

## WINTER 2009-2010 NEWSLETTER



Al Golden's 1947 Woodie at Hershey



KEYSTONE STATE CHAPTER of POCI

Founded 1975



# Hail to the Chief

As this year begins to wrap up, (Where did that year go?!!) we can look back at some of the highlights of 2009. Dick has been working with and upgrading our website. I understand pictures from this past year events are there. Our tour of the Eisenhower Farm had great weather and seemed to be a hit! GM on Display had decent weather and as always with good weather, had a great turnout. Our last Spring Meet to be held at Northwood Auto Group in New Bloomfield was a disappointment. We had good weather and some great cars including the first showing of Jim Martin's '26 coupe. Anyone who went to the Co-vention can attest to how great THAT was! Our membership meeting at Knoebels Amusement resort was GREAT and heavily attended. Das Awkscht Fescht was rained out on Sunday, only the second time since having this event. The Fall Meet was outstanding! We had great weather and some awesome cars. Our Fall Tour was great, but not heavily attended. Some of our membership discussed this and decided that it was missing some key ingredients, shopping and possibly alcohol. (Wine, Beer) Our annual Junkyard tour was at Les Auto Salvage in Honeybrook Pa. A band of 10 dedicated POCI'rs met at Clairs Family restaurant in Morgantown Pa. for the breakfast portion of the day then off to the muddy Les'. We even had a visiting POCI member from Virginia. Then of course the Dinner, ALWAYS a hit!

The backbone of any club, the newsletter, club flyer, whatever the title may be, is our communication to the membership. This information package keeps the membership informed of events going on in our club. It also includes info and pictures of events that some members may not have been able to attend. In our computer age there is still a few of us not using the internet. These individuals especially, depend on the newsletter to get the information for our club. Besides, it's a hard copy of our events and a great way to show potential club members a sample of our club!

Stephen Liebert

## Junk Yard Tour

Our weather on Friday, Nov. 26 started out misty and cloudy. While we had a great breakfast at Clairs' Family restaurant the weather got better and we adjourned to Les Auto Salvage. This was a smaller yard than we have visited recently, but he still had some jewels. He was full of the cash for clunkers cars and trucks, and some of us priced some parts from these rides. We found out that most of the Pontiacs I saw on my reconnaissance mission were off limits. They were being stored for a Pontiac enthusiast in Paradise Pa. There was a '70 Catalina on the "parts" side of the yard next to the pole building and under another car. It still had the disc brakes intact. Ralph found some trinkets from a '56 Pontiac sedan.

I always invite my MOPAR buddies and they found a treasure trove in 2 Road Runners of '68 vintage. One still had the original engine intact. I understand the pricing was fair on the older parts, although he seemed high with some of the clunker parts. We had a long haul POCI member come up from Northern Virginia, Craig Lawrence and his lovely wife Cheryl. Thanks for hiking up to visit our tour! Everyone seemed to have a good day slogging through the mud and squeezing between the cars and trucks, jammed into this yard.

by Stephen Liebert and Photos by Bill McIntosh

## THE FIRST RACE WAS CONCEIVED WHEN THE SECOND CAR WAS BUILT

On a rainy Saturday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, the KSC crew toured the Simeone Foundation Museum near the Philadelphia airport. WOW!!! The founder and head of the foundation, Dr. Fred Simeone, gave us a personally narrated and directed tour. Check out the museum website: [www.simeonemuseum.org](http://www.simeonemuseum.org)

The museum's theme is "Come Celebrate The 'Spirit of Competition'" and the focus is on "sporting cars" and sports car racing. You can see cars such as a 1909 American Underslung, a 1937 Supercharged Cord, a 1956 Jaguar D-Type, and a 1966 Corvette 427 Stingray. However, the BIG treat was seeing the 1916 Oakland Model 38 Speedster.



Some basic facts:

Chassis Number: L72676

Horsepower: 39

Displacement: 4-cylinder, 3.15 liter

Wheel Base: 112"

The Oakland claimed to be "altogether a comfortable, graceful, powerful car with the speed of a racer – a delight to the man who likes to drive FAST!"

Oakland was one of the very few post-World War I companies that marketed a vehicle for sporting purposes even though they were not involved in racing. But, as the ad says, they wanted a car that "makes it seem like a thing ALIVE, and fairly thrills you with its eagerness to GO."

