



NCKCC News

Handcrafted Automobiles

June 2003

Volume 21 Number 6



The expansive Boogle Vineyard viewed from near the tasting room in Clarksburg, CA. The day started with Brunch at the Ryde Hotel with reminders of historic action that took place here when California was one of the newest states to join the USA.

ACTIVITY NOTICE

June 27-29, 2003 - Medford Mingle. Contact Chuck Maddux 707/754-4361.

July 3, 2003 - Benicia Torchlight Parade starts at 6:30. Meet at Maddux home at 5 p.m. to decorate cars. Contact Chuck Maddux 707/754-4361.

BRUNCH & WINE TOUR

By Steve Cameron

Wind, wind and more wind. Sunday, May 18th was one of those gusty days that cried out for sailing, sail boarding or kite flying. But, we had plans for cruising down to Antioch with the Tomahawk, picking up a few club members along the way, and cruising along the Delta for a Sunday brunch and some wine tasting.

Normally, Pam would have taken one look at the blustery conditions and told me to can the idea of taking the Tomahawk out. That would be before we had the new hardtop installed. Instead, she was almost anxious (I said, almost, honey) to take a Sunday morning spin along the river road.

Our first stop was the Burger King off Highway 4. We arrived just seconds before Vern and Carol Hance's Mercedes 500K, and a minute before Paul and Ruth King. Although we hoped to see more of you, this was our cruising group.

At precisely 9:45, we headed back on Highway 4, destined for our first stop, the Ryde Hotel, which lies just south of Walnut Grove. After an amiable drive along the river road, we arrived at the Hotel and joined a few friends of mine: Raiyn Bain with her husband Ed Moore, and Maria Sapiandante with her husband Renel Sapiandante. Raiyn and

Maria are attorneys that work in my office. As it turned out, this was Maria's birthday, and it was sort of a reunion, as the six of us met up in Cambria last year for the Paso Robles wine festival.

We started off with a quick tour of the Hotel grounds. As we explained last month, the Ryde Hotel is a classic art deco establishment, with a history of lawlessness from the Prohibition era. It has been incredibly restored, and now hosts weddings and parties in addition



to its food and hotel accommodations.

Since it was nearly 11:00 and my stomach was growling, I corralled the group and got everyone in for the brunch. (See above) We were treated to the usual Sunday faire, which included omelets, waffles, fruits, salads, chilled prawns, desserts and of course champagne.

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Once we had our fill of food and champagne, it was time for wine tasting. By this time, we were joined by Gene and Val Stanger. They had just arrived from the British car meet in Dixon.

Our next stop was Bogle Vineyards, just 15 miles up the river. The journey to Bogle isn't easy, as the winery is located about 2 miles off the river road. If you don't visit often, you could get lost—so we try to visit often.

Bogle is a nice stop. The vineyards and grounds are beautiful, the staff are friendly, they don't charge for tasting and the wine prices are very reasonable. It seems like we spent an hour or two tasting and chatting before everyone



was ready to head home.

My guests were wowed by the Tomahawk and Vern's Mercedes. Ed said he was ready to put some real time into his classic Firebird, which hasn't been

running for the last few years, and Renel, . . . I wouldn't be surprised to see him joining the club. He just has to convince Maria.

ART & WINE FESTIVAL - WALNUT CREEK

This annual event was held May 31st and June 1st this year. The weather was nice and warm on Saturday and downright hot on Sunday.

We had 7 NCKCC member cars on display Saturday, including Steve & Mary Ellen Bales (M-B 500K), Vern Hance (M-B 500K), Dave Jones (Cobra), Paul & Ruth King (M-B SSK), Chuck Maddux (M-B 500K), Mark Rubenstein (M-B Barron) and Jim & Kathleen Standiford ('46 Ford Club Coupe).

On Sunday we added Steve & Pam Cameron (Tomahawk), Roger & Sue Winslow (Cobra) and Tom & Irene Wallters (M-B 500K). All the Saturday people were also there again, but Jim Standiford brought his Jackrabbit rather than his "genuine" '46 Ford. Sunday we also had two additional non-member cars, a Sunbeam Tiger, owned by Ronnie Demer, and '61 Corvette, whose owner we didn't identify.

The vehicle display idea is growing; a couple years ago a Harley Davidson display was added and this year the MG Owners Club had about 9 cars on display both days. (Page 4 for pictures)

Shown below: Some of the Sunday crowd enjoying some cool shade. From top left: Paul King, Steve Cameron, Pam Cameron, Mary Ellen Bales, Roger Winslow, Ronnie Demer, Steve Bales, Irene Wallters, (under the straw hat) Dave Jones and Tom Wallters.



