December 2018 / January 2019

Pacific Tiger Club Newsletter

ROOTES OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

BY BUDD BENNION

PTC Club members,

So it is time to think about what we as a club want to do next year, 2019. I am looking for ideas, where you would like to go what you would like to do. What was some of the fun things you liked in the past, what drives would you like to do. Everything is open for discussion.

On that point the organizing event meeting is at my home January 26th, 2019. Come and throw in your ideas or vote for someone's else's idea.

-Do you want to attend a car show?

-If so, how far are you willing to drive?

-Do you want to go to a PTC member's house for a short gathering?

-How about a potluck?

-Do you like the club swap meet?

Your ideas here:

(_____)

If you can't make the January meeting, email me a short note of your ideas. Doesn't have to be an exact event but tell me what you like to do with your Rootes-mobile.

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Renewing your membership?

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

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Annual Membership Dues: *$32.00 (US funds).*
Make checks payable to: Pacific Tiger Club.

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PTC Club Events

January 26 - PTC Planning Meeting

Saturday January 26, 2019 Budd Bennion will host our 2019 Event Planning Meeting, 10 AM. 14720 30th Ave NE Seattle 206-364-8478.

-February thru December? TBA!!

Treasurer's Report

Pacific Tiger Club
Statement of Receipts & Disbursements
Fiscal Year Ended September 30, 2018

INCOME			
	Bank Interest Earned	6.00	
	Membership Dues	2,275.00	2,281.00
EXPENSE			
	Advertising	(350.00)	
	AGM Gifts	(402.65)	
	Bank Fees	(4.00)	
	Club Annual Insurance	(485.00)	
	Donation to Rootes Archive UK	(301.49)	
	Meeting Location Fee	(50.00)	
	Meeting Snacks	(523.72)	
	Newsletter	(231.40)	
	Office Expenses	(60.48)	
	Postage for Newsletter	(56.67)	
	WA SOS Annual Filing Fee	(10.00)	(2,475.41)
TOTAL			(194.41)

Susan Pray – Treasurer

Brent Edinger submitted this and says:

"I found this old calendar picture years ago in a shed on my property."

There Goes the Neighborhood!

by Kevin Jewell

Judy and I moved to Redmond in 1973. I was very envious of our next-door neighbor who was driving a 1972 Red C3 (third-generation Corvette). Then the first gas crisis came in 1974 and he traded in the Vette for a Datsun 240Z. He soon had wheels and exhaust on the Z car and probably a few other items, but it just didn't have the torque that he liked, so he traded the Z in on a '75 Red C3. Although this era Vette had decent torque, the engine was ther emissions-strangled and the base engine that year was rated at only 165 hp. The only optional engine (L82) was rated at 205 hp. According to one source only about 6% of the buyers ordered a L82. We bought our Tiger in 1976, but to our Vette-owning neighbor the Tiger was just an old English sports car.

Judy Jewell with Kelly and Clark, a few years before that nice Hill family moved in down the street and offered to watch their kids. (photo courtesy of Judy Jewell)

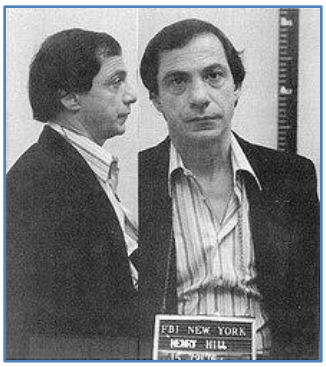
Now that I am talking about my car buff neighbors I will tell you about the family that lived directly across the street. He drove one of the smaller, early '70s German-built Mercury Capris, which had been nicely modified. Shortly after we moved in, I could see him in the garage working on the car. I walked over to introduce myself as a fellow gearhead. He politely shook my hand and without pause informed me that did not want to be friends, and to please leave him alone. Needless to say, that is what I did. We had almost no contact for the next year or so, and then one morning we discovered that his family of four had cleared out the house in the middle of the night and disappeared. The house sat empty for at least two years as the bank tried to resolve details. The neighbors all assumed that the gentlemen had been in the witness protection plan and was forced to make a sudden secret move.

