

The Beginning of the
Quarter Milers

Rod & Custom Car Club and

“Autorama
to Jazz”

This includes many of the photos,
articles and letters etc. from the first
seven years, 1956 to 1962.



“From a Lion cub to the Lions Club, from Poetry to Pies”



An overview by Bob Clarke.

QUARTER MILERS HISTORY

by Bob Clarke

The Quarter Milers (Hot Rod and Custom Car Club) was formed in February, 1956 as a direct result of the ensuing negative publicity resulting from the death of a fellow hotrodder by the name of Frank Lapp.

Daryl Foster wrote a letter to the editor and included the signatures of many local car buffs.

A well-attended meeting was called and the decision was made to form Victoria's first hotrod club.

In order to prove to the general public as well as law and order officials who may have considered us 'crazy young hotrodders', we set about to demonstrate that we could be sensible members of society who happen to love fast and attractive cars.

The club instituted strict rules of driving conduct while wearing the distinctive purple and white club jackets and displaying club plaques on their cars.

The members demonstrated their corporate responsibilities by donating their services to the 'Community Chest', 'Red Cross' (blood donor drives and canvassing), delivering 'Christmas Hampers' to less fortunate children, as well as stopping to assist stranded motorists.

Many local drivers were helped on their way by club members who refused remuneration but presented the motorist with a 'Courtesy Card' stating the aims of the club. Club members also installed lap type seatbelts in cars long before seatbelts became mandatory.

In order to promote ourselves as the good guys of the hotrod set we also arranged our own publicity.

Many spinoff clubs were started up as a result of the success of the Quarter Milers club. The 'Roadsters'; the 'Golden Knights'; the 'Century Toppers'; S.P.A.R. (Saanich Peninsula Auto Restylists), as well as some up-island clubs. The 'Century Toppers' club was revitalized with a few of the original members and some new ones who have remained car nuts who can now afford to build and buy the cars they used to only dream about.

Two of the main activities of the Quarter Milers club were the 'Car Shows' and 'Drag Races'. The first hotrod and custom car show was held in the Victoria Curling Club on Quadra Street in 1958 - the 'Centennial Autorama'. Indoor car shows continued through the sixties and early seventies when outdoor car shows gained in popularity.

The drag racing interests of the club blossomed with the use of a straight section of a rock haulage road owned by Ocean Cement at Cobble Hill. The club supervised drag strip attracted hotrodders from all over the island and gave vent to the speed urge of young drivers in a safe and sensible manner. A separate entity, the 'Island Timing Association', was formed to oversee the expanding interest in drag racing.

The rock haulage drag strip was dubbed 'San Cobble' and continued in operation until a young Duncan entrepreneur developed a regulation size drag strip near Mill Bay. The uphill shutoff area proved a limiting factor in that the sanctioned strip was limited to 180 mph and the fact that the land was more valuable as a site for future homes.

The club started to lose steam in the early seventies with the waning interest in indoor car shows, members following new careers to other cities, and the fact that the 'muscle car' era meant that one could order a hot car rather than having to build one.

The Quarter Milers club was quietly disbanded in 1972 and, 9 years later held their first reunion on the date of the 25th anniversary of the inception of the club.

On February 23, 24 & 25, 2001, the club will celebrate a 45 year reunion at the site of the first reunion - the 'Harbor Towers'.

This event is one of the main reasons the Quarter Milers Club was formed at this time.

Frank Richard Lapp, 20, 1325 Lang, was still unconscious and "weaker" at St. Joseph's Hospital today.

Lapp has been in critical condition since he received head injuries, a broken leg and possible internal injuries in a fatal "hot-rod" accident early Jan. 8. Killed in the accident was John William Hitchin, 23, 1955 Kings

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DEATHS

LAPP—In Victoria on January 26, 1956. Frank Richard Lapp, aged 20 years, of 1325 Lang Street; born in Victoria. He is survived by his father and step-mother, Mr. and Mrs. Richard H. Lapp at the residence; his mother, Dora, in Victoria; a sister, Mrs. Eleanor Dignan of Victoria; his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. H. A. Fink and Mr. and Mrs. George Lapp.

Funeral services from McCall Bros.' Floral Funeral Chapel on Saturday, January 28, at 12 o'clock noon. Rev. W. E. Greenhalgh officiating. Interment in Royal Oak Burial Park.

It prompted me to write a letter to the "editor".

The Editors,

January 14, 1956

Victoria Press Ltd.,
2631 Douglas Street,
Victoria, B.C.]

Dear Sirs:

With reference to articles which appeared in our two local papers . The Daily Times and the Daily Colonist concerning a recent automobile accident:

Two terms were used, to wit, "hot rod" and "souped-up" motor, in a way that tended to twist the true facts out of reasonable proportion. For instance, cars of today in nearly all cases have greater horse power than the "hot rod" referred to in the articles. That car, in fact, incapable of developing 125 horse power at the most, compared with Chevrolet V8 at 162 horse power, Ford at 202 horse power and other larger cars at 300 horse power, and more. Almost any car on the road today, from small foreign cars to the largest American car, could have done what that car did, with equally disastrous results.

A common definition of a hot rodder is any fool who drives with wild abandon and is careless for the safety of others. In truth, a more correct definition would be a person who owns a car exactly like many others on the road today, but who improves his machine to achieve maximum performance, efficiency and economy. The facts must be made clear that all attention on this type of car is not put on the motor, but rather that every part, brakes, steering, etc. receive equal attention.

Two errors appeared in these articles, to the effect that the car was running on three carbs and that the motor was built by the youth himself. In the first case, the car was only running on two carbs, like many modern cars (ex. four throat carbs) one being disconnected. In the second case, the motor was not built by the owner, but rather another city youth.

To date all dealings with the younger motorists have been in the form of fines, license suspensions, and prison terms. Why is there no place for these motor age enthusiasts to test their equipment under proper supervision? k Would it not be better if drinking, illegal racing and idle time were replaced by legal racing and co-operation with the police? All efforts so far on behalf of the younger generation have been quashed in the bud.

Now, a trial unofficial club, headed by Daryl Foster, has been formed, the purpose of which is to get the kids off the street and onto a safe place to test their equipment. Building "Timing Traps" is the most reasonable, cheap, logical and intelligent way of approaching the subject. Timing Traps, commonly referred to as drag strips, flourish in the States and are also in use in Vancouver and Port Alberni. The Port Alberni Strip is under the guidance of the local R.C.M.P., and many others are guided by the local police, and all are run with police and public support. Club members who violate traffic regulations are expelled or restricted by the club. Why cannot this be done here?

The police forces of the four municipalities and the Colwood R.C. M.P. have been approached on the subject. Cpl. Shepherd, commanding officer of the R.C.M.P. at Colwood, offered his full assistance, with particular attention to safety education. Assistant Saanich Police Chief Bert Pearson stated that he would give all possible help he could in the development of a project of this kind. Oak Bay Police Chief Restin gave an encouraging though non-committal answer to a recent phone conversation. Approval was also voiced by Victoria Chief Blackstock during a half hour interview. Esquimalt Police Chief Stancombe would make no definite statement at the time he was called. Saanich Police Chief Bull refused to discuss the subject with us.

This is not an appeal for aid, neither financial nor in the form of gifts or grants , but, an appeal will be made!

Someone has died; don't let the next one be someone important to you. The cure for the problem of youth in the mechanical age is your problem, and it is most important right now.

Yours truly,

Howard Goodall

Frank Kitto

Ray McDougal

Phil Hendry

Bill Sims

Johnny Ellis

Gary Dickenson

Bob Clarke

Dick Layton

Don Mitchell

Pete Walker

Gene Eslin

Bill Mattison

Daryl Foster

Howard Hilton

Dick Willoughby

Frank Addison

Phil Lambrick

Dick Varley

Fred Kockett

Chuck Nault

Bill Foster

Tucker David

Bob Ray

Bob Lindsay

Gary Tucker



Right from the start we were hugely successful in getting media support and we capitalized on that by following what could be described as a rather unconventional approach for getting our drag strip.

In no particular order, what follows are examples of promotion, photos, news stories and advertising that kept us firmly in the public eye. From a lion cub to the Lions club and from poetry to pies we were relentless in our pursuit of public exposure. We made many friends. We received a lot of help. We did get a place to race.

LOCAL NEWS

The

NO. 250—NINETY-EIGHTH YEAR

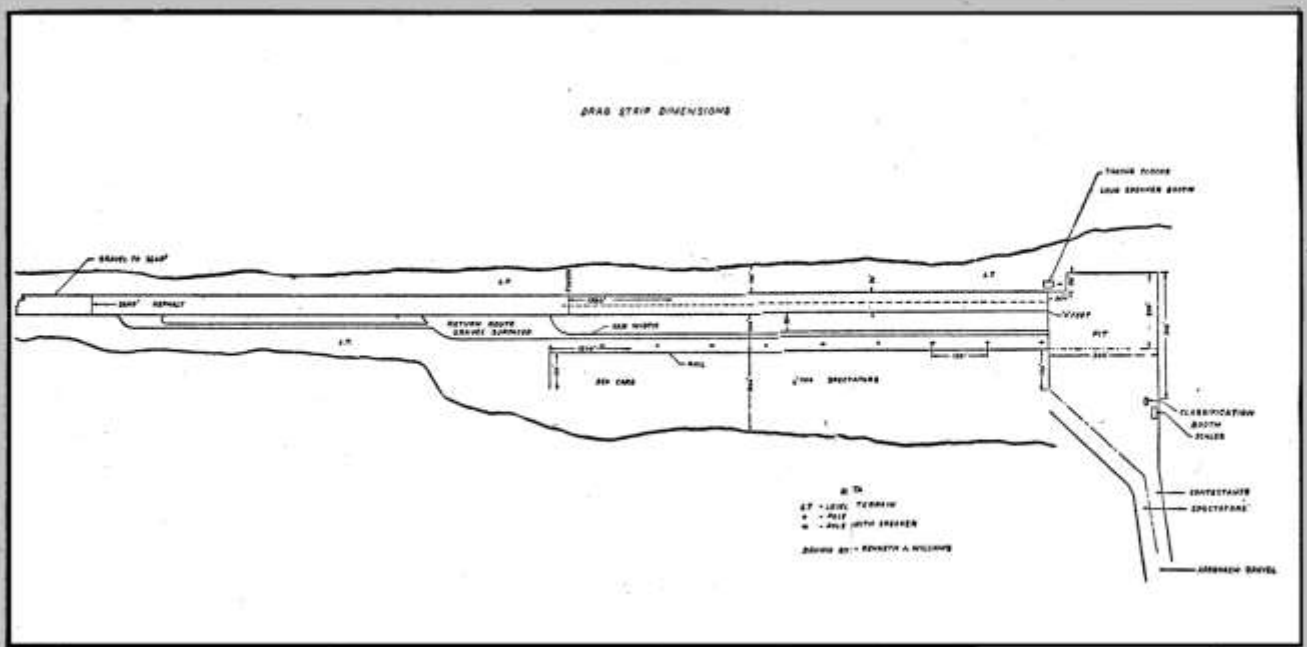
VICTORIA

Tuning Up for Big Drive



These four members of the Quarter-Milers Club will be doing a different sort of driving when they join Community Chest canvass. Daryl Foster, Bob Clarke, Harvey Stratford and

Dave Winter, owner of "modified street rod" pictured here, will help drive chest over the top, along with scores of other volunteers. — (Colonist photo by Jim Ryan)



Here's What Proposed Drag Strip Would Look Like

Drag Strips Designed For Safety and Speed

(Vancouver Island's hot-rodgers are looking for a place to race. This is the second of a three-part series. Selling their argument as they seek public aid in construction of a drag strip.)

By JIM TAYLOR

To the average observer, a drag strip may not look like much. To a hot-rodder, it is a quarter-mile stretch of asphalt-paved heaven.

It is a place to see just what his car can do, a place to check scientifically the results of his hours of work, and have fun at the same time. This is what Vancouver Island's hot-rodgers want—a place to drag cars that for the most part have been all dressed up, with no place to go, for the past two years.

They have the cars. Now they want a place to drag them.

Just what is a drag? Techni-

cally, it's a timed acceleration, judged from a complete stop to maximum speed attainable over a quarter-mile path. It is run singly or in twos and threes, with timing done at the beginning and end of the strip.

Bolled down to basics, it's a race against time and other cars. It's a race with all the excitement of any wild dash down a highway, but with a difference. Here there are no curves to send a car careening out of control, no telephone poles to wrap it around. Which explains why police invariably give wholehearted support to drag strips wherever they spring up.

It has already been stated here that the Island Timing Association will appeal to the public for funds to construct a drag strip for its 14 member

clubs. Here is an idea of what the public would be buying.

Highly Organized

To begin with, the formation of a drag strip is no fly-by-night, haphazard operation. It is a highly-organized undertaking, and the local group would have the benefit of experiences of clubs all over the United States to draw from when work begins.

There are scores of such strips in operation in the United States, under a governing National Hot Rod Association. The NHRA sets standards for strips, provides literature regarding races and activities, and offers rewards for performances at strips.

Nothing is left to chance. Under NHRA specifications a strip must have an inspection area, a parking area and a

pit area completely isolated from the general public. A staff of 22 (NHRA recommended minimum) is on hand at every race to see that each car that goes on the strip does so in top condition.

This is no cursory examination. Each car is inspected by a qualified technician and must pass a point-by-point check and exhaustive safety test. Safety belts, helmets and goggles, roll bars, shatterproof windshields and fire extinguishers are only a few pieces of the standard equipment required for each car.

To meet NHRA specifications, a drag strip must have an ambulance and first aid man on hand at all times. Each driver must be fully insured, and NHRA has a special scheme to keep the race down.

Down to Zero

In essence, a drag strip provides a place for hot-rodgers to try their cars, but makes sure that the probability rate of an accident is as near to zero as humanly possible.

