January / February 2017

Pacific Tiger Club Newsletter

ROOTES OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Veep! Beep!

by Dick Sanders

They're still out there. I recently got a call from the president of the local Fiat owners club. A friend of his owned a Tiger, and due to health issues, the gentleman was thinking of selling it and needed advice. Turned out the fellow and his wife lived nearby, so I decided to go on a "Sunbeam Safari" and check it out.

The couple that owned the Mk 1 were fun to talk to. He had bought it in 1969; probably the second owner. They spoke of times past, like driving the Tiger top-down for a vacation in Reno. At some point, though, it got to be too much work, too much hassle. The license tabs and dust told me that the Tiger had sat pretty much undisturbed for 20 years in their garage until they recently decided that such a wonderful car, that had given them so many pleasant memories, should not go undriven.

Local Tigers and Alpines still appear regularly on Craigslist and other ad sites. But I rarely recognize a PTC member's car. From this and the similar stories I've heard from members who went on their own Sunbeam Safaris, there are still Sunbeam owners out there in significant numbers who aren't members of PTC and may never even have *heard* of the club. Sometimes they're out in the hinterlands, sometimes right under our noses.

Like the couple I just met, they all have their stories, their memories. Some might be ready to throw in the towel, but others are just starting, or looking for that extra bit of inspiration to move the boxes of Christmas ornaments off of the dusty hood and trunk and make a stab at getting their Sunbeam or Hillman back on the road - to create new memories.

The club hit a milestone recently. When I joined PTC in 1978 we had maybe 30 members. With a few peaks and valleys along the way, we were at 120 just before the Big Recession hit, dropping at one point to a low of 80. At the end of 2016, PTC had climbed back up to an even 100 memberships. And there's no reason why we can't exceed our old peak. I'd like to think that the enthusiasts who make up PTC can help grow the club by reaching out and providing that inspiration, that spark, to the Sunbeam owners we encounter who might not have considered joining a club in the past. Direct owners to our website. Get their contact info and send it to our Membership Secretary.

It's an old refrain, but worth repeating:
The more, the merrier.

Club Officers

President: Need a volunteer!

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Committee Chairpersons

Membership: Dan Kuenzi
1790 Longmire Lane
Selah, WA 98942
509-952-7120
shelbycuda@hotmail.com

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: Pacific Tiger Club.*

PTC Club Events

April 29 Spring Dash Tour 10am *Craig Burlingame always finds the roads less traveled for our tours. We'll start at the XXX Drive-In in Issaquah, ending in Snohomish.*

May 20 10am. Brooklands British Car Restoration Shop. Tacoma, WA
Come tour one of the few remaining repair shops that specialized in British cars. The majority of their business is MG's, but they do work on Sunbeams. 8237 S. Tacoma Way.

June 10 – Meeting at the home of PTC member Greg Oliver in Edmonds, WA
Greg's sister is a professional photographer who will be available to take quality photos of your Sunbeam or Hillman.

July 22 Western Washington All-British Field Meet. *St. Edward State Park in Juanita, WA. An epic display of British iron!*

September – Shop tour of Simpson Design. *Whidbey Island. Details TBA*

October – PTC Annual General Meeting (AGM) *at* ***Bobo's*** *auto consignment shop. Shoreline, WA*

Sunbeam Events

WestCoast Invasion 2017

May 18-21 Cambria, Cal.
Celebration of Alpines and 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

Local Interest

Tulip Rallye – 36th Annual

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

Free Cruise-In at LeMay ACM: *Second Tuesday evening of the month, April-Oct*

May 21 9am British & French car show
XXX Drive-In, Issaquah, WA. Vive la Coventry!

