

The Blitz



Thunderhill 16.0
The Fantastic GoInEFI
Carlisle in 2025, and Beyond

Welcome to the Opel Motorsport Club

The Opel Motorsport Club is celebrating its 44th year of dedication to the preservation and appreciation of all German Opels, with special emphasis on models imported into the United States. We have members from all over the United States, Canada, and Europe. Membership benefits include subscription to this publication and invitations to club-sponsored events.



To Join OMC: Write to

OMC TREASURER
c/o Rick Graham
200 Black Pine Drive
Reno, NV 89511

Membership Dues:

We are not asking for membership fees at this time and we won't until we resume a regular publication schedule

Meetings:

The OMC meetings are as announced, at varying locations. Please consult the OMC Blitz calendar or the OMC website to find out who is hosting the next meeting or event.

The Blitz

The *Blitz* is the official publication of the Opel Motorsport Club (OMC). It is published four times a year. Circulation is limited to club members and prospective club members.

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President: Paul Kaman
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Treasurer: Rick Graham
Blitz Editor: Mike Meier
Web Master: Mike Meier

This Issue

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Jessa's GT, from East Texas.

Cover photo: This photo, by Mike Meier, has been dubbed "Opel All-nighter," because it was taken at around 2 AM while work on the car was being done getting ready for a race that would start in less than 48 hours.

Official Club Business

About This Issue

We haven't put out an issue of *The Blitz* since late 2022, so this seemed like a good time to do it

In this issue, we have two tales from Team Tinyvette, one being about a race, and the other about their return to Bonneville, sort of. Charles Goin contributed several articles, two of them dealing with the Carlisle show, and the other about a fuel injection system he has designed, produced, and raced. Alex Zaychenko tells us a little about his life with Bianca, his 1973 GT, Ronald Garchar updates us on his 1968 Kadett, and we hear from Jessa from East Texas.

One story, which is an old story, deals with a little kerfluffle from a few years back. It doesn't go into the kerfluffle itself so much as it lays out the plan for *The Blitz*, hatched back in 2014, which, hard to believe, was ten years ago.

Finally, there is the photo gallery which features very nice photographs of our Opels. Many of these photos have appeared in the publication before, sometimes on the cover, often in its pages, yet some are new, and some were submitted by our members.

Anyway, 116 pages (including covers) for a single issue representing a whole year of Opel-ing should keep people happy until the 2025 issue comes out.

A Note from the Editor

It had been almost two years since an issue of *The Blitz* came out. Without a new editor, to take my place, after 10

years on the job, publication ceased. But the itch was still there, so after consulting a few people we agreed that a single issue for the year 2024 would be a good thing, and this is it.

Beginning in August I put the word out and asked for articles, and photos, and the response was tepid. Clearly online forums were providing what people wanted, which is fine, but I still think there is a place for publications like this.

Our Website

Yes, we still have a website, and there you can:

- Find just about every issue of *The Blitz* going back to 2002, and download it.
- Search all *Blitzes* by author, topic, title, or other key words, to find relevant issues.
- Find related literature, such as posters and announcements from prior events.
- Join and update your contact information.
- View photos (slide shows) taken throughout the years, going back twenty years.
- View a selection of videos, several from races, and one from the 50th anniversary event.
- Find clubs, websites, books, and other related classic Opel resources.
- Contact the officers.

The URL is: www.OpelClub.com

I also have many originals of older issues. Contact me (inside of back cover) and I will send you a list of what I have. If ordering more than one or two cover the cost of postage and I'd be happy to send you copies of issues you want.

Reprints!

The Blitz

Full color, and the same high quality as the originals.

Issues currently available include 1999 and late 2012 to present, with additional issues coming soon.

Link: <http://www.magcloud.com/user/omc>



2025 Calender

January

- 3 - 17 Dakar Rally
 18 - 19 VARA's University, Driver's Training School at Buttonwillow Raceway, Buttonwillow, California

March

- 12 - 15 12 Hours of Sebring, Sebring, Florida
 22 - 23 Sears Pointless, The 24 Hours of Lemons, Sonoma Raceway

April

- 3 - 6 Charlotte Auto Fair, Charlotte Motor Speedway, North Carolina
 TBA Opel Fun Run, from Auburn to Opel GT Source, California

May

- 1 - 3 30th Opel GT Europatreffen, Le Mans, France
 2 - 4 Formula 1, Miami Grand Prix, Miami, Florida
 16 - 17 Carlisle Import & Performance Nationals, Carlisle, Pennsylvania
 17 - 18 VARA British Extravaganza at Buttonwillow
 26-June 7 Isle of Man
 23 - 25 Formula 1, Monaco Grand Prix, Circuit of Monte-Carlo, Monaco
 25 Indianapolis 500, Indianapolis International Raceway, Indianapolis, Indiana
 31-June 1 Days of Thunderhill 2025, 24 Hours of Lemons, Thunderhill Raceway, Willows, California

June

- TBA International Opel Festival and Picnic, Perris, California
 11 - 15 24 Hours of Le Mans, Le Mans, France
 15 German Car Day (Formerly Opels on the Lawn), Larz Anderson Museum, Brookline, Massachusetts. (The date is tentative.)
 19 - 22 24 Hours of the Nürburgring, Nürburgring, Germany
 23 - 26 Buick of America National Meet, Concord, NC
 23 Pikes Peak International Hill Climb, Pikes Peak, near Colorado Springs, Colorado
 27 - 29 Test & Tune at the Bonneville salt flats, Utah Salt Flat Racing Association.

July

- 12 Deutsche Classic, Oley Fairground, Oley, Pennsylvania
 16 - 19 The Maine Event, Loring AFB, Limestone, Maine

- 12 Deutsche Marques, at the Gilmore Car Museum, Hickory Corners, Michigan
 10 - 13 Goodwood Festival of Speed, Chichester, West Sussex, England

August

- TBA The Pacific NW Opel Meet, Tacoma, Washington
 9 - 18 Monterey Car Week, Monterey, California
 2 - 8 Speed Week, Bonneville Salt Flats (runs through September 2)
 3 - 6 The Harvest Event, Loring AFB, Limestone, Maine (runs through September 3)

September

- 11 - 18 International Route 66 Mother Road Festival, Springfield, Illinois
 19 - 21 Charlotte Auto Fair, Charlotte Motor Speedway, North Carolina
 5 - 8 World of Speed, Bonneville Salt Flats, Utah Salt Flats Racing Association
 11 - 18 Targa Newfoundland, St. John's and Clarenville, Newfoundland, Canada.
 27 - 28 Button Turrible, The 24 Hours of Lemons, Buttonwillow Raceway

October

- 8 - 12 Bathurst 1000, Mount Panorama Circuit in Bathurst, New South Wales, Australia.
 11 Deutsche Marques Octoberfest, Gilmore Car Museum, Hickory Corners, Michigan
 17 - 19 Formula 1, United States Grand Prix, Austin, Texas

November

- 4 - 7 SEMA Show, Las Vegas, Nevada
 8 - 9 VARA Big Bore Bash at Willow Springs, California
 10 - 16 Baja 1000, Ensenada, Baja Mexico
 22 - 23 Arse-Freeze-Apalooza, The 24 Hours of Lemons, Sonoma Raceway

December

- TBA The 25 Hours of Thunderhill, Thunderhill Raceway, Willows, California

VINTAGE AUTO RACING ASSOCIATION

VARA 2025

**JAN
4**

**ANNUAL MEETING
TOM MALLOY'S SHOP**

CONTACT VARA FOR MORE INFO

**JAN
5**

**CHAMPIONS OF 2024 CELEBRATION
HANGAR 21 FULLERTON AIRPORT**

**JAN
18-19**

**UNIVERSITY OF VARA
BUTTONWILLOW RACEWAY**



*HIGH PERFORMANCE
DRIVING SCHOOL*

**MAR.
29-30**

**HIGH DESERT CHALLENGE
WILLOW SPRINGS RACEWAY**



**ALL-JAPAN SHOOTOUT
& CAR SHOW**

**MAY
17-18**

**BRITISH EXTRAVAGANZA
BUTTONWILLOW RACEWAY**



*BRITISH
CAR SHOW
UNION JACK CHALLENGE*

**SEP.
13-14**

**CIRCUIT TRACK (NEW TRACK)
BUTTONWILLOW RACEWAY**



*ALL-GERMAN
MARQUE RACE*

**NOV.
8-9**

**BIG BORE BASH
WILLOW SPRINGS RACEWAY**



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FINALE!**

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2025

EVENT SCHEDULE



FEBRUARY

PINTS WITH THE PAST

Saturday, February 15

MAY

CORKS & CRAFTS TASTING EVENT

Saturday, May 10

VINTAGE BOAT & TRAVEL TRAILER RALLY

Saturday, May 10

GILMORE CAR MUSEUM GALA

Saturday, May 17

CCCA MUSEUM THE JAZZ EXPERIENCE

Fri, May 30 & Sat, May 31

JUNE

FRANKLIN AIR-COOLED GATHERING

Saturday, June 14

VOLVO & SAAB MEET

Saturday, June 14

GINGERMAN RACEWAY TRACK DAY

Thursday, June 19

REAL PERFORMANCE MEET-UP

Saturday, June 21

JULY

DEUSCHEMARQUES

Saturday, July 12

MAD DOGS & ENGLISHMEN

Sunday, July 13

JULY (cont.)