Borrowing from the foundation's outstanding book, "The Spirit of Competition", the following is how the Foundation acquired the Oakland. Per Dr. Simeone, on "September 23, 2006 Bonham's auction of the Frank Cooke collection sported a '1916 Oakland Model 38 Speedster.' They did not really have any significant history, and in fact the only information I could find was gleaned from our collection's original brochure produced just for this car, a part which is reproduced here. Clearly the auction catalog writer was unaware of the provenance of this vehicle because the writer assumed that the body was not original. However, careful inspection and comparisons with the only detailed illustration of the car (in the brochure) showed that this was a remarkably original automobile. The leather, for instance, was intact. Speaking with Andrew Reilly of Bonham's at the time, convinced me that this was actually the original body and one with many undisturbed features, particularly the leather."

Six months later ANOTHER Speedster showed up at another auction with the auctioneer declaring that it "might be the only Oakland speedster in existence." This second car sold for over 4 times what Dr. Simeone paid for his.

Surprises abound. What a find. AND what a treat to tour the museum. Thank you Dr. Simeone for your vision!

Information taken from "The Spirit of Competition" with the permission of The Simeone Foundation Museum, Philadelphia, PA



Article by Dick Stover



**My Two 1960 Pontiacs – Part 1 of 3**  
**History and Background of the 1960 Pontiac**  
by Bill McIntosh

This is a three-part story about my small, two-car collection of 1960 Pontiacs. Before I tell our readers about these two particular cars, I have to start my tale with a review of the background and history of these wonderful cars and the forces within GM and Pontiac that brought them to market.

The history of Pontiac dates back to 1926 when the Oakland Motor Company, a division of General Motors, launched the Pontiac. Of course, the Oakland Motor Company was transformed into the Pontiac Motor Company in 1932 when the Oakland car was taken out of production. One year later, its name was changed to Pontiac Motor Division. The Pontiac Division was GM's attempt to sandwich in between Chevrolet and its more expensive brands a "slightly upscale" product. While sixes were available off and on in the early years, Pontiac's real claim to fame was offering an eight-cylinder engine at a relatively low price. Much of Pontiac's success was also the result of the leadership provided by Harry J. Klinger, a salesman's salesman, who took the helm as general manager of Pontiac in 1933.

Despite all of its success, the Pontiac had a distinct image in the marketplace as a "little old ladies" car – solid, well engineered and reliable – anything but a performance automobile. In spite of significant engineering advances in the mid-50s, its image was anything but exciting. So, in June of 1956, top management decided that Pontiac needed a new general manager. That general manager had the assignment of shaking up the Pontiac Division and adding excitement to the product and the brand. The man who got that job was Semon Emil ("Bunkie") Knudsen. He was the singular force to reshape Pontiac with a lasting influence until the demise of the brand as recently announced by GM. While I will mention a few of the famous stories of his transformation of Pontiac, it should be remembered that it was Bunkie that turned Pontiac into the number three brand in the industry (the industry, not just GM)!

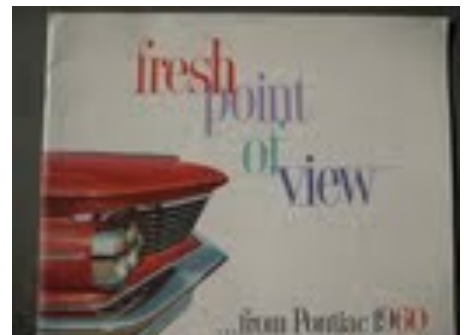
It all started in 1956, when Bunkie was appointed general manager. Having carefully analyzed the situation, Bunkie concluded that Pontiac's problem was image, and so he set out to change the image of the Division and the car with real determination. He realized that an image is closely related to the symbols. Many of Pontiac's old symbols had to be buried before he could change the image of the Division. He started by eliminating the most well-known image of the Pontiac – the silver streak – the chrome strips that ran down the hood and trunk of all Pontiac cars since 1935. Later, he eliminated the equally famous Indian-head hood ornament as another symbol of the past. With the symbols of the past, sedate image of Pontiac quickly being set aside, Bunkie had to set a new direction for the Division. Having thoughtfully decided, Bunkie set out to create an image for the company that can be summed up in one word: "performance."