THE REMODELED PETERSEN MUSEUM

Over the years I discovered that I never have enough time to see and touch everything in an auto museum. My wife Vicki, on the other hand, walks through the displays, has coffee and maybe lunch, makes a new honey-do list, and finds a near-by outlet mall before I'm half done. I kept her occupied this year, as I signed us up for the "vault" tour, at the Petersen Automotive Museum, in L.A.,

Driving Through Paradise

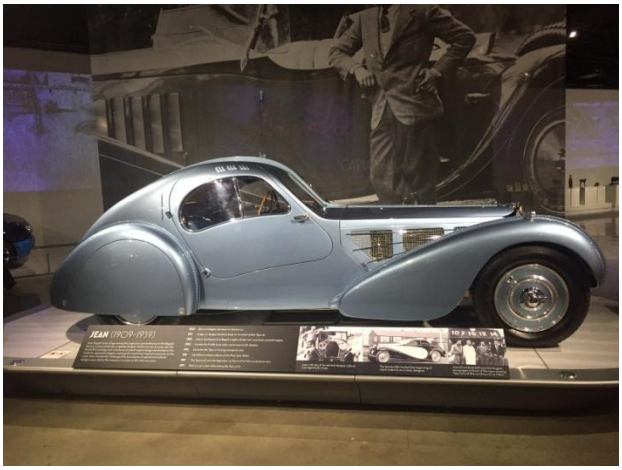
by Jim Clark

California. The vault is essentially the Museum's basement where they store all the cars that they don't have room for on the main display floors.

The tour was advertised as lasting 90 minutes. As the participants gathered in the lobby for the one o'clock tour, the guide told us that he could stretch his talk 15 or 20 minutes longer. I smiled, Vicki frowned.

The tour was very entertaining, but we were on our feet for almost 2 hours. We were able to see Steve McQueen's Jaguar XKSS plus his Hudson Wasp, Elvis's Pantera, The Dark Knight's cool motorcycle, one of Jane Mansfield's '57 Plymouths, Preston Tucker's own '48 Tucker, a rare 901 Porsche, Carole Lombard's '41 Cadillac, one of President Roosevelt's '42 Lincoln limos, and a Pope mobile built on a Cadillac chassis that was never used. The list goes on, there were a dozen Hot Rods and even one of the VW love bug "Herbie's."

A word of warning; there are no bathrooms in the vault, no phone reception, no picture taking, no coffee shops and you cannot touch any on the cars-



you can't even walk between them. Vicki had reached her limit of automotive history quickly, and at the end I was dying to stroke a chrome bumper or caress a tail fin. Robert Petersen and his wife, Margi, made their fortune in magazine publishing. Hot Rod was their first magazine, followed by Motor Trend, in 1965. They published Motor Trend because there weren't any other magazines like it; and he was very interested in cars. They went on to publish many other magazines. In 1994, they completed the conversion an old department store into a modern car museum.

In 2015 the museum spent $90 million on renovating the interior of their building by completely gutting it and re-designing it's interior. The building still retains a department store look on the outside, but it is hiding under a new free-flowing artistic metal sculpture. Stainless steel was the main metal used to decorate the building's exterior; so much in fact (100 tons) that the price on the open market for stainless steel was affected. The exterior of the building has a sculptured look much like the EMP, in Seattle.

The museum's first floor has a ticketing area, a Bugatti with its skin removed, an exhibit about the artistry of the automobile, and an Italian Restaurant. We were counting on some lunch at the Petersen, but we were out of luck as the restaurant wouldn't open for 2 weeks. Parking is available on the first level; and of course, there's a well-stocked gift shop. The gift shop is large and

they will validate your parking, if you buy a certain $ amount. I stocked up on a few Xmas gifts, and parked for free.

Museum goers start the self-guided tour on the third floor of the museum. It is the history floor, and has automobiles from TV shows and movies, several concept cars and an art mural. The second floor is called the Industry floor, where race cars, motorcycles, hot rods, and alternative power plant ideas, are displayed. There's a special section, where Forza motorsport driving simulators were available to drive cars at high speed. I'd been on the L. A. freeway, so I didn't need to drive at high speed with inches between car fenders…I'd done that that morning.