With sufficient financial backing at the start, drag strips have almost always proven to be successful undertakings in the United States, and the NHRA has proved that once those initial expenses are met, a strip can be virtually self-supporting.

"We believe that a strip would be an asset to the community," reports Daryl Foster of the Quarter Millers. "It would serve a dual purpose in that it would give hot-rodgers a place to race and at the same time provide the public with a good spectator sport. It's worked out that way in other places and we feel it could here, too."

Officials of the NHRA have summed up their feeling this way:

"The hot rod virus bites deeply. It becomes a sport, hobby and avocation rolled into one. Adult guidance and assistance can make it a constructive enterprise. Unfair criticism can serve only to create bitterness and drive a perfectly legitimate activity underground."

A suitable location, high cost and public opinion were obviously going to make it difficult.

Drag Strip to Cost \$25,000; Raising Sum Big Problem

(Vancouver Island's hot-rodders are looking for a place to race. This is the last of a three-part series giving their arguments for public aid in the construction of a drag strip.)

By JIM TAYLOR

In times when deals involving millions of dollars are commonplace, \$25,000 doesn't seem like much. But just try and raise it.

The Island Timing Association is trying. It's been trying for over a year, and so far \$1,500 has been raised for its drag strip fund. Hot-rodders are a determined breed, which probably explains why the efforts haven't died of discouragement long ago. But even determination has its limitations, and without public help hopes for a drag strip for the Island's hot-rodders seem doomed to failure.

The why's and wherefores of a drag strip have already been explained here. On May 22 and May 23 at Victoria Curling Club, the hot-rodders will explain in more detail at the annual car show.

TO ANYBODY

They'll talk to anybody who wants to listen, but it's a frustrating business at best. Daryl Foster of the Quarter-Milers explains it this way:

"One of us can corner someone, sit down and talk to him, and have him go away convinced that we should get our drag strip. But we can't reach everybody, and we're going to need everybody's help if this thing is to go through."

What do the hot-rodders need? They need a piece of property 200 feet wide by a mile long. In a pinch they could make do with a strip three-quarters of a mile long. In addition, they need the \$25,000.

step in the right direction." Officers in other Island centres are of a similar viewpoint, and police everywhere that drag strips have sprung up have been quick to recognize their value.

The hot-rodders aren't asking for someone to hand them their strip on a silver platter. They don't want everything done for them. What they do want is financial aid, enough money for them to do the necessary work themselves to make the drag strip possible.

In the past there have been numerous campaigns to get children off the streets. The public has often expressed a desire to get the hot-rods off the streets too, and the hot-rodders are only too willing to do it.

But they can't do it alone.

NEAR DUNCAN

The property should be somewhere in the Duncan or Nanaimo area, so that it is centrally located for all Island hot-rodders, but this isn't strictly necessary.

"Most of all, we need a service club to back us, or we have to go it alone," Foster explained. "The only way we could do it ourselves would be with a bond issue and shares."

With only 300 members in the 14 member-clubs of the Island Timing Association, selling shares would mean turning to the public. And, as has been said here before, the public attitude toward hot-rodders, erroneous though it is, still makes the prospect of selling many shares a dubious one.

RIGHT DIRECTION

The Island Timing Association has police backing in its bid for a strip. Police Chief John Blackstock of Victoria calls such a move "a definite

QUARTER
MILERS
VICTORIA B.C.

Lots of free publicity.

*Island
Events*
AND

MOTOR CLUB NEWS

Victoria Automobile Club



In This Issue

NANAIMO — SOLID GROWTH

APRIL 1956

25c



Birth of a dragster

Hot-rodding not only provides hours of pleasure for a large number of citizens, but during the years has made many worthwhile contributions to the automobile industry.

The true "rod" does his racing on a supervised race course, either against the clock or other cars, or both. Very often local police and officials of automobile associations organize and help stage competition meets. Always the



At Cassidy pits



Drag strip starting line

The . . .

**1
4**

MILERS

By DARYL FOSTER

(Photography — "Curly" Hilton)

"Hot-Rodder" and "Shot-Rodder" are two terms very often confused. In fact you may not have heard of the last mentioned if you are outside the auto racing fraternity.

A hot-rodder is a person of any age, 16 to 60, who is interested in automotive sports from the building, driving and racing angle. His work is exacting and precise, for he is continually striving to achieve maximum auto performance, economy and efficiency. He is one of the foremost exponents of safety, and frequently his wife and children are his most ardent 'fans.'

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meets are run with police approval. And it is interesting to note that wherever organized "hot-rodding" has been encouraged and properly supervised, the automobile accident, death and complaint rate has dropped substantially.

An example occurred in the country to the south of us a year or so ago. In Pomona, California, "shot-rodders" were running wild through the town. The local police force exerted every effort, but youthful energy was not to be denied, and the powerful cars multiplied. The accident rate went up,

tragedies increased. Responsible citizens decided that the best course of correction was to provide the young auto enthusiasts with a place to expend their energies. A track was built, and today not only is the problem licked, but the city has a tourist attraction popular with citizens too. A substantial number of similar clubs and associations devoted to "hot-rod racing" now flourish across the continent.

But what about that "shot-rodder"? Here we find the immature, inconsiderate driver of any age. He need not have a "souped-up" vehicle. He may be your neighbour, the quiet little chap who weeds his petunias every weekend. But put him behind the wheel of the family sedan, and brother, what a murderous type! He is just as dangerous — perhaps more so — than that youngster with the hopped-up sedan who passes you like a flash on the highway. At any rate, "shot-rodder" is the term used by the racing boys to describe a poor driver, and what they mean, quite appropriately, is that the fellow's intelligence is "shot"!

Like the Vancouver Island Track Racing Association, the Quarter-Milers are a recently formed organization interested in the promotion of safer driving habits on our roads and better racing on supervised tracks. Quarter Milers differ from V.I.T.R.A. members in that they are primarily interested in "dragging." Last month this magazine ran an article on V.I.T.R.A. operations, which concern stock-cars on a full-scale race track.



A "mother head beast" leaves the 100 m.p.h. field behind on a typical 1,320 foot strip.

THE QUARTER MILERS Officers

President Bob Clarke
Vice-Pres. Daryl Foster
Secretary Harvey Stratford
Treasurer Harry James

ISLAND EVENTS • April, 1956

A "drag" race is a timed acceleration run judged from a complete stop to maximum speed attainable. It is run over a straight quarter mile strip, either singly, or in two's or three's. Timing is done in the last few feet, just before and just after the quarter mile distance. The car, or cars, are then slowed, and returned to the pit area. Layout of such a "drag strip" is shown in the accompanying sketch.

Running and personnel rules are rigidly enforced by "drag" officials, all with the aim of maximum safety. Failure to comply with rules can result in elimination from an event, or actual expulsion from the club. Crash helmets, safety belts, inspected gear and ade-

A drag strip is within the realm of any community's accomplishment, provided there are enough parties interested in working for it. Most service clubs are on the lookout for worthwhile projects. Here is one which has the public safety at heart, as well as providing a very necessary outlet for this generation's wheeled enthusiasts. Editor.

quate fire precautions are only a few of the conditions required before a car can compete.

While a meet is under way, any car can run in its separate class against what is considered by officials to be fair competition. From the cop on his motorcycle to the perfectionist hot-rodder with his 6-wheeled, twin-aircraft engine monster, all can get rid of that urge to get there fast and in competition with someone else. The race is everything, and when the frantic dash finishes, electric timing devices settle without argument who racked up the fastest speed.

Classes are determined by cubic engine displacement, weight and body style, and whether supercharged or not. If neighbour Brown and neighbour Smith argue about which of their cars is the best for speed and acceleration, they can join this club and find out, using their family sedans—provided they comply with safety regulations.

In Victoria we have no drag strip—not yet. The Junior Chamber of Commerce has taken up the fight for all of us who are interested in autos and racing, however, and Jaycee Len King heads a committee trying to locate a suitable site. Then will come the need for funds to build a strip.

Most local police authorities have voiced approval of our plans to build a drag strip, and some Officers have offered their assistance in forming and running the club meets. So we have made a beginning. Our membership is growing.

Victoria Quarter Milers are rather like the cricket team that has the players, the equipment and the enthusiasm, but nowhere to put on a good match. Sometimes we wonder whether you, the public, are interested in our need.

Are you? ✓



Down in San Fernando, California, the motorcycle patrolmen join in the fun, and not only assist in organization, but frequently compete in actual drag events. Interested by-stander is Victoria's "Curly" Hilton.



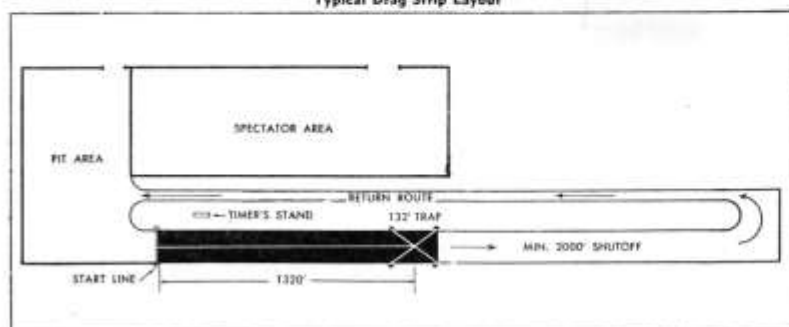
Here are the leading enthusiasts in local drag circles: Quarter Miler Executive L to R standing, Daryl Foster, Bob Clarke; kneeling, Harvey Stratford and Harry James.

Herding The Beasts

A Hot-Rodder's Glossary

- Beast**—Car with fast getaway.
- Blow Off or Dust Off**—Cross the quarter-mile mark first.
- Bone**—Model "A" Ford.
- Breaking Loose**—Tires do not hold.
- Chopped Top**—Car with its cab lowered.
- Getting a Bite**—Tires hold traction during acceleration.
- Goat**—The other fellow's car.
- Gook Wagon**—Car loaded with ornaments; nothing extra inside.
- Gutted**—Car with its interior stripped.
- Herd**—To drive a car.
- Mother Head**—Terrific, a real gone car.
- Lakester**—Special body and no fenders.
- Nerf**—To push another car.
- Jug**—A carburetor.
- Pot Out**—Engine failure.
- Prune**—To beat another car.
- Sectioned**—Car lowered by removing a section of the body.
- Smoke Out of the Chute**—Accelerate from the starting line with tires spinning.
- Stick a Foot in the Pot**—Open throttle wide.

Typical Drag Strip Layout



DUNCAN

A Pleasant Welcome ...

at the

COMMERCIAL HOTEL

Duncan, B.C.

Phone 6

Daniels Motor Co. Ltd.

VOLKSWAGEN SALES & SERVICE

Phone 600

Night Phone 715R

DUNCAN, B.C.



A Queen of the show was mandatory.

This is worth reading

Make That Autorama Scene Irons and Eyefuls Real Cool

By EDMUND COSGROVE

You didn't have to be real far out to make the scene—but it helped.

Like, there were all these irons, see. And up on the bandstand Eleanor Collins (real cool) and the Autorama Queen, Bobbi James, 19, hazel eyes, brown hair, 124 pounds, five feet, seven inches . . . man.

COME ON

Hard to keep your attention on one thing.

You start reading the vital stats on a real gleaming iron with a 1930 Model A chassis, '49 Mercv rear end and a '47 Packard transmission converted from a floor shift . . . and suddenly you're thinking of five feet, seven inches, hazel

eyes . . . you know what I mean?

Or you burn the drums to stop beside a '26 T roadster with the name of "Blue Diamond." Hand-made juice tank and exhaust, frame hand-tooled from four-inch channel iron, and from nowhere comes the voice of this poet.

"Wednesday is green," he's saying up there on the bandstand. "Why is Monday blue? because it sounds correct. Tuesday is brown and it fits."

"Nice car," you say to your neighbor, young fellow named Dave Bartlett. Dave is 17 and he liked the rods, but the iron that really took his fancy is a \$12,900 Buick, gleaming red, that revolves slowly among the lineup of cars on display at the Autorama in the Curling Club.

" . . . Educated people the world over tell you Tuesday is brown," intones the man on the stage. His name, we find, is Tony Emery. He reads far out poetry to jazz. He's a professor.

"That's enough of that nonsense," says the poet abruptly and then Eleanor Collins gets up and belts out a couple of songs, in the style that has won for Eleanor Collins a large and loyal fan club.

Everyone stops eyeing the gleaming cars to eye Miss Collins, who is certainly an eyeful. Then the music fades and we all look back at the cars.

By this time the place is so packed that the girls selling the tickets are wishing for a second set of hands.

INGENIOUS IMPROVISATION AT QUARTER-MILERS' AUTORAMA

Hot Cars, Cool Jazz Really Jive Together

By NORMAN CRIBBENS

Do cars and jazz go together?

Most certainly when the cars, like jazz itself, are improvised and put together with bits and pieces of this and that.

If you don't believe me, go to the Autorama put on by the Quarter Milers Club of Victoria at the Curling Rink any time between now and midnight today.

Here is a marriage of hot cars and cool jazz and improvisation—so much needed in this age of increasing standardization—is the keynote of both.

The cars on display are ingenious combinations of one company's engine with another company's transmission, another company's coachwork and fourth company's steering apparatus.

The jazz is a compound of ideas by leading local instrumentalists led by Buddy Glover and Hans Gruber, conductor of Victoria Symphony Orchestra.

POETRY READINGS

Working with them is Professor Tony Emery of the University of Victoria who reads poetry against a jazz background and somehow creates a relation between the two.

But the emphasis is on the hot-rod cars and, whether you are auto-minded or not, you will be delighted by the strange and remarkable combinations effected with years of patience and skill by young men who love cars for their own sake.

Here, for instance, is a combination called the "Lil Stinker" constructed by 20-year-old Paul Ferris of Victoria. It has a 1932 Ford three-window coach with a 1948 Mercury engine and Lincoln

Zephyr transmission, and took five years to build.