The cars below: (C.W. - L to R) Rubenstein Baron, Jones Cobra, Bales 500K, Winslow Caobra, Maddux 500K, Wallters 500K, ? '61 Corvette, Demer Tiger, Cameron Tomahawk, Hance 500K, King M-B SSK.



CROSLEY WITH COBRA ENGINE

By Bill Siuru (written for Convertible Connection)

When you think of 1950's sports cars, cars like the MG Jaguar XK and Porsche 356s come to mind. However, America's sub-compact car builder Crosley made some decent sports cars in those days. These were the Hot Shot and Super Sport that while not exactly pretty, were fun to drive and did well in motorsport competition.

The Hot Shot model appeared in 1949. At 137 inches, it was even shorter than the tiny Crosley sedan although its 85 inch wheelbase was 5 inches longer. While archaic even for 1950, the semi-elliptic and coil-springs front suspension and quarter-elliptic springs in the rear lead to pretty good handling. It rode on tiny 4.50 x 12 inch tires.

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Under the hood, the standard engine was Crosley's CIBA cast iron four which produced 26.5 horsepower at a high revving 5400 rpm. The displacement was a mere 44 cubic inches (721 cc) and torque was rated at 32.5 lb at 3200 rpm. This was coupled to a non-synchromesh three-speed.

The Crosley engine is a story in itself and was undoubtedly Crosley's most outstanding contribution to the auto world. The engine would live on well after Crosley folded, being used in everything from small farm tractors and utility vehicles to boats and midget racing cars. During World War II, Crosley obtained the rights to the Cobra four engine used to power everything from light aircraft to truck refrigerators. This unique engine had a block and head made of sheet metal stampings copper together, thus the title Cobra for Copper Brazed. It weighed a mere 138 pounds ready to run. Unfortunately, when Crosley put the engine in cars it tended to warp and develop holes in the cylinders because of electrolysis. Crosley solved the problem by using the Cobra design, OHC, five main bearings, pressure lubrication, etc., but constructed of conventional cast iron and designated the CIBA. Weight went up a mere 22 pounds. This high revving, lightweight, almost bullet-proof engine became a hit with performance enthusiasts. It was probably one of the most "hot roddable" engines of all time. Only the CIBA was used in Crosley sports cars.

The rest of the running gear was essentially Crosley sedan including the Hydradisc brakes found on early models.

Crosley is credited with being the first production car to use disc brakes when they appeared on the 1949 models. Disc brakes would appear on certain Chrysler models in 1950. Unfortunately the "Hydradisc" brakes were less than successful since salt and grime quickly ate up the spot disc pads or caused freeze-ups. Crosley went back to drum brakes in 1951.

The Hot Shot weighed less than 1200 pounds. By comparison, the contemporary MG was powered by a 54 horsepower, 1250 cc engine, but weighed about 700 pounds more. The Hot Shot was a true, wind-in-your-face sports car that came without doors although metal inserts were available for safety. The slab-sided car had "bug-like" headlights, bucket seats, outside mounted spare tire, and a flat windshield. Actually, the car looked a bit like the Austin-Healy "Bugeye" Sprite that would appear a decade later and was about the same size.

In 1950, the Super Hot Shot, subsequently called the Super Sport, was offered. It had better trim and a higher performance engine with a 10: 1 compression ratio up from the standard 7.8: 1. To put this in proper perspective, in the early 1950s the Oldsmobile Rocket 88 was touted for its "high compression engine," and it was only 7.25: 1. These Crosleys had a top speed in the 80 to 90 mph range right out of the box. Crosley did not claim any additional horsepower from the 10: 1 engine, but it had to be

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CHRONICLES OF A HANDCRAFTED AUTOMOBILE

By Joel Heinke

This month's article takes a detour and doesn't talk about the GTO project at all. Truth is, that project received no attention at all last month so there's nothing to provide an update on. I did however decide garage confinement of the Cobra for a year and a half in combination with the arrival of spring weather meant that it was high time to get the Cobra back to running condition.

The combination of a small radiator leak with the arrival of my second son resulted in the Cobra being mothballed in the garage. The radiator leak itself wasn't that bad but the fact that it was caused by an engineering flaw meant that some new engineering and fabrication were required to fix it right. I had originally elected to follow the cooling fan manufacturer recommendation to mount electric cooling fans to the radiator core with some special plastic mounting ties. It took 4 years and about 14K miles for this engineering folly to show itself but the telltale sign of antifreeze trickling off a fan indicated a problem.

