



Flyer

April 2019

Vol. XLI, No. 3

Featured Articles:

April 2019 Event

Page 3

1961 Pontiac Tempest

Page 4

Buying One is Only the Beginning

Page 6

West Coast Meet 2019

Page 9

Would It Please Henry?

Page 10



President's Message

My story for today is:

...Learning life lessons again and again! I found a car that I wanted to add to our stable (I know, as if we needed any more cars!) but the price was a bit above what I wanted to spend. I contacted the owner and tried to negotiate but we ended up about \$2,000 apart and neither of us would budge. I visited his webpage repeatedly and bid on it each time it came up for auction but we just couldn't make it happen—this went on for 3 or 4 months!

I was telling a local member about the car and he said “if this car is all you say it is and you want it this badly, then you need to quit quibbling over the dollars and just buy it. You will never regret spending those extra dollars to get your dream car.” I thought about his words for a couple weeks and decided he was right, so I called the seller to agree to the purchase only to find that he had sold the car the previous week—and to a northern California customer no less! So there's a good chance I will see this car and it will wrench my gut every time I do.

The moral of the story is...there is no moral; I'm just an idiot sometimes!

Motor on!

Scott Mikkelson

President, Freewheelers Car Club

In this Issue of the Flyer

President's Message	2
April Tour	3
Paul & Scott's 1961 Tempest.....	4
Buying One is Only the Beginning	6
West Coast Meet 2019	8-9
Would It Please Henry?	10
Calendar/In Memoriam	11



Board of Directors 2019		Member Information		
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Advertising in the Flyer				
Type of Ad	Members: Non-Commercial	Non-Members: Non-Commercial	Members: Commercial	Non-Members: Commercial
Ad for car, equipment, etc.	3 for Free, then \$10/insertion	\$20 per insertion	n/a	n/a
Business Card Size	n/a	n/a	\$30 per insertion,\$250/yr. (11 issues)	\$35 per insertion, \$300/year
Quarter Page Size	n/a	n/a	\$60 per insertion, \$500/yr. (11 issues)	\$70 per insertion, \$600/year

April Double Collection Tour in Sacramento!



Mark your calendars for **Sunday, April 28** and prepare yourself for not one, but two car museum tours in sunny Sacramento!

We will meet at 10:00 a.m. at Freewheeler John White's beautiful Ramshead Collection in Natomas for tire kicking, coffee and donuts, and then a tour of John's collection.



Around noon, we'll take a leisurely back roads drive over to the California Automobile Museum (C.A.M.) in Sacramento for the Micro Car Exhibit, featuring several Freewheelers' cars, followed by lunch on the premises. The Freewheelers will also be presenting the C.A.M. with a donation to their "Tinker Time" youth education program!

At a glance

What: Double Collection Tour and Lunch

When: Sunday, April 28th beginning at 10:00 a.m.

Where: Ramshead Collection at 1500 N. Market Blvd., Sacramento 95834; then onto the California Automobile Museum at 2200 Front Street, Sacramento 95818

Fee: \$25.00 event fee includes lunch at the C.A.M.

RSVP: Upcoming email invitation or contact Bill Hall at 510-612-3300 williamhall1234@yahoo.com



1961 Pontiac Tempest Custom 4-Door Sedan

Owned by Paul Baker and Scott Prickett



— by Christopher Slater

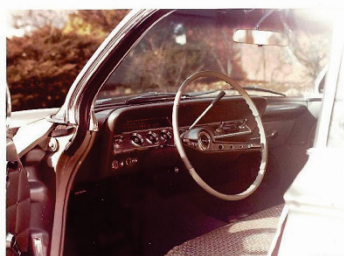
Ask one question of either Paul Baker or Scott Prickett and prepare yourself for an entertaining conversation. They finish each other's sentences, add funny anecdotes, and provide color commentary as the other is speaking. I wanted to know more about their 1961 Pontiac Tempest started and the conversation instantly took off in multiple directions along with delightful side trips down memory lane.

A whirlwind romance for Paul and Scott was kindled by a chance meeting at the Badlands bar in the Castro. Soon they discovered there was more to their relationship than days of bliss and nights filled with romance. Both remember the automobiles of the 1950s and 1960s fondly and talk about a time when American cars were fantasies made real in sheet metal, chromium, and color coordinated interior fabrics.

