October / December 2016

Pacific Tiger Club Newsletter

ROOTES OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Veep! Beep!

by Dick Sanders

2017 is suddenly upon us. Where did 2016 *go?* Wasn't it just yesterday we were touring to Lynnwood, Whidbey Island, Black Diamond, Fall City?

With our Rootes cars mostly tucked snugly away from cold and salted roads, it's time to plan for the year ahead. Budd Bennion has graciously offered to host our annual event planning meeting on Saturday, January 28. Bring your ideas. Many of our best events have come from this meeting, a lively mixture of brainstorming and BS-ing. And there's always Budd's Hillman Husky in the garage if tire-kicking is your thing.

Elsewhere in the Sunbeam world, California might be on your itinerary this summer. Tigers United XXXVIII will be held in June near Sacramento, as far north as this event has been held in many years. Adding to usual good times, at least seven members of the UK's Sunbeam Tigers Owners Club (STOC) are planning to ship their Tigers over to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the final year of Tiger production. They'll be touring around So. Cal for a week before attending Tigers United.

In nearby Cambria, Cal., the Sunbeam Alpine Club of America (SAOCA) will be holding their first west coast event May 18-21, inviting owners of Alpines and other Rootes cars. California is home to a large percentage of Alpiners. It will be interesting to see how big a turnout they can get.

Much closer to home, you may have read of the recently approved land swap between the state of Washington and private developers who plan to refurbish the crumbling seminary at St. Edward State Park near Kirkland into a hotel. Early renderings appear to show that the large grass lawn used to stage the All British Field Meet for the last several years will remain intact. Hopefully the new operators will wisely see the value to their guests of having a free car show held just outside their windows.

Sad news to report for those who don't receive the club emails: Paul Jelinek, 60, passed away in November after battling a rare form of cancer that normally only strikes people in their teens or younger. He and wife Lisa had recently made a long-planned move to Belgrade, Montana, which was also close to where their son Jack was attending college. Paul joined PTC not long after he and Lisa moved here from Alaska, where they both worked for Alaska Airlines. Our thoughts and prayers are with Lisa and Jack. ***PTC***

Club Officers

President: Need a volunteer!

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Historians: Dave Dunn / Dan Kuenzi

Renewing your membership?

Members are asked to send all membership checks and correspondence to:

Pacific Tiger Club
c/o Dan Kuenzi
1790 Longmire Lane
Selah, WA 98942

509-952-7120
shelbycuda@hotmail.com
Annual Membership Dues: *$32.00 US/35.00 for foreign members. Make checks payable to: PacificTiger Club.*

Treasurer's Report – Bob Bennion

Detail of Income & Expenses FYE 9/30/2016

Receipts	
Dues	2,473.00
Memorabilia Sales/Name Tags	352.00
Total:	2,825.00
Disbursements	
AGM costs	763.71
Charitable Contributions	350.00
Door Prizes	401.88
Insurance	517.00
Monthly Meeting Costs	249.00
Name Tags	267.26
Newsletter Printing	203.71
Postage	59.98
Taxes & Licenses	400.00
Total:	3,212.54
Net Profit or Loss	(387.54)
Cash balance, Sept 30	12,017.22

PTC Club Events

2017 Event Planning Meeting

Saturday, January 28 10am
At the home of Budd Bennion
14720 30th Ave NE Seattle 206-364-8478

Sunbeam Events

WestCoast Invasion 2017

May 18-21 Cambria, Cal.
Celebration of Rootes Group cars! Sponsored by Sunbeam Alpine Owners Club of America SAOCA.org for more details

Tigers United XXXVIII

June 23-25 Sacramento, Cal.
Sponsored by Sunbeam Tiger Owners Assn

Of Local Interest

Tulip Rallye – 36th Annual

Saturday, April 22 Cascade Mall In Burlington.
Tuliprallye.org for info and online registration