"El Torro," entered by Johnny Walker, has a 1931 Ford body with 1940 Ford brakes, 1951 Oldsmobile engine and 1937 Hudson steering gear. The rear end came from a 1940 Ford and the instruments from a 1954 De Soto.

"Lil Devil," owner by Ricky Little of Victoria, has 1955 Chevrolet coachwork, painted maroon, and a 1956 Chevrolet engine.

"Tempo," entered by Bob Clarke, has a 1941 Chevrolet body, 1954 Buick transmission and 1956 carburetor.

OLDEST CAR

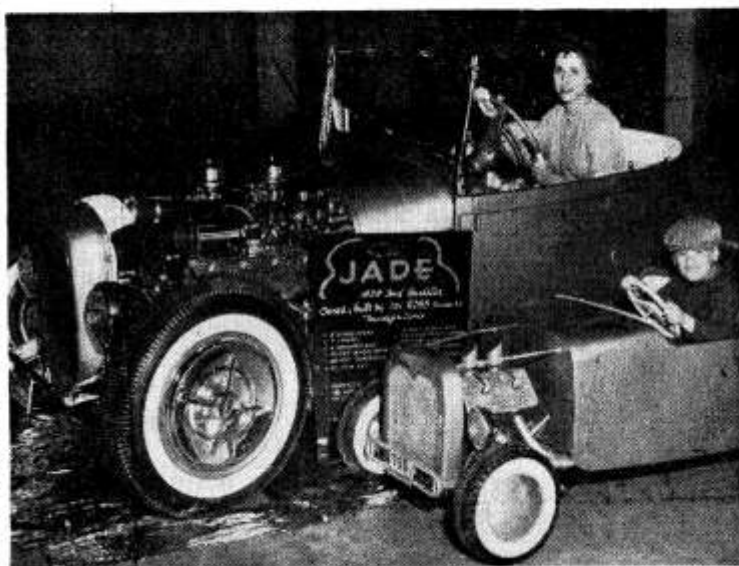
Oldest car in the show, viewed from the outside, is "Mood Indigo," built by Chester Sapala. The body is a 1915 Ford roadster with brass radiator, but the engine is a 1941 Mercury and there is a hand-made aluminum hood.

"Sweet and Sassy," a clever model by Jim Donaldson, embodies a 1940 Ford coupe with a 1957 Chevrolet Corvette engine.

Daryl Foster of Victoria is the author of "Mandarin," painted a bright orange color and using a 1934 Ford engine. He has spent \$5,000 on this improvisation which has won awards in U.S. car shows.

Irving Ross of Duncan is represented by "Jade," an ingenious model built around a 1929 Ford roadster chassis.

Alvin Peltomaa, president of the Quarter Milers Club of Victoria, said he hoped the Autorama would promote interest in both cars and hot-rodding and raise enough money to establish a drag-strip (race track) for club members.



HOT ROD, COMPACT style, and hot rod, quarter-miler style, are demonstrated at Curling Rink Autorama by

Mrs. Joan Ross, in Irv Ross' chrome-glistening creation, "The Jade." (Times Photo by Strickland.)

At present the Quarter Milers use the B.C. Cement Company's road at Cobble Hill.

"We would like to get a dragstrip nearer Victoria," Mr. Peltomaa said.

Last year the Quarter Milers put on a custom car display without the jazz and spent more than they took in. Autorama is an attempt to combine the best in hot-rods and custom cars with the best jazz groups available.

"We shall do this every year if we get enough support," the young president said.

Hundreds of teenagers attended Friday's opening night and strolled around the exhibits to a lively jazz accompaniment provided by the Bon Sprinkle Quartet and the Larry Crawford Quintet.

This afternoon and evening the Buddy Glover Quintet will be featured with the All Star Jazz Group, a 14-piece ensemble led by Glover.

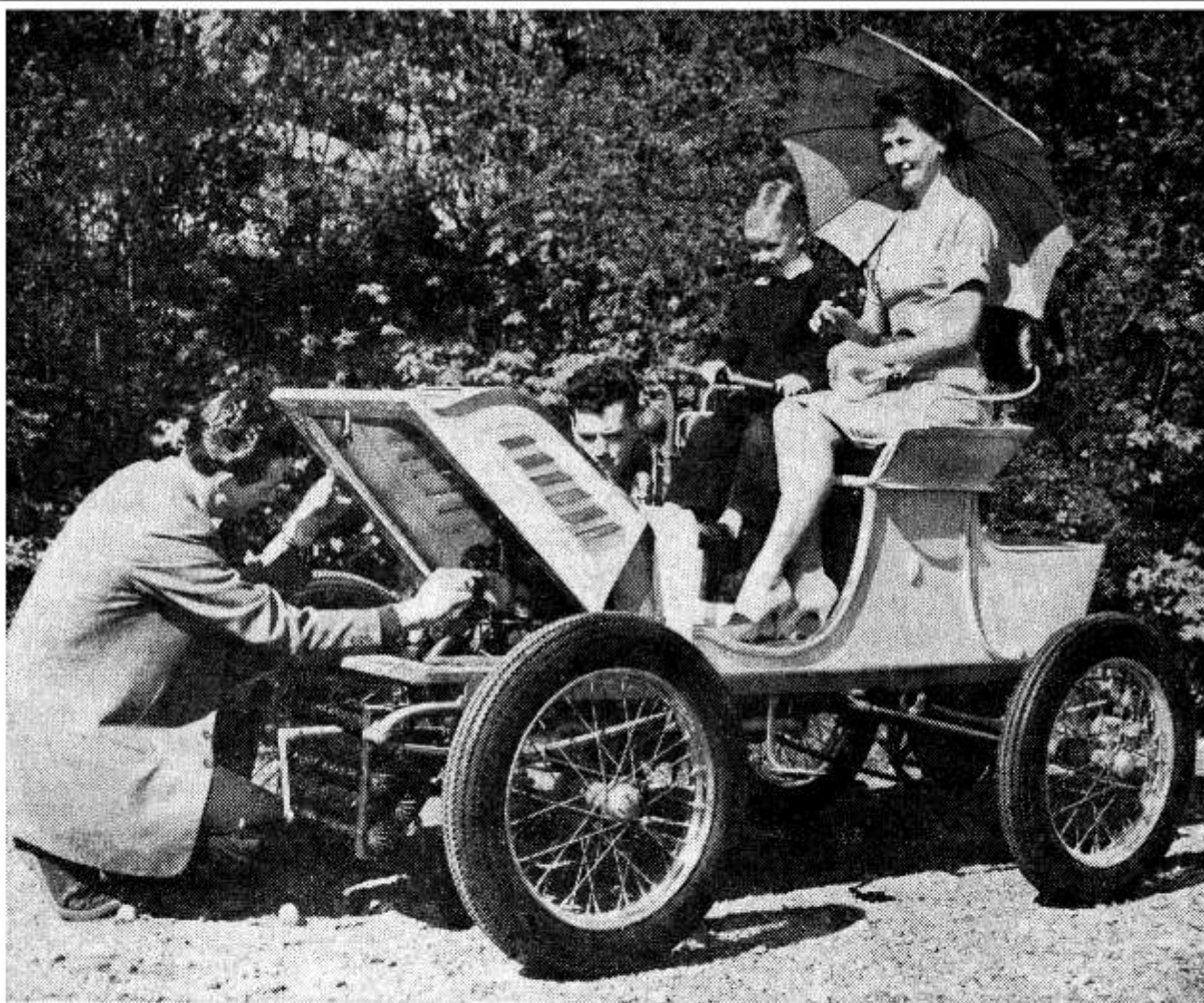
Symphony conductor Hans Gruber, as patron of the show, will appear with the All Star group and has indicated he will play the bongo drums in a jazz jam session.

Prof. Tony Emery officially opened the Autorama Show Friday night and introduced pretty fair-haired Frances Hatcher, 18, who will reign as "Miss Autorama" until tonight.

"The Quarter Milers Club has done a great service to the community," Prof. Emery said. "They are showing how young people can engage in useful constructive effort without getting into trouble."

"Don't take any notice of those miseries who want to stop hot-rodding and jazz. There are kill-joys everywhere."





WHAT IS IT?

If you can positively identify this shining but ancient example of automotive power it could win you \$100. Prize money is being put up by the Quarter Milers' Club as part of its two-day show, "Autorama

to Jazz," in Victoria Curling Rink April 28 and 29. Taking a pre-show peep but getting nowhere are, from left, Daryl Foster, Bob Clarke, Brad Clarke and his mother, Mrs. Betty Clarke. (Times Photo.)





ELEANOR COLLINS

★ ★ ★

The Car Corner

First Class Idea Worth Repeating

By J. T. JONES

A master stroke like the Quarter Milers' Autorama to Jazz naturally has to be tried again. And, since this hot rod organization is more on the ball than practically anybody I can think of, they've expanded and improved on the original idea.

The whole works will be unveiled at the Curling Club April 28 and 29.

This year the show's custom cars—around which it is built and its reason for existence—are entered by invitation only.

This means they'll all have to be good, and they'll come from all over southern B.C. and the Pacific Northwest.

These cars have to be seen to be believed, and certainly to be appreciated. You know—17 coats of lacquer are hard to put into words.

Naturally, the entries will display all the latest far-out ideas.

★ ★ ★

The jazz will be worthwhile, all by itself.

For a start, Eleanor Collins will be there. (I've carried a secret torch for this girl for years.)

And Prof. Tony Emery, metre-reader and car buff from away back, will deliver his now-classic poetry to jazz.

Buddy Glover and combo supply the foundation for it all.

★ ★ ★

What else? Let's see. Free movies, Miss Autorama, a display of model cars, plus the oldest car in Victoria.

★ ★ ★

After last year's show, I talked to a number of people who are strictly lukewarm about cars but wandered in out of curiosity. Every last one of them was enthusiastic.

The jazz fans learned about cars, the car fans learned about jazz.

★ ★ ★

One last thing: somebody's going to go in there without a custom car and come out owning one that's been specially modified as a prize.

12 *Bella* *Collier* *Victoria, B.C., Sun, April 24, 1966*



Lookin' "pretty and neat" enough to make anyone who for the moment, 25-year-old Victoria member will soon be "The Author" at the "Autorama to Jazz" event and Saturday at Victoria Curling Club—(Photo: Corbis photo)

Have to love an article written with style.

DRAGGIN' ON AN ISLAND



HIGHWAY TYPE STRIP is the only drag spot on Vancouver Island, still they manage to have some wild races and big crowds.

By DAN ENYEART

Have you ever noticed how a car can bring a group of fellows together?

A year ago some of the boys from an island called Vancouver arrived in Washington with a four-banger that failed to meet safety requirements. A local club called the Drifters immediately took it upon themselves to legalize the rig.

The Yankee hospitality was greatly appreciated and the Brits offered the use of Bamberton Road, the island and a big party in return.

This is how the big event began with the Drifters from Mt. Vernon and the Mystics from Victoria holding a drag meet on the Bamberton Road, which is run by the Quarter Milers Car Club of Vancouver, B. C.

With a couple of weeks to plan, the Mystics went all out. Articles were put in the local papers telling of the American cars that would be at the drag races, lodging facilities were found, and a hall was rented for a banquet.

This was set up for a two-day event. The first day was to wine and dine, and the second day was to drag and brag.

Now these Drifters, being a hardy bunch, had done quite of both, but the first day caught them with their goggles down. It was a sort of Mardi Gras—British style.

The draggin day arrived and the crowd headed for Bamberton Road. After traveling about 30 miles, we arrived. Did I say arrived?

After being accustomed to 75-foot-wide runways and drag strips, the Drifters couldn't believe their eyes. There sat Bamberton Road—all 22-foot-wide of it. It kind of took off through the stumps and timber with a nice dip right in the middle of the measured 1320. The shut-off area was as far as the eye could see.

This may not be the best strip in the Northwest, but enough cannot be said about the management of the Quartermilers that made things run so smooth.

One of the bigger surprises was the crowd that showed for the big event, nearly five hundred. Most of these had never seen a drag race or at least one with hot machinery.

If ever a place needs a strip, Victoria, B. C., should be one of the first to get it.

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AUTORAMA to JAZZ ~ 1961 ~



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VICTORIA



CURLING RINK

APRIL 28 and 29

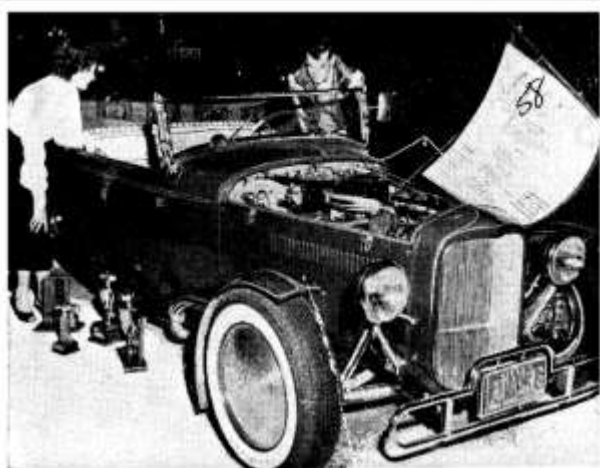
FRIDAY - 6 P.M. TO 12 MIDNIGHT

SATURDAY - 10 A.M. TO 12 MIDNIGHT



Admiring the low, trim lines of this white and red custom car is Bob Clarke, Quarter Milers' president. The \$7,000 car began as '49 Ford but now has a

lowered roof, '51 Meteor grill, '51 Kaiser bumper, '52 Buick side trim and '51 Mercury side skirts.—(Colonist photo by Jim Ryan.)