My diagnosis was road and fan vibration were transmitted to the plastic mounting ties causing them to wear holes in a couple of the core cooling passages. Based on this evidence, my

advice to you is to not use this cooling fan mounting method. If you already have a car with fans mounted in this manner, check for any looseness and snug them up if possible. Inspect the core for signs of vibration or wear and proactively change the fan mounting if any wear signs are present.

Getting the radiator leaks fixed was the easy part although it cost about \$50. I decided to fix several other cooling system issues while I was at it and this made the project just a bit bigger. The temperature sensing switch that was suppose to automatically turn on the fans never had worked reliably and I had to use the manual override switch for the last couple of years. In addition, I wasn't able to get all the air from the cooling system as the radiator fill wasn't elevated high enough. Finding solutions to these issues in combination with designing a new mounting and shroud for the fans added some challenge.

I fabricated the fan mounting frame from 1/2 square tubing and turned to fellow club member Russ Thompson to custom bend a fan shroud from stainless steel sheet metal. I mounted the fans 1 1/2" from the radiator core and needed a shroud to make sure air was being drawn through the entire radiator core surface. I decided to make up a cardboard template for the shroud and luckily determined my first two designs were faulty in that they left insufficient



Shown above: The final result from revamping the cooling system came out nice. New is a fan mounting frame covered by a stainless steel shroud, a temperature adjustable fan switch, and a degas/surge coolant tank.

room for the hood hinges when trying to close the hood. Important tip: if your working with a cramped engine compartment (like on most kit cars) make your mistakes in cardboard and not expensive stainless steel.

My first new part search challenge was to find a replacement fan switch. I did some looking around and found pay dirt in the Jegs catalog (www.jegs.com on-line or 1-800-345-4545). The Flex-a-lite fan switch (part # 400-31147) comes with radiator mount temperature probe and is adjustable from 180 to 240 degrees. It will let you set the adjustment so your fans will shut off when your

cruising down the highway and they aren't needed anyway. I mounted the switch in the new fan shroud for easy access and a clean look.

My next new part challenge was the degas/surge coolant tank. This turned out to be much harder to find as I was looking to find one that mounted in-line in the upper radiator hose and could be had for less than \$200. The Cobra specialty dealers had replicas of surge tanks used on original Cobras but they wanted

\$250 at a minimum and that exceeded my budget. I finally found a very nice looking tank fitting my specifications at Fortes Parts Connection (www.fortesparts.com on-line or 781-273-9900) for \$150. It's compact, made from aluminum and fabricated with some very nice welding. After a bit of time on the buffing wheel it turned into a show quality piece.

The last part of the puzzle was new radiator hoses. If your kit car is like mine, you can't just walk into your local auto parts store and tell them you need hoses for XXX make/model/year car to get what you need. I found the local Napa auto parts store to be very helpful. I took some measurements, made some drawings and they helped me find some pre-formed hoses that

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would work. They had a book showing the basic size and shape of many radiator hoses. When we'd find something close, they'd look it up to see if they stocked it. If so, they'd get it from the shelf to see if it was close. After a few losers, we were able to find a couple that worked out just perfect.

I hope you found the topic of this months article interesting. It's a bit of a departure from the Ferrari GTO project but I thought others may need to do a cooling system revamping project and would find the information helpful.

MEDFORD MINGLE II - LAST CHANCE

By Chuck Maddux

It's down to the final crunch time for the Medford Mingle II, our annual visit with OHAA to the north.

We will be eating breakfast at the Black Oak Restaurant at I-80 and I-505 at 8 AM on Friday the 27th. To get there from the bay area take I-80 east to the I-505 exit in Vacaville, there is an off ramp, just as you enter I-505, which dead ends at the restaurant. If you just want to meet us there, we will be leaving the restaurant about 9:30.

I seem to recall that some people from the valley indicated interest, so we will be stopping at the rest stop north of

Dunnigan at approximately 10 AM. We plan to stop in the Redding area for lunch. I will, of course, be stopping as necessary for gas (12 gallon tank and so, so mileage). Please bring your cell phones along so we will be able to keep in touch. I will have a map showing the way to the motel once we're in the Medford area. I will also have a map of our planned outing on Saturday.

The Medford Best Western still has rooms available at \$75 and up, so join in and go to www.bestwestern.com or call the motel direct at 1-800-452-2255. As far as Shakespeare (1-541-482-4331) in Ashland or the Britt Theatre, (1-800-882-7488) in Jacksonville, I think it would be best to contact them when we arrive at the motel. I would really appreciate hearing from those of you who are going by the June 15 so I can prepare maps and handouts for your perusal. My e-mail is camnsam@att.net or (707) 745-4361. For the trip my cell number is (707) 373-3469. We hope many of you can join us for our annual visit with our friends from Oregon. Y'all come, ya HEAR!!!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We added one new member family in May and wish to welcome them aboard.