Bunkie re-staffed Pontiac's major departments with new managers who could execute his vision of performance. Most importantly, he hired Pete Estes (actually Elliott M. Estes) to take the position of chief engineer at Pontiac. Estes would eventually become President of GM, but, while at Pontiac, he was the driving force behind the development of all aspects of engineering that would transform Pontiacs into high performance automobiles. In addition to understanding the importance of building high performance automobiles, Bunkie also understood that he had to show the public that these new Pontiacs were high performance cars. So, Bunkie broke with the gentleman's agreement in the industry to keep automobile manufacturers out of organized racing. While not the focus of this article, his efforts to demonstrate Pontiac performance on the track netted Pontiac three (3) NASCAR wins in 1958, one in 1959, six (6) in 1960 and thirty (30) in 1961! In the 1960 and 1961 seasons, sixteen (16) of the winners were 1960 Pontiacs!!

Skipping over three most interesting model years of 1956, 1957 and 1958, I have to spend a bit of time on the 1959 model year for two reasons. First and foremost, the 1959 Pontiac was the culmination of Bunkie Knudsen's drive to remake Pontiac into a performance automobile. While each year since his arrival as general manager he had directed changes in the car, it was the 1959 model that reflected his and his new staff's complete range of ideas. By 1959, the only thing left of the old Indian chief image was



*Continued on the next page*



The 1959 Pontiac was almost a complete departure from previous models – totally re-engineered from top to bottom. A complete new body design, it was the lowest, widest and longest Pontiac in history. Because of that, the engineers moved the front track out to 64 inches so the car did not look like it had a funny narrow track on this very wide body. Thus was born the first “wide-track Pontiac.” Engineering improvements and changes for 1959 were wide ranging and included:

- A larger displacement V8 engine, bringing it to 389 c.i. It was the longest running Pontiac engine in the history of the Division.
- A large range of engine horsepower ratings from the economy Tempest 420E at 215 h.p. to the top of the line Tempest 420A at 345 h.p., sporting three two barrel carburetors.
- New intake manifolds with passages of equal length and shape.
- New front suspension that included new lower control arms, larger diameter coil springs with lower ride rates and recalibrated shock absorbers.
- New Saginaw power steering with rotary valve and fail safe system.
- Revised braking system with heavier brake drums and new brake booster.
- Electric windshield wipers replaced the old vacuum system.

The 1959 Pontiac was a most successful model year as 382,000 cars were sold and Pontiac’s market share was increased to 6.33 %. Pontiac took forth place in sales behind Chevrolet, Ford and Plymouth. And that sets the stage for introduction of the 1960 Pontiac, the real star of this story.

It was October 15, 1959 when Pontiac built its 7,000,000<sup>th</sup> car – a 1960 Bonneville Vista – a car just like one of my two. The product planning staff had set out to break another sales record and lots of changes were in store for the 1960 model year. To begin with, Pontiac introduced the new Ventura line, a step up from the Catalina. That meant that Pontiac offered four model series: Catalina, Ventura, Star Chief and Bonneville. The chart below details the dizzying array of models:

**Pontiac Models for 1960**

<u>Series</u>	<u>Models</u>
Catalina	Sports Sedan (2-Door Hardtop w/ Pillar) 4-Door Sedan Sports Coupe (2-Door Hardtop w/o Pillar) Convertible Coupe Vista (4-Door Hardtop w/o Pillar) Safari Station Wagon 6-Passenger Safari Station Wagon 9-Passenger
Ventura	Sports Coupe (2-Door Hardtop w/o Pillar) Vista (4-Door Hardtop w/o Pillar)
Star Chief	Sports Sedan (2-Door Hardtop w/ Pillar) 4-Door Sedan Vista (4-Door Hardtop w/o Pillar)
Bonneville	Sports Coupe (2-Door Hardtop w/o Pillar) Convertible Coupe Vista (4-Door Hardtop w/o Pillar) Safari Station Wagon 6-Passenger



Bunkie Knudsen



*Continued on the next page*

While substantially all of the sheet metal was changed, the look of the 1960 was that of a 1959 model with a major face lift. Gone were the fins and the two-piece grill from 1959. The 1960 model brought a new distinctive one-piece grill (actually two separate castings), which many now call the “shark-nosed” grill. It appears that designers missed an important clue as to the importance of the split grill and its relationship to the “wide-track” Pontiac performance image. This would be rectified in 1961 as the split grill was brought back and for years to come thereafter.