CELEBRATION OF BRASS

Fri, July 18 & Sat, July 19

BEST OF THE BOWTIES CORVETTE & CAMARO SHOW

Sunday, July 20

TRUCK AND TRACTOR SHOW

Saturday, July 26

AUGUST

RED BARN SPECTACULAR

Saturday, August 2

LINCOLN HOMECOMING WEEKEND

Fri, Aug 8 & Sat, Aug 9

RELIX RIOT

Fri, Aug 15 & Sat, Aug 16

PIERCE-ARROW PRE-75 ORPHAN SHOW

Sat, August 23

SEPTEMBER

VINTAGE MOTORCYCLE WEEKEND

Sat, Sept 13 & Sun, Sept 14

FORD MODEL A DAYS

Fri, Sept 19 & Sat, Sept 20

CADILLAC (ALL GM) FALL FESTIVAL

Fri, Sept 26 & Sat, Sept 27

OCTOBER

DEUSCHEMARQUES OKTOBERFEST

Saturday, October 11

FLAVORS OF FALL

Saturday, October 18

TRUNK OR TREAT

Wednesday, October 22

DECEMBER

WINTER WONDERLAND HOLIDAY EXPERIENCE

KEEP UP TO DATE AND LEARN MORE



North America's largest car museum!



6865 W Hickory Rd
Hickory Corners, MI 49060
(269) 671-5089

Bench Racing

Can't. Stop. Racing.

By Mike Meier

I can't. I really can't, and the fact that I am not doing it doesn't mean I've stopped. So what's the problem?

I have a car, a good car, and it is well known throughout the unconventional world of motorsports I race in. The car looks great, and it runs great, and it has a national following, and so what if the rest of the field has gotten faster and our chances of winning, even just our class, becomes less and less likely year by year. The car is fun to drive, and racing, well, is racing.

I also have a team, and a pretty solid one at that. Over the years I've had 23 different people take the wheel in the car, and I have a core group of smart, patient, and skillful drivers who are begging for more races. And heck, I almost had RallyBob take a seat in the car for our race last May. So who is next? Verstappen?

I've also had great support from the Opel community. Gil at Opel GT Source has been fantastic, while Charles Goin has locked onto my car as a great test-bed for his inventions, and a great marketing tool for those same inventions. And the rest of the community, on the forums and elsewhere, their interest in what my team and I are doing makes it all just that much better.

The reason I can't stop is, once I suit up my world changes, and after I get in the car, I am not in this world anymore. I am in Race Space. The rules there are different and the physics are too, not so much in kind, but in magnitude. Some have disappeared, while others are on your butt constantly. I need to adjust, mentally, and I don't have much time to do so.

There will be a measure of pain, actually, more like an unwelcome degree of discomfort with a measure of distress thrown in, neither of which I would tolerate in your street car. The belts are tight and the seat hard, but those are not the problem. It's the heat, and the noise, and the limited visibility afforded by my

helmet and window net. I've got 5 times more mirror than any street car does, and even that doesn't seem to be enough. And it's the traffic, the ever changing track conditions, the stress, and it's never having a moment to relax. It's everything.

My mission is simple, yet difficult: take the car out, wring every ounce of performance out of it that I can, then bring it back in still healthy enough that the next driver can do the same. I have been allocated two hours to do my job.

My crew is crawling all over me, getting me strapped in and hooked up, while I look straight down pit lane and down the track for as far as I can see. Turn one beacons, and turn two, just out of view, is waiting for me. Over the pit wall I hear other cars speeding by, then looking down track, I see them setting up for turn one, then disappearing around it. Very soon, that will be me.

Finally, I get a pat on the roof and a thumbs up, which I acknowledge. My crew is done, I am in, it's all mine now.

I get the signal that traffic behind me is clear, so I pull out and head down pit lane, while still staring down the track, to turn one. I stop for wrist band and final safety checks, then I get another pat on the roof and a wave. It's time. It's like that moment with a new lover, the moment when you know it is going to happen.

So what's the problem?



The view of turn 1 from the main building.

This German DVD - set is Codefree (R0) / Pal, German language with optional English subtitles.



This is the story of the Opel GT, a journey through five decades on the trail of Opel's first sports car using archive material, home movies and newly filmed interviews: Erhard Schnell, designer of the GT, Opel Classics' own Heinz Zettl as well as legendary race car driver Hans Herrmann recall the history of the GT's production back in the 1960s. German tuning experts Günther Irmischer and Gerry Lenk, Olympic champion Erhard Keller, Opel GT Source founder Gil Wesson and other passionate GT drivers talk about their experiences with the Opel GT.

Running time 59 minutes + 18 min. additional scenes. 8 page booklet, gallery, DVD comes in slipcase.

price: \$ 25.00 incl. worldwide shipping. ordered from Mike: eldoradofilm2@hotmail.com
eBay sale price slightly higher

The Opel Nationals are Dead. Long Live the Opel Nationals

By Charles Goin

As we all know this could either be the last OMC newsletter, or the start of a single online annual version. With the aging of the US Opel community the events are also slowly seeing less attendance.

Case in point, the "Nationals" over the last few years have gotten smaller and smaller, with the off years like the Richmond show being attended by a limited few. Given the work that goes into putting on the shows the National moniker is now being retired.

This Carlisle would have been OMC's 45th Annual celebration, but nothing was planned. So Carlisle's 29th will be filling in for it.

With that said, all the events will still go on, be it my RVA Oktoberfest in Richmond in late September, or Route 66 in Springfield, or the Autofair in Charlotte. But there won't be a National meet anymore.

With that said, Carlisle Events, has, for 29 years, hosted a variety of events, not only the Import show that we attend. It's a company that specializes in putting on the events. That means, for us, little work is needed by the community outside of getting awards, and finding a hotel.

So going forward, the defacto National Opel Meet will be the Opels@Carlisle Meet. As long as Carlisle Productions exists the event will go on. Just check www.carlisleevents.com for more info.

Also with that is the club hotel, we have been at this hotel now for 4 years, and it has served us well. So if you are reading this in 2030 know the Opels will gather in Carlisle in May.

Speaking of FUTURE events, it wont be long until Opels@Carlisle celebrates its 30th year. That event will be a big one I am sure. So don't forget to put the 2nd weekend of May of that year on your calendar for Opels@Carlisle.

OPELS @ CARLISLE
29th Anniversary

ALT OPEL-US

ANA

MAY 16th & 17th 2025

CARLISLE
IMPORT & PERFORMANCE
NATIONALS

Comfort Inn PA Turnpike - I-81

77 Shady Lane, Carlisle, PA, 17013, US

+1 (717) 440-9555

[Review All Hotel Details & Amenities](#)

Your Group Reservation Dates:



Check-in:

15

Thursday, May 15, 2025
3:00 PM

Check-out:

18

Sunday, May 18, 2025
12:00 PM

Group Name: Opel Motorsport 2025 - GROUP
Group Number: KO95S9

All rooms MUST be booked **before Friday, Apr 18, 2025**. After this date, the group room block is released to the general public and you will no longer have access to the special group rate.

ANA
30th
ANNIVERSARY

ALT OPEL-US

30 Years of Opels @ Carlisle
May 14th - May 16th 2026*

CARLISLE
IMPORT & PERFORMANCE
NATIONALS

* DATE TENTATIVE CONFIRM AT Carlisleevents.com

From Poland with Love

By Charles Goin

Some stories are best told from the beginning. Mine began almost a decade ago with a search for EFI parts to build a custom EFI system for the GT. I needed specific 2.4L fuel rails, and after exhausting my options, I found a single seller on eBay. Reaching out, I asked if he had any more, hoping for a bit of luck. His answer surprised me: “How many do you want?” Encouraged, I took a shot and asked if he had full 2.4L engines, expecting a polite no. Instead, he replied, “How many do you want?”

Finding late-model Opel CIH engines wasn't terribly difficult, but finding someone willing to ship them internationally was. So when he said he would ship, I asked about 5-speed transmissions, received the same answer, and requested photos, compression tests, and costs to pack for shipping. He agreed, and, taking a leap of faith, I ordered three of each.

Reflecting on it, I realize this was a butterfly moment that reshaped the entire course of my life. That simple transaction with Rav turned into a long-standing friendship, and since 2016 we have imported 10 crates from Poland, nearly 20 engines and transmissions, and much more. One year was motors; the other was transmissions. Then I got into the 2017-2020 Buick TourX (aka Opel Insignia B Wagon), and we started importing parts for converting it to the Opel Sports Tourer. The next one will have custom EFI

parts and Calibra parts, etc. etc.. Often, each year's crate has something unique based on what I was into that year.

Speaking of Calibras and other gray-market Opels, early in our business partnership, my 2005 Pontiac GTO caught Rav's interest, and he offered to trade me for his 1992 Opel Senator B Irmscher. So, we agreed to swap cars, and in 2018 I headed to Poland to meet him and pick up the Senator. That trip to Europe didn't end up being just a trade; it became a turning point. Not only did it open my horizons to what was possible, but it also deepened my connection to Europe and Rav.

Before meeting Rav, I had traveled Europe by train with my wife in 2015, which was enjoyable but also felt confining. When we returned in 2018 to meet with Rav and get the Senator, that trip changed everything. Driving my own car on European roads brought a new level of freedom. Rav, a professional mechanic, went over the car meticulously to ensure I wouldn't have any issues on the road trip, and like in the U.S., European countries give a 90-day grace period to register a new vehicle, with insurance carrying over. This setup made buying a car cheaper than renting, with the bonus of bringing it home. Since then, I've returned in 2021, 2022, and 2024 to bring back three Opel Calibras. The goal is to bring over a car a year and hopefully sell it to help pay for the trip.

These trips often take a different route and have a unique theme of some sort, just like the crates we ship. The



Me and my first Calibra at the Opel Museum.

memories and friendships I've built along the way are invaluable, and I owe a huge debt of gratitude to Rafal Tusien, my friend who has made so much of this possible. Rav has supported my vision and often gone above and beyond to help me turn my crazy Opel dreams into reality.

Roads Less Traveled – European Road Tripping in Your Own Car

After that trip to get the Senator, I realized I wanted to do that again. So, I had to find an excuse. That excuse manifested itself as a black 1994 Opel Calibra, a car I had been wanting since I first set eyes on them in a magazine in 1990.