The Petersen is just south of Hollywood and it took 2 hours to drive there, but it was a tortuous 4 hours to get home during rush hour(s). Not having lunch, we stopped on the way back to our vacation condo, at an In-N-Out burger drive in. You need to know the secret menu to order something besides a cheeseburger at the In-N-Out drive-in. Unfortunately, I learned about the secret menu later in the week. We enjoyed our cheeseburgers. (but I could've had a "4x4" or an "animal style" burger).

The museum has a new and fresh feel to it, with lots of space between exhibits. It is worth the $12 entry fee, but be sure to reserve a spot on the vault tour-it is well worth the extra $20. Just wear comfy walking shoes, and warn your spouse that 90 minutes could become 120. ***PTC***

Membership Report

2016 was another good year for PTC, adding several new members and bringing our total to an even 100. Mind you, joint memberships count as one, so including spouses and significant others, total individuals come to at least 140.

Join us in welcoming PTC's Class of 2016:

Joe & Lisa Robin - Green Series V Alpine
Bellevue, WA
Herman & Scott Lemke - Series V Alpine
Auburn, WA
Lynn & Jan Whiting - Red Mk 1a Tiger & Black Mk 1a Tiger Spokane Valley, WA
John & Peggy Whitmore – Series V Alpine
Maple Valley, WA
Steve Metcalfe - Black Mk 1 Tiger
Steilacoom, WA

- ***Dan Kuenzi***

PTC Voting Ballot

Our club by-laws require a vote by the general membership whenever there is a change in dues. Per a motion made at our January planning meeting: Given that most Newsletters are now sent electronically, negating the need to charge extra for Canadian postage,

Shall dues for Canadian members be lowered from $35/yr to $32/yr?

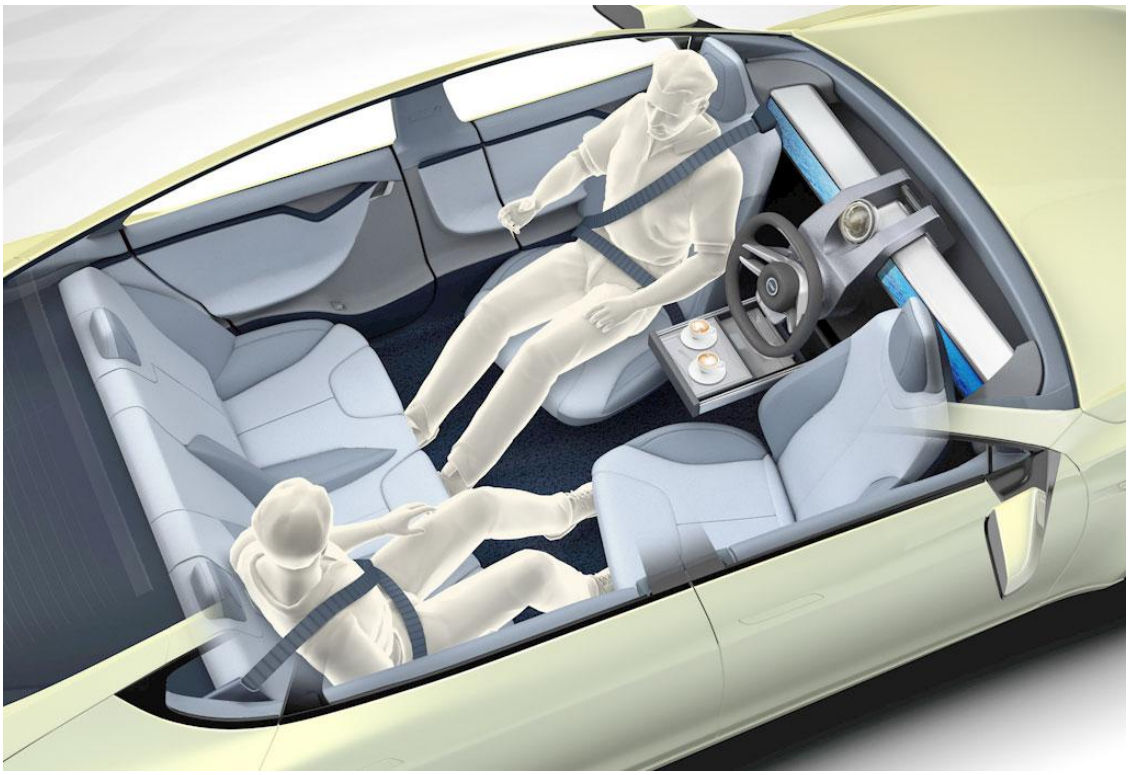
Please email or snail-mail your 'Yea' or 'Nay' to Membership Chairman Dan Kuenzi at his address as shown on Page 2 by April 25. These ballots will be combined with in-person votes at our April 29th meeting/tour.