All 1960 Catalina and Ventura models, as well as the Bonneville Safari wagons, were built on a 122-inch wheel base. Star Chief and Bonneville models sported the 124-inch wheel base. While appearing as a “re-done” 1959 model, the 1960 Pontiac had extensive engineering changes and improvements -- a total of 47, including body modifications. Major engineering improvements included:

- The new Equa-Flow cooling system including a new water pump.
- A redesigned Hydra-Matic transmission. Smaller and lighter, it allowed the hump on the floor to be one inch lower and two inches narrower.
- Revised rear suspension, including large rubber bushing for quieter ride.
- Shocks now had nylon-sleeved pistons and variable viscosity fluid.
- Power steering units were improved for better ease of service.

The 1960 model year offered Magi-Cruise – a device for maintaining the throttle at a fixed opening.

For the first time in 1960, Pontiac offered the “Daytona” package, the first super-duty chassis package sold by the Division. This gave those racing Pontiacs a car that could literally be taken from the showroom to the track. Earlier in this article, I mentioned the unparalleled success that the 1960 Pontiacs had on NASCAR tracks taking, 16 wins in the 1960 and 1961 seasons combined. These great cars also did very well on the drag strips around the county, as exemplified by Jim Wangers gaining fame with his winning NHRA championship races at Detroit Dragway. His car, which looked like a perfectly stock Catalina model (with the exception of tires and other legal modifications), reached 100 miles per hour before reaching the end of the quarter mile track!

Three basic engine configurations were offered for 1960, including the Tempest 425 w/ 2-BBL in both a 8.6:1 and 10.25:1 compression ratios, the Tempest 425 w/ 4-BBL in both 8.6:1 and 10.25:1 compression ratios and, finally, the Tempest 425 w/ Tri-Power (3 2-BBL) and the high compression heads with a ratio of 10.75:1. The lower compression ratio engines came equipped with standard transmissions, while the higher compression engines came with Hydra-Matic transmissions. Either transmission could be ordered with the Tri-Power set up.

The option and accessory list was as dizzying as the model line-up, with 84 different options available according to the salesman’s “Pocket Facts Book.” In addition, Pontiac offered Accessory Groups, grouping the most popular factory-installed accessory groups. Popular Accessory Groups included the “Basic Group”, “Lamp Group” and “Décor Group” the latter being offered on Catalina models only.

In my next article, I will discuss my first Pontiac acquisition, a 1960 Pontiac Bonneville Vista 4-door pillarless hardtop. Many of you have seen this car at our shows.

**Acknowledgements:** I could not have completed this article without the information provided in the book *Pontiac 1946-1978 – The Classic Postwar Years* by Jan P. Norbye and Jim Dunne. For those of you who don’t have the book, I strongly recommend that you get a copy from Motorbooks International. In addition, I used as sources many of the printed materials available in 1960 including the “Pocket Facts Book” and the “Color, Fabrics and Accessory Binder,” the latter used to help customers pick out exterior colors, interior appointments and accessories for their 1960 Pontiacs.