Ted & Billie Lichti live in Carlotta, CA, (707) 777-1788, and drive a Blakley Bernardi powered by a 2.3 liter Ford. They are interested in all club activities, but are several hours to the north. We hope to see them at the September show. (Photo page 9)

BENICIA TORCHLIGHT PARADE 2003

By Chuck Maddux

Thursday, July 3rd, 2003 is an evening of small town America enjoyment. NCKCC has participated in several of the parades in the past (winning 1st in class many times). So, I cordially invite you to join us with your patriotically decorated auto to enjoy the atmosphere of Benicia for a few hours. We start gathering from 4:30 to 5:30 PM at our house at 126 East D Street. When we receive our line-up place we will make the trip up 1st Street at 6:30 PM to the cheers of the local people and their children. We have many great restaurants in town and I will be most happy to make reservations after the parade. I will need to hear from you no later than the Jun 15 so I can get the entry to the organizers (let me know if your interested in dinner). Please e-mail me at camnsam@att.net or call 1-707-745-4361. I will give you directions when you call or e-mail. Also, you may want to come back on the 4th, as there are festivities all day, culminating with a fireworks display at dark, You are welcome to use our new driveway for parking as it will be very scarce, especially for the fireworks.

CROSLEY STORY

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there. By 1951, doors were standard on the Super Sport and optional on the Hot Shot, and these were about the extent of

the creature comforts. The Crosleys were really bargain basement sports cars. A 1949 Hot Shot listed for a mere \$849 and the 1960 Super Hot Shot cost only \$925. MGTDs listed for about twice this.

The Crosley sports cars shone in the Formula type races where engine displacement was an important ingredient in addition to speed. The Crosleys competed in the under-750cc class. While doing well in many road races of the period, the car reached its zenith by winning the Index of Performance in the grueling 12 hour endurance race at Sebring in 1951. A Crosley powered car with a highly modified engine rated at 42 horses and with a special body almost won the same award in the 1951 LeMans 24 hour race, but did not finish because of generator problems when it was averaging 73 mph.

Crosley got out of the car business in 1952 after losing millions of his own money in the venture. In all some 2498 sports models had been built in the last four years the company was in business.



Shown above: This is the Blakley Bernardi that belongs to new member Ted Lichti.

FOR SALE

COBRA- Registered 2001 Shelby <200 miles, smog exempt, Arntz styling, Butler quality. 351 Cleveland w/ 10" setback, Jag rear-end, 4-spd top-loader, Hurst shifter, H.D. half-shafts and strut assy. 52% wt on 12" Z-rated rear rubber, 10" rubber front. 6-piston 13" Wilwood brakes. Hood, trunk, doors molded inside & out. Finished eng. compt. Marty Krueger 775-852-1453 or E-mail mck427@msn.com (3/02)

COBRA Ford power, Jag rear-end. Silver w/ black interior. \$21,500 Call Bob Elster 707-938-3254 (1/02)

COBRA/VW KIT - 427 Snake body fits on your 3" shortened VW chassis. \$6,200 Call Wayne McAllaster (510) 656-5844 or E-mail medusa427@aol.com (4/03)

DODGE PICKUP 1994 2500HD (3/4 ton) Laramie SLT, std cab, long bed, Cummins 5.9L intercooled turbo diesel, 5-spd trans, top of the line, lots of extras and power everything, great for pulling a 5th wheel, car trailer, or ski boat. 112K miles, runs and looks great. Joel Heinke (925)449-1149; e-mail jandjheinke@earthlink.net (2/03)

FERRARI Testarossa (Ladre kit) On stock 1988 Fiero - under 20K original miles. V-6, 5-spd stick, A/C, AM-FM cassette, Hayashi Racing wheels with VR rated Goodyears. \$8,000 Call Warren Okamura 925-458-4030 evenings. (4/03)

FERRARI Testarossa (Dazzling Black Convertible) 34K original miles on Corvette platform. One of nine, custom built by SCM Motors for Mid-east royalty. at \$85K each. 626-458-922 asking \$30,000. (5/03)

MERCEDES 500K 4-PASSENGER. This all metal replica was built by H.T. Price with leather interior, 400cid Ford power, auto tranny, A/C, stereo/cassette, wood steering wheel. Call Diana (574) 277-3798. Write 51500 Orange Rd., South Bend, IN 46628-9419. (3/02)