As chance would have it, both of their dads are the same age and they both grew up as General Motors families. The garages of their youth were graced with brand new Buick, Oldsmobile and Pontiac automobiles. Back in this era parking a new car in your driveway meant your neighbors would quickly walk over to see what all the fuss was about. A 1959 4 door flat-top Le Sabre wowed the neighbors, as did the 1963 Buick Le Sabre Custom 4-door hardtop, and the burgundy 1965 Pontiac Catalina.

(continued on next page)





In the '90s, Paul and Scott decided it was time to settle down together and this meant purchasing a home. Even in the early 1990s, San Francisco was too expensive for home ownership so they packed up their things and moved to New Mexico. Settling into a home meant they could think about parking something really exciting in the garage. When discussing the idea of owning a collector car they quickly decided to focus on GM cars from the early 1960s.

Their first acquisition, a 1962 Impala Sports Sedan with only 12,000 miles, was purchased from an estate sale in Albuquerque. This two-toned beauty had a beige roof over a metallic gold body. The clear seat covers installed by the dealer kept the interior in fantastic shape. With a Corvette 327 motor and power glide transmission the Sports Sedan was no slouch, but it was no power princess either as this gem had no air conditioning and no power windows. The Impala Sports Sedan was driven to all parts of Albuquerque but eventually it was sold to gay woman in White Sands where it lives to this day.

For many years Paul and Scott were able to resist the siren's call to move back to the West Coast, but when they returned to California in 2015 they quickly rejoined the Freewheelers. Interestingly they found the Freewheelers car club in a Google search as they were looking for car storage in Walnut Creek.

Having returned to the Bay Area they decided it was time to purchase another collector car. As Paul is quick to point out, the Pontiac division managed to steal sales away from a quite a number of Oldsmobile and Buick owners with a combination of luxury and power. They too were drawn to the Pontiac division and this explains how the 1961 Pontiac Tempest Custom 4-door Sedan ended up coming into their possession.



Who will you be?

...for the glamorous **Private Dick Ball** on Friday night?
 Come as your favorite Private Eye
 or in disguise for Undercover Assignments!
 See you at West Coast Meet 2019: **Private Eyes and Swingin' Rides**
 ...and don't forget your Alibi.



BUYING ONE IS ONLY THE BEGINNING

By Jim Davidson

It all started a few years ago at the holiday party of the Southern California chapter of the Rolls Royce Owner's Club. It was held at the swanky home of the club president and her husband—lovely people and very cordial. When I arrived there were still a few parking spaces in the flagstone covered driveway so I eased my '63 Silver Cloud into one of them. As I walked toward the house I couldn't help but admire all the handsome vintage Rolls and Bentleys parked there. Then I noticed the stack of large absorbent pads by the front door. How humiliating to realize that the so-called world's finest motor cars leak enough oil to stain that beautiful driveway and embarrass their owners—mine among them. Thus began a journey that so many of us have undertaken and the realization that when you buy one of these cars, it's only the beginning of a very long odyssey we call restoration—and prodigious outlays of cash.



I'm not new to the car hobby and many of my collector cars have leaked at one time or another. A valve cover gasket here, a pan gasket there and the leak is gone. So I thought I might as well fix my dripping Rolls Royce. Not so fast, I was informed. The only way to stop a Rolls from leaking is to overhaul the engine. This was hard to believe at first but when I was properly schooled about wet sleeve aluminum engines, weep holes in the block, and all the other intricacies that make this car annoyingly unique I succumbed to the inevitable. After all I reasoned, even though the car seemed smooth and quiet, it had done 103,000 miles so maybe an overhaul wasn't such a bad idea.

The Rolls mechanic I chose was very knowledgeable and could quote shop manual data and repair procedures without even cracking a book. His shop was 100 miles from my house but he had a lifetime of experience which included working for a Rolls Royce factory repair facility. I started ordering parts for the rebuild and work began in earnest around January, 2010. What followed was something neither of us expected.