LOW, POWERFUL and a thing of beauty is "Apache" being inspected by Quarter-Milers president Bob Clarke and his wife. Car is owned by Jim and

Mary McGowan, Vancouver, and occupies place of honor at the Centennial Motorama now at the Curling Rink.—(William Boucher photo)

Centennial Autorama On Today

Junk to Beauty

A \$20 car, bought in Nanaimo last week end, is one of the prime exhibits at Victoria Quarter Milers' Centennial Autorama at the Curling Club today and tonight.

It stands cheek-by-jowl with some of the hottest production sports cars made in North America, and not too far from a \$7,000 beauty owned by Fred Fredette.

The \$20 car is owned by Quarter Milers' president B. Clarke who bought it to work over, channel the body and turn it into an open hotrod like two others nearby. The three are 1929 Ford A roadster-pickups.

Only five of 20 entries from Vancouver were able to reach Victoria because of the CPR ferry strike. Many of the Vancouver entries could not be driven to either Azacortes or Horseshoe Bay for other ferries because the cars are too low-slung.

Many of the cars are minus door handles and keyholes, others are built up with grills, fender skirts, headlamps and bumpers from different cars, most have had the roof chopped down. Those that don't gladden like showroom pieces are painted with flat paint.

Big question asked by many of the visitors to the exhibition last night was "How do the doors open when there's no handle and no keyhole?"

The answer is simple—with a key—as one of the owners showed a Colonist reporter yesterday. But then again, some of them don't even need a key.

AT MOTORAMA SHOW

These Hot Rods Are Aristocrats

By MICHAEL ROSE

One day a week, sometimes two, for nearly seven years Mr. and Mrs. Jim McGowan have worked in their car. Now it stands in the Curling Club, showpiece of the Victoria quarter milers centennial motorama.

The Vancouver couple has taken top awards in Vancouver, Seattle and Tacoma for the modified bright red 1932 Ford roadster with matched trailer.

The "Apache" is one of more than 30 cars on display at the motorama from island clubs and Vancouver.

Some are recent models with new, satin smooth, hand-cutted paint work and others, like the 1920 Oldsmobile owned by local club member Daryl Foster, were bought in near wrecked

condition for as little as \$150 and are now worth up to \$6,000.

All the owners are proud of their cars, their clubs and what they have accomplished for charity and their communities.

Letters from many charitable organizations thanking them for their help are on display at the show.

The Red Cross, Community Chest, Polio Fund and many others have benefited from their efforts.

Since the show opened Friday evening, owners have been standing by their cars, eager to show off their cars and explain details of their work.

"GOLD DUST"

One machine, belonging to Skip Crawford of Vancouver, drew interest for its paintwork.

The originally all-black 1937 Chevrolet had been sanded down to the metal and then re-finished in shiny black lacquer flecked with "gold dust."

Objects of the host Quarter-Milers and other clubs were explained by president Bob Clarke. They include the construction of a "drag strip" where cars could be raced and lined in safety, within the law.

DRIVERS' OATH

"We accept new members into the club with clean sheets," he said, "and they take an oath of safe, careful driving when they join."

"If they break rules and get into trouble we deal with them and deal with them severely."

"We have suspended and even dismissed members for persistent infractions."

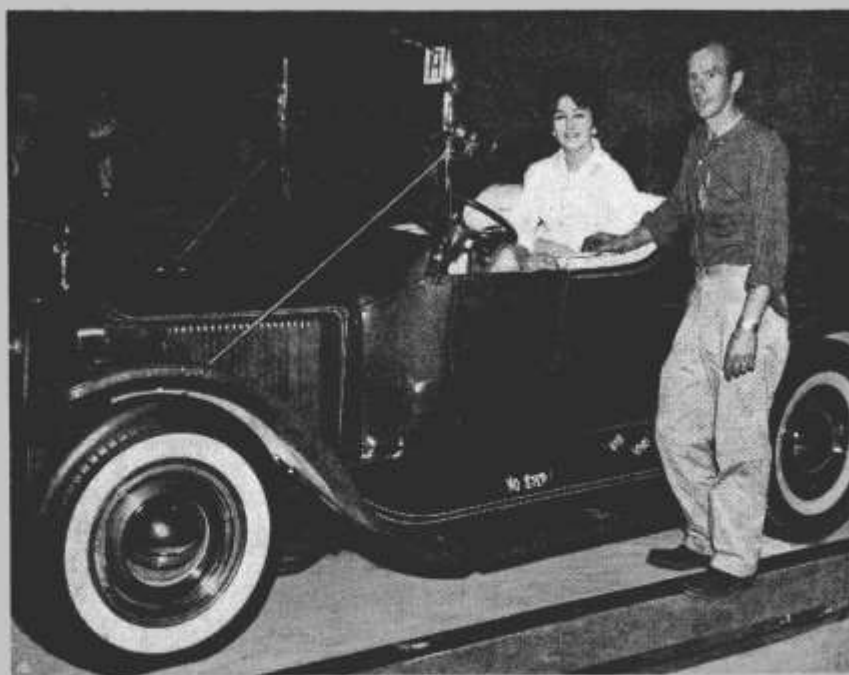
"In a lot of cases drivers with questionable records have improved markedly when they realize they are letting themselves and the club down."





Devils At Heart

Young-at-heart hot-rodders don chapeaux of the open road as they get the feel of a customized car they hope to win at Quarter Milers' Autorama to Jazz show at curling rink April 28 and 29. Would-be speedsters are Miss Nel Edwards, 70, left, and Miss Mona Rickaby, 67. Car giveaway is to raise funds for drag strip. See Car Corner, Page 6.—(Ryan Bros. photo.)



Model T Still Popular

Favorite car of more than 4,000 people attending Autorama to Jazz last night was "Mood Indigo," Model T, worked over by Chester Sapala of Langford. Mrs. M. R. Greenfield of 232 Richmond tries thickly-upholstered modern seats for comfort, and

high windshield for protection. Car's radiator shell is original highly-polished brass, but paintwork is 26 hand-rubbed coats of purple and blue lacquer. See Car Corner, Page 12. — (William Boucher photo.)

The Right Place to Speed

FOR several years those young men in this community whose particular hobby is developing fast cars from ordinary models have sought a drag strip. This is a stretch of hard-surfaced roadway on which they could test their cars for speed and themselves for driving ability.

The cost of such a project has appeared prohibitive. Last weekend's use of a section of the B.C. Cement Company's private road near Cobble Hill appears to have established an alternative both practical and satisfactory.

The company's road is private. It provides the physical facilities

for racing at no risk to anyone but the performers and those closely associated with them. If a private concern is willing to allow its property to be used in this manner during off hours, it is to be complimented.

The virtue of a drag strip lies chiefly in the provision it makes for those who want to test their car speeds under conditions which fall within the law and jeopardize the public in no way. The sponsors of last weekend's event are young men who have shown a high degree of civic consciousness in their support of worthwhile causes in this community. They have earned respect.

Help on the Highway

I wish to extend my sincere thanks to the Quarter-Milers Club who so kindly assisted me on the Malahat last week. They extended me every courtesy and certainly displayed good sportsmanship.

Their endeavors to assist people who are in difficulties on the road should not go unnoticed and I think that the citizens of Victoria and district should get behind this club and give them all the publicity they can.

Thanks again to the Quarter-Milers, Victoria's Modified Car Club.

EARL B. ALLEN.

501 Niagara Street, Victoria, B.C.

Good Box Office

The Quarter-Milers Car Club seems to have finally found the right combination to attract Victoria audiences to their shows.

Chairman of the Autorama to Jazz, Daryl Foster, said today the show, at the Curling Rink Friday and Saturday, was a "great success."

More than 5,000 Victorians of all ages paid to see the hopped-up, painted-up cars from clubs on Vancouver Island, the mainland, and the United States.

"I think the jazz was what made the show," Foster said. "There doesn't seem to be enough people interested in cars alone to come to the show."

Biggest crowd of the weekend was between 8 and 10 p.m. Saturday night when trophies were presented to the winning "rods."

The Sweepstakes Trophy was won by Carl Tjorhom of Vancouver with his 1932 Ford

roadster but Langford customizer Chester Sapala won the People's Choice award from audience ballots with a 1915 Model T.

Foster said every effort will be made to present the show again next year.

"We'll try and get a name-band or singer," he said.

Quartermilers Busy Making Tots Happy

Members of the Quarter-milers Car Club will give more than 1,800 Victoria children an advance look at Christmas today.

They'll be delivering toys to each child as the final stage of an annual year-long project of the Victoria Christmas Bureau.

The bureau, a member of the Community Chest as an agency of the Welfare Council, each year gathers a list of

needy families in the Greater Victoria area who will not be aided over Christmas by any other source.

The parents of the families, about 400 this year, are sent Christmas cheques for food.

For the children, the bureau gathers old toys throughout the year from Victoria residents. The toys are turned over to the Cosmopolitan Boys Club to be repaired and painted.

QUARTER MILERS

TO HELP IN TIMES' RACE

Accent on Safe Driving

Ready to lend a helping hand in any cause or project they consider worthy, Victoria's Quarter Miler Club has volunteered their services to The Daily Times in the presentation of Vancouver Island's biggest ever cycling spectacular.

Club cars will assist in carrying officials and first aid attendants the 100-mile distance from Parksville to Victoria when the Times' centennial hike race is staged next Saturday. The Quarter Milers

will assist any of the riders who are injured or overcome by physical exertion.

They will also follow the course of the novice event, a 40-mile grind from Duncan for native B.C. riders who have had no previous racing experience.

The Quarter Milers, with 40 members under president Bob Clarke, are dedicated to highway safety and the belief that youthful interests can be guided into useful channels stressing good sportsmanship

and safety through their interest in modified cars.

Their present project is the acquisition of a drag-strip where they can race and test their sleek, high-powered cars without risk to themselves or to the public.

The club is presently sponsoring an "autorama" at the Victoria Curling Club, with the final showing scheduled tonight from 6:30 to 12 midnight, in aid of their project.

Gold, Girls, Jazz, Cars

Autorama, Klondike in One Show

Gold nuggets, pretty girls, hot jazz and cool cars will vie for the public's attention at this year's combined Quarter Millers-Lions Club Autorama and Klondike Week.

"We're shooting for double last year's crowd," said Autorama planner Daryl Foster, one of the three Quarter Miller Club co-chairmen handling arrangements for the big show which opens for a week's run at the Victoria Curling Rink June 25.

DREW 7,500

Last year's show drew some 7,500 spectators in its two-day run.

But the beefed-up centennial year program offered jointly by Victoria Lions and the custom car people promises to be a block-long block-buster.

Co-chairmen in charge of the outdoor Lions Club Klondike show are Don Anderson and Ted Cebula.

Two used cars will be offered as first prizes with tickets selling for 10 cents each at the car show inside the Curling Club.

The Lions have plans to re-create the gold rush days in miniature with claims on the "diggings" selling for 10 cents each. The lucky "propector" wins a gold nugget valued at \$200—plus a trip for two to Barkerville.

The outdoors show will also feature rides, games and other midway attractions.

Custom car fans will find a full range of "irons" inside the club.

Also on hand will be Victoria's first custom car, owned by Basil Oldfield, and built 30 years ago.

MISS AUTORAMA

There will also be Miss Autorama, Sandy Fryer, and princesses Lucille Clarke and Cheryl McBratney.

The show will run Monday to Friday from 6 p.m. to midnight and Saturday from 10 a.m. to midnight.



Lucky Lizzie's Loaded

Lucky Lizzie is this Model T—one of two to be displayed at this year's Autorama — carrying Autorama Queen Sandy Fryer, 17, centre, and Princesses Lucille Clarke, 18, left,

and Cheryl McBratney. Week-long show, in conjunction with Lions' outdoor Klondike Week, opens at Curling Club Monday.—(Colonist photo.)



Vancouver Car Wins —Model T Favorite

By J. T. JONES

Carl Tjorhom's chrome-loaded 1932 Ford roadster with 1947 Mercury engine carried off the Sweepstakes at the Autorama to Jazz last night.

The purple Vancouver car, which features chrome-plated exhaust pipes, springs, axles, driveshaft, rear-end housing and so forth, was top pointer with the panel of expert judges at the Victoria Curling Club.

Sponsors of the show, Victoria's Quartermilers, said last night that more than 4,000 people saw the cars-and-music show Friday and yesterday, and the club expected to show a profit to boost its drag strip project.

The People's Choice—by ballot—was a chunkily spectacular Model T Ford, 1915 vintage, reworked by Chester Sapala of Langford. It was also the oldest car in the show—

newest was a 1957 Chevrolet.

Sapala has kept the polished brass radiator shell and the high, braced windshield, but the body glitters with 26 coats of Wild Cherry lacquer, trimmed in Oriental Blue. Naturally there's lots of chrome, but the idea was to preserve some of the old T's character and shape.

Engine is '41 Mercury and running gear is of various recent manufacture.

For the information of would-be customizers, Sapala's masterpiece took more than 2,000 hours of work and \$2,000 in cash.

★ ★ ★

Best paint job in the show was judged to be on Paul Ferris' black 1932 Ford coupe. Prize for upholstery went to the blue-and-white leatherette fittings on George Cooney's blue 1955 Chev., from Vancouver.

A good deal of showmanship went into this year's displays.

Ricky Little's '55 Chev. (with a supercharged '56 Chev. engine) stood in an artificial garden that included a working fountain.

Garry Dickinson's "Dear Hunter" was set off by crossed rifles and a stuffed deer head. This '57 Chev., black with gold scalloping, was the newest car on show.

Ned Johl's "Flaming Orchid" carried a card noting that the "scalping" was done by one James of Vancouver.

Daryl Foster's "Mandarin," an orange creation with 16 trophies for show and go grouped around it, was in a setting of Chinese lanterns and a seated Buddha.

Irving Ross of Duncan displayed "Jade," a '29 Ford with '48 Mercury engine, side-by-side with tiny, identically-finished "Rebel," a children's car built by J. E. Adams and complete with dummy engine up front and real one in the tail.