Jerry Logan's Mystery Car

As most of the readers here, I spend many hours engaged in cruising the websites and magazines for all things Sunbeam. The Sunbeam affliction has even taken me around the world seeking out other Sunbeam enthusiasts. It is a pleasing hobby with a mixer of meeting wonderful people, finding those with higher understandings about the Sunbeam and enjoying the Sunbeam ride. Occasionally, I come across an unusual bit about the Sunbeam. In the fall of 2011 this was the case while reading a thread on the Sunbeam Alpine Owners Club of America (SAOCA) site. Thread contributors were questioning the makeup of a car for sale on Ebay. There was a suggestion the peculiar automobile was using a Sunbeam for it's platform and yet it had a Jaguar engine installed. Following the cyber trail to Ebay I viewed what was an incredibly inviting proposition. It was indeed based on the Sunbeam Series I platform with a Jaguar engine. My viewing was excited by the 1960's racing sports car appearance. Later investigations determined the front section was in fact from a racing Lotus 19. Now three things had me hooked. It was a Sunbeam platform (I have all five Series Sunbeams in one form or another). I had owned a 1953 Jaguar engine (I restored and loved a Mark VII as my third car 50 years ago). And it had the racing sports car look, at least from the front. Four days later I was the winning bidder arranging the 3500 mile trip to get the Lyrad /Jaguar/Sunbeam.

I arrived in Illinois and met Phil the son selling his recently deceased father's Lyrad. Phil shared that the Lyrad had been parked ever since his dad brought it home 30+ years ago. On that occasion

Phil's father had exclaimed, "That thing is too dangerous to drive I'm parking it in the barn." When I got the Lyrad in my shop I confirmed Phil's father's concerns, there were some serious suspension problems. And due to the rear section's unusual design there were no quarter windows lending to dangerous side wing blind spots. This would not be a restoration project but a reconfiguration venture for safety reasons. I pondered for days about this project when a package arrived in the mail from Dr. Darryl Townsend, the builder of the Lyrad. Townsend included all the documents, photos and registration

paperwork from Quebec, Canada and Illinois, USA. More importantly, he opened the door to a new friendship that I revere. With galactic aspiration Townsend's motivation to conception to inception pathway led to adding a special sports car to the automotive universe.

Imagine as a 23 year old your first car is a 1949 Morris Minor followed by an MGA coupe. These were not purchased for their design or beauty but merely to give you functional transportation. Each also provided you with the requisite daily tasks to keep them operating at a somewhat reliable level. Eventually, as a young doctor, you longed for a car that would provide more faithful service. As if the car Gods heard your plea a 1958, 4000 mile, 3.4 Jaguar sedan enters your life. No more need to keep the battery charger attached overnight. No more fretting the overheating issues. Just jump in and enjoy the drive. Functional conveyance became driving gratification. Townsend's Jaguar ownership elevated his enthusiasm for the world of sports cars and the automotive hobby.

In this "after" photo, the contrasting colors show off the familiar Sunbeam door

With little need for daily or even weekly tinkering the dependable Jaguar began to weigh on the pleasure Townsend derived from hands on immersion into the classic automotive hobby. Townsend began to conceptualize a sports car to fulfill this need. Indeed, Townsend would set out to build his first car. A one-off that would give his friend's D-type Jaguar a challenge on the road. The creation of a unique car began.

In 1962 Townsend's bud of visualization started somewhere between a sleek Ferrari 250 LM and an Aston Martin DB4. This would be a powerful four wheel dream car. The project had to be of low cost so an economical platform needed to be found. Townsend already had a 3.4 Jaguar engine from a Jaguar race shop in Montreal, Quebec where he occasionally worked when he wasn't employing his medical expertise. A recently found wrecked Series I (B9001069) Sunbeam would serve as the platform. Townsend liked the structural cross frame integrity that the Sunbeam uni-body provided. He appreciated the sporty windshield and doors with rollup windows. And the final $25 price tag, after selling unneeded components, met the low cost budget.