MERCEDES 500K PARTS - For Classic Factory 500K: (4) door latch plates, patterns for tall tail light bases and side window frames. Also windshield frame patterns for 4-pass 500K. Call Diana (574) 277-3798. Write 51500 Orange Rd., South Bend, IN 46628-9419. (3/02)

MERCEDES 500K (Marlene) replica. Soft and hard tops, 17,000 miles, pwr brakes and steering, 351 V-8, Blaupunkt radio/CD player, anti-theft alarm. Excellent condition. **Reduced to \$15,000.** Maury Schwarz 415-931-7501 or 925-938-8331. (6/00)

MERCEDES 500K Heritage kit, unassembled, body in crate. Burgandy exterior/interior. All options. Stub Chevy front end, 350 engine and auto tranny (not rebuilt) \$14,000 Call Louis Boscacci (415) 892-5245. (04/03)

MERCEDES SSK (Gazelle) 2.3 Pinto powered, gray w/ red fenders, Auto tranny. License & Smog thru 3/04. Priced for quick sale. only \$3,000 obo. Bob Pincus 925-939-7581 05/03)

PANTERA Factory built, only one known to exist. Red w/ beige interior, Chev power. \$35,000 Call Bob Elster 707-938-3254. (1/02)

SEBRING 5000 parts. Two complete new bumpers w/ mounting hardware, set of fiberglass seat pans, chrome grille surround, chrome fender beading. \$75 for all. Also new GM HEI distributor for \$100. Don Owens (530) 677-2690 or e-mail owensdon@pacbell.net (1/02)

STERLING powered by '63 Buick 3.8 liter V-8. Fast, reliable, smog legal. White w/ brown interior. Removable sunroof, stereo, CB. Gorgeous, one-of-a-kind looker. Ya gotta hear the engine snarl. Excellent condition. **REDUCED TO \$4,000.** Roy Yates 650-365-1909. (2/01)

LUXURY HOME with SHOP. 4-Br, 3-bath, 3,600 sq. ft. designed for casual or formal life style. Landscaped backyard and patio overlooks a 4,000 foot paved & lighted runway in this Air-Park development. Attached heated hanger and shop perfect for auto & plane enthusiasts to live in a friendly community. Located 30 miles east of Sacramento near mountains, skiing and water sports. Offered at \$595,000 by Don Owens (530) 677-2690 - e-mail owensdon@pacbell.net

2003 AHA Knott's Berry Farm Show 90 minute video covering cars and awards. Available as DVD disc \$19 or VHS tape \$16 postpaid in U.S. Send check to VMH Services, 3317 Ellesmere Ct. Walnut Creek, CA 94598. Or use a credit card and e-mail funds via "PayPal" to vmh@mac.com (6/02)

CAR TRAILER - Specially built for Porsche Speedster. Suitable for other VW based kit cars with 53.5 inch track width. Wheel runner channels are 6" wide. \$600 o.b.o. Vern Hance (925) 938-1442 or nckcc@astound.net (11/02)

"Cars for Sale" ads in the *Kit Car Sun* are for members only. Rate is \$10 for 12 issues.

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C.S.H.

861-251-2223

CALENDAR OF EVENTS - 2003

- June 27 to 29 - Medford Trip (Chuck Maddux)
- July 3 - Benetia torchlight parade (Chuck Maddux)
- July 19-20 - Bethel Island show (Vern Hance)
- August 3 - 17th Annual Bean Festival car show in Tracy. Info: 209/836-2900 or 209/835-0890
- August 7,8,9 - Hot August Nights and Reno Swap Meet. Info? 916-933-0949
- August 16 - Hot August Niles show (Vern Hance)
- September 6 & 7 - NCKCC Car Show (Carolina Williams)
- September 10 thru 14 - Cool Sept Days show (Bob Bohaboy)
- October 19 - Winetasting - Livermore (Leanne Jones)
- October 24-26, 2003 - Club Sandwich, Riverside Hotel, Laughlin. NV
- November 2 or 9 - Buffet (Leanne to investigate; Steve has a backup plan)

These are some of the new entries at the AHA Knott's show: Allen Motors MG-TG (MR-2 based), Cheetah by Shell Valley, Banshee (Pontiac Firebird), MR-2 Special



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The Kit Car Sun is published monthly by the Northern California Kit Car Club. Opinions expressed by authors should not be considered the position of the club. We are a non-profit educational organization and do not intend to influence legislation.

SMOG UPDATE

As of May 30, 2003, only 38 of the 500 Certificates of Sequence were unassigned and still available. To check on how many of the 500 Certificates of Sequence are left go to <http://www.dmv.ca.gov/vr/spcns.htm>