The cars on show aren't the hot-rods you see blapping up and down Yates Street on a Saturday night.

These — some of them — qualify as works of art. All of them are labors of love. For go and for show.

By the time this sees print, it will be too late to see them this year, but judging by the improvement over last year's display, next year's ought to be a stunner.

★ ★ ★

As for the jazz, I heard only a little of it, but it sounded like a good match for the cars — basic things from away back, with a high modern polish.



Show with a Difference

Hot Cars and Cool Jazz At Autorama This Week

Hot cars and cool jazz join forces at Victoria Curling Club April 29 and 30 in a unique experiment that could result in growth and renewed interest in two city organizations.

The show is Autorama, the second annual custom car display put on by the Quarter Milers Club of Victoria, but this year it will be a car show with a difference.

In addition to displaying some of the Northwest's finest hot-rods and custom cars, the show will feature many of the outstanding jazz groups in the province. Headlining this portion will be Professor Tony Emery with his popular poetry-to-jazz readings, a 14-piece orchestra led by city jazz man Buddy Glover, and Hans Gruber, director of the Victoria Symphony Orchestra.

Mr. Gruber, patron of the show, as a feature attraction will put down his baton and pick up his bongo drums for a jungle jam session. Two quartets and the Larry Crawford quintet will also be featured.

There is a dual purpose in the planning of the dual show. Quarter Milers are still trying to promote interest and raise money for a drag strip for Vancouver Island's hot-rodders. Jazz lovers are one again faced with the realization that public interest seems to be lagging.

In the past the problem of both organizations has been to interest outsiders. It is hoped that by combining the two,

the crowds will be at least twice as large, and interest will be promoted in both jazz and hot cars.

Approximately 35 cars will be on display, including the Canadian drag champion, which has accelerated from a standing start to 160 m.p.h. in 60 seconds.

There will also be free movies and a working model of a drag strip.

The show will run from 6 p.m. to midnight Friday, April 29, and from noon to midnight Saturday, April 30. Admission is 85 cents for adults and 50 cents for children, with a "go-kart" as door prize.





Looking "sweet and sassy" enough to make motors race for miles around, 18-year-old Frances Hatcher will reign as "Miss Autorama" at the "Autorama to Jazz" Friday and Saturday at Victoria Curling Club.—(Robin Clarke photo.)

★ ★ ★

TAKES A DIM VIEW

Police Commission Squelches Pie Duel

City police commission today refused to allow Chief John Blackstock to enter a pie-throwing duel for charity.

He was challenged by Saanich police Chief W. A. Pearson to the duel but the city commission stepped in before he could reply and said no.

Chief Pearson's challenge was part of a money-raising gimmick planned for the Centennial Autorama and Klondike Carnival which opens tonight at the Curling Rink.

A number of citizens, including some prominent names,

were to act as targets for custard pies thrown by anyone attending the show willing to pay between 25 cents and \$1 for the privilege.

Money was to go to charity.

Targets include Ald. Millard Mooney, assistant superintendent of motor vehicles Ray Hadfield, and others.

THREE NAMED

Among the "name" live targets were to be Chiefs Blackstock and Pearson and Oak Bay Chief Constable Robert Smith.

As an added attraction, Chief Pearson challenged Chief Blackstock to a pie-throwing duel at 12 paces with each paying \$50 into the charity pool for the privilege of pasting the other.

"The police commission takes a dim view of the challenge," said Mayor R. B. Wilson who doubles as chairman of the commission.

"We do not believe this would be in the interests of the police force.

"Our constant objective should be to create respect for the law.

"Consequently, the commission has directed Chief Blackstock to have no part in this affair."

No pie throwing for Victoria chief of police

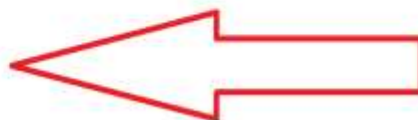
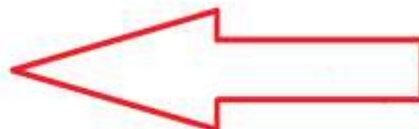
VICTORIA (CP) — The police commission Monday refused to allow Chief John Blackstock to enter a pie-throwing duel for charity.

He was challenged by Saanich Police Chief W. A. Pearson to the duel, but the city commission stepped in before he could reply and said no.

Chief Pearson's challenge was part of a money-raising gimmick planned for an autorama and Klondike carnival this week.

Money will go to charity.

Targets include Ald. Millar Mooney, Assistant Superintendent of Motor Vehicles Ray Hadfield and others.



Mooney Tries Car Show Pie

By ED COSGROVE

Ald. Millard Mooney was thrown to the Lions last night.

In the neatest double-play since Tinker to Evers to Chance, Ald. Mooney was smeared at home plate by a double dish of custard pie.

The beaming alderman shared the stage for the opening of the combined Autorama-Klondike Week with Autorama Queen Sandy Fryer.

PIE IN THE EYE

Then, called on to throw out the first pie at the outdoor "pie-in-the-eye" booth, Ald. Mooney warmed up enthusiastically as target Ray Hadfield, deputy superintendent of motor vehicles prepared for duty.

Miss Fryer gave the signal—and two pies thrown at a range of two feet, creamed the city father in his tracks. Mooney, by the way, missed Mr. Hadfield.

Hundreds of first-nighters wandered through the curling rink to marvel at \$5,000 cars that were originally built to sell for \$2,000.

The show features more than 30 entries, from sleek, sophisticated custom convertibles to businesslike little irons that are all motor.

Judging for the 42-plus awards will be done through the show, with presentation on Saturday, the final day.



'Jeep' Tagged Out

Winning pitch by Ald. Millard Mooney last night tagged out J. E. P. "Jeep" Jones, chairman of the B.C. government purchasing commission, as the pair waged a duel with custard pies at 12 paces at the Autorama-Klondike Week "pie-in-the-eye" booth at the Curling Rink. Minutes earlier, Ald. Mooney caught two custard pies tossed by Mr. Jones and another Lion. See Page 13.—(Peter Chapman photo.)



Chief Plans Pies in Eye For Police

By ED COSGROVE

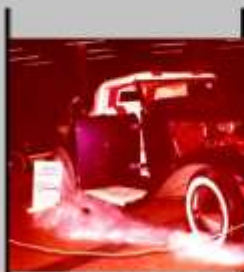
The Keystone Cops' famed custard pie caper will enjoy a sensational revival if Victoria Police Chief John Blackstock accepts the challenge of Saanich Police Chief W. A. "Bert" Pearson.



CHIEF BLACKSTOCK
... gets challenge



CHIEF PEARSON
... he'll pay \$50



The duel, to be fought in the interests of charity, calls for custard pie at twelve paces.

The field of honor will be the mammoth Centennial Autorama and Klondike Carnival at the Curling Rink June 25 to 30, said Autorama official Daryl Foster of the Quarter-Milers Club.

BASER INSTINCTS

Victorians at large will be allowed to indulge their baser instincts at the "pie in the eye" booth, said Mr. Foster.

Targets will be plentiful. For homeowners smarting under increased assessments—Ald. Millard Mooney, Drivers with a grudge against the provincial motor vehicles branch can toss a custard at beaming assistant superintendent Ray Hadfield.

'LADIES' DAY

There'll be members of the naval shore patrol, cell block sentries, galley staff and pay writers, prepared to receive pies from navy personnel. G. E. P. "Jeep" Jones, chairman of the B.C. Purchasing Commission will be there and radio station disc jockey Doug Taylor will be a special "Ladies' Day" target.

BIGGEST GAME

But the biggest game of the custard shoot will be three live police chiefs—if Chief Pearson's challenge is accepted.

Oak Bay's Chief Constable Robert Smith has already volunteered for duty as a live target.

And Chief Pearson says he will pay \$50 for the privilege of pasting Chief Blackstock with a pie—on a reciprocal basis, the money to go to the Cerebral Palsy Fund.

SHOTS AT 25 CENTS

The pie in the eye shooting gallery will offer shots at 25 cents each at live targets. Prices go up as the importance of the target increases.

There will also be nightly "celebrity" targets to lead spice to the game.

FOR CHARITY

Ray Hadfield, the police chiefs, Ald. Mooney and Mr. Jones will fetch a price of \$1 a throw. Doug Taylor, Lions Club members and navy personnel cost 50 cents.

The proceeds from any throw over 25 cents will go to either a charity designated by victim or victims, or by the pie tosser.

This is
one of
the few
times
that we
got a no.

It was of
course
still a
win for
our side.



PERCHED AT WHEEL of working model of 1903 Ford on display at Autorama is singing star Eleanor Collins of Vancouver. "Miss Auto-

rama" is Bobbie James, 19, of Sidney, and looking pleased with company he is keeping is Daryl Foster, co-chairman of show. (Times Photo.)

AUTORAMA DRAWS CAPACITY CROWD

Fast Cars Tuned to Jazz Tempo

By DON INGHAM

The bright, bold, brassy, breezy '61 Autorama to Jazz opened in the Curling Rink Friday night with a capacity crowd on hand to enjoy a show as fast as the cars on display.

Annual showpiece of the Quarter Milers' Car Club of Victoria, it gives the builders and owners of custom cars a chance to show off the results of their long labors in the shops.

This they did, with most effective staging, and with entertainment by brilliant Vancouver songbird Eleanor Collins, Prof. Tony Emery of Victoria, whose poetry reading against a jazz background are attracting a widening circle of fans, and the Buddy Glover quintet, which provides the background.

Some 'Fantastic'

All of the cars in this show are quite wonderful, and some are fantastic.

There is the Bremerton Buick, for instance, which the owner values at \$12,000. With its lush upholstery and thick white rugs, it is about the closest thing to sin on wheels Victoria will ever see.

The sleek and low Rambler

Rose displays a feature some veteran motorists have been waiting for years to see, and wondering why the manufacturers have never produced them—rear window wipers.

El Torro has a 300-cubic inch engine with a supercharger as big as a complete Volkswagen engine, and a six-carburetor manifold setup as big as the engine in a Mini-Minor.

Ancient and New

"Antiquity" is a '26 Model T Ford with a 54 Cadillac motor and-of all things—a T-Bird steering wheel.

"Blue Diamond" sports 30 coats of paint, and "Solo" makes the onlooker wonder how a car could get so close to the ground.

They are the owners' efforts to achieve perfection. If anyone told the builders—none of them rich and most of them young—that they were artists, they would answer "Nuts."

Yet what they do with wrenches, hammers, and chromium plating is exactly what the painter does with canvas, paint and brushes. Right now the Curling Rink is competing with the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.

There is no commercialism,

since all the cars are privately owned, but there is plenty of showmanship.

The setting is superb, with lighting confined almost exclusively to the floodlighting of the cars, and most of the owners have gone to great lengths to display their works in the proper atmosphere.

Co-chairmen of the show are Daryl Foster and Rod Stevens, and Miss Bobbie James of Sidney is reigning as "Miss Autorama."

The show opened today at 10 a.m., and will continue until midnight.



NORTH WEST ROD NEWS

VOLUME 1, No. 5

(10c)

Phone WE 2-6534

87

MAY, 1961



Bobbi James, queen of the Victoria Autorama, is shown posing in Lore Sharp's Sweepstakes and People's Choice trophy winner. Sharp is a member of the Handlers, Bremerton, Wash. The car is a candy apple '56 Buick, sectioned four inches.

Jazz Helps Show In Victoria Go

VICTORIA, B. C.—Jazz and a stage show helped the Victoria Autorama Custom Show to a successful run in the Canadian city—one that is completely surrounded by water but takes a back seat to no other area in the Northwest when it comes to rod activities.

All the complements of the racing fraternity are represented here, from go-carts to dragsters and shows.

The main reason for holding the show was to foot the bill for the construction of a new drag strip. As yet there is no strip available, the only means of letting off steam being an obsolete highway which is privately owned and not too safe.

NWRN wishes to congratulate Show Chairmen Daryl Foster and Rod Stevens on their fine show.

Peter Wright won the 'El Monarch (Merc) door prize. More than 7,000 persons attended—2,000 more than last year.

Winners at Victoria were: FULL CUSTOM, Ted Baxter and Colin Clark (1st and 2nd). RADICAL

SEMI, Stu Braddock, Ron Korhonen, Rick Little (1st to 3rd). MILD SEMI, Rudy Zembradt, Gerry Scott, Jerry Jackson. STREET RODS, El Donovan, Don Campbell, Bob Smith. STREET ROADSTERS, Dave Shorter, Johnny Walker, Gary Barlow.

MODIFIED ROADSTERS, Irv Ross, Gary Cooper, Ray Bowserman. ROADSTER PICKUPS, Phil Doyle, Jim Johnston, Roger Melenchuk. SPECIAL CLASS, Harry Dashevsky, Gary Cunningham, Steve Yarmie. BOOTH DISPLAY, Gerry Jackson, Rudy Zembradt, Gary Cooper. BEST UPHOLSTERY, Dave Shorter. BEST PAINT, Gary Cunningham. PEOPLE'S CHOICE AND SWEEPSTAKES, Lore Sharp.



Ted Baxter and his '50 Ford sedan won first place trophy in the Full Custom class at the Victoria Autorama. The car is sectioned 3 1/4 inches and chopped 3 1/4 inches. It is powered by a 283 cubic inch Pontiac V-8.