Then in 1983 we built a house in a small (about 45 homes) neighborhood off Redmond-Woodinville Road overlooking King County's 60 Acre Park. The development was built on a large piece of property and an adjacent home had been granted on easement to drive through the property to reach their home. As the new neighborhood was developed the adjacent home retained the driveway easement that ultimately ran through the yards of two of the new homes. This would later cause huge issues in the neighborhood and with the police, as the home tenant would frequently barrel down the hill on this one lane easement at well over 60 mph next to the two homes. Although the neighborhood streets were private, this home was granted the right to use the neighborhood streets, but he continued to use the easement just to be difficult. When we first moved into our new house, the home tenants were reasonable neighbors. Their daughter, Gina, even sat with our children a couple of times. Gina was fairly young and a "babysitter in training" and her mother, Karen, would usually help out.

In the next couple of years, the father became more and more weird (from alcohol and drugs), and his actions more violent and threatening, in addition to obvious drug sales. Multiple calls to the Redmond Police were fruitless, and they would respond that their hands were tied. Things were brought to a head when the up-hill

neighbor blocked the easement with logs and the easement holder became rabid. At the time, I was president of the neighborhood HOA, and tried to bring the parties together and resolve the issue. It was not pretty.

That man was **Henry Hill** of mafia fame. His story was chronicled in the book "Wiseguy: Life in a Mafia Family." Martin Scorcese later created the movie "Goodfellas," based upon Hill's life. The Hill family later got tired of our community and moved to Seattle. Henry continued his drug dealing and in the early 1990's he and Karen were expelled from the witness protection program. Henry died a natural, although rather young, death in 2012. I was always amazed that he could be so brazen in the witness protection program and in later years, but he never suffered retribution by the mob.



Won't you be my neighbor?

So far in our current neighborhood we aren't aware of any "witness" neighbors. OK, so Hill didn't own a car of merit, but his history was probably similar to my Mercury Capri owner.

I was intrigued by the PTC Newsletter article about Spokane member Jerry Logan and his recent purchase of an Alpine race car. So, I did a little internet search. In 1961 and 1962, the factory sponsored three Sunbeams in the 12 hours of Sebring race. Sunbeam car #41 was a competitor in 1962. In this era Sebring still had the angled standing start ala Le Mans. In a photo of the start you can see seven C1 Corvettes starting near the front and starting about 19 through 21 are the three Seacrest Green Sunbeam Alpines.

I was intrigued by the story and did an internet search of the race results. The grid at Sebring would include full-out race cars such as Ferrari 250 TRI (1st overall), Chaparral/Chevrolet nished 6th) and multiple classes of slower cars. Racing often has strange results, as the #41 Sunbeam Alpine with only a 1.6 liter en

Circa 1990, *Goodfellas* star Ray Liotta (r) poses with the real-life mobster.

gine, finished 15th overall (third in Class GT1.6) and ahead of every one of the Corvettes. The best finish for a Corvette in Class GT +4.0, was 18th overall, and famed Don Yenko in his Corvette finished 19th.

I also thought it was interesting that four Pontiac Tempests had been entered in the race, including one to be driven by AJ Foyt, but none of the Tempests started. I suspect Pontiac pulled support of these Tempests at the last minute. In 1962 most Tempests were powered by a large, 3.2 liter four-cylinder that was basically the right cylinder bank of the Pontiac 389 ci engine. It was no surprise that this could be a very rough running engine. The top performance four-cylinder was rated at 155 hp. There were also a very few '62 Tempests that had the Buick built 3.5 liter aluminum V8. I could not find any indication whether the four Tempests were four or eight cylinder powered. The Pontiac Tempest was later a feature in the movie *My Cousin Vinny* when Marisa Tomei is on the witness stand trying to explain why the get-away car must have been a Tempest, as it was

"Do I know the firing order of a Sunbeam Tiger with a 302 engine? No, it's a trick question!"

the only GM compact (at the time) with an independent rear suspension.

