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THE BULLETIN

January/March, 1981

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PROPOSED MEMBERS' MEET IN THE LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA AREA.

A couple of months ago member Dr. Stephen Jewell-Thomas, whilst on a visit to the U.K. called on our Hon. Secretary. During the course of conversation, Steve suggested that a members' meet in the Los Angeles, California area would be a good idea.

All those members living in that area should get in touch with Dr. Jewell-Thomas, C/o Products Research & Chemical Corpn., P.O.Box 1800, 5430 San Fernando Road, Glendale, Cal., 91203. (Telephone: 213:240:2060)

He would like them to offer him suggestions as to the form this should take, i.e. lunch, afternoon or evening meeting; also they may have some idea of a suitable venue.

We hope that members in the surrounding area will not delay in communicating with Steve with offers of support.

This is your chance to get together for an extremely convivial meeting to discuss the 'marque' Allard, and to meet some fellow members. ED.

Member Edgar Reed II writes us as follows:-

"...I received the October/December Bulletin with the Christmas card, and I was glad to see a picture of a K2 Allard winning a race!...

My K2 was recently involved in a parade down the main street of Worcester, (Mass.) so I decided to send you a picture of my car leading 29 other cars. Part of the parade consisted of 30 antique, classic and cars of interest. Before the parade began the cars were parked in a parking lot near the start of the parade. I was sitting in my Allard with the engine running, the clutch depressed, and the gear shift lever in low gear. When the word came to the line-up on the street, I accelerated through the parking lot and got out on the street first, so I could lead the other cars. I knew if my Allard was going to be involved with other cars it would have to be out front leading them. In the picture I have sent, you can see that is what I am doing...

I was very interested in reading in the July/September issue of The Bulletin about building a hot Cadillac engine. I am considering building an extra engine for my car.

Recently one of my sons restored a 1973 Jensen-Healey. When the car was finished my son told me he was sure the Jensen-Healey had more acceleration than the Allard. What went through my mind was the many times over the years that I have defended my Allard's ability to out-accelerate any other car. When our acceleration runs were over, my son said to me: 'The Allard's exhaust sounded so awesome that it slowed down my shifting'. That word 'awesome' describes the Cad-Allard perfectly. It is an awesome combination of car and engine..."

Very many thanks, Edgar, for the fine photo of the parade, with your Allard in the right place, as you say, in the leading position. ED. 475 9525

In a letter from member Don Milligan of Andover, Mass. we extract the following:-

"...I enjoyed reading Dean Butler's account of Cadillac modifications in the Bulletin... My original intent was to put a Chrysler Hemi in the M2X. However, the steering box (my M2X is right-hand drive) comes very close to the existing engine so I doubt if the Hemi will fit without tearing up the whole car. Thus a '56 Cad-Eldorado will be the most likely candidate. This too may require some adjustment. Dean's summary was of special interest. I occasionally talk with Dean, and did buy one of his clutch/flywheel assemblies. Just don't know how he finds the time to write as often as he does..."

Many thanks for letter, Don, and as you say, Dean's information on Cadillac motors was most interesting. Do let us know sometime, your progress and any problems, on fitting the Cad-Eldorado into the M2X. ED.

Our Hon. Secretary writes: I should like to take this opportunity of thanking all those members who wrote me during 1980, and especially those who have written items for the Bulletin. Here I must mention member Dean Butler of Cincinnati, Ohio, and his article on the building of a hot Cadillac motor. I wish to thank our President, Tom Lush for his assistance and help with technical queries and for attending the annual Concours at member Brian Sharp's home, whom we also thank. Also, thanks to Mr. Don Hudgins in his capacity of the Register's Mid-West U.S. correspondent, for his work in dealing with many questions from members and enthusiasts in his very wide area of central U.S.A. A special thank you to member John Patterson for his help in obtaining spare parts. As if by magic, John can literally produce these 'out-of-the-hat'!