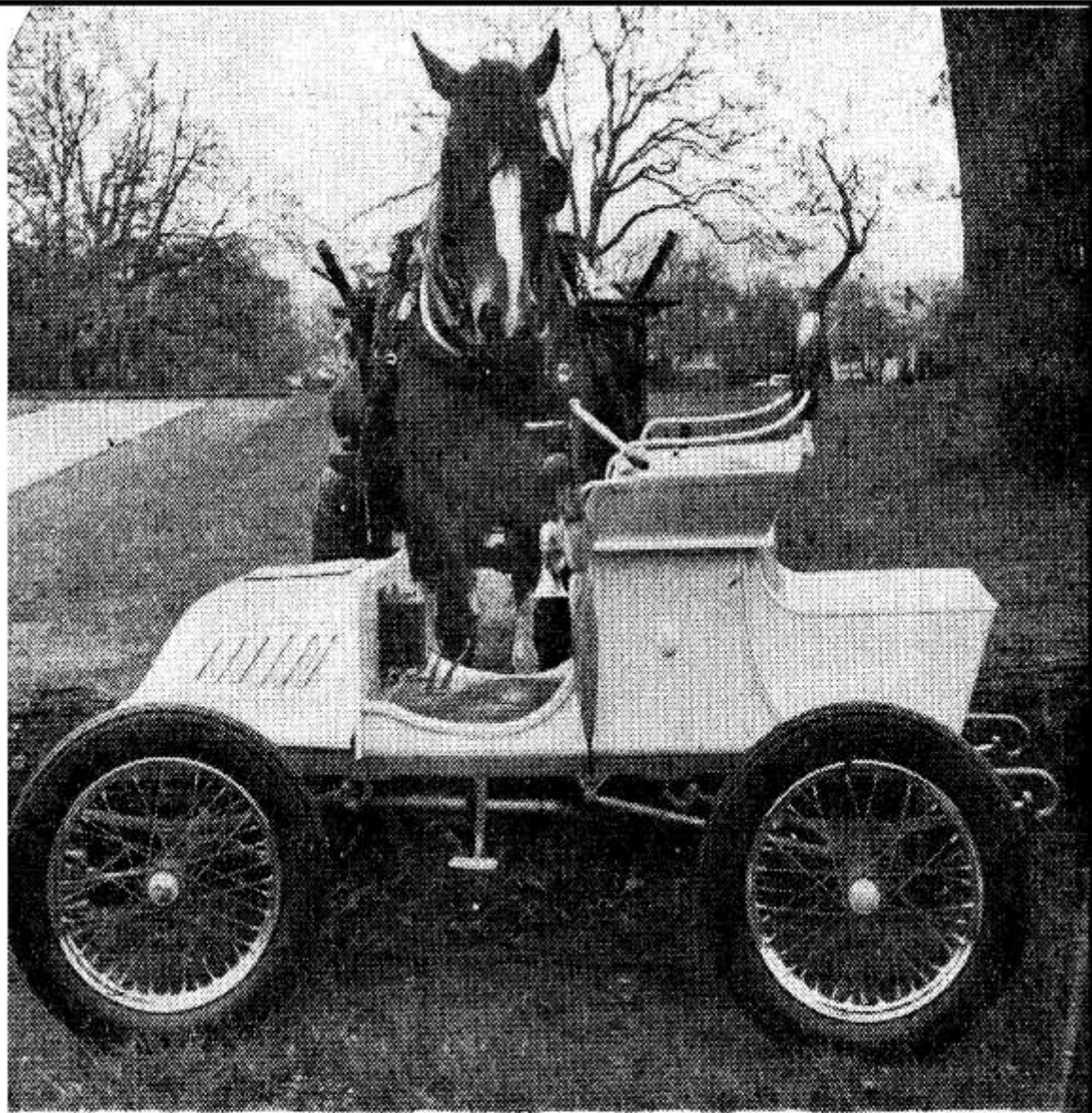
MAY, 1961

NORTHWEST ROD NEWS 7



This Canadian cutie is known as the "Cherry Kart." It won second place trophy in the Roadster Pickup class for its owner, Jim Johnston.

NORTH WEST ROD NEWS



Horse Is a '51 Model

Identify make and year of this antique car and you'll win the \$100 prize offered by Quarter Milers car club, sponsors of Autorama to Jazz to be held Friday and Saturday at

Curling Club. Wild guessers beware: Queenie, Beacon Hill park horse, is only 10, far off age of car.—(Ryan Bros. photo.)

\$1,000 Prizes Awarded Tonight

Trophies valued at close to \$1,000 will be presented tonight at 9 in the Victoria Curling Rink to the winners of Autorama to Jazz '62.

This will be the final session of the week-long display of hot cars, high-powered boats, and hopped-up motor bikes, in which entries competed for both class and special awards.

Running in conjunction with the Autorama is the Victoria Lions Club outdoor Klondike Week, with its popular pie-throwing feature and other midway attractions.

30 custom cars and
at the Quarter Mile
Autorama last night.

Norm Porter's en-
the Autorama Swe-
trophy and the People's
trophy in the judging
final night of the show

Orphans Guests Today

Fifty youngsters from the Protestant Orphanage will visit the combined Autorama-Klondike Week show at the Curling Rink today as guests of the Quarter Miler Club.

Wives and girl friends of club members will act as escorts for the youngsters, who will be taken to the show aboard a chartered bus at 6 p.m.

They will tour the Autorama display inside the Curling Club, then visit the Lions' Klondike Week carnival outside, where they will be treated to free rides and refreshments.



Scat and the Fiddle

Problem—how to load a bass fiddle into a sports roadster. Solution, as musician Doug Peaker found—put the top down. Peaker will be play-

ing in the Quarter Milers' Autorama to Jazz show at the Curling Club Friday and Saturday.—(Ryan Bros. photo.)

Don't forget Tonight . . . and all this week
at the Victoria Curling Rink and adjacent lot

CENTENNIAL AUTORAMA TO JAZZ '62

Featuring FREE ADMISSION to the Victoria Lions

KLONDIKE CARNIVAL

\$200,000 OF HOT ROD AND CUSTOMS

MISS AUTORAMA—1962

VICTORIA CENTENNIAL ORCHESTRA

FERRIS WHEEL — TILT-O-WHIRL, ETC.

FUN FOR EVERYONE

WIN 2 CARS or a GOLD NUGGET
and a TRIP TO BARKERVILLE.....Only **10c**

Admission—Adults 35c, Kids 50c, Sat. Matinee 35c

OPEN—Mon.-Fri.—6 to Midnight

Sat. 10 a.m. to Midnight, Matinee 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Hot-Rodders' Club Works for Chest

Residents of at least two parts of Greater Victoria may be somewhat surprised when they open their doors to Community Chest canvassers during the two-day "blitz" drive Oct. 16 and 17.

Members of the Quarter-Milers Club, a group of young men who know the difference between "hot-rodgers and shot-rodgers," have volunteered to take on the two districts and are available for more.

They will do the rounds in their customized cars and will be wearing their distinctive purple-and-white jackets, which bear the name of the club on the back.

The idea is that of Bob Clark, 238 Colinet, 24-year-old seventh worker and oldest of the 36 club members, who said he read in The Colonist that "they were looking for help, and it's our constitution to take part in community efforts."

LAY-TEE SUPPORT

Mr. Clark and nine other young motorists began the club last February. Their aim is a drag strip where cars may be tested and raced under supervision and in safety, and the club is receiving support from the Junior Chamber of Commerce toward that end.

The young president said club members are proud to be

"hot-rodgers," despite the fact that the name "makes people get their backs up."

Daryl Foster, vice-president, defines a hot-rodger as anyone aged 16 to 60 years "interested in automotive sports from the building, driving and racing angle; continually striving for maximum automotive performance, safety, economy and efficiency."

ANY AGE

A "shot-rodger" is an "immature, inconsiderate driver of any age—maybe your neighbor, the quiet little chap who reads his petrieas every week end."

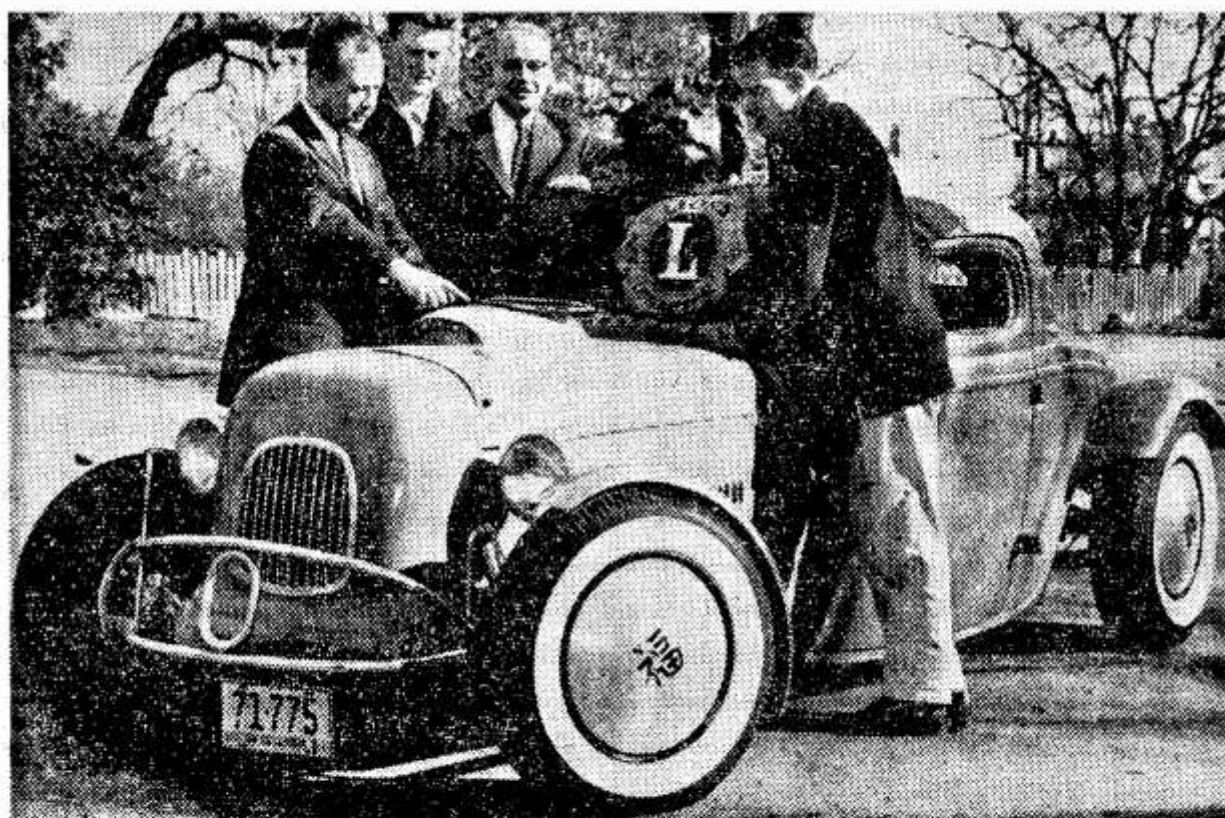
"When we call someone a shot-rodger we mean, quite appropriately, that the fellow's intelligence is shot," he said.



Messengers of Goodwill

The year-long "toys for tots" campaign of the Victoria Christmas Bureau ended yesterday as members of the Quarter-milers Car Club delivered the more than 1,600 toys to children of 400 needy Victoria families. Three Quarter-milers who helped in the distribution were, top to bottom, Daryl Foster, Stan Winterbottom, and Don Slimas.—(Photo by Robin Clarke.)

**QUARTER
MILERS
VICTORIA B.C.**



Klondike To Jazz

Members of Victoria Quarter-Milers and Lions Club will join forces in centennial event in last week of June. "Autorama-to-Jazz" event put on by young car enthusiasts will combine with "Klondike Week" staged by Lions, in Curling Rink and two adjacent lots. Above, using Daryl Foster's car as desk, contract is signed by Don Anderson, Lions' Klondike chairman; Dick Stratton, Quarter-Miler president; Bert Young, Lions' president, and Rod Stevens, Autorama chairman. — (Robin Clarke photo.)

Guests Today

Fifty youngsters from the Protestant Orphanage will visit the combined Autorama-Klondike Week show at the Curling Rink today as guests of the Quarter Miler Club.

Wives and girl friends of club members will act as escorts for the youngsters, who will be taken to the show aboard a chartered bus at 6 p.m.

They will tour the Autorama display inside the Curling Club, then visit the Lions' Klondike Week carnival outside, where they will be treated to free rides and refreshments.





'MODIFIED' IS THE WORD

You'd Never Know Lizzie

By LESLIE MILLER
Henry Ford would never have believed it.

Forty-seven years of Ford cars are spanned in the Victoria Quarter Milers' auto-

rama at Victoria Curling Rink,

and not one of them looks the same as it did when it left the factory.

Ingenuous young men have painted them, polished them, roost, decked, lowered, holed, stretched, chopped and then

neted them into hot champagne wagons and showpiece street cars—all at an expense that would have made frugal Mr. Ford wince.

There's "Le Baron" for example, a '28 Model A pickup that the owner wanted to sell a little while ago. The asking price was a mere \$1,800—more than twice what the car cost new 34 years ago.

It has custom suspension, an 11-inch clutch and chopped fender, a '57 Plymouth engine, frame and rear end, as well as 16 wheels.

The car attracting most eyes, though, is Chester Sepala's 1915 Model T. He put 21,000 hours of work into the car, and when he was through he had a machine with a '55 Chrysler V-8 engine, a '57 Packard transmission, a '28 Mercury rear end, and steering out of a '38 Willys.

The steering wheel is the original model.

FIFTH YEAR

Now in its fifth year, the annual autorama attracted 30 entries this time, one of them—the "Le Baron"—coming from as far away as Lehigh, Ala.

It's being run for a full week for the first time this year, the jittery Quarter Milers having wished their collective shirt that they can make it pay for six straight nights.

Outside, a Klondike-themed midway sponsored by the Victoria Lions is in co-operation with the Quarter Milers features dizzy rides and games for the children of the car wainers.

Show continues for the balance of the week, 6 p.m. to midnight nightly, with an extra show Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.