Under The Hood

by Kevin Jewell

The same day I started writing this column, our work server went down at 11 AM. Our internal IT people couldn't resolve the issue, so we called in the outside consultant. The server still wasn't working by the end of the day. This is just one more reason that the idea of self-driving cars gives me concern.

I am not alone with my concerns. A recent study by the University of Michigan reports that 46% of respondents prefer no self-driving capability at all, while 15% want a fully



self-driving vehicle. Almost 10% said they wouldn't be concerned about riding in a self-driving car. Wow, how can we be certain that the system won't crash? Another survey reported in the Puget Sound Business Journal shows that 69.5% believe people will be riding in self-driving cars within 10 years, 24% said 10-20 years, and only 3.4% say it will never happen. Are the PSBJ numbers skewed by the fact that we are in a tech hot-bed, where many believe the latest technology is the answer to every issue?

I have read most of the claims about self-driving cars and they are claimed to eliminate auto deaths plus make it so easy to commute that everyone will simply jump in a rented pod and whisk to work. I remember reading some of the same claims decades ago in Popular Science and Popular Mechanics, although those claims had us flying rather than clogging the highways.

Speaking of which, if everyone gives up transit to use the rented pod, don't we just add that many more trips to our highways, which are already over capacity? Who takes responsibility to keep the rental pods clean and maintained? In most of our major cities, what do our public transit vehicles look like?

I suspect the biggest issue will be who is responsible when the inevitable accident/fatality occurs. Is the "driver" responsible, when the driver wasn't actually driving? Or is the manufacturer responsible? If the latter, I expect we will never see wide spread autonomous vehicles. I expect all the manufacturers will be pleading with the feds to make sure they are not held accountable.

A valid comparison would be to look at private aviation. The liability costs and liability insurance costs are so high that few people can afford to buy a private plane anymore. I do note that the pundits claim such things as "Autonomous transport will be ubiquitous by the 2040s, if not sooner" (Consumer Reports, Oct 2016). Of course it is always easier to make predictions 24 years in advance, as who will remember who made which prediction later? While I also dislike our atrocious traffic, in general I still enjoy driving. I suspect most of you do also, or you wouldn't own a Sunbeam, or any other specialty car.

Autonomous cars are claimed to be safer, so I thought I would report on safety improvements that we now take for granted. Did you know that Volvo, a brand associated with safety for decades, was granted a patent for the three-point seatbelt in 1959? What did Volvo then do? They released the patent to all manufacturers to use. However, even seat belts were slow to be adopted, let alone three-point restraints. In the US, the auto industry finally agreed to install seat belt anchors in all cars in 1962. As I remember the first shoulder belts were installed in US cars in 1969 models.

The upper torso belt was installed on clips along the top of the window and was almost useless in use, so hardly anyone actually used the three-point restraint until the manufacturers started making this a combined one-piece unit.

Way back in 1950, Consumer Reports argued that a low vehicle was more stable than a high one. Yet, SUVs and higher riding cross-overs are the best-selling non-truck vehicles today.

When it comes to that special product that will make your current car last forever, or somehow make your special car have unbelievable power, hope springs eternal. If you added up all the modifications to your Tiger/Mustang/Camaro etc., do you now have 700 naturally aspirated horsepower? You could, if all the individual claims were anywhere near accurate.