Back to Sunbeam #41. The Little Sunbeam Alpine That Could proved once again that the race is not over until the checkered flag.

In other racing news, a recent interview with Nigel Mansel of Formula 1 fame had some interesting information. At the age of 40, after Mansel won the 1992 F1 championship, he flew to America and won the 1993 CART Indy Car Championship. He became the only driver to hold both open wheel racing titles at the same time. Although the Indy 500 has gotten some brickbats from the Europeans since it is a modified oval, compared the typical F1 road course, Mansel indicated that the Indy 500 was a course without comparison. In his words, you're averaging around 230 mph, so if you put a foot wrong, the barriers are right there next to you, unlike Formula 1 where you have got the runoffs." In discussing some of the issues facing Formula 1, the most striking message to me was his comment that the current top teams have annual budgets of about $700 million. Wow. Racing can be so expensive that racers sometimes need additional funds. Four-time American Le Mans series champion, and Level 5 Motorsports team owner, Scott Tucker was recently sentenced to almost 17 years in prison for racketeering crimes related to his payday lending business. Obviously, sometimes the source of those extra funds can be questionable.

[Kevin Jewell is a past president of PTC and an tive member since the late 1970s. He and Judy have hosted numerous club meetings, barbeques and holiday parties at the homes mentioned here]

Veep! Beep!

by Dick Sanders

Kevin Jewell sent along this heads-up for a Tiger sighting on a current TV show: "British program ***Unforgotten,*** Season 1, Episode 1 (we caught it on Amazon Prime). Look for a red Tiger with LAT hood and bright round CAT sticker in the right corner of the windshield. The Tiger was in a classic car showroom (at least for the episode). Judy got tired of me rewinding several times as I tried to get a better view of the car."

I've made my wife Hollie sit through similar silliness. A few weeks ago, Jim Leach alerted me of an upcoming episode of *Chips*. It too featured a Tiger, this time trying to outrun the *Chips* motorcycle cops in the opening scene of an episode. It ends with a trailered boat careening through a window into a business lobby. That was good for a dozen replays.

Another rewind classic is Arnold Schwartzeneger's *Commando*. This was an early, lower-budget effort by Arnold, and it shows in the Alpine chase scene. Arnold, driving the Alpine, collides repeatedly with the villain driving a yellow 911. Bumpers are crumpled and fall off, then straighten and reattach themselves. It's supposed to be a high-speed pursuit, but in some shots appears to be no more than 30mph. At the end of the chase, Arnold crashes the red Alpine straight into a pole doing at least 35mph – neither he nor passenger Rae Dong Chong wearing seatbelts – yet they're barely fazed. As the scene ends, Arnold and Rae drive away in the villain's 911, which had previously been rolled onto its driver's side. The final shot shows the 911 leaving, without a scratch. I almost wore out the buttons on the remote re-watching it.

Dr. No is another Alpine rewinder. Watch the hearse careen down the revine after chasing Sean Connery in his Alpine. The hearse turns into another Rootes product, a Humber SuperSnipe or Pullman, just before it explodes into flames. Cut! That's a wrap. ***PTC***

Driving Through Paradise

Story & photos by Jim Clark

The World of Speed Museum

When I was young I was pretty fast, and some would say a little reckless. These days, when I'm fishing, I can set that fish hook in seconds. I can get a joke, quick as a wink. And I can change the spark plugs in my Sunbeam in 40 minutes flat, give or take.

This fall I decided to see how fast and reckless others were in the 1960s and 70s. A good place to do this was at the World of Speed Museum located just south of Portland, Oregon. I drove down to their Wilsonville parking lot while pulling my fishing boat, as I was on my way to my favorite fishing lake in Oregon. I had no problem parking as there were several yellow school buses to park beside.