That first Calibra was a sleek black Irmscher model with a V6 and a 5-speed manual transmission. Rav checked it out and then went over it with a fine-tooth comb. I had the motor and trans rebuilt, as well as all the maintenance done. Even though I planned to keep it, interest from buyers quickly led me to search for a second Calibra to resell. I soon found a gold 1996 V6 automatic model for a good deal and pulled the trigger on it to have an excuse to go back a third time. As I kind of liked the automatic in the Senator, and the Calibras had the same "Sport mode" setup, add to that the demand for the 5-speed was higher than an automatic, I sold the black one and kept the gold one.

Earlier this year, we found a blue 1992 base model with low

kilometers and in great shape, so I got it and recently took it on my fourth drive across Europe. I am auctioning it to help gauge the market for these cars and see if doing this more often might be viable.

As Jules Verne wrote: "It's really useful to travel if you want to see new things." and to quote Jennifer Niven: "We alternate choosing places to go, but we also have to be willing to go where the road takes us. This means the grand, the small, the bizarre, the poetic, the beautiful, the ugly, the surprising. Just like life." Those two sentiments are so true... and why these trips are so much more than just going and getting Opels.

My first Calibra trip took me from Poland to Pfarrkirchen to see an family friend of mine, then on to the Opel Museum in Germany, where another friend at Opel, Jens was so gracious and allowed me to really explore the museum like I had not been able to do in 2015. That day remains one of the best memories of my life, immersed in the rich history and design of the brand I had grown to love. I also made it a point to visit various Opel-themed art exhibitions around Germany and met with my other partner, Jef Boite, who was rebuilding my Getrag 5-speeds.

On my second trip, I drove from Poland to Pfarrkirchen, again like the first Calibra Trip, but then down south thru Switzerland and into Monaco to meet a Calibra friend of mine. After a side trip to Millau, I drove up and met partners in Belgium and the Netherlands. In Belgium, I



My second Calibra, at my happy place – Dom Zegarmistrza, in Bogatynia, Poland.

reconnected with Jef Boite, and together, we drove up to the Netherlands to meet with Peter Susselbeek. Rav joined us, and we picked up a range of parts, including windshields and customer orders for the U.S. What started as a personal passion project now had the potential to meet the demand of U.S. Opel owners and collectors.

On my most recent trip I went thru Russelshiem again, and meet with my old friend who I had known since the AOL area, who used to work at Opel Rolf Ewert, and was the one that got me into the Opel Museum in 2015. From there I went to northern Germany, where I met partners to pick up and discuss my GoinEFI kit that I had been developing for the Opel GT; a project rooted in my work with Bosch EFI systems sourced from Rav. From there I returned south to Milllau, France and meet some new friends with the French Opel Club as they planned the 2025 Opel GT International Meet in Le Mans, where I wanted to contribute.

Each trip had its challenges and its joys... and I look forward to many more. The more being the upcoming 31st annual Opel GT Europatreffen this upcoming May 1st thru 3rd.

Returning the favor, the 5th Adventure and the International Opel Meet

After all that Rav has done for me, I finally have a chance to repay him for his kindness. He's always wanted an Opel

GT, and I was able to find a good, rust-free GT in solid working order that needed to be gone over, and I'm currently restoring it for him. Once complete, I will reverse the process and ship it to the UK, ferry it to France, and bring it to Le Mans for the Opel GT meet, complete with my EFI system. From there, I'll drive it to Poland to hand it over, fulfilling a long-held dream of his and bringing our shared journey full circle.

Next year, I even envision a group of Opel enthusiasts from the U.S. joining us at the Opel GT International Meet in Le Mans, hosted by Entraide Opel GT (The French Opel GT Club). But the idea doesn't stop there. I picture a possible caravan from Le Mans to Rüsselsheim, with stops in Millau and Liechtenstein. The road trip would be a mix of scenic detours and those rare, unforgettable moments of camaraderie you only find on the open road. It's still just an idea, but I would love to have others join me and enjoy a road trip through Europe. But, that is all still to be decided.

But one thing I have missed being able to do is share these adventures with my Opel friends and I hope to change that in 2025. If anyone is interested in going to the Europatreffen, contact me at cdgoin@yahoo.com. I have found a beautiful chateau for us to congregate in and while the amount of rooms is limited the camaraderie will not be.

This past decade has been one of camaraderie, adventure, and a deepening passion for the Opel community. What started as a single eBay exchange grew into an unexpected



My third Calibra, at Opel Headquarters in Russelsheim, Germany.



The road less traveled, my detour through the Swiss Alps in 2022.

friendship that enriched my life beyond measure. As I look back, I realize that it's not just about Rav; it's about everyone who has been part of this journey. From Tom and Toby Thevenin at Opel Parts and Service, who invited me to my first Opel meet in Maryland, to friends I've known

for decades—Gil, Todd, Bob, Gary, Gordo, Harold, Steve H, Mike P, and newer friends like Rav, Mike M, Matt, Owen, and so many others. Each person has become a lifelong friend, sharing my passion, and I am honored to call them friends.



Rav and I in 2015, in Prague.

EUROPATREFFEN

Entraide
OPEL GT

2025



Contact :

lemans-2025@entraideopelgt.fr

Informations :

www.entraideopelgt.fr

Welcome to Le Mans

FRANCE

Friday May 2 and Saturday May 3, 2025

Tentative Program

- Visit of the 24 Hours circuit museum and technical rooms
- Driving on the mythical circuit Bugatti with your GT
- Activities : Opel GT parts sales and exchange - Concours d'elegance — Local drinks and food tasting
- Gala diner
- Ride with your GT, visit an old SNCF workshop and enjoy a trip in a vintage steam train
- Optional : Visit to the old Le Mans city (planned for Thursday May 1)



The Opel Ranch Meet-up

By Mike Meier

It seems to me there are three clusters of classic Opels in the US: those being the Los Angeles area, the Seattle area, and my back yard, locally known as the Opel Ranch. Well, most of the Opels here don't run, so let's just say the general Sacramento region instead, which covers a fairly large area, from Auburn to the east, at the base of the foothills, all the way to, well, the Opel Ranch, located on the western edge of the Sacramento Valley. I figure there are ten good, clean, running Opels in this region, and in the cool of an October morning half of them gathered at the Opel Ranch for coffee, a chat, and then lunch at the Road Trip Bar and Grill in the nearby tiny town of Capay.

Paul Camilleri organized this one, and in fact he is the power behind Opel activities in this region. He set up the Gold Country Opel GT's page on Facebook and we all use that to stay in touch.

Paul's GT is a very nice, yellow, '73. He bought it two years ago and we went through it together getting everything in ship shape. He gets it out to shows fairly often.

Alex Zaychenko's GT is the green '73. He's been working on it for years, steadily improving it. The story of his car is in a separate article in this issue.

Folks from Clear Lake drove down and stopped by. I can't recall their names. They were on their way to a family event in farther east of us and they headed on before we went to lunch.

Maria and Richard Ahrens, a couple we had not met before

came down from Lincoln with a nice, red, GT/J. I really liked the clean look of the car, its minimal trim, simple gas cap, and more. But then I would, because, next car.

That next car was the Tinyvette, a '69 that got rescued from an olive orchard 14 years ago and has been racing in the 24 Hours of Lemons ever since. I report on it's races in this publication, so you are probably familiar with the car, and are maybe even a little tired of hearing about it by now. But hey, send in your story and you just might hear fewer of mine.

We discussed future events, which of course would include the spring cruise to Opel GT Source, but in addition, we talked about regular quarterly events, and one of them to include a dinner. Ideally it would be held six months out from the Opel GT Source event.

I suggested that one of the quarterly events involve motorsports. Yes, we could all go to a race, but better, we could participate in something. For example, an auto-cross. We could compete as guests at one of the regional SCCA events. And if that does not satisfy one's craving for speed, how about a track day at Thunderhill or Sonoma? A number of clubs host run-what-you-brung events at these tracks. All one needs is a helmet, which you can borrow or rent, and a healthy car. We wouldn't be racing, but we would finally see what the car, and the driver, can do. There was definite interest in these and I am looking into them.

And of course we had a little photo shoot.





Opel Therapy

By Jessa Jorgensen

On May 1st of 2021 my dad, Rich, was diagnosed with Stage 4 adenocarcinoma, at 49 years of age. The doctors told him with treatments he should be able to make it another two years. That news flipped my whole world upside down. My dad was my best friend. He loved cars and the car community so much. We spent every Sunday of my childhood at a car show. He would walk me from car to car and tell me all about them. He was always so thrilled to share his vast knowledge with me. We bonded over our love for cars. I'll never take for granted the appreciation of the automotive world that he passed down to me.

After receiving the news of his cancer my dad decided he wanted to find a car for us to fix up together so that I could have something special after he was gone. Our biggest issue was the man was so indecisive. One week it was a Jensen Interceptor, and the next it was an Impala or a Nova. Despite his passion for American classics, he wanted something I would love too, and I'm a Euro gal. After a year of looking for something we could both love he eventually compromised and decided to search for an Opel GT. With the look and body of an American classic, but still being European, that car checked both our boxes.

At this point we had about a year left to find something and

fix it up. By then the radiation and chemotherapy started to take its toll on his mind and body, and he struggled to form thoughts and move around like he used to. I knew our time was slipping away, and with just six months left and I turned my focus to just spending our precious remaining time together. I let go of the idea of the car, it didn't matter anymore.

On May 1st of 2023, exactly two years after his diagnosis, he passed away. My love for cars left with him. As weeks went by I would look out at my own project cars in the driveway, and I started to resent the idea of building my car on my own. I've always had his help with my cars. About two months after he passed I decided I was done with my cars. I got on Marketplace to list my money pits and leave it all behind. I got on the site to start my listing, and I couldn't believe what I saw. THE car that we had been looking for, in perfect condition, was right there at the top of my page. It was the 1972 Opel GT 1900, 50k miles, all original everything, and only one state over. I called my mom, hoping she would talk me out of buying another car, but she instead traded in her truck for a bigger one, re-decked her trailer, and drove me out there the next weekend. After about a five hour drive we got to see the car, and we both broke down crying in this preacher's driveway. It was pristine, and my dad would have adored it, so we took it home.





