

SAH Journal



ISSUE 293
JULY / AUGUST 2018

\$5.00 US



HISTORY ON THE FIELD: THE GREENWICH CONCOURS D'ÉLEGANCE

From Rétromobile to Pebble Beach, there's History on the Field. This and future articles will continue to highlight certain examples at shows and concours—vehicles with automotive history appeal.

Here are examples seen at the 2018 Greenwich Concours d'Élégance. This year's show (May 31st–June 2nd) featured the cars of Briggs Cunningham. Of the 35 Cunninghams produced, 33 are known to survive; and—amazingly—all 33 surviving cars were present. The concours itself takes place over two days, featuring American cars on Saturday, and international cars on Sunday.

The concours uses display plates and placards with brief owner-provided histories. Here we utilize those sources, editorializing when necessary.

1934 Studebaker President Year Ahead Land Cruiser; owner: Bob and Mia Belling **[1]**: This is the only 1934 Land Cruiser known to exist in the U.S. The design was highly aerodynamic for its time. This is the first showing after a six-year restoration. It took over three years alone to recreate the interior upholstery!

1915 Dodge Brothers Five-Passenger Touring; owner: Parker & Gwen Ackley **[2]**: The Dodge Brothers Touring car was the primary “staff car” used by American Expeditionary Forces in France during WWI. This particular car was featured in the award winning documentary *All Things Bakelite*, as well as Masterpiece Theater's *The Chaperone*.

1966 Oldsmobile Toronado Fitch Phantom; owner: Kevin M. Fear **[3]**: There was no placard displayed when photographed. The following is sourced from hagerty.com: “One of the two Fitch Phantoms built and the only survivor,

the two-tone Phantom was Fitch's attempt to do to the luxurious new Bill Mitchell-designed Oldsmobile Toronado what he had done to the Corvair. The car was shipped from the dealer to his shop where the shocks, exhaust system, and brakes were upgraded, along with some interior and exterior modifications that included an 80,000-candlepower driving light. Horsepower was said to be up to 405 because of the low restriction exhaust, and Fitch was way ahead of his time in developing seats with motorized fans to blow cool air through them as well as modifying the shifter mechanism for the automatic transmission to make it





Here and at the top of the previous page are the surviving 33 Cunningshams C-3s, all with Vignale coachwork. There were other Cunningshams models there as well (e.g., C-1, C-2R, C-4R, C-5R, and C-6R) as well as "continuation" examples.

much more controllable manually by the driver. However, the mods added \$2,000 to the price of the already expensive \$4,600 Toronado (today that's like adding \$15,505 to \$35,660), and the market never developed."

1955 Fiat 1100 TV Pininfarina Coupe; owner: Gary A. Pezzella [4]: Fiat only made 127 of this model, of which only 10 had the "Panoramic" rear window. This one was shown at Villa d'Este and featured in *Automobilismo* magazine. The car was cosmetically restored in 2016. This car was awarded the "Honorary Chief Judges' Award" trophy.

1951 Moskvitch 400; owner: Walter Miller [5]: Making its show debut here at Greenwich, this diplomat in the 1990s. The Soviet Union captured the Opel Cadet factory in WWII, and this is the result. The Soviets built the Moskvitch as a "people's car."

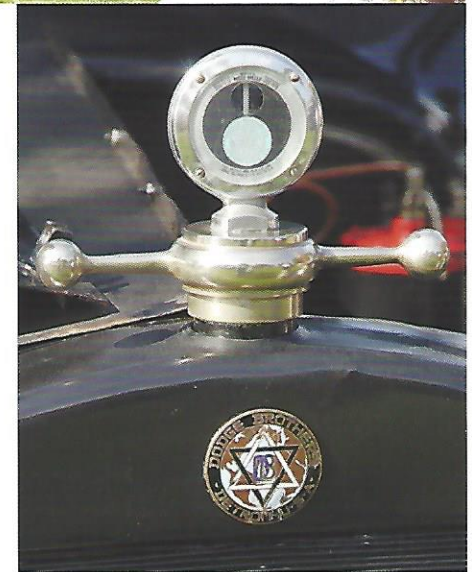
1922 Alfa Romeo RLTF; owner: Richard King [6]: There was no placard displayed when photographed. The following is sourced from conceptcarz.com: "The Alfa Romeo RL was produced from 1922 through 1927. It had a displacement size of 2.9-liters from its six-cylinder engine, that would continue to increase in size throughout the years, culminating with a 3.6-liter size and around 125 horsepower. There were four versions of the RL created, the Normale, Turismo, Sport, and RLTF (for Targa Florio). The RLTF was a purpose-built, racing version that was stripped of non-essential items, given a sleek design, and weighed about

half of the other versions. The engine was finely tuned and given seven main bearings and double carburetors. It was used in competition by such legendary

drivers as Ugo Sivocci, Enzo Ferrari, Antonio Ascari, and Giulio Masetti. One example driven by Sivocci won the 1923 Targa Florio race." This car was awarded



Parker & Gwen Ackley got into the "concours spirit" with dress to compliment their Dodge. Right: a Boyce Moto-Meter monitors coolant temperature, and features a Dodge logo. Below: judge Kit Foster interviews Mr. Ackley.





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The brochure cover announced it as "The Phantom by Fitch" followed by "Toronado Inspired." Note the Webasto-like top. Under the header of "The Toronado Phantom introduces features totally new to the automotive scene," it is referred to as the "Sliding scenic sun-roof."

The 1966 Oldsmobile Toronado Fitch Phantom on display looked to have a 1967 headlight surrounding panel. Above is the 1966 trim with its parallel grille and the "brows" at the top of the retractable lights. The change for 1967 (top) featured a squared grille pattern and the "brows" were deleted. The Sept. 1966 issue of *Popular Mechanics* featured a two-page article on the Fitch Phantom where the headlight "brows" are clearly visible on the picture of the car in the article.

the "Chairman's Choice - International" trophy.

1963 Volkswagen Type 34; owner: Christopher Turner [7]: The Type 34 is a rare VW in the U.S., as it was never imported here. The engine is a 1500 cc

air-cooled 4 with 45 hp. Styled by Ghia, the Type 34 was the most expensive Volkswagen sold in the 1960s until it was replaced by the VW-Porsche 914.

Be sure to peruse the Cunningham on the cover captioned on page 2.

—R. Verdés



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