I decided that I might as well order new pistons along with everything else so I wouldn't have to worry about one cracking on some distant freeway and spoiling all that expensive labor. A set of new pistons from the factory was hugely expensive, but a well-known local piston manufacturer could make them for a quarter of the price. Better still, they used modern high density, low mass forged aluminum technology instead of Rolls' clunky old cast pistons. The cylinder liners would be honed rather than replaced since they weren't likely to cause trouble later on. The mechanic delivered the block to a machine shop he'd used before in Huntington Beach to have the liners removed and the block refurbished. Soon afterward I got a phone call—did I know that my block had several cracks in it? Much later I figured out that the cracks probably occurred when they pulled the liners out. It's a tricky business and if not done properly cracks usually result. Nevertheless, I paid these idiots to weld the aluminum block, reinstall the liners, and do the machine work.

When the engine was finally reassembled I made what I thought would be the last of my many trips out to the repair shop located in the middle of nowhere. The mechanic had done a good job. The engine compartment looked good and the car started right up, idling smoothly. But—what's this?—a knock in the motor sounded like a ticking lifter except louder. I left the car and various remedies were tried: longer push rods, another set of lifters, more machine work, but still the knock remained. Next, the motor was pulled out, torn down, and another set of pistons installed, this time with tighter clearances. It still knocked. After tearing everything down a third time the mechanic summoned a couple of his expert pals and a discovery was made: Some genius at the machine shop had stamped the "F" (for "front") on the side of the pistons that were supposed to face the

rear of the engine, thus causing each one to be installed backwards. With some cars this wouldn't matter but Rolls pistons are offset, meaning that the connecting rod is not attached in the center of the piston. Obviously this could cause the noise. However, reassembly and reinstallation determined that this was not the only problem because the knock was still there! At this point the mechanic announced that he was retiring and closing his shop so I'd need to pick up my car. At least it was running and there were no missing parts, I rationalized. So now I had my car back. It actually had more power and got better gas mileage but still there was that annoying knock. I could just picture some yet to be discovered internal parts banging together with each revolution of the engine.



By now it was April, 2014 and I took the car to a Rolls mechanic near my home. After some preliminary attempts to fix the problem he said he'd need to pull the heads and have a look. That was a Friday afternoon and I left him a deposit. On Sunday there was the annual British car show 3 miles from my house. Two friends and I decided to go without the car and since there was a strong Santa Ana wind blowing I was glad that my Rolls was inside the repair shop rather than parked in the dust and weeds at Woodley Park. As we approached the section where Rolls and Bentleys were located my friend observed, "That car over there looks a bit like yours." Imagine my surprise when it actually turned out to be my car! The mechanic had taken it to the show without my consent. Not only that, the windows were open and the trunk was unlocked with no one around. I also noticed a fresh silver dollar sized patch of missing paint on the top of my right fender where a brake fluid soaked rag had been left. I waited until the owner of the shop came by in his jogging outfit. He did a double take and said that he was surprised to see me. (I'll bet he was!) I should have taken the car right then but I didn't. I did insist that he close the windows and lock the car and the trunk.

Monday morning he must have come in early because by 10 AM the heads and manifolds were sitting on the shop floor next to the car and with all the garage doors open, the Santa Ana winds were coating everything with dirt including the inside of my newly overhauled engine. There was a towel judiciously placed over the paint damage on the fender. "Oh, don't worry. We'll clean everything up before we put it back together." I told him not to bother, just to box up everything while I called the Auto Club and had the car hauled back to my house. The car sat there for two years until I persuaded Kelly McLain to take the rest of the motor out yet again and truck it over to Santos Guerra in West Los Angeles.

This was 2016. Santos rebuilt the engine, this time with a replacement block and Rolls Royce pistons. I learned two things: Never use anything but factory pistons in one of these cars (different expansion rates, you know) and don't weld an aluminum block because the heat will probably warp it. When I got the car back right on schedule, it was smooth, powerful, and finally silent. I also had Santos redo the transmission—two previous rebuilds had failed to get it right—as well as the steering box which had also been unsuccessfully rebuilt by a former owner. It's now 2017 and every component in the car has been refurbished including, most recently, the rear leaf springs which began to creak annoyingly as soon as I started putting some miles on it.

Now the car finally drives like it did in 1964 when it left the showroom in Florida. It's been quite a journey and I had the dubious privilege of commissioning not one but two engine rebuilds, a steering box overhaul, and three

transmission tear downs – plus the rebuilding of dozens of other components. At least I got plenty of experience. (Experience, as the saying goes, is what you get when you don't get what you want.) I think the best advice I can offer is to realize that when you buy a 42 year old Rolls or Bentley—which mine was when I bought it in 2005—the purchase price is only the tip of the iceberg. So next year maybe we'll tackle some of those cosmetic issues. Here we go again...!



