



The *Dagmar*

www.rmrlc.com

March 2009

ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE

CALLING ALL CARS! We have received a request for 6 convertibles to escort WWII veterans in the St. Patrick's Day Parade Saturday, March 14th.

Those of us who have participated in parade the last 3 years have found the new route through LODO to Union Depot to be a much better one than the old route that went up 17th and down Broadway. The crowd is in a Mardi Gras mood and enjoy our cars.

If you can volunteer your convertible, call me a 303-738-3981 ASAP. John Cullinan

16 Cars Signed Up for Crested Butte

This years Summer Tour will be to Crested Butte. We will be leaving for Crested Butte on Thursday, August 13th and returning Sunday, the 16th. We have 16 cars signed so far but there is room for more. The Cristiana Guesthaus is already filled up, so call our alternative lodging site, the Old Town Inn, to reserve a room. The rate should

be \$119. Their number is 888-349-6184.

Most of us will be leaving from Denver and taking Route 285 via Bailey, Fairplay, and Salida. We will stop for some shopping and lunch in Salida. Those coming in from Pueblo and Colorado will meet us in Salida. It is a scenic 90 minute drive from Salida to Crested Butte. The club members who hosted us when we visited Durango 2 years ago will be driving up from their beautiful town to join us in Crested Butte.

Friday morning we will caravan down to Gunnison to visit the car museum and the Pioneer Museum. Then we will have a nice lunch at a local Cajun restaurant in Gunnison, before driving over to see the Black Canyon of the Gunnison and the Curecanti Reservoir. We are also considering a pontoon boat ride on this beautiful reservoir before returning home to Crested Butte.

Saturday, we will have a list of activities from which the tour participants may choose: ghost town tour, artist gallery tours, shopping on historic Elk Avenue, and a quarry tour. Saturday night

we will have our traditional group dinner. On Sunday we will split up, with some returning to Denver as a group and others going on their own tours to other areas before returning home.

Please make sure you tell John Cullinan you are planning on joining the tour, if you have not already done so. Don't forget to call the Old Town Inn at 888-349-6184 to book your room. Happy Motoring.

Fill Her Up!

One of your editor's friends and his family had stopped for gasoline in Twizel, New Zealand recently when this beauty drove up and filled her tanks. How often do you see a 1912 Cadillac at the pump?





Director's Column
By John Serfling

I'm writing this column on February 24th. The temperature this morning is almost 60° with an expected high of 65°. You are reading this in early March, so it is probably 25° with 6 inches of snow on the ground (well maybe not this year). I'm definitely thinking of the spring things that I will need to do, while still planning on a lot more ski days. I was skiing yesterday in heavy snow all day long. What a difference 65 miles makes. I drove to Breckenridge in my '70 Eldorado. Yesterday was its 4th trip to the mountains this month. Rick complains about the amount of gas I must be using until I point out that I am getting about 2 mpg less than his SUV. I'm up to 13.5 mpg! I think that's pretty good considering that I don't slow down for the steep hills. I pass everybody else. I just can't get over how much torque that car has, even at 11,000 feet.

The arrival of spring-like

weather also reminds me of the work that needs done to our cars at this time of year. Those of you planning on driving in the St. Patrick's Day Parade better get busy. You need to wash and wax the old girl before the big day. There is maintenance to be performed, too, before you idle down the avenue for a couple of miles. My big maintenance issue is to figure out why the brakes on my '63 convertible don't release like they should. Is it an issue with the springs in the brakes or perhaps a wheel cylinder problem? Poor John Washburn will probably get to help me figure it out and fix it. For my money, the most value provided by our club lies in the friends who help me correct problems with my cars. If you haven't latched on to a few fellow members who know more about your car than you do, it is time you started making more friends. Most of us love being used in that capacity.

We continue to enjoy having our meetings at the Denver Elks Club. In February a few people joined us for dinner who had only attended the meeting portion during January. They had seen what fun we were having and how reasonably priced the meal was and just couldn't resist joining us. Now it's your turn. It's like having a member appreciation dinner every month. See you there on March 10th.

The previously mentioned mountain excursions in my Eldorado were not entirely without incident. When I turned the key to start the car at the end of a good ski day at Vail there was a definite hesi-

tation with the starter motor, but it did work. By the time I got home, the headlights were quite dim, but the dash lights were still bright and the blinkers still operated at a normal speed. I pulled into my garage, turned off the engine, and then immediately tried to start it again, but without success. Clearly I had charging issues. The next day I removed the alternator and took it to Tom Clark. He is the fellow who rebuilt my starter last winter. He is quick and excessively reasonable price. You should consider using him whenever you need something electrical rebuilt. Sure enough, the stator coil was burned up. After reinstalling the alternator, the battery still wasn't being charged. I suppose it would have helped if I had bothered to reconnect both wires to the positive terminal of the alternator instead of just one of them. My feeble excuse is that the missing wire was black and it was dark in the garage. Maybe I shouldn't mention that I have a good work light and I was using it. That would make me look kind of dumb (perhaps for a good reason). Amazingly, after connecting all of the wires, everything worked like it should and I love my car once again.



GM 100 Celebrated in South Africa *By Michael Brittan*

As readers are aware, 2008 marked the 100th anniversary of the founding of General Motors. Living as we do in the United States, we sometimes are inclined to think parochially of GM in terms of its US operations, but it did not take the company long to establish sales and manufacturing facilities in numerous countries around the world. For example, General Motors has, I believe, been operating in South Africa since the mid-1920's with an assembly/manufacturing plant at Port Elizabeth on the southern coast.