Five years and many stories later the Lyrad was born in 1967. The name for this one-of-a-kind came about while Townsend was at the Quebec Department of Motor Vehicles. They asked, "What do you want to call the car?" Townsend pondered for a moment and remembered how school kids were having fun devising

codes by reversing letters to words so he reversed the letters to Darryl minus one r for simplification. It is formally registered as a **Lyrad GT Mark I**. Townsend eventually moved to the USA ultimately taking a position in one of Chicago's medical facilities. In 1978 he sold the Lyrad to an Illinois resident. A full history of the Lyrad Jaguar build can be found in The EJAG News Magazine (February and March, 1978) written by

Dr. Townsend. I purchased the car in 2011 and it is registered in Washington State, USA under the name Lyrad GT Mark I.

Three years into the Lyrad's re-birth much needed improvements have been made on the rear section, still keeping to a mostly original look. With great appreciation to Jim Simpson from Simpson Design, check it out you will be pleased (http://www.simpsondesign.net/), the Lyrad now has quarter windows and a streamlined aft section incorporating a Porsche 911 rear window. The suspension was extremely unpredictable relying on the original Sunbeam Series I rear suspension and homemade front coil-overs constructed out of the Sunbeam's front wishbone components. Solution, install a generation 1 Mazda MX5 front suspension. Experience with my own Miata's mechanical under carriage has given proven performance for me and there are numerous modifications available for tuning. Such as, height adjustable, coil over shock systems and complete poly bushing kits. It was also a plus to integrate a Miata's Independent Rear Suspension (IRS) with a Torsen limited slip differential for the final drive component. The Lyrad's weight will be slightly more than a stock Miata but less than a Sunbeam Tiger at around 2500 lbs (1134 kg). It will maintain its approximate 50% to 50% front to rear balance ratio and the 100" (254 cm) wheel base which was increased from the stock Sunbeam's 89" (226 cm). With a 220 HP Jaguar engine coupled to a Jaguar 4speed/overdrive transmission the Lyrad's world should be righted and a glorious performance is highly anticipated. Work still continues on the project with a new bonnet cut from an XKE Series I bonnet and body paint preparations ensue.

My desire is to trailer the sleek Lyard GT Mark I to Dr. Townsend's Pennsylvania home for private showing. Followed by participation in the 2016 Watkins Glen Vintage Grand Prix show car display and one parade lap around this acclaimed road course. Hopefully, the 80's something Dr. Townsend, lead technical inspector at Watkins Glenn for numerous years, can join me on this promenade through the past.

Post script: Sadly Townsend passed away April, 2016. However, I had the pleasure of talking with Townsend 3 or 4 times a month for two years discussing all things mechanical. A wonderful relationship that will be forever cherished ***PTC***

[This first appeared The Horn*, published by the Sunbeam Alpine Owners Club.]*.

October / December 2016

The Ballad of Irving

An Auto-Biography by Dick Sanders

It was 1977, gasoline prices were going through the roof (almost $2 a gallon!) and my college student budget was strained to keep my thirsty 1968 Dodge Coronet 500's tank full. That's the only rationale I can think of for buying my first Sunbeam, a 1969 four-seat fastback ("Baby Barracuda") Alpine Coupe. It seemed strange and exotic, and I had next to no experience working on cars. But what the heck, I'd just learned how to gap the points on my Dodge. I was now the master of all things automotive! How hard could it be to keep a Sunbeam running? I soon found out.

Literally within days the starter quit starting, the charging system quit charging, and the headlights became prone to turning on or off at any time of their own choosing. The Coupe quickly became a personal rolling technical school. After a few months I had ironed out most of the major bugs and settled down to tackling the little things. Balky door, seat and window mechanisms, miscellaneous Lucas conundrums and the like.

Dig those bell bottoms! "Irving" was rarely this shiny.