That car reignited my love for cars, and since getting it we've participated in every local car show we could find. The stories people have about owning these cars in the past fill me with so much love and appreciation for the car. My dad would be so proud. He never got to see the car but I feel him with me every time I go for a drive in it. I've even made a lot of progress on my personal project cars with the help of my friends.

I love my Opel, and I found that for me, the best therapy is a beautiful car. Thank you mom for encouraging me and thank you Opel for healing my heart just enough for me to find my passion again. I miss you Dad, but I know you would be proud.

My 1968 Kadett Rallye

By Ronald Garchar

I bought this '68 Kadett Rallye brand new when I was a senior in high school. I wasn't even 18 yet, and I still have it. It was my first car. I worked while in high school as much as I could for 18 months to save up enough to buy a decent car instead of a junker. I put away over \$1,600 when my dad and I visited the local Buick dealer. There was a red GT and a gold and black Rallye in the showroom. I really wanted the GT until I saw the sticker, it was over \$3,200, so it was out of the question. I was a senior and graduation was approaching, so my dad made up the difference to buy the Rallye for my graduation present. The car cost us \$2,350 while the sticker read \$2,450. If a spouse purchased a second car from the dealership, they would take \$100 off the price. Since my dad was already a Buick owner, we had my mom purchase it under her name to get the discount. \$100 credit was worth the hassle back then. Later my mom gifted me the car when I turned 18. I was one of the few that was driving a brand new car right out of high school. More recently, when I retired a few years ago, I restored it with most of the original parts.

Now, it looks as if it's six months old. In the U.S., I may be the only original owner of a '68 Opel Kadett Rallye that still has it. It's over 56 years old now!!!! All the people I have talked to that have them are 2nd, 3rd or 4th owners. Original Rallye's have become very rare. I take the car out at least three or four times a month, and no matter where I go, the car gets a lot of attention since you almost never see them on the road anymore. When attending near-by car shows, I am almost always the only one that has an Opel. There are only two Opels in my area, and sadly my buddy who has the GT recently passed away. If you wish to read the long version of this story, look up *The Blitz* Vol. 39, issue 4, Oct.-Dec. 2019.

HAPPY OPELING !!!!



What Was I Thinking? I'll Blame COVID

By Charles Goin

I wasn't, is the short answer. Since COVID, I've been in a perpetual state of coming up with ideas and lacking the common sense to stop. Small ideas lead to other ideas, and for the life of me, I've forgotten half the genesis of these projects. What I do know is that they all evolved from one crazy idea to another as I was bored and stuck at home, like the rest of you. Some of these ideas don't even seem connected – like how looking for 2.4L fuel rails turns into 3D printing random parts, which turns into ordering windshields. If I knew how it all happened, maybe I could stop myself, but I digress.

The best place to start is after a few crates from Poland, where I imported a lot of motors, I was egged on by a certain SciFiGuy (Gordon Payton) and others to build them. So, I did. But beyond engines and transmissions, Rav sent me 2.3L Diesel cranks, which could be modified to fit a 1.9L block and make, with the right parts, 2.5L motors. So I had the bright idea to design a custom rod to make the job easier; effectively using Ford 351 rod bearings, a 2.3L diesel crank, and LS pistons. It was supposed to be cheaper and easier. (Spoiler alert: it wasn't easier and not much cheaper.)

After committing to designing them, I found a company in China to make the rods. After some trial and error, I finally

had a 2.5L motor running. That motor is now in the Tinyvette. The fork in the road for other projects to come, was that this project introduced me to Alibaba, a way to find manufacturers to make things no longer available or affordable in small quantities in the U.S. (Foreshadowing, anyone?)

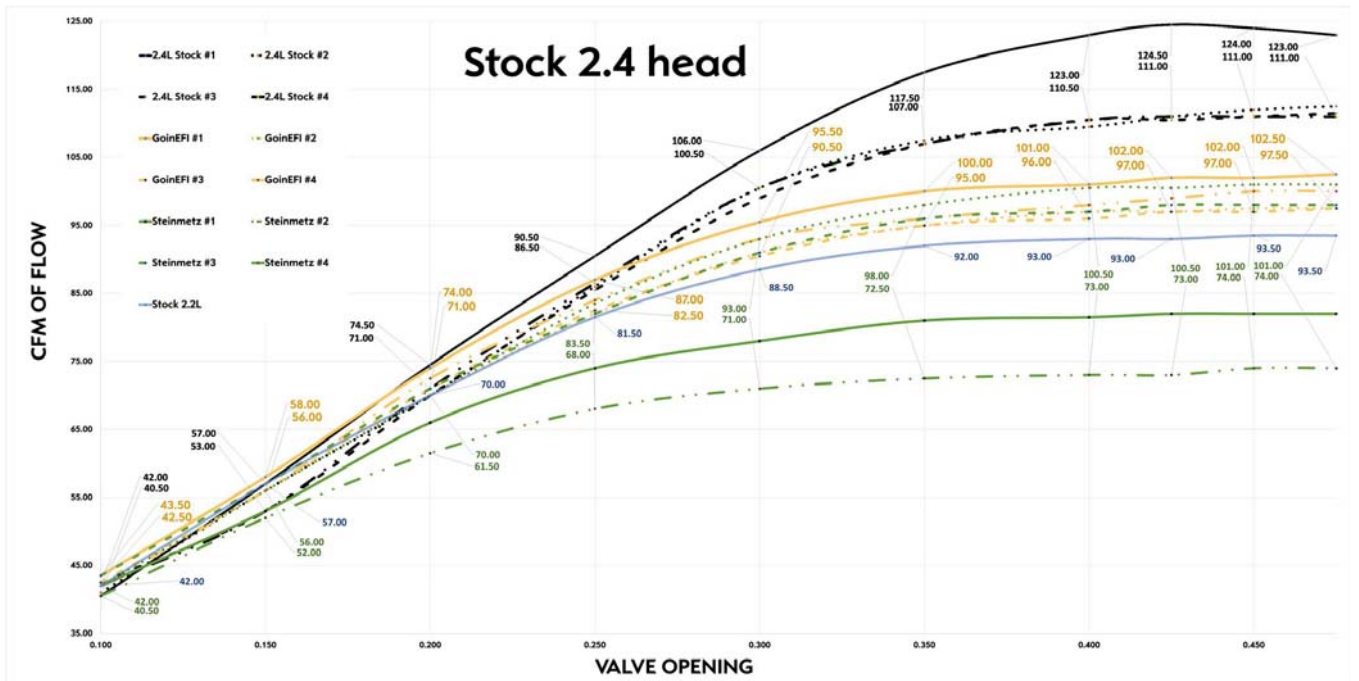
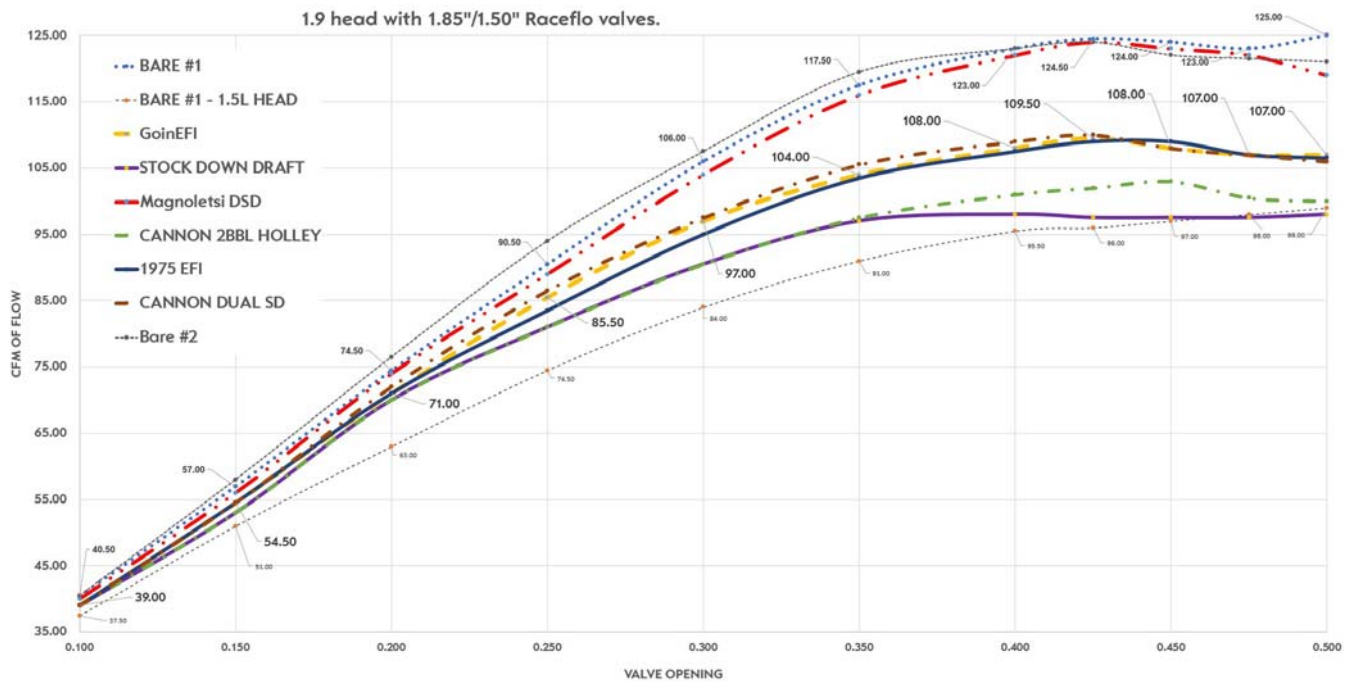
Around this time, my son got me a 3D printer, and COVID entered the picture. That's when I came up with the idea of EFI parts for the CIH. The big motors I was making needed EFI, but cobbled-together systems from older Jetronic and Motronic systems weren't cutting it. Hard-to-find parts led me to design an intake that could flow as well as side drafts, fit under the hood of the GT with no body modifications, and work with an aftermarket computer. Unsurprisingly, Gordon Payton egged me on to build one for him too. So, I blame him as much as I blame COVID or my son.