RELIVING GOLD RUSH DAYS to be depicted at the Lions "Klondike Week" at the Centennial Autorama June 25-30 at Victoria Curling Rink is Lions co-chairman, Ted Cobula, while "gambler" Elmer Stevens looks on. Prizes at the week-long show include gold nugget and a trip for two to Barkerville.

Blackland - Times



Don't forget Tonight . . . and all this week at the Victoria Curling Rink and adjacent lot

CENTENNIAL AUTORAMA TO JAZZ '62

Featuring FREE ADMISSION to the Victoria Lions

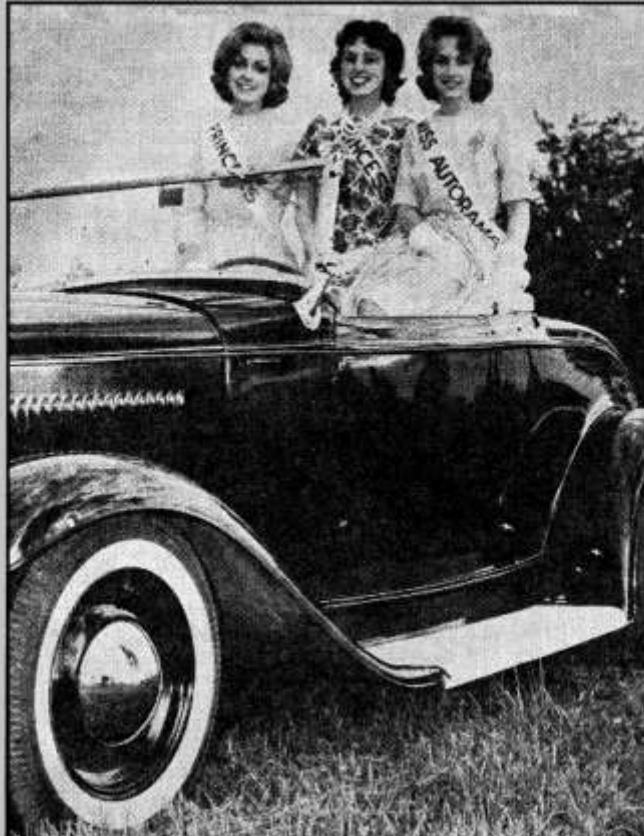
KLONDIKE CARNIVAL

SHOWS OF HOT ROD AND CUSTOM
YEAR AUTOCAR—1907
VICTORIA CENTENNIAL OPTICUTRA
PERIOD WHEEL — TILT-O-WHEEL, ETC.

FUN FOR EVERYONE

WIN 2 CARS or a GOLD NUGGET
and a TRIP TO BARKERVILLE Only 10c

Admission—Adults 50c, Kids 25c, Sen. Maltese 25c
OPEN—Mon. thru Sat. 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.
Sat. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.



AUTORAMA QUEEN this year is 17-year-old Sandy Fryer, seen here with Princesses Lucille Clarke, 19 (left), and Cheryl McBratney, 18.

Centennial autorama show, slated for June 25-30, features a hot rod and custom car display at the Victoria Curling Rink. (Robin Clarke photo.)

Prize Car Given Away

Peter Wright, 1236 Faithful, won the specially customized prize car at the Quarter Milers' Autorama to Jazz at the Curling Club last night.

The car show played host to more than 7,000 people in its two days, compared to last year's 5,000, club officials said. No one managed to prove the identity and age of a mystery car.

Week-Long 'Autorama' June 25

Fourth annual Quarter Milers' Autorama, slated for June 25-30, will be a week long this year compared to last year's two-day show.

Length of the show has been extended for a special centennial program, which includes the Victoria Lions "Klondike Week."

Based on a 100 years ago theme, the Klondike week features games such as "stake a claim" with gold nuggets as prizes.

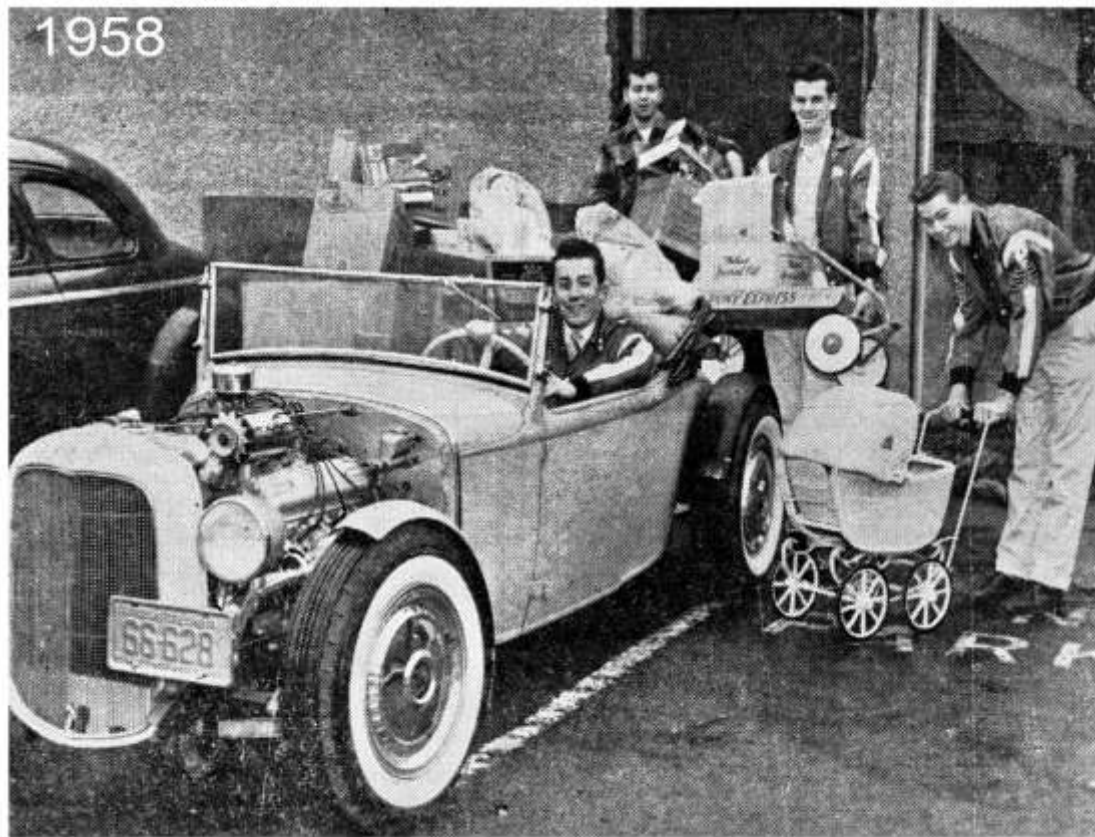
The Centennial Autorama will be outside the Victoria Curling Rink as well as inside this year, and the Victoria Centennial Orchestra will entertain nightly.

Other features of the show include kids' rides, Miss Autorama, and a contest to win two cars for a dime.

The show will run Monday to Friday from 6 p.m. to midnight and Saturday from 10 a.m. to midnight. Proceeds are for the drag strip building fund and Lions' charities.



1958



Anderson is doing his best to lure us into being a target for the custard pie throwing contest at the Centennial Autorama. We'll settle by giving the Victoria Lions some publicity. It's a wonderful show, yessiree!

62

greeting guests . . . Daryl Foster, counting heads . . . Bill

Winner of two lightly-customized Fords as door prizes was Jack Mather of Prince George.

Norman Porter's customized 1950 Ford won the show's two top trophies, the Autorama Sweepstakes trophy and the People's Choice award.

Auto Show Catches Fire

The Autorama - Klondike Week Show at the Curling Club, which reported an attendance lag earlier this week, finally caught fire yesterday—literally.

Flames from a garbage incinerator ripped through half an acre of grass on Memorial Arena property immediately behind the Curling Club—and Autorama officials happily reported they had topped last year's attendance figures.

show.

Hot cars and cool ja the attractions, with than 30 "street" cars a strip wagons arrayed the auspices of Victo

Mr. Porter is a member of the Quarter Milers.



Hottest thing on three wheels—the mighty atom—will bring \$25 to whoever guesses weight closest during Quarter Miler Club's giant Autorama June 25. Top speed of 1911 roadster was clocked at 47 miles an hour.—(Colonist photo.)

'Mighty Atom' In Show

When the "mighty atom" was unveiled to a car-hungry public in 1911 it was the hottest thing on three wheels.

That's right—three wheels. Designers of the day were just as streamline-conscious as their latter-day colleagues, and a fourth wheel on a motor car looked like just so much icing to the cake.

Elmer McEwen and friend
joying lunch . . . Jim W
greeting guests . . . Daryl
ter, counting heads . . .
Boucher, checking his bi
les . . . Millard Mooney, c
ing his topper.

MIGHTY ATOM

Billed as "The Unequalled A.C. — the Mighty Atom" in the July 4 issue of Britain's motoring publication *The Motor Cycle*, the tiny roadster boasted such refinements as a folding mother-in-law seat, buggy top and a one-cylinder engine that produced six horsepower that drove the Atom to a top speed of 47 miles an hour.

The Atom will enjoy renewed popularity in Victoria, starting June 25, when it stars in the Quarter Miler Club's giant Autorama at the Curling Club.

\$25 FOR SOMEONE

Loaned to the show by owner Cliff Scroggie of Vancouver, the little horseless carriage will bring some lucky Victorian \$25 during the course of the week-long custom car show.



JAZZ SINGER Eleanor Collins of Vancouver, will be one of the feature attractions at Victoria Quarter Milers' Autorama to Jazz in Victoria Curling Rink Friday and Saturday. Eleanor—billed as Canada's leading song stylist—will put on three half-hour shows each night backed by a five-piece group led by pianist Buddy Glover. Professor Tony Emery of Victoria College, also will be featured in a presentation, "Poetry to Jazz." Free movies will run continuously during the two-day show.



Drag Meet Set

City Hot-Rodders Get Their Desire

Victoria's hot-rod enthusiasts, who have been campaigning for years for a drag strip, have finally got their wish.

Sunday at noon, Victoria Quarter Milers Club will hold a drag meet on the B.C. Cement Company road near Cobble Hill. Although not a regulation, fully-equipped drag strip, the site is a step in that direction, and the club promises an exciting show for spectators.

A "drag" is a timed acceleration from a standing start over a measured distance. Hot-rodders from all over Vancouver Island are expected to

attend the show and try to prove their cars can drag better than any of the others.

All cars will have to pass a rigid mechanical examination before being allowed in the meet. They will race in groups of two over a quarter-mile distance.

A public address system will be in use to keep spectators up to date on the runs, and a special timing system has been devised to clock the cars.

Signs showing the way to the meet will be posted from the Island Highway turnoff to Cobble Hill.



Although it was far from the drag strip we envisioned we might someday have it was good enough for now and cause for celebration. It changed the focus of the club and presented many new challenges. I don't think that I was alone in finding that working to achieve this goal had been the best part and I did not mind at all as my involvement diminished. For that reason I hope someone else will write the drag strip part of the story.

The short bit that follows summarizes the parts that I have omitted. I hope that you will read to the end, in particular Ron Burnham's Article "Quarter Milers' quarter century".

Daryl Foster.

2016

Victoria BC

SEPT 12/71

DRAGS

SUNDAY, SEPT. 12th



ISLAND
POINTS
Championships

FEATURING

COMPETITION

Roadsters Racing Team—Victoria
Pearce, McRon and Pearce—
Victoria

SUPER STOCK

Mel Butler—Victoria
Russ Cooper—Duncan

PLUS

Regular program of drag racing and E. T. Brackets . . . DRAGSTERS
MODIFIEDS, SUPER STOCKS, STOCKS

ADMISSION

Adults, \$2.00; Students, \$1.50, with cards.
Children Under 12 with Parents

FREE

Gates Open 9:00 a.m. Sun., Time Trials • Eliminations 1:30 p.m.

VAN ISLE DRAGWAYS

Phone 743-2719

1/4 Mile North of Mill Bay

Turn East on Kilmalu Road and Follow the Signs

Some Memories of "San Cobble" from Bob Clarke

The Quarter Milers club was, as the name implied, formed in February, 1956 for the purpose of racing our cars on a properly organized quarter mile drag strip.

A fellow hotrodder's untimely death served as the impetus for drawing us all together to prove to the skeptics and police that we were not a bunch of 'crazy young hotrodders'. A lot of street racing was being done by guys who hopped up their cars and needed to try them out.

Club members searched out many a possible drag strip site before one member approached the officials of the Ocean Cement Co. at Bamberton about the possibility of using their rock haulage road in Cobble Hill. The straight and fairly level section was determined to be at least a suitable start as a drag strip and we were allowed to use it every second weekend. So, in 1960, we started up our somewhat hokey, 20' wide drag strip that we dubbed 'San Cobble'.

The tech committee made sure that cars were safe and properly equipped before being allowed to race. We rigged up our own timing gear using service station bell cords and stop watches. A flag man started the racers off the line as the ever increasing crowd of spectators cheered on their favorites. We had to supervise parking on the somewhat narrow roads leading to the strip in order to keep adequate access open for emergency equipment.

St. John's Ambulance attended every meet and the old Brite Spot Drive-in sent along a trailer stocked with hot dogs, hamburgers and pop to keep spectators fed and watered.

A battery powered P.A. system was hung up in the trees and we built a fence to keep the crowd back from the edge of the strip. We were very lucky that we never experienced any accidents to speak of.

The 'Syndicate Scuderia' dragster from Vancouver was invited over one Sunday to show spectators what the big boys were racing on the mainland. The crowd was thrilled by a smoky, thundering exhibition run and, due to a bit of a dip at the end of the quarter mile, the driver shut down before the traps and popped his chute to add to the show. Unfortunately his chute picked up our Mickey Mouse bell cord timing gear and flung it into the rhubarb --- but he put on a great show.