To mark the GM centenary in South Africa, a car show spotlighting all GM products was held in Johannesburg in May, 2008. The show was organized by the Piston Ring Club (www.pistonring.org.za), a large antique- and collector-car club which caters to all makes. A few select photographs of Cadillacs and other interesting GM South African products on display at this event are presented in Figures 1 – 5.

In the pre- and immediate post-WWII period, American cars were very popular in South Africa. GM's presence was dominated by Chevrolet, which enjoyed a great reputation in the country. I recall with vivid clarity the 1940 Chevrolet coupe owned by my father. He used this car during the war years as a member of a rideshare group of fellow travelers who made the 72-

mile roundtrip daily commute to Pretoria during the era of petrol (gas) rationing. His next car was a remarkable 1948 Chevrolet Stylemaster Town Sedan which went on to do well over 200,000 miles. In 1958 he acquired a Pontiac StratoChief, essentially a Canadian-sourced model with a Pontiac body, but powered by the venerable stovebolt inline 6 and other Chevrolet mechanicals.

Along with the "Chevs", as they were usually called, a modicum of Pontiacs, Oldsmobiles and Buicks were to be seen on South African roads of that era. Cadillacs were few and far between. Complementing this array were Vauxhalls from England, and Opels from Germany.

In subsequent years, as fuel became more expensive and the US dollar strengthened against the South African currency, larger American vehicles became more costly and a shift towards smaller cars sourced from Europe and elsewhere began. In the 1950's and 1960's, GM even added Australian Holdens to their product line built in Port Elizabeth. As South African manufacture of Holdens progressed, they were eventually marketed under the Chevrolet badge with minor trim changes.

The import of Corvairs to South Africa in 1960 represented a short-lived effort to trade on the revered Chevrolet name while serving also to maintain a US profile in the marketplace with a more compact and economical car. Nowadays, of course, the

South African market is dominated by Asian brands. These include some products such as the Korean Daewoo (Daewoo is now owned by GM), mildly redesigned and badge-engineered with the Chevrolet bowtie – a common global practice these days.

During the years when political sanctions were imposed on South Africa, GM sold its assets to a local company by the name of Delta Motor Corporation. Delta continued to import and build GM products (mainly Opel-based, along with Isuzu trucks) in Port Elizabeth, thereby indirectly maintaining a GM presence in the South African market. After a democratically-elected government took office in South Africa in 1994 with Nelson Mandela as President, GM returned to the country via a takeover of Delta. This has been followed by an expansion of GM brands on offer which now range from Hummer (locally manufactured) to Cadillac.

With the present crisis afflicting economies and motor industries around the globe, it could be sobering to see what form GM might take in the mid-2020's when the 100th anniversary of the start of GM's South African operation rolls around.

(see pictures following page)



A nicely turned-out 1948 Cadillac Series 62 Club Coupe at GM's 100th Anniversary car display in South Africa.

South African car fans ogle a 1959 Cadillac Series 62 convertible.



1960 Chevrolet Bel-Air in South African-manufactured right-hand-drive form at the GM centenary show.



Another period GM RHD South African product is this 1960 Pontiac Parisienne assembled from GM Canadian export components. To the left is a South African version of a Chevy El Camino, in essence a re-badged Australian Holden ute.



Not exactly your typical South African trailer queen - 1964 Cadillac Fleetwood 75 somewhat the worse for wear.

The Dagmar monthly newsletter of the Rocky Mountain Region **Cadillac and LaSalle Club**

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Monthly Meeting:

2nd Tuesday of each month at Elks Lodge at 2475 W. 26th Ave. in Denver at 7:30 PM. Dinner at 6 PM prior to the meeting for those who wish to join us.

The Dagmar:

The Dagmar is published monthly (except December) and is mailed First-Class to all RMRCLC members on the current roster. The Dagmar is copyright©2009 Rocky Mountain Region Cadillac and LaSalle Club.

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Deadline:

Is the 25th of each month.

Advertising:

Display ads: \$15.00 per issue, \$125.00 per year prepaid for a business-card-size ad. Larger sizes available at a discount. Contact the Editor for more information.

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First three months free for Club Members (RMRCLC), after that normal rates apply. \$20.00 for three consecutive issues prepaid for nonmembers. Cadillac and LaSalle related ads only; there is a 50-word limit on each ad. Classified ads also appear on our web site at:

Check out the RMRCLC Website at:

www.rmrclc.com

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Official List Of RMRCLC Sponsored Functions

Saturday, March 14th—St. Patrick's Day parade
June, 2009—Caravan to Cadillac Grand Nationals in Las Vegas\
Thursday, August 13 through August 17, driving tour to Crested Butte

Other Events

Wednesday April 1 through 5, Denver Auto Show

Saturday, April 11th—Miss Wheelchair Colorado show, 72nd All MVs, \$20/ veh; setup 10:00, show N-4 PM; at Westminster Senior Ctr, N on Federal fr I-70, W on 72nd Ave. to cor Hooker St. Call Fred Criswell at 303.393.8014

Saturday, June 20th - The 2009 Havana Cruise 3-9PM
Sunday, July 19th—Annual Pikes Peak Hill Climb

August 22-28, AACA/VMCCA Glidden Tour for pre-war vehicles (1942 and earlier)
Saturday, September 19th - The 2009 Colfax Avenue Cruise

Rocky Mountain Region

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