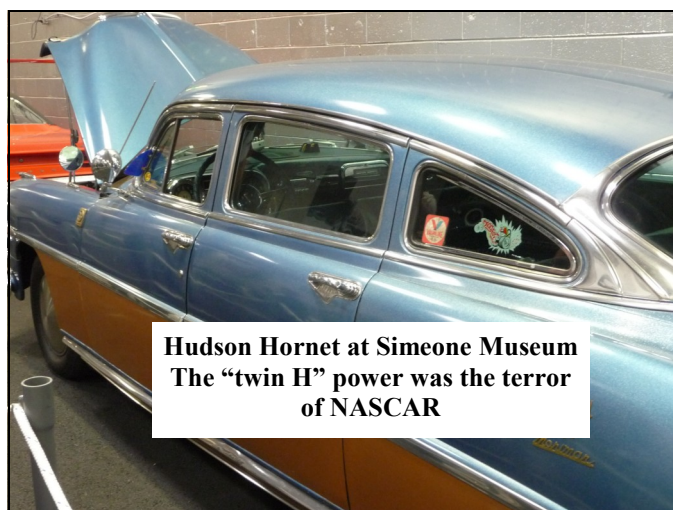
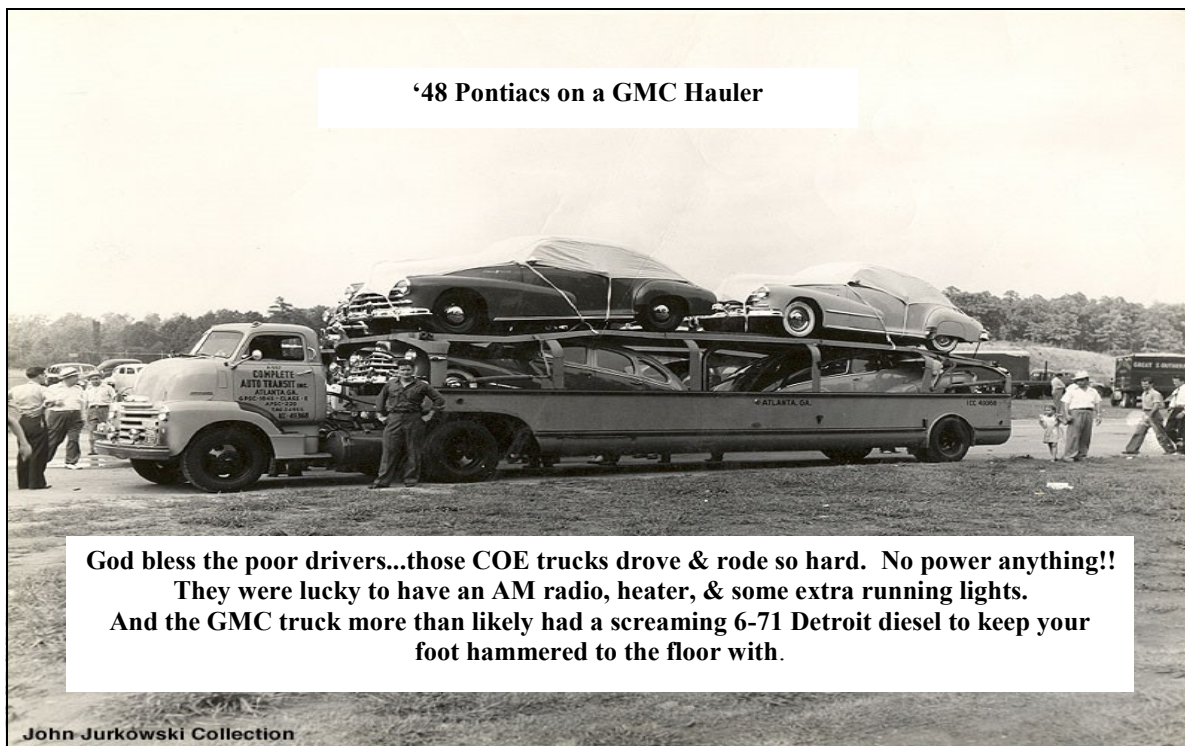
*Stay tuned for Part 2*

### **Upcoming Events:**

- **Jan. 10, 2010 SUNDAY: Board Meeting, 1pm, Bird-In-Hand Fire Company, Bird-In-Hand, PA; Contact Jim Martin at 717-393-3031**
- **March 2010, Spring Tour, TBD**
- **April 25, 2010 SUNDAY GM on DISPLAY at Macungie, PA**
- **May 15, 2010 SATURDAY Spring Meet at Freysinger in Mechanicburg. Joint meet with the Mid-Atlantic Fiero Owners Assn.**



# Odds and Ends



See all the photos by going to the club web site: [www.kscpoci.org](http://www.kscpoci.org) then select Photo Gallery and the link to the Simeon Museum trip

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- Director: Jeff Reich
- Chapter Historian: Bill Stephenson

### **Keystone State Chapter Membership Information**

For general information, contact Richard Stover at kscpoci-info@gmail.com



Annual Chapter dues are \$15.00 payable in **January, 2010**. You must be a member of POCI National FIRST before joining a chapter. Send dues payable to KSC-POCI, c/o Rick Harding; 314 Reinholds Rd.; Denver, PA 17517 or bring to Board Mtg.

For Pontiac-Oakland Club International information write: POCI; P.O. Box 9569; Bradenton, FL 34206; or call: 941-750-9234

Annual POCI dues are \$31.00 and include a monthly magazine.