The first thing I noticed as I entered the main lobby was a lot of high school boys milling around the gift shop and the café area. I smiled when I saw the blueprint drawing of a

Shelby Cobra on the café /gift shop wall. Several of the high school kids thought it was an MGB. Cobras are a little faster than my Tiger. Already I was feeling slower, with my Sunbeam Tiger, than a museum gift shop.

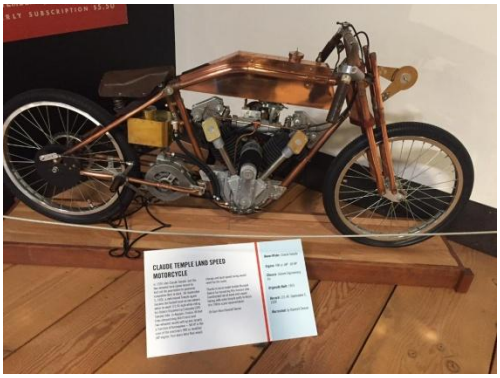
The first exhibit in the museum was made

up of half a dozen Porsches; not just any Porsches but racing Porsches. They were a part of the revolving exhibit at the museum that changes every six months or so. Among the racing Porsches was a very interesting 6-cylinder twin-turbo engine on a display stand.

Next to the Porsche engine was the actual Challenger I that Mickey Thompson drove to the land speed record of 406 mph. It was powered by four Pontiac engines. Whoa, I am not sure I can do 100 with my one engine Tiger, and live to tell about it. His record was soon

broken by Craig Breedlove's and Art Arfon's Bonneville Salt Flats jet engine cars. Pictures of their vehicles are on a long wall titled "Zero to 1000 mph."

Next to the sleek, streamlined jet cars was a very non-streamlined motorcycle. In 1926 the fastest man on two wheels was Claude Temple,who rode his OEC – Temple bike 121 mph with a 56 horsepower engine. Now there's a reckless man. The museum has a wood and



copper re-creation of Temple's non-aerodynamic bike.

In the middle of the museum are three racing simulators. My favorite was the Lola – Mercedes Indy car simulator, on a 2.3 mile course. For 10 bucks you can drive, and try to stay on the race course, for 12 minutes. The other simulators were a 1962 Lotus and a 1998 Ford NASCAR racing machine. I proved to myself that while I could not drive at 200 miles an

hour, neither could the high school kids. Lola also displayed a beautifully restored 2000 CanAm race car that was a crowd pleaser at the 2011 Laguna Seca races. The paint on the car was outstanding.

NASCAR was well represented by four cars on a wall tilted 31 degrees, like the real Daytona speedway. Attached to the wall was Junior Earnhardt's #8 Chevy, Cale Yarborough's #11 Oldsmobile and several others. Jeff Gordon's short track car, #24, was on display in the middle of the room. He called it "Buster" because at those tracks, drivers bump and push each other out of the way. There's a place you could be reckless and fast.

Dragsters were represented by a '62 Chevy

II named "Jungle Jim." I really like how they named cars in the old days. There were half a dozen 1960s era dragsters; most cars were from a local Oregon drag strip, all of them restored beautifully.

Boeing was even represented, not by airplanes, but by an unlimited hydroplane labeled the U-787, that ran a fast lap of 153.6 mph on Lake Washington at Seafair in 2009 with Chip Hanauer at the wheel. [Boeing was testing a new biofuel, containing 80% coconut oil, in the hydro's turbine engine – Ed.]

It's well worth stopping in to the World of Speed museum to see some terrific looking cars that are part of the record setting 60's and 70's. They may show their age, but they still look fast. If nothing else, the cars will remind you of how quick you used to be. ***PTC***

Would you buy a used Sunbeam from this man? William "Billy" Rootes (center) poses with Vice President Richard Nixon at a British trade show in New York in 1960. **(Dick Sanders collection)**

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