What will you drive?

Packard? Continental? Firebird? Thunderbird?
 Crappy Peugeot? Mustang II Ghia with a bomb attached?

Or your interpretation of a Swingin' Ride
 because **ALL cars are welcome!**

Whichever car you bring, **it's going to be a blast!** See you at WCM.

**REGISTER** by mail or online**BY MAIL (pay by check):**

Complete this form and mail it, along with your check (payable to Great Autos of Yesteryear), to:

David Hallen
West Coast Meet 2019
8356 Via Sonoma, unit E
La Jolla, CA 92037

ONLINE (pay via PayPal):

- Go to greatautos.org
- Use the "Activities and Events" menu
- Select "West Coast Meet 2019 - Register & Pay" from the menu
- Follow on-screen instructions
- PayPal ID required (\$5 per person fee applies)

REGISTRANT please print all information clearly

Name	(INCLUDE NICKNAME IN PARENTHESES AFTER NAME)
Spouse/ Partner	(INCLUDE NICKNAME IN PARENTHESES AFTER NAME)
Car Club Affiliation	Arrival Date
Address	Day Phone
City/ State/ Zip	Eve Phone
Email	Mobile Phone
Hotel name	Reservation name

GUESTS (Spouse/partner in the section above, other guests below)

Name (1)	Name (2)
------------	------------

CARS (For additional cars, please enter information on back and check here ☐)

(1) Year	Make/Model	Bodystyle	Owner's Name on Placard
(2) Year	Make/Model	Bodystyle	Owner's Name on Placard

Accommodations provided by
Spring Hill Suites by Marriott
900 El Camino Real, Atascadero, CA
(805) 462-3500

When you call, say: **I am making a reservation for West Coast Meet.** Rooms are \$189/night + tax (Thurs., Fri., Sat. rate—please call hotel for Tues. or Weds. arrival). Reservations open April 1—rooms will be held for group until June 8, then released to the public.

Registration deadline is Monday, June 5, 2019. Any registration forms postmarked after then will accrue a \$25 per person late fee added to the activity fee. Space is limited, so register now! If registering/paying online, a \$5 per person convenience fee will be added to each Weekend Activity Fee ticket. **CANCELLATION POLICY:** 100% refund if requested by June 5, 2019, minus a \$10 administration fee, a 50% refund if requested by June 30, 2019. No refunds after June 30, 2019. Registration questions? Email David Hallen at Dhallen219@att.net or call him at (619) 709-2109.

EVENT RESERVATIONS Register early!

EVENT	QTY	PRICE/EACH	TOTAL
Weekend Activity Fee Includes Souvenir pin and the Saturday night dinner and awards show		x \$119	\$
LATE Fee after June 10, 2019 (\$50 at the event)		x \$25	\$
Road Rally		x \$22	
Friday "Private Dick" Ball		x \$40	\$
Saturday Lunch		x \$11	\$
Souvenir Polo Shirts (order size & quantity)	SMALL	x \$22	\$
	MEDIUM	x \$22	\$
	LARGE	x \$22	\$
	XLARGE	x \$22	\$
	XXL	x \$24	\$
Include a check (payable to Great Autos of Yesteryear)			\$
TOTAL ENCLOSED \$			\$

HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT: The undersigned, desiring to enter and participate in West Coast Meet 2019, to be held July 11, 12, 13 and 14, 2019, at the Spring Hill Suites in Atascadero, California, does hereby tender his/her application to participate. If this application is accepted, the undersigned and registrant, having suitable automobile insurance, and his or her guests assume liability from and shall indemnify and hold harmless Great Autos of Yesteryear, Inc., and its members, officers, directors, employees, agents, servants, invites and assigns from and against any and all liabilities arising from said event. The undersigned holds the aforementioned harmless and indemnifies them against judgments whatsoever arising, directly or indirectly, out of or in conjunction with participation in said event. Event registration required for Spring Hill Suites hotel stay.

Applicant Signature _____ **Date** _____

☐ **Contact me about volunteering to help with this event**

Would It Please Henry?