So after designing the intake I sent it to Bob Legere for flow testing based on the 3D model and was surprised at the results. They were better than I had dared hope for. So, I went on to the next phase.

Some components, such as the throttle body, were hard to find, but after some work and searching Alibaba, I found a solution. I even got a prototype made, and it looked promising. The hardest part, though, was the trigger wheel. I thought using a VW distributor as a trigger was a clean and excellent solution, not just something like a Pertronix



The first completed kit.



The results from flow-bench testing shows that in a 1.9L head flow is significantly better than the stock downdraft and very similar to Canon dual side-draught. On a 2.4L head flow is significantly better than a stock 2.2L, similar to a Steinmetz head, but somewhat below that of a 2.4L head.

but a complete 12-1 wheel. A year and a lot of wasted money later, I gave up. I'd gotten overconfident, wanting to make a complete kit down to the computer. While I did make the computer, the distributor project piled up, and a year later, I still didn't have a finished kit.

Meanwhile, Gordon was experimenting with the MaxxECU and his own attempts at EFI, with similarly poor results. Around this time, I finally got the welded prototype from China. It was okay but not what I wanted, too expensive and took too long to get (more foreshadowing). Eventually, I stuck with the Motronic crank wheel. It was rare and hard



My EFI system in Gordon's GT (top) and my son's Manta (bottom).

to find, but I had enough of them. With that, I got my EFI system running on my son's Manta.

During this period, I found a guy in Germany to cast the intakes. After a lot of back and forth, we developed a universal solution, and he promised to deliver in a few months. (Spoiler alert: he didn't.) Over a year later, the castings were done, but they still needed machining. That "wouldn't take long" (you know what's coming). A year later, no progress. I ended up sending some castings to my machine shop to finish.

More Info:

<https://www.facebook.com/GoInManta/>

Just before Carlisle this year, I swapped the EFI onto the cast manifold, got the Manta to the event, and thought I was close to the finish line. Not quite. Still waiting on machining, I went to Europe, picked up my parts, and even brought some back with me. Long story short (too late, I know) the system is running on both a high-port head (Gordon's GT) and a low-port head (my son's Manta). Dynoing will commence soon, but before I can deliver any

more I'm still waiting on that machining to be done. Hopefully, it'll be done "next week."

But wait; there's more.

The EFI project's genesis is a blur, but another blur during this time was windshields. It started with Suselbeek, who had parts (mainly windshields) no one in the U.S. had. I had a crate coming from Poland and decided to include windshields and other parts Suselbeek had a hard time shipping for US Customers. Demand was high. When I tried to order another batch, I was met with silence. U.S. manufacturers quoted massive up-front mold costs and minimum orders of 1,000. Since I was already using Alibaba for EFI, I asked a couple of companies if they had GT molds. They didn't, but one offered to make them if I sent a windshield. Surprisingly, the numbers looked good. So, I ordered 100, which turned into 88 after trial and error with shipping. I sold out in four months.

I ordered a second batch and still have 40 left. Given how slowly they're selling, this will be the last batch. I considered doing Manta and Kadett B windshields but didn't see enough interest to justify the cost. If interested, they're \$749, including shipping and handling to the lower 48. Pickup price is \$349.

Link:

<https://www.paypal.com/instantcommerce/checkout/2PT7QZQLW7E3Q>

So many more projects and stories over the last eight years, but they'll have to wait.



OMC Drama from 2014

By Mike Meier

Ten years ago, almost to the day, something of a kerfluffle having to do with, well, everything OMC, and *The Blitz*, and me and a certain other person, who shall go nameless, because that's how he prefers it, was unwinding. The interesting thing about it was peoples' responses to my initial post laying out my vision and my approach to producing this magazine. The guidelines I laid out back then are still being followed, and the issue you are now reading is an example. Anyway, I thought you might find it interesting and worthy of further comment.

If you prefer, you can find and read the original by searching the forums for "OMC versus everyone else."

Dec 17, 2014

m610 (me)

A little over a week ago while Internet-searching for something for a *Blitz* article I came across this lovely thread in these very forums:

Link: <http://www.opelgt.com/forums/opel-motorsport-club/21674-use-omc-material.html?daysprune=-1>

I was a little surprised I had not seen it before but then 2009 was a little before I contracted opelitis.

The thread is initially about copyright issues but it eventually gets to the issue of the vibe OMC was emitting back then, but hopefully not now. Phrases such as "secret society" and "why I don't have anything to do with OMC" struck me most, and made me grimace. It seems there was going to be more uphill to my job as editor of *The Blitz* than I had anticipated.

When I became the editor of *The Blitz* (Acting editor actually. I was never elected to this office, but then again, technically, OMC has no officers, their one-year terms having expired a several years ago.) I guess I had no idea what I was getting into. I knew it would be work, but what I didn't know was how close to dead the club seemed to be. I've noted these things in *The Blitz* and from what I've learned I've tried to find a path that would bring a little life back to the club. The one thing I had not figured on was a negative perception, often a strong one, towards OMC. That thread I mentioned above brought that to my attention in a way that made me a little sick to my stomach. And the

weird thing is, if I had read this several months ago I would have thought it was an old, passing issue, unfortunate history. Instead, I now find myself battling the same very restrictive, possessive, selfish, legalistic, perhaps even paranoid outlook that fueled that argument 5+ years ago.

Rather than describing any of what is going on between me and my critic (You can read about that in the past couple issues of *The Blitz*.) I would like to note a few changes, ideas, and things I am trying to do. In other words, moving forward.

Copyright Policy

The generic "all mine" copyright policy of the past is gone, replaced with a policy saying that all we want is to be able to use material submitted for OMC purposes, in perpetuity. That means OMC projects, CD-ROMs, posters, promos, reprints, etc. My rationale was this, we don't want to own your stuff, we just want to be able use it in *The Blitz*. The Opel world is too small to be locking up good Opel content in frankly, a place few people know exists. If some other outlet wants your story feel free to send it in. (You'll have to inform them that the story has been published already.) Get all of the mileage you can out of it. That can only be good for all of us. By contrast, according to the previous agreement, OMC would own your article, your photos, and your illustrations. That means that favorite photo you took of your car on the Appalachian Trail back in 2002, if you sent it in, OMC would own it. You can't use it for personal purposes anymore, without express permission. That's not how I see things.

On the other hand, if you do want to use an article or illustration from *The Blitz*, one that you didn't create, for any major commercial purposes, we expect to be asked. It's the right thing to do and if there is a pot of gold involved I'd think OMC is owed a bit of it. I've talked to a number of music and photo pros and their attitude was, as long as it isn't for a beer commercial or anything involving real money, go ahead and use it for hobby/enthusiasts/club projects. They are not worried about every little leak of copyrighted material, and I am sure they even realize that such leaks are good for business. Advice I read in a book recently said something along the lines of "Write something people would want to steal, then don't fret about it if a bunch of people steal it. The word will get out, your name will get out, and you actually end up selling more books."

Two other quick items on the issue of copyright:

1. I will always credit a photo or article or anything I use to their creators. It's not only the right thing to do doing this helps build connections and community.

- I will always get permission to use other people's articles and photos. For recent issues I have contacted the editors at Opel-Post, The Telegraph, and others and so far no one has turned me down. On the other hand, scan through past issues of *The Blitz* and you'll find many pirated articles, usually with no attribution given. The excuse I was given was "fair use" and we produce a "news" letter, so we are a news outlet. Yeah, right. No more.

But copyrights aside, there is a bottom line to all this. It takes a lot of work to put *The Blitz* together and it's not cheap printing and distributing it. Call it \$800-\$1100 per issue since we went color. In order to be able to pay the bills we need paying members, and that means to some extent we need to be able to withhold the fruits of our labors from people who are not helping to support the effort. At present I think OMC has been too restrictive and I'd like to see it opened up more, for instance, selling a CD-ROM containing all back issues, or making issues over a year old available free for download, or some variation on these ideas. I hope this is something we can discuss at an upcoming meeting, perhaps the Nationals next August. But whatever we do we have to get past this "secret society" problem.

Relationship with OpelGT.com

It took me a while to get my bearings in this job and develop a sense of what the relationship between OMC and this site was. Were we friends? Were we competing? I can clearly see that this site could easily replace OMC in nearly every way except putting out well-research articles, and even that is not beyond this site's capabilities. It has many advantages over OMC, such as being free, active, and on the Internet where people from all over the world can find it. In addition, it seems that what were once OMC chapters are now groups here. In many ways this site has already replaced OMC.

Long ago *Blitz* editor John Seaman noted how OpelGT.com was a much better source for tech-tips, and he was saying this in response to people leaving the club due to the lack of tech-tips in *The Blitz*, and John was constantly begging for tech tips and other articles. I figured that out a while ago and have since focused more on the life-style and pride-of-ownership aspects of the Opeler's life. Of course that too is being covered in posts on this forum so I have to do a good job and produce something that is at least worth chopping down a tree or two.

The way I see it, OMC and OpelGT.com complement each other. OpelGT.com does a far better job than OMC ever could in terms of bringing Opel owners together, providing timely advice specific to a person's needs, and creating a

supportive community, with a few exceptions, as noted in the thread in the link above.