Still, it could be fun to drive. Unlike the heavy-steering early '70s Toyotas I had test-driven, the Sunbeam was very easy to drive on the open road, and had excellent brakes and leg room. Fast? Nope. The Coupe model had the cast iron head with single Stromberg carb setup, an optimistic rating of 68 horsepower, and basically had trouble getting out of its own way.

A year later I named the car *Irving*, partly from its license plate, IRV 788, but mostly from an old novelty song played on the Dr. Demento radio show, called *The Ballad of Irving - the hundred-and-forty-second fastest gun in the West*. I figured that my *Irving* was about the hundred-and-forty-second fastest Alpine in the West.

Irving took great offense to this notion. Within a month the starter shorted out again, this time melting the insulation off the battery-to-starter cable, which drooped down across the plastic fuel line and severed it completely.

I propped open the hood to find sparks dancing across from the exposed, red hot battery cable to the back of the engine block, just inches from where fuel was freely flowing onto the ground around the car from the full, 17-gallon gas tank.

With no tools close at hand to disconnect the battery, I called the fire department. Just as the fire truck rolled up and slowly came to a stop (they probably thought it was a false alarm) a huge ball of flame erupted from the engine compartment high into the night sky. Momentarily as surprised as I was, the firefighters extinguished it in about 10 seconds.

Expecting the worst, *Irving* emerged remarkably unscathed with minor paint damage to the underside of the hood, needing just another starter, plus a few new hoses, wires, and re-routed battery cable to get it back up and running. A few months later *Irving*, still offended, burnt up its number 3 rod bearing while en route to Vancouver BC. An early morning phone call to a friend (Jim Leach) got a 40-mile flat tow back to Seattle from Everett. I'd have felt a little guiltier if Jim hadn't been

the one that I'd let talk me into buying the car in the first place.

By this time I had just purchased a Mark II Tiger and also bought and sold a Series V Alpine, so transportation was not a problem. That goal of cutting down on car expenses while in college had long since been forgotten. In true young-bachelor style, I pulled the engine from the Coupe, physically dragged it up the stairs to my apartment and repaired it on my kitchen table.

It still ran badly afterwards. A piston ring broke almost immediately, followed soon after by parts of the rest of the piston, but I entered *Irving* anyway in the next autocross at Sunbeam Northwest III in Olympia. Why? Well, as the Ballad goes, *"A hundred and forty one were faster than he, but Irving was looking for one-forty-three."* With no power to speak of and piston-slap that could be heard a hundred feet away, second place in stock class was very rewarding.

That proved to be *Irving*'s last hurrah, as it went on a downhill slide from there. Yes, it was discernable even after all the previous problems. The fuse box, mounted on a hole in the firewall with inside lead wires too short for access or repair work, started acting up unpredictably, causing various shorts. The ignition system would go dead without warning and it became necessary to carry a long umbrella with me so I could reach underneath the parcel tray and poke at the back of the fuse box to restart the engine without having to pull over to the side of the road.

The Coupe's end seemed near when, heading to a party on the eastside after the next PTC banquet, a member following me in his Tiger told me he could see what looked like glowing cigarette butts blowing out of the tailpipe. Later that night, *Irving* limped back home across the 520 floating bridge. As I pulled into my driveway, the head gasket blew.

Irving appeared in the classifieds the next week. Soon after, a fellow with grand delusions of installing a V6 or a rotary or something came by to look at it. I let him have his delusions - and the car.

I learned quite a lot from owning the fastback. Areas of car maintenance that I wouldn't have dreamed of tackling before, such as electrical, engine or clutch work, became almost second nature on the many Sunbeams I've owned since. But the most important lesson learned was - never named your Sunbeam *Irving*. ***PTC***

[Longtime members will remember this column which I first ran back around 1992. Hope you enjoy the rerun. –Ed.]

Thanks to Dan Kuenzi for forwarding the front page of this catalog from California Car Cover Co.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all the gang at PTC.

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