Do you remember the STP demonstration unit on the counter at the local auto parts store? You would turn the handle and watch how the STP goop stuck to the gears where normal lubricating oil ran right off. Of course, no one thought to explain how all that thick goop was going to work when the gears were turning at 5000 rpm, instead of the 100 rpm on the counter demo. How many of us bought STP hoping to extend the life of our engine, or transmission?

True Grit icon John Wayne was touting Motaloy in 1954. Simply dropping 4 metal tabs of Motaloy in your gas tank was supposed to give you a ring and valve job while you drove. Guess what? Not one independent study could verify any such claims. Regardless, we still see claims all the time that some special product will solve all the problems. Seems the internet has just made this an even bigger problem, as it is so easy to make unfounded claims.

Clearly, the old adage "If it sounds too good to be true, then it probably is" is still appropriate. ***PTC***

A few months ago we featured an old photo pulled from the "Seattle Vintage" Facebook page which featured what we believe was Budd Bennion's Hillman Husky parked at Golden Gardens Park in Seattle in 1968. We recently found another Hillman photo on that same Facebook page. We don't who the owner was of this 'Mark' Hillman Minx, circa 1967 in front of the then-new White Front store at 130th & Aurora Ave N in Seattle's north end.

Secretary's Report

January 28, 2017

Event Planning Meeting at Budd Bennion's house in north Seattle. Meeting called to order by Dick Sanders. Attendees: 16

The club thanked Budd B. for hosting the planning meeting at his home.
Treasurer's Report: Susan Pray reported that our new checking account is with US Bank and that Budd B. is the second signer on the checking account.
We have $4k in checking and $8k in a CD that will expire in 2 months and will be rolled over at US Bank.

Old Business: none

New Business:
Jim Clark reported on the Western Washington All British Field Meet.
The LLC operating the WWABFM would like to know if PTC is going to buy ad space again in the show program. If so, the prices for ad space are the same as last year. There was discussion on the investment value of a club advertisement and it was determined that $350.00 would be good publicity for the club. A motion was made to spend up to $350.00 on an ad similar to the previous year's ad, for the 2017 WWABFM pamphlet. Motion passed by unanimous voice count

Five Rootes cars (Ed Erickson had already left) emerge from hibernation for January's event planning meeting.

For judging purposes, the WWABFM would also like to know the number of classes of cars the club will be entering. They require five cars to make up a class. It was decided that PTC would have three classes: Alpine, Tiger and an "other" or "unique group". This will let the organizers know how many trophies are needed.

Dick S. reported that the club currently charges Canadian members $35 for yearly dues, while the US dues are $32.00. Nearly everyone receives the newsletter electronically – no longer a need for a difference in dues to cover extra Canadian postage. A motion was made to reduce the Canadian dues to $32.00. Motion passed by unanimous voice count.
Dick S. then explained that before it can go into effect, club by-laws require that the motion be published in the Newsletter so that all members can vote on the change. The proposal will appear in the next Newsletter.

More New Business: Future club meetings: Dick S. listed a number of past events and tours the club had attended. This prepared the club meeting for planning events for 2017. Discussion followed, and a number of ideas were discussed. A tentative schedule was formed, which can be found in the **Club Calendar** listing of **Club Events.**

Other events were mentioned that may be listed in the Club Calendar as of general interest to our members:
*Shoreline, WA car show in July
*Tulip Rally Mount Vernon, WA – April 22
*West Coast Invasion – Cambria, CA – May 18
*Tigers United: Sacramento, CA – June 23-25
*Whidbey Island Car club – 1st Sat meetings
*Portland, OR Swap meet – April 7-9
*Spring opener at XXX Drive-in – May 14
*French and British car show at XXX Drive-in – May 24

Meeting was adjourned
minutes submitted by ***Jim Clark***

June 2016 drag racing action at Spokane Raceway. Paul Erzen of Post Falls, ID launches his Tiger.

photo courtesy of Mike Lepkowicz – MML Racing Photographs.

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