—By Dave Chiotti

In the January-February 1992 issue of *Antique Automobile* (vol. 56, no. 1) was a story about a 1930 Ford Model A standard coupe entitled "Would It Please Henry?" Through my car's lifetime, it saw many modifications. In its early years, it was fitted with 16-inch rims, a new horn and a few poor paint jobs. From the time I purchased it from a used car lot in Redwood City, California in 1956, it found a home.

As a 15-year-old, dreams of hot rodding it filled my head. Because of insurance costs and a lack of knowledge it remained a Model A with stock running gear, but with a black-and-white pleat-and-rolled interior, wide white sidewall tires and a black paint job.

In 1971 I spruced it up, painting it blue with black fenders and installing correct size 19-inch wheels and a gray Mohair interior. The Model A had made a transition from the going to work car to a fun weekend car. Many happy miles have been accumulated through the years in this little car by my wife Marilyn, and me. She's been driving it almost as long as I have, seeing we were married in 1962 – to club tours, parades, anniversaries, birthdays, and weddings...even funerals of car-loving friends.

In 1999, my bride of 37 years said to me, "You know, of all our cars, the Model A is still my favorite and it's starting to look a little tattered. It will be turning 70 next year, and you're almost 60; why don't we restore it before you're too old to do it?"

Having restored a few vehicles during the years, we learned a few lessons. We took our time and did research of correct colors, fabrics and pin-striping from which to choose for March of 1930. Then we disassembled and cleaned each part, installed patches where needed, and stripped it down to bare metal. New bushings front and rear, higher speed rear end gears, and safety glass all the way around were installed.

We first showed the car in Santa Rosa, California at the 2000 Wine Country Concours d'Elegance, taking a second place in a mixed class. Next, we attended the Silverado Concours d'Elegance at Mare Island in Vallejo, California, where it took another second place in class, plus a special award – the Norman Langly Memorial Award. This is presented to a Model A shown "as Henry built it." Norman believed that too many automobiles are over-restored today and this award is given to honor cars that are not.

Today, the Model A is as close to being the way it was when it first left the factory, but be sure of this, she doesn't hide in the garage. We still take it on tours as often as possible. I think Henry would smile.





APRIL 2019

Saturday the 6th, 2019 – The Southwest Unique Little Car Show in Old Town Sacramento.

Sunday the 14th, 2019 – Board Meeting at 288 Buchanan Airfield in Concord.

Sunday the 28th, 2019 – Sacramento Collections Tour – Ramshead & California Auto Museum – see page 3 for details.

MAY 2019

Sunday the 12th, 2019 – Board Meeting at 288 Buchanan Airfield in Concord

Sunday the 19th, 2019 – Friendship Day in Redwood City

JUNE 2019

Sunday the 23rd, 2019 – East Bay Drive Tour

JULY 2019

Thursday the 11th – Sunday the 14th, 2019 – the 41st Annual West Coast Meet in Atascadero; see pages 8-9 for details and registration information.

AUGUST 2019

Sunday, the 11th, 2019 – South Bay Pool Party

SEPTEMBER 2019

TBD

OCTOBER 2019

North Bay Drive Tour

NOVEMBER 2019

New Members Brunch in Concord

DECEMBER 2019

Sunday, the 1st, 2019 – Holiday Party in Pleasanton

NOTE: Dates/events/locations subject to change.

NOTE: Club Board Meetings are typically held the first Sunday of every month at 10 a.m. in Concord, and are open to all members. Contact a board member if you're interested in attending to confirm the time and place.

IN MEMORIAM



Michael Porto of Pasadena and Rancho Mirage passed away peacefully but unexpectedly at home on Tuesday afternoon, March 12, 2019. He was 67. Mike was an enthusiast and collector of classic automobiles and well-known for his deep knowledge and attention to detail. He served on the National Board of Directors of Packards International for 20 years. He was a

member of Great Autos of Yesteryear and served as its treasurer, membership director, vice-president and president. He was also active in the Lincoln Continental Owners Club; Cadillac-LaSalle Club, National DeSoto Club, Southern California Imperial Owners Club, Antique Automobile Club of America, and Classic Car Club of America where he served as a Director for the Southern California Region. Mike's expertise was acknowledged in his service as Assistant Chief Judge for the San Marino Motor Classic. His knowledge has been described as "encyclopedic and experienced in all facets of the hobby." He is survived by his life partner of 31 years, Gary Carr.

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