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On a sad note, I mention the death of member Mr. Jean Davidson who campaigned J2 Cadillac Allard in races and speed hill-climbs in the U.S.A. in the early 1950's. A great character and a fearless driver. I was hoping that one of the Register's Christmas cards would show Jean in action. As it turned out this was not to be, but in 1977 I wrote him with a specific request. I still have his reply in my files, and it reads as follows: "I never kept a scrap book, and do not have any photos, but there must be some/automotive files of specialised magazines of the times, i.e. 1950-55. There was rather a mean one after Sebring 1950 with the caption 'At it again, Davidson, blitzing slower cars in a NO PASSING ZONE'. I was skimming by telegraph poles and slower cars with the sign 'NO PASSING ZONE' plainly visible in the picture. Some wanted to get me disqualified on that basis. I precisely came in behind Fred Wacker who came in first on his black J2 Cadillac. Mine was red! I was very honoured by you and your Committee offering me the position of joint-Vice-Presidency with Fred Wacker, but I have to decline....."

Referring to the photo taken in the NO PASSING ZONE, I'm wondering if any of our members who collect action pictures of Allard cars happens to possess one.

Many years ago Jean wrote an article giving a full account of his adventurous journey from Washington-Sebring, Fla. to compete in the first Sebring Six Hours race, and a re-issuing of this article would seem to be appropriate.

SEBRING, 1950. Part I. By the late J. Davidson.

All this happened thanks to General Curtiss Lemay, head of the Strategic Command(SAC) of the United States. Himself an Allard driver, he thought it would be interesting to run the British machines against whatever sportswear on 4 wheels America could assemble. So he loaned to the Sports Car Club of America, in December, 1950, the Strategic Command base of Sebring, Florida. Thus, the first Six Hours of Sebring.

On the starting line there were quite a number of Allards and three extra-hot ones:

1. Fred Wacker's 5.4 litre black Cadillac-Allard. Fred lived in Chicago but he rigged it up in Detroit with the help of Cad experts.

2. Erwin Goldschmidt's 5.4 litre red Cadillac-Allard, which had been put together in New York where he lived, by experts from Detroit Racing Equipment. A firm interested in speed and sports cars whose mechanics had also in former years tuned the terrifying boats of Gar Wood - the Miss America's - unbeatable on the Great Lakes. They sported three water-cooled V-12 airplane engines, in line, with Wood seated at the rear - the old dragster of the Great Lakes!

3. There was myself and myself and myself, in a 5.4 litre tomato coloured (it had its original English war-paint on and the British are known to be discreet) Cadillac Allard. Hubert Rout, former American Dirt Track ace had put it together. He was chief mechanic at Ford's in Washington, D.C. and contrived this racer exclusively between 8 p.m. and 1 a.m. We had a Cadillac engine, Carter dual carburettors, a Dodge truck clutch, a Ford gearbox (only three speeds) and a Ford rear axle.

In the opposition there were only four cars of any importance. A 5.4 litre Cadillac Healey, owned by Briggs Cunningham and driven by an able and crafty American veteran, Walters. In fact, this machine was the only one that could stick with us in the straights, but the Allards would drop it in the bends.

There were three Ferraris. A blue one belonging to Luigi Chinetti, who once, with Raymond Sommers, co-piloted a winning Alfa-Romeo at Le Mans. A red one belonging to a Kleenex millionaire from Chicago, Gentleman Jim Kimberley. Another red one belonging to a wealthy gentleman named Spears. They had small engines, 2.5 litre V-12's and during the first trial runs they were hopelessly out-accelerated by our "big bangers". Luigi Chinetti, God bless him, tried to make up for this deficiency before the race and in two different manners. He jumped once on the front fender of my coasting J2 after a test run and waved his hands frantically. I dismounted to see what the trouble was. He yelled: "Look, look, oil spewing at the hub, you break axle and kill yourself". "Interesting", I muttered. However, that same night, Hubert Rout checked a faulty felt and the hub spewed no more.

That same night, also, Luigi Chinetti was as busy as hell and probably more so. Single-handed, he was reboring in the shop of a local mechanic, his V-12 2.5 litre Ferrari into a 2.7 litre - in the hope the extra 200 cc. would give him a chance to stick by us.

At 7 a.m. the morning before the race, he had finished the grinding job and put the engine back together and into the car again! The race starting at 4 in the afternoon would end at 10 p.m., three hours under the Florida December sun and three hours at night, to test the lighting equipment of the high-fangled blunderbusses.