OMC puts out *The Blitz*, an attractive publication full of original material, much of it written by myself, and maybe a little heavy on Tinyvette articles, but more and more others are submitting their own stories and photos. (My strategy, lead by example.) I feel there is something more substantial in our publication, especially the print version, which people are telling me are "keepers". There's a permanence in it, an archival quality, and where threads on the forums tend to be chatty (and fun) and meander, the more formal article-style of *Blitz* content feels, well, satisfying.

I am trying to make *The Blitz*, and therefore OMC, less us against everyone else, no more a secret society that is overly protective of it's tiny treasures, including treasures it stole. Yet I personally am up against the same toxic ghost that showed itself in that 2009 thread. I am being criticized for dealing with GoinManta, for giving space to "the enemy" that is OA, for going color and increasing costs, for jeopardizing everything and possibly harming many by publishing a roster, disregarding the fact that the membership packet includes a full roster and regular membership reports do the same in parts. I am being accused of cheating members out of issues promised, while disregarding the fact that I deliver more in page-count alone in 4 issues than past editors did in 6. It sure makes that little copyright squabble seem trivial in comparison, but that's what we've got and somehow we are going to get that behind us. The classic Opels community is too small for us to be excluding anyone and we have a lot to gain by being more open and willing to share the legitimate treasures we have built up over the years.

Sorry for the length and, well, airing dirty laundry. That 2009 thread has been eating at me ever since I stumbled upon it, especially in light of current "discussions."

oldopelguy

Whew

Given my past history with *The Blitz* I'm actually kind of pleased with myself for staying out of that previous thread.

I for one welcome the new attitude, Mike, and in light of it will certainly be much more willing to help out. Thanks for the hard work I know you put into *The Blitz*, and let me know if you need anything.

Dec 18, 2014

Yellow73GT

Hey now, I LIKE the way your thinking. I try to stay out of some threads and I recall that one and stayed out of it, but did read it and followed to see where it went. It was those attitudes, beliefs and behaviors (generic "all mine" copyright policy of the past, "secret society", and the behaviors of "certain individuals" in that thread) that have kept me away from becoming a "member" of OMC and paying anything for it, both prior to that thread and from that point on ESPECIALLY. But if you are true to your word, and truly hold the beliefs and attitudes you have expressed here in this post and you continue to work towards that goal, I will have to reconsider my position on the subject (the idea of a disc with all the back issues is an EXCELLENT idea in my opinion) and will seriously consider a membership, as I am fairly certain many others will. I personally believe you are headed in the right direction and may well grow *The Blitz* with a good attitude like this.

lowkey (R.I.P.)

Mike, The issues with *The Blitz*, go back far longer than what you'll ever know. You've read my rants about the SCCA and how they treated Opels back in the day. Well, back in the day, *The Blitz*, and the SCCA both had the same type of Illuminati leadership.

As I recall, they would not let me run an ad for "The OpelHaus," because we were not an Opel Authorized Garage or some such nonsense. I think that one eventually got resolved, but it was not as easy as sending in my money, and ad copy.

The "We Publish It, We Own IT!" attitude was another thing. As they found out, it was impossible to enforce, but it sure did alienate a lot of folks.

But enough of the history lesson.

I think you are doing a fine job, and everybody should give you the benefit of the doubt, and give *The Blitz* another chance. Personally I'd like to subscribe to *The Blitz*, without joining the club.

I find it very annoying, when I google something on Opels, get an OMC listing, go to it, see the header of what I want, and then find out I can't read the article without joining the secret club. I also can't join the club then and there with my PayPal account.

Until that old nonsense is gone, I'd rather not be part of any club like that. Secret handshakes are not my thing, I belong to clubs that want people to join them, not clubs that make it hard to join.

Anyway, keep up the good work, you're doing fine, and when my schedule lightens up, I'll have a couple good articles for you, that you can print.

Happy Holidays and best of Luck

James

p.s. Ever think about adding a 3-month calendar to each issue, listing up coming Opel Events? Possibly with an Opel Calendar Girl on the page? I could help with that!

bigben

Ditto.

dallasmanta

Very interesting, never understood the whole OMC thing. I thought I signed up for the publication in the 80's got a couple of mailings and then nothing. Could not understand the sign-up to see content when I had signed up so I gave up and let it die. Found Opelgt.com and have never looked back. Nicer, better, more friendly bunch.. Keep up the good work... I know it is a lot of work.

Thanks, Ron

opelspyder

I used to be an OMC Member, but with their difficulty to acknowledge I had paid my dues or have joined was lacking. I like printed materials, and there were a few issues of *The Blitz* that I could cross-reference, like Dennis's Targa issue. I felt though there wasn't enough member-submitted tech tips that weren't already two months behind in knowledge. With that said it is the same way with technology, the Internet is current, where print is in the past. Everyone announces here their new upcoming items and such.

I'm not against the OMC and *The Blitz*, but note how I separated those two. I don't feel that the National Opel Meets should be labeled as the OMC Nationals. I don't know of the OMC actually sponsoring any of these shows. I would rather them be called the OpelGT.com National meets. If OMC is going to sponsor these national meets,

then I am fine with that. I think we give too much credit for the OMC for these meetings, when they are only working on keeping the newsletter intact.

Now I have looked at several of the newest *Blitz* issues, and they are quite large, and colorful. Since Mike has started editing it, I noticed though it seems more about racing and of the such (which is Mike's passion, and we can tell). I'm not into the racing aspect, but it is called the Opel Motorsport Club and when I hear that I think about racing. About the property thing, that did make me hesitate on submitting anything to the club, as I may desire to submit it to other places, which if I wrote it, I own it (period).

Mike, I think the relationship between the club and OpelGT.com is good, as many are members here, but I hear things, and club events without help from the club in question is one thing that doesn't look good. I guess I hate to see all the club membership dues go into solely *The Blitz* magazine, and not be used for other things such as club meets and things. Now I'm not saying go at it like the NRA does, where it costs \$35.00 a year and they give you a hat, a ton of mailings, and a free magazine of your choice, they spend more on that crap than they get out of the membership.

One idea is if these National Opel Meets are going to be labeled as OMC events, then not only some sponsorship should take place, but maybe have an authorized person signing up new members and collecting at the show. Give them a chance to sample a look at *The Blitz*, and I guarantee membership dues will be up, renewals will be up, and show the people what OMC is providing back with those dues.

Also I want to note about the chain of command with this club. I don't know who is the leader. I thought Matt Newman was somehow involved and was acting President, possibly treasurer. If Dave is the Ex-President, then he needs to be just that, and Ex-President. If he wants to still run things and not be labeled as a President...then he needs to get off the horse and let someone else run it like it should. You can't be a non-leader and still lead. This may be the root of a lot of issues with the OMC is leadership. You can't have your cake and eat it too.

tealcarver

Mike, I save all the electronic articles that I come across for future reference. There was a question asked on this site, and I had the article that not only answered the question, but expanded and refined it. I got an email from someone (never saw the email address before) saying that I had to remove the article for opelgt.com because I was in violation

of copyright laws, and the OMC owned the rights to the article. Okay, I took it down after many attempts. The more I thought about it, the more angry I got. Over half of the content in the article was directly from the shop manual. I am not a lawyer by any means, but how do you copyright something that is already copyrighted? That's when I got the bad taste in my mouth concerning OMC.

Don't get the wrong idea, your work on *The Blitz* is outstanding. I hope there is a mindset change at OMC about their thinking on copyrighted material. I don't believe that anyone would write a detailed article and then say "take it down" when it was put there to answer a members question. I guess I take things too personal, but when it comes to sharing information, nothing should be so top secret that your are being told to take it down because it theirs.

Bob

RallyBob

Mike, I for one think you've done a great job. I've written for numerous newsletters/clubs over the years (Opel USA in the '80's, Opel Driver's Club of America in the '80's, OANA in the '90's, OMC in the '90's, and again Opel USA in the '90's).

It's a lot of work, especially when you run the whole show (as I did with Opel USA in the '90's) with virtually zero outside input.

I did a lot of tech articles/stories for the OMC in the early '90's, and yes, I ran into that 'we own it' attitude. No you don't. I wrote it, it's mine. If you paid me....that's another story. It kinda took the winds out of my sails and I no longer wanted to write articles for them, even though I've been a member non-stop since about '87.

Even when they were using tech tips (from the Internet!) that were written by myself and others taken from the old Yahoo Opel mailing list, it was construed as 'theirs'. Well it's not, once it's on the Internet in a public domain, it's pretty much there for everyone.

That was my only beef with them. 'Them' probably being one person, but I never pointed a finger directly at anyone, I simply stopped writing articles.

m610

Thanks all for your thoughtful replies.

I figured out early on that getting people to submit articles could be difficult, but I figured that was mostly because people would find writing was not their strong suit, or a number of other reasons. I had not considered the possibility that OMC policies and practices were actually discouraging people from doing so.

The policy changes I made were done unilaterally. Frankly, there was no formal club leadership around to run things past and I got the clear feeling when I started this that I was pretty much on my own. In fact, when I accepted the position I asked Gil what my parameters were? Cover design, page count, content? He told me that I was the editor and that all past editors had approached this differently and each had left their mark. In my first issues I kept a number of the existing style and format elements but kept it moving in a direction previous issues seemed to be pointing in, and that was the evolution to being much more like a magazine than a newsletter. Given the infrequency of publication and the total lack of breaking news I figured the newsletter concept was dead. So now we have a full-color publication, currently as bi-monthly as I can make it and not shrink it back to newsletter dimensions, and hopefully going quarterly which will give me more time to develop meaningful articles.

My goal for *The Blitz* is to make it a must-have for owners of classic Opels. It should look great, contain meaningful articles, be something you want to show friends or display on the coffee table. I think having something like that will make people that much more happy that they own an Opel.

I knew the copyright issue was a mess, but I didn't realize it went as far as pirating the FSM and other online sources. That will no longer happen.

In the any-day-now December issue I have an article that describes how people can get their stories into "this gorgeous publication." After reading the replies above I will revise it to add a copyright paragraph.

