ci (the size of the Corvette's) in intermediate cars, DeLorean (with support from Jim Wangers from Pontiac's ad agency), came up with the idea to offer the GTO as a dealer option package that included a 389 ci engine rated at 325 or 348 horsepower (260kW), depending on carburetion. According to lore, by the time the GM brass had a chance to question the move, DeLorean had over 5,000 orders for GTOs in hand.

The entire Pontiac lineup was honored as Motor Trend's Car of the Year for 1965, the third time for Pontiac to receive such honors, mainly due to the division's efforts to create salable cars for the mass market along with niche models such as the GTO and the Grand Prix. The February, 1965 issue of Motor Trend was almost entirely devoted to Pontiac's Car of the Year award and included feature stories on the division's marketing, styling, engineering and

performance efforts along with road tests of several models.

Due to the popularity of the GTO option, it was split from being an option on the Tempest LeMans series to become the separate GTO series. On the technology front, 1966 saw the introduction of a completely new overhead camshaft 6-cylinder engine in the Tempest, and in an industry first, plastic grilles were used on several models.

The 1967 model year saw the introduction for the Pontiac Firebird pony car, a variant of the Chevrolet Camaro that was the brand's answer to the hot-selling Ford Mustang. Intermediate sized cars (Tempest, LeMans, GTO) were mildly facelifted but the GTO lost its Tri-Power engine option though it did get a larger 400 cubic-inch V8 that replaced the previous 389. Full-sized cars got a major facelift with rounder wasp-wasted bodylines, a name change for the mid-line series from Star Chief to Executive and a one-year-only Grand Prix convertible. 1968 introduced the Endura 'rubber' front bumper on the GTO, the precursor to modern cars' integrated bumpers, and the first of a series "Ram Air" engines, which featured the induction of cold air to the carburetor(s) for more power, and took away some of the sting from deleting the famous Tri-Power multiple carburation option from the engine line up. This line culminated in the Ram Air IV and V round port cylinder headed engines. The Ram Air V garnered much auto press publicity, but only a relative few were made available for sale. Full-sized cars and intermediates reverted from vertical to horizontal headlights while the sporty/performance 2+2 was dropped from the lineup.

For 1969, Pontiac moved the Grand Prix from the full-sized lineup into a G-body model of its own based on the A-body intermediate chassis, but with distinctive styling and long hood/short deck

proportions to create yet another niche product - the intermediate-sized personal-luxury car that offered the luxury and styling of the higher priced personal cars such as the Buick Riviera and Ford Thunderbird but for a much lower pricetag. The new GP was such a sales success in 1969 as dealers moved 112,000 units - more than four times the number of Grand Prixes sold in 1968. Full-sized Pontiacs were also substantially restyled but retained the same basic underbody structure and chassis that debuted with the 1965 model - in fact the rooflines for the four-door pillared sedans and Safari wagons were the same as the '65 models, while the two-door semi-fastback design gave way to a squared-off notchback style and four-door hardtop sedans were also more squared off than 1967-68 models. The GTOs and Firebirds received the Ram Air options, the GTO saw the addition of the "Judge" performance/appearance package, and the Firebird also got the "Trans Am" package. Although originally conceived as a 303 cubic inch model to compete directly in the Trans Am racing series, in a cost saving move the Pontiac Trans Am debuted with the standard 400 cubic inch performance engines. This year also saw De Lorean leaving the post of general manager to accept a similar position at GM's Chevrolet division. His replacement was F. James McDonald.

The 1969 Firebirds received a heavy facelift with swoopier sheetmetal but otherwise continued much the same as the original 1967 model. It was the final year for the overhead cam six-cylinder engine in Firebirds and intermediates, and the Firebird convertible (until 1991). Production of the 1969 Firebirds was extended into the first three months of the 1970 model year (all other 1970 Pontiacs debuted Sept. 18, 1969) due to a decision to delay the introduction of an all-new 1970 Firebird (and Chevrolet Camaro) until after the first of the year - Feb. 26, 1970 to be exact