From 7 a.m. till the start, Luigi was busy breaking-in that freshly ground Italian steel, pouring oil into it with a five quart pitcher - the same that his crew used so lavishly during the race, later on. Luigi never had a chance to take a good look at the Florida palm trees.

So far, the Jaguars and the Porsches, of which there were quite a few, remain unmentioned merely because in those days the Porsches lacked power and the Jags lacked stamina - they never figured in that particular race at all, except at the pits.

All the potent machines had reached Sebring in special vans, surrounded by mechanics

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and spare parts. All, but mine. White House Correspondent for the French Press Service (AFP), I drove all the way from Washington, D.C. to Florida, in the J2. I expected to cover the 1,000 miles of open road rather reasonably, with a sharp eye for the police speed traps and a relatively light foot that would not push things over 90 mph - 60 was seldom tolerated by the various state authorities.

Things went smoothly till a straight patch of road in the neighbourhood of Danville, Virginia. Cruising pensively along the relatively free highway, at about 85 mph, I suddenly heard the powerful blast of a ship siren.

"Here come the cops" I said to myself, slowing down and pulling to the curb.

It was not the cops at all. Two kids of 18 or thereabout, in a black Mercury, made that terrific noise, somewhat of a combination airplane-motorcycle and crane!

Few incidents in the Sebring race, later on, were to prove as exciting!

"You must not get yourself worked up on account of that Mercury", I said to myself, "but why tag along?"

This soon levelled the Allard's revolution indicator, an electronic Sun Tach, made in California for airplanes, at a steady 105 miles per hour!

As good a chance as any to check the road-holding of this J2, which hardly had ever been over-extended - you could not open Allards up amid White House lawns! There was a mighty crosswind and the Mercury bobbed quite a bit. I just pressed the throttle down and was convinced: The British had an idea and Hubert Rout was a real mechanic - one of the best. The revs climbed steadily to 5,600 and the Allard spurted by the boys at well over 130 mph. The wind might have been a tall one and there might have been a favourable incline - "SUPERCHARGED" stood out in big golden letters on the rear of the black Merc.. They were supercharged, but I was airborne. Then, something on the highway, should not have been there at all. A fireman's ladder stretched across it like a gate and there was no fire - but behind the gate there was a squad of police cars. So, I let that throttle go and stepped gingerly on the brakes instead, to stop in the arms of angry policemen, who suddenly became quite tame and considerate. By now the black Merc. was thundering in. Its pace was more modest, but so were its brakes, and it caused an uproar when it slid to a stop into the ladder. Forgetting me completely, the cops hauled the two kids out. The driver was trembling like a youngster afflicted with Parkinson's disease, he waved his licence to the policemen, repeating all the while:

"This is my big sister's car, she is a regular nurse and I just tuned it a little so she could answer emergencies".

I don't know if this performance impressed them, but the police were understanding. They booked us for speeds in the neighbourhood of 100 mph - cost 100 dollars. If they had figured out I was doing 135 mph, this would have cost 135 dollars and I only carried 120. I would have spent the coming Sunday in the clink of Danville, Virginia, instead of on the strategic airport strips of Sebring. As it was, I had enough left for gas and to wire my Washington office for more.

After this impediment, I drove clear down to Sebring without further challenge, covering the 1,000 miles, including the Danville fracas, in less than 15 hours at about 70 mph average, seldom overshooting 100 mph, speed at which one can still try to figure out where the police force is located and what it has in mind. END OF PART I.

ADVERT.

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WANTED

PALM BEACH MARK 1. Condition immaterial. G. F. Dickson, "Pitfold", Cranley Road, Guildford, Surrey. ('phone Guildford 66128)

Member Jim Donick, of Dover, New Jersey, U.S.A. writes: "...At Mont St. Michel (Northern France) we met Mr. Rivers Fletcher, who was delightful company one evening. He mentioned your name before I did, and we talked Allards, Bentleys, M.G.'s and Triumphs..... I saw a cute tee-shirt tonite - "God save M.G... the Queen can look after herself"....."

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1981 ARE NOW DUE

THE ALLARD REGISTER

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