Somehow I have to fix things regarding past copyright fumbles. I'm a little reluctant to produce a CD-ROM or even make past issues available before that is taken care of. I realize we are small fry and one of those thieves I mentioned in my original post, but it's still, well, let's just say unprofessional. I'll figure it out.

For anyone currently thinking of submitting an article, the more open copyright policy I noted above is in effect. Plus, I'll send you a print and PDF copy of the issue when it

comes out.

As for back issues, I don't currently handle that, but if there is a particular article in an issue going back to around 2002 that you want, let me know and I'll snip it out and send you the PDF version.

The Nationals meet is happening this year. I'll post something on that soon, and of course it will be in *The Blitz*; OMC will be organizing this one, paying all the up-front costs, etc. As far as I know the event is going under two separate titles, OMC's 35th anniversary, and the Opel Nationals. I don't think it will become the OMC Nationals.

Mike

P.S. As some have noted there is a single person (possibly more, but I have not heard from them) behind a number of the negative traits people have noted. The two of us have been having a pretty heated "discussion" of these issues for months. I have invited, and encouraged, him to write up and present his views and I'd put them in *The Blitz*, unedited and without rebuttal or comment, for all to read. He sent me a 3-page document that I was ready to put in the December issue after he made one simple change, to put his name, or a recognizable alias, on his submission. It looks like that is not going to happen. If you want to see what he wrote you might try contacting him yourself.

Knorm65

I plan on setting aside some money and joining OMC after Christmas.

There are some very helpful tech articles. I've found several of Rally Bob's articles over the last couple months, and the OMC tune-up article was very helpful.

It looks like you are really trying to make this the best you can Mike.

I wasn't planning on joining, but you can count me in now.

The Scifi Guy

Well, I've been a member of this site and an avid poster for about 8 years now and an owner of many GT's since 1979. I never heard of OMC before this site and until I read this thread today and received emails about elections, OMC played no part in my life. It seems to be a California thing and has no presence elsewhere in the country.

Therefore, I'll decline to add anything to the comments regarding previous history of the OMC and related issues, pro or con, since I have no personal knowledge or experience with the organization. So, as an outsider looking in, and reading the comments previously made for the first time, my knee jerk reaction is to suggest the abandonment of the OMC as a representative of the Opel community at large and let it continue to be a local organization representing it's native territory in California/West Coast, if it chooses to. Maybe a name change to further put some of the bad history it has garnered over the years behind it.

Further, it should be de-coupled from *The Blitz*.

It seems clear that the OMC as a driver of national interest in Opels, a unifier and common flag under which we could all unite, and a planner/coordinator of nationwide Opel activities, is woefully lacking, if not totally absent. The local Opel organizations seem to be handling their gatherings and events just fine, without any noticeable input from the OMC.

The love of our Opels or the hobby of playing with them and fixing them up should be fun and enjoyable. The OMC seems stodgy and stuck in the mud and is feebly trying to hold onto it's past glory. Times have changed and clearly the OpelGT.com website has usurped *The Blitz* as the source of Opel wisdom and technological information. Our various retailers of Opel parts are also the last word in definitive technological knowledge, how to, and upcoming developments and new parts. Like every bit of knowledge on this site, it has all been compiled and built upon by previous Opelers over the decades. In the pre-Internet days, *The Blitz* was probably the only source for a lot of the knowledge that we now take for granted. *The Blitz*, and all previous individual Opelers who contributed knowledge before *The Blitz* even existed, have earned our respect and thanks for the work they have done and the repository of information they have created and built upon.

But, time marches on, and times have changed. We're in the digital age now and the era of hard copies of information being the only source of info and help for Opelers is fading in the rear view mirror. It's seems obvious to me that this website is now the center of the Opel universe and *The Blitz* and our retailers orbit around it. This site acts as our digital "party line" that lets all of us communicate our thoughts to every other Opeler instantly, thereby creating a virtual Opel Nation in the ether. No previous organization or publication has brought us together like this site has. Not by a long shot.

I need a break from typing. I'll come back later with more thoughts, particularly about how *The Blitz* could be made

more relevant in the digital world.

Frozen Tundra GT

Nobody cares what I think, but in typical James fashion, I'll let you know anyways, and I'll do so like the caveman I am.

The last issue I received made me want to use as ass wipe, but wont because of the beautiful paper and hard work by M610 to make it technically sound, not because of Mike's efforts, but because of the annoying politics. It was fricking depressing.

The Blitz should be fun, should be celebrating our cars, should have a damn crossword, or fun facts. People need to get over themselves and allow it to breathe. I don't care if you kept regurgitating all the old tech articles, or even reprinted the old ones verbatim, it will still be worth it and a much more pleasurable experience.

The read should not be a roster, or club financials or politics. I don't care what the old style of doing things are, why would we care what financials are?

Gordon for president and on with the fun stuff. It's okay to reuse old stuff. We all recognize and love what you're doing on K Street, no disrespect towards you at all.

Either that or Mike should start his own!!!!, or Mr not so anonymous get lost, and start his own secret society.

The Blitz is dead unless more of us contribute. RIP

Not so dry!! Make it a tad more FUN! Me likey pictures. Lowkey, save them brain cells for the next article! Knorm should take some time between cramming for finals and motor-boating freshmen and write something!

Patrick

I never thought I would say this.... I agree with JJ..... ;)

The Scifi Guy

Stuff we could do for *The Blitz*:

1. *The Blitz*/Mike could do articles on individual members and their cars by phone interview. Not many people have the gift, concentration, time, etc. to write succinct, interesting, articles about themselves and their cars or projects. I thank Mike for giving me the

centerfold article place of honor in *The Blitz's* first color issue, but it was HARD to write an entertaining and readable dissertation on me and my car. It took hours! And I write a LOT for you guys. Maybe Mike could generate a list of questions and then arrange a phone interview. Record it. Rewrite it as an article or just print the whole conversation, question and answer, verbatim. You wallflower guys could handle that couldn'tcha? Just shoot the bull on the phone with Mike, maybe send him some pics of your ride to print in *The Blitz*, slip him a \$20, and your Opel legacy will be assured when your chat shows up in the next *Blitz*! No sweat! (Mike, as always, has to do the bulk of the work.)

If not by phone, maybe Mike could send out a questionnaire and people could write their responses at their leisure and send 'em back.

My point is that we've got to make it easier for *Blitzers* to get personally involved in the magazine and maybe get a rush from appearing in the magazine.

2. Start an Opel poem/song of the month Ode To Opels column.
3. Send us monthly requests for pics for The Opel Next Door section.
4. Reprint conversations/threads from here on the website. They're already typed up. With pictures! Ready made articles that include multiple viewpoints or suggestions on how to do something. This website's members are *The Blitz's* main source of new and present subscribers, the two endeavors should be brought closer together and *The Blitz* could make use of the knowledge base created here. This thread might make for an interesting and useful source of reprintable threads:

<http://www.opelgt.com/forums/opel-tips-tricks/32433-opel-technical-info-links-threads.html>

Or, for fun filler, reprint the results of the various polls we've done:

5. I nominate Ubernoob to be our resident comic artist and demand that he furnish at least one doodle per issue.
6. Frozen Tundra should be our gritty man-on-the-street interviewer. He could drive around in Death-By-Purple and pull up next to unsuspecting people (babes) and say "Ay, what do ya think of my

ride, ay?"

7. Fly (bus) lowkey and his most luscious of lovely ladies around the country to take pics of her reclining saucily on member's cars.

Who else has ideas to enhance *The Blitz* experience?

lowkey (R.I.P.)

Fly? Hell, gimme a Shell card, and an allowance and I'll load my Nikon, a toolbox, and a bag of my custom bikinis in Daily Driver and drive across the country.

It's a package deal, you feed me, let me stay on your couch, I'll fix your GT, drink all your beer, talk a local honey into posing on your car, download the pics and story to Mike, and head off to the next member.

I can be ready to go in May, and *The Blitz* will have two years of content in six months. Dallas, to OGTS and back, maybe hit a few car shows, write a few stories.

I'll take lots of pictures of "The Cat," at famous landmarks.

It's doable, and I can do it.

I even have the title for the main story series: 69 Hundred Miles in a 69 GT.

(Like Hunter S without the drugs)

At the end, *The Blitz* can sell the book rights and get all the money back.

I bet OGTS would sponsor me, in parts.

Sometimes you just have to think outside the box, ya know?

m610

Thanks, Gordon, everyone.

Gordon makes several good points in his first post. Opelers get plenty of support and community from this forum, meaning *The Blitz* is not essential. It once was, but no more.

Another point he and others made, and something I have been wondering about, does it make sense to call OMC a club when it's only product is *The Blitz*? Other than a concentration of Opel owners in southern California and a somewhat smaller concentration in the Tacoma/Seattle area, membership is pretty dispersed, so meetings, cruises,

whatever, are not really possible. Hosting the Nationals every five years is something, but hardly something that requires a club structure.

Things I have tried since getting involved in OMC:

1. Facebook page. That seemed like a no-brainer and it amazed me that it had not already been done.
2. Automated emails via Mailchimp. It's free and it provides some useful metrics, such as: the "open" rate on the emails is generally around 70%. We have email addresses for 102 of 153 members. That means if we go 100% digital, as has been proposed, we'll only be able to reach just under half our members that way.
3. Centerfold, I figured people would like to show off their cars and this would be that opportunity. The accompanying text would deal more with the "relationship" people had with their cars rather than the technical stuff.
4. Bench Racing - a column where people can tell stories ranging from true to over-the-top fishing stories.
5. Photo Opel - just a place to display a great photo of our cars or related to our cars.
6. Web pages that make it easy to update your info, join, or renew.
7. Materials - that's my specialty and I thought I could provide some useful information in that column.

As for story submissions, the first Centerfold was initially based on a phone conversation, as was Roy's story "Opels, Beer, Morphine". The whole Bill Ward (Bonneville Opel GT) story was based on telephone conversations. Several hundred dollars worth.