After that weekend the crowds wanted more dragsters and faster cars, so the whole idea of taking racing off the streets started to succumb to the paying public. The lower and slower classes of cars got slowly squeezed out in favor of faster ones. As a result, some of the young guys who couldn't afford faster cars, went back to racing on the streets -- sort of a self-defeating proposition.

Jerry Ruth was invited over with his fuel dragster later on and he put on a memorable show for an appreciative crowd. We always had trouble keeping spectators back from the strip beyond the end of the fence. But when Jerry fired up his thundering beast, the ground shook and everyone held onto their ears. We had no trouble keeping the crowd back for that run! Jerry figures he turned about 170 that day after burning rubber half way down the strip. Truck drivers hauling rocks the next week wanted to know who dragged his brakes down the strip.

We instituted a '100 m.p.h. club' at the strip and presented tee shirts. One of the Nanaimo racers let his girl friend drive his hot chevy and she beat his time and got a tee shirt.

The club built a gas dragster which Al Clark drove and eventually bought and ran it at a few sanctioned strips over the years. 'San Cobble' was successfully and safely operated for a few years until one, Mike Stogrin, of Duncan, developed a drag strip of proper dimensions and named it 'San Cobble Dragways'. The limiting factor was a fairly steep uphill shutoff that ended with some rails hanging their front wheels over the end of the strip looking down into a gravel pit.

N.H.R.A. would only sanction the strip for limited speeds because of the inadequate shutoff and the fact that the rails would flex too much at the beginning of the uphill shutoff. The demise of 'San Cobble Dragways' came about when the land became more valuable for a housing development.

The 'Backup Pickup' put on a spectacular display at the one and only time that I attended the strip. This was around the time that I retired from active participation in the Quarter Milers club. I'm now pushing 70 and still a bit of a car nut, driving a '67 El Camino that three grandchildren are itching to get their hands on.

Quarter Milers' quarter century

Personally I always thought the Quarter Milers car club was just an excuse for raising hell. "Not so," says Victoria's Bob Clarke, an old Quarter Miler himself. And he has two scrapbooks of articles and photos to back him up.

The formation of the Quarter Milers Club, in early 1956, resulted because of a grisly event — the road death in Saanich of a youth in a hot rod, the "cut-down, hopped-up" custom automobile of the day.

THE COVERAGE the accident received in the newspapers, Clarke says, prompted him — and a number of others — to do something positive towards defining and overcoming the problems arising from the combination of youthful enthusiasm, fast cars, bad roads and poor driving habits. Presto! The Quarter Milers.



FANS LOVED IT, BUT THE NEIGHBORS DIDN'T.

In February of 1956, with Bob Clarke, Daryl Foster, Harvey Stratford and Garry Dickinson as members of the executive, the club was formally created to promote automobile safety.

And to work towards providing a place where hot rod enthusiasts could "try out" their machines without unduly endangering themselves or others.

More important to them, the club intended to remove some of the stigma attached to young men in modified cars, to attempt to dissuade the general public from thinking of them as "young punks in hot rods."

ONE OF THE FOUNDERS of the Quarter Milers, Daryl Foster, used the media quite effectively in that attempt. His letters to the editor and his articles in community newspapers stressed the car club's goal of providing an environment for the achievement of "maximum auto performance, economy and efficiency."

By Ron Burnham

Distilled, Foster's commentary proved to be: "We want a drag strip!"

Needless to say, such a racing area wouldn't be easy to get. After all, it required a piece of land several hundred feet wide and up to a mile long!

TYPICAL OF THE ITEMS appearing in print at the time are the following: "Quarter Milers to Play Santa . . . will use their hot rods and custom cars to play Santa Claus for the city welfare department Saturday."

"Hot Rodders Club Works for (Community) Chest."

"Three city hot rod clubs will fight for possession of a new perpetual trophy donated by The Daily Colonist — by giving blood to the Red Cross."

"Competition in a good cause will be staged by two Victoria clubs Thursday night when the Quarter Milers Club and the Century Toppers Rod and Custom Club will be out on one-night collection drives on behalf of the Red Cross."

Apparently their image-creating campaign was beginning to work. Letters to the editor started coming in from outsiders, such as this one: "My purpose in writing this letter is to bring to your attention the courtesy of the Quarter Milers Club of Victoria."

"On Monday a group of women were returning to Nanaimo from Victoria and had car trouble. A member of this club assisted us, giving us time and effort and would take no remuneration. We think courtesy such as this deserves success."

OTHER LETTERS THANKED the club for free services to charity organizations.

The Quarter Milers were gaining public support — even if most people probably shared my opinion: a great bunch of guys, but rowdy nevertheless.

With good press behind them, the Quarter Milers started their dragstrip campaign in earnest. Among other projects such as rummage sales and dances — they placed entries in May 24 parades, actively seeking public support for their dragstrip.

But their most important move, the one that gained the most public recognition for them, was their Autorama — their annual car show.

Entrants to these shows brought their custom cars and hot rods to Victoria from all over the Island, the lower mainland and the northwest United States.

THE FIRST AUTORAMA was held in Victoria's Curling Rink in the late 1950s. I went to see that show, along with something like a thousand others, and my impression of the group began to change. They were still, I was certain, a bunch of hell-raisers. But everyone could see they had talent.

About this time the Quarter Milers talked the B.C. Cement Company into allowing them weekend use of a mile or so of the company's private two lane paved haul road near Cobble Hill. The drag races were on.

And so were the battles. By the end of the third weekend of racing, the club faced prosecution as a result of a complaint from the RCMP that the Quarter Milers were violating the Lord's Day Observance Act.

"It was," as Bob Clarke points out, "the only publicity that had been adverse to the Quarter Milers since it was formed."

THERE WERE OTHER problems, however. Once, when rain postponed a meet, those who showed up ran their own impromptu race — the

And always they let the press know about it.

Continued on Page 11

From page 10

Quarter Milers'

prevention of which was the reason the Quarter Milers was formed in the first place.

And still the Autoramas went on, pulling in bigger crowds and attracting popular entertainers, including such personalities as Vancouver jazz singer Eleanor Collins. Even well-known UVic English professor Tony Emery lent his talents and name to the cause.

After a few years the show moved to the Esquimalt Sports Centre, where it continued to draw crowds of several thousand.

Yet despite all their apparent success, the Quarter Milers, after nearly a decade of existence, still hadn't achieved the purpose for which they had formed — the construction of their own drag strip.

"Actually," Clarke says, "we never did reach that objective. It was finally built by an individual businessman."

It was quite possible, however, that private enterprise was encouraged by the groundwork laid by clubs such as the Quarter Milers.

IN 1966, THAT STRIP was about to accept drag racing action on the old Deeks-McBride gravel pit at Mill Bay. Or so the Quarter Milers and the other car clubs hoped.

However the neighbours didn't like the idea.

Local residents, racehorse owners, chicken farmers, mink and sheep ranchers all opposed the strip.

Nevertheless drag races were held at last at San Cobble Dragways in the old gravel pit.

Crowds of 1000 spectators became commonplace. They were entertained by cars capable of covering a quarter of a mile in around eight seconds, with speeds reaching 170 miles an hour, accompanied by screeching tires and palls of blue smoke. The crowds loved it.

The horses and chickens and mink probably didn't.

By 1970 the Autorama was attracting entrants from as far away as Alberta and California, and entertainers, such as one of Playboy's Playmates of the Month, Nancy McNeil, from Los Angeles.

THE QUARTER MILERS were in the Big Time.

Alas, not for long.

Shortly after the 1972 Autorama, the Quarter Milers quietly walked out to their custom cars and stole away into the night. Their 16-year reign as the best known hot rod club on the Island ended.

And it's just possible that everything went back to what it was in 1956, before the club started, judging from the rate the hot car drivers began killing themselves on the roads.

Bob Clarke and Daryl Foster, the two men who saw the problem back then a quarter century ago, and assembled a group of young men to do something about it, are planning a reunion of all those ex-members. In early February, 1981, they're going to get together to relive all those moments of fun and hell-raising and seriousness all over again.

And who knows? Maybe another car club will come out of it.



Page 11



Driver Training Starts Early Gary & Ron Cunningham

Writeup in the Victoria Auto Racing Hall of Fame'
18th Anniversary program.

QUARTER MILERS CAR CLUB HISTORY

The Quarter Milers Car Club, formed in February of 1956, was Victoria's first hotrod and custom car Club. The Club set out to prove to the public that its members were not a bunch of "crazy young hotrodders", but a group of sensible young car enthusiasts who were determined to take racing off the streets.

The Club wanted to promote community involvement and automobile safety so they became involved in community fund raising events; Christmas hamper deliveries, blood donor drives and seatbelt installation in cars for the general public. Members equipped their own cars with emergency road safety equipment and assisted motorists in need, leaving them with a Quarter Milers Club courtesy card.

Another goal of the Club was to find a place where they could race their cars on a properly organized and safe quarter mile drag strip. After scouring the lower Island for a suitable site, members of the Club approached the Ocean Cement Company with a request that they be allowed to use their rock haulage road in Cobble Hill for organized drag racing. The Company agreed and in 1960 the Island's

first drag strip, named San Cobble Raceways, became a reality.

The Club supervised drag strip attracted drag racers from all over the Island, the Lower Mainland, Washington and Oregon. A tech committee was formed for the purpose of ensuring that each car met stringent safety requirements before racing down the strip. St. Johns Ambulance provided medical care and the Bright Spot Drive-In sent along a trailer stocked with hot dogs, hamburgers and pop. One of the more interesting aspects of the drag strip was the timing system. It was built using service station bell cords and stop watches.

The Quarter Milers operated San Cobble Raceways until 1965 when a developer built a National Hot Rod Association sanctioned track in Mill Bay. Some members of the Club assisted in the operation of the new track until its closure in 1973.



My Involvement With The Quarter Miler's Car Club (1956 - 1964)

I have loved cars since my teenage years. When I was delivering papers I could name every car on the streets. My first car was a '29 Model A Roadster; then, I advanced through the '33 Chev; '38 Ford Convert; to '41 Chev by the time I was 21.

In 1955, a well liked young guy smashed his '40 Ford Coupe into a telephone pole on the way from a party and died in the crash.

The papers played up the "crazy young hotrodder" angle and that got all his friends angry enough to write a rebuttal letter to the editor.

Although I didn't actually know the guy personally, I was acquainted with a lot of his friends and my name was added to the letter.

A meeting was called and I went along to see what could come of it. I must have had a fair amount to say because before I knew what I was getting into, I was elected President of what was to become Victoria's first hot rod and custom car club - - - the "Quarter Milers".

I guess the fact that I was a couple years older than most of the guys there, and married, they probably thought that I was older and wiser and more inclined to take on the responsibility of guiding the club through its formative years, making me a logical choice to lead.

As soon as we got the club executive organized, we mapped out ambitious plans to clean up the term "Hot Rod" and to show people that we were not a bunch of irresponsible drivers.

We donated our time and energy to community fund-raising events, Christmas hamper deliveries, blood donor drives, and installed seat belts in cars for the general public. We borrowed an idea from our car club friends on the mainland and set up a courtesy card program.

We equipped our cars with emergency items so that we could help stranded motorists. Our members helped hundreds of motorists on their way and we always declined offers of money by giving out courtesy cards and telling them that, if they wished to donate to our cause, they could mail it to the club.

I designed a club crest for our purple and white jackets. it was a back view of a roadster racing down a perspective view of a drag strip. Cross-checked flags topped off the crest.

New members had to wait a probationary period before buying a jacket and crest to determine whether or not they could live up to our strict rules.

A couple of 16 year old members were relieved of their jackets for awhile after being seen "squirrelling around" in their cars downtown.

More car clubs started up all over the island and there was a lot of friendly rivalry and competition amongst us all.

In our second year of successful operation as a progressive club, we decided to put on our first indoor Rod and Custom Show. The Curling Club on Quadra Street was rented for the weekend and we gathered cars from the island and the mainland to show people what rods and customs

were all about.

An ill-timed ferry strike prevented mainland cars from making it to the show but we managed to pull it off quite successfully anyway. It was easy to top our first show in the following year.

After seeing a customized and Buick powered '41 Chev coupe in a Nanaimo car show, Bett and I decided to forego our idea of buying our rented home and buy this beautiful car. We had a lot of fun as a young family with the car and I have driven "different" cars ever since.

I entered the car in a few car shows and had a lot of fun designing and building interesting displays for it.

We continued to put on car shows every year, moving to the Esquimalt Sports Centre for some later ones.

Over the years we had been searching for an abandoned road that we could turn into a drag strip and we finally found one. Not exactly abandoned, but unused on weekends. It was a rock haulage road owned by the Bamberton Cement Works and they allowed us the use of it every second weekend in the good weather. The road was only 20 feet wide but it was straight, with a gradual uphill shutoff area.

This make-shift drag strip allowed the club to virtually take drag racing off the streets and put it where it belonged - - on a properly supervised drag strip.

The popularity of the strip eventually proved to be its undoing. We used to get a good turnout of spectators and, naturally, they wanted to watch faster and faster action all the time. So the slower stock classes were squeezed out in favour of more modifieds and some guys went back to racing on the streets.

Drag racing went on at this strip for a few years until a regulation (or supposedly regulation) strip opened up in the Cobble Hill area. This was a financial disaster and only lasted a few seasons before the land was sold for a housing development.

There has not been organized drag racing on the island since, unless the 1/8 mile racing at Western Speedway can be called drag-racing.

I retired from the club in '64 when we built our house. Rather than being a non-participating member, I opted to get out of it completely.

My interest in cars is an ongoing thing but I no longer work on cars. My present car is a '67 El Camino and Bett drove the '64 Beaumont we purchased in '68 until it was recently taken over by our eldest son, Rick.

My involvement in the Quarter Miler's Club was a valuable endeavour for me. It taught me to take hold of an idea and tenaciously see it through to a successful conclusion and has stood me in good stead for successive ventures.

Written in the 1990's by Bob Clarke











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