I think what it really takes to get stories is that someone needs to get the bug, the story telling bug. Not many seem to have that, but it would be so cool if it spread like opelitis and infected the whole community. That would certainly make us stand out.

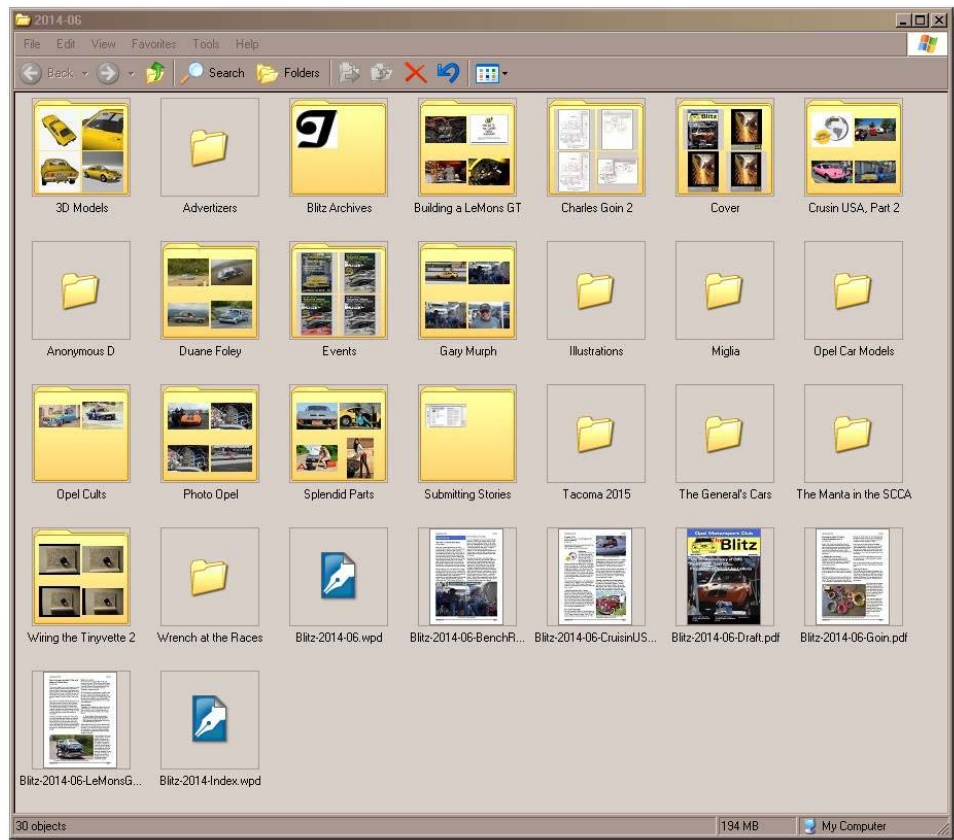
I wouldn't submit a story for the sole purpose of keeping *The Blitz* alive. There are other motivations that I think would work better. Such as, sharing, promoting an event, telling a story you think

people want/need to hear, informing people.

My motivation is the bug combined with the obligation to get out issues. These get me to go out and research stories, such as the Allison Opel GT, and Bill Ward's career on "the Salt." I have other stories I am trying to get to, such as the fate of the Manta in the SCCA, and the general's cars. I'd also like to do stories on the histories of Splendid Parts, Opel GT Source, and others, as well as a history of various Opel clubs. Personally, I want to know more about these things and that motivates me to research then write about them. It also motivates me to contact people to ask for stories, which I did for the McQueen GT story.

Of course you get to hear all about the Tinyvette because I do that a lot, plus I write up events I attend, such as the Tacoma Meet. I keep carrying the unfinished stories forward, moving the folders on my PC from issue to issue until I finish them. (See below.)

I think I have been successful in recruiting at least one southwest correspondent. GTRoy is planning some trips around Arizona this year, to visit other Opelers, and has promised to tell us about that. I haven't quite convinced Keith to become our Miglia correspondent. Keith goes out with Euro Sunday on their multi-day road trips and I am



This is a typical folder on my PC for a single issue. When this issue is done portions of this, such as Cover and Illustration, plus stories I had not finished, get copied and moved to the folder for the next issue.

sure he would have photos and stories to share. Roger Wilson has contributed one story and is working on another. I'm also talking to him about compiling his technical articles into either a book or maybe a very special issue on engine building. I also think it would be interesting to see if *The Blitz* can be part of any of the rumored business of Opel bringing cars back to the US.

I think *The Blitz* has its place in informing the Opel community and celebrating classic Opels. I am convinced it has to be more than a newsletter to be able to do this. Maybe it should become a publication separate of OMC, but in a sense OMC is a family and several people have written to tell me how much OMC and *The Blitz* have meant to them over the years. And this brings us to an interesting moment in the club's history. Its future will be discussed in serious terms at the 2015 Nationals. Attendance/support for the event will say a lot, but people who do come (member and non-member alike) will be able to help shape the club's future, or lack thereof.

lowkey (R.I.P.)

Seriously, although I would do that in a heartbeat if somebody came up with ten grand for a budget.

I think Mike is putting a lot into this, and we should give him support.

As for the Copyright Curmudgeon, well, fine, keep everything you stole before, and we'll just rewrite it all again, and change the comma's. Ya happy?

Anybody who has ever met me in person knows that I'll tell you anything you want to know about GT's, or how to do anything to one.

I will say this. Until I found this site, I never read anything about GT's that I did not already know, or if it was something new, it was way past my skill set, or my budget. I know I'm not alone in that. But I have learned a few things here, and I have a GT that corners like a slot car, even without sway bars, thanks to a Rally Bob article.

Among other things.

So I say, we help Mike all we can, and let's move forward, even if we leave one nameless turtle behind.

Frozen Tundra GT

Y'all should save this energy for an article in an upcoming issue.

m610

Lowkey – fun, crazy idea from a guy who undoubtedly has the passion. The world needs more of both. When Opel lands on North American shores again and contacts me about making *The Blitz* a national Opel lifestyle 'zine, with funds, I'll give you a call.

lowkey (R.I.P.)

Magazines? Those things I used to wait every month to get so I could read on the toilet? The guys who used to send me checks for my scribbles and peektures? In the words of the late lamented "Lucy," From your lips to God's Ear.

I'll just settle for getting Opel parts for my GT from Der Fatherland.

But if I was going to write for a lifestyle mag, as an arteest, well, here's my Profile pic, and my Lifestyle. (This post include three photos of lowkey being lowkey.)

Taken at my first visit to Hippie Hollow, the only legal nude state park in Texas, in a 69 Datsun Roadster with an overhead cam, fuel injected two liter.

The car, you dummies, not the dual overhead model.

The last pic is my plea to Gary for posting the first two pics

wrench459 (R.I.P.)

Mike good luck. Some of the secretiveness was due to racers not wanting specs revealed. It also showed up on this site.

opeljohn

When I got back into Opels around 1993 I did not join OMC, I joined the North American Opel GT Club (NAOGTC) out of Chicago. After the death of Riley Taylor, who was the glue for that club, we were merged into OMC. Knowing there was little chance I would be able to attend many club functions I could have dropped out then. I felt then as I feel now that it was the best chance to be a

part of a National Opel Club. Is it what it used to be? No. A lot of that is due to club burn out.

Why are the Nationals considered an OMC Event, because the whole concept was given birth at the 25th OMC picnic. This was when that was the big show in the country and places like Carlisle and Springfield were wannabes.

I am not sure this site can be what we need for a National Club but by all means go that route if you want. I am not big on the possessiveness of the old *Blitz* but now that Gary sold this site who (Owns) the content here. Could we be charged at some time in the future to get access.

Before someone puts a stake in the heart of the OMC, which I think does in fact own *The Blitz*, show me something better.

Dec 19, 2014

West Coast GT

I'm glad Mike is still willing to publish *The Blitz*, and especially glad he's evolving it into something desirable. God help you.

Copyrighted material: though not an attorney, I've got to believe copyrighted material comes with a sunset clause. So, me, I say use what you find. Let someone run a copyright claim into a court and see if it stands the test. And really, would OMC actually be able to demonstrate ownership and, more importantly, monetary damages?

But squabbling, political or personal, is not my cup of tea. I'd hoped to leave it behind when I moved out of the company office and worked exclusively from my home office.

Just from what I've read in this thread, OMC sounds like a college fraternity organization – something else I could never stomach. I'll stick to our OpelGT.com forum, thank you very much.

That said, Mike, I will make a renewed effort to write some material for you this coming year so you aren't going it alone. Hey - my first New Year's resolution!

m610

Thanks Keith. I'll hold space in the next issue for you. Will 6 pages be enough? ;)

I feel that OMC is a club in name only these days. Technically, it is a club, an informal one as far as the IRS is concerned, if the IRS even knows about us. But it does have a history, and I suppose traditions, and a membership that feels they are part of something, and that last item is not a trivial one.

Unfortunately the "politics" in this case involve mostly myself and that other person, although that other person has more of a history in this than I do. If this wasn't a club and *The Blitz* technically a newsletter, a means for communicating with its members, I would never have allowed any of this recent business to find it's way onto any page in it.

After the ballots come in we'll see what happens next. Paul Kaman is up for president and he has already expressed a desire to make OMC more open and to put all this negativity behind us.

lowkey (R.I.P.)

Actually, about the whole copyright thing. My photography gets stolen on a daily basis. Has since 2000 when I first started posting pictures. Some asshat copies and pastes, then claims it was public domain. So I have some knowledge here.

Litigation is possible, but frankly not feasible. Besides having to prove authorship, as said above, you have to prove damages. IE: This denied you income in what way?

Then there is the matter of attorney fees which need to be paid up front. Bottom line? You'd have to put up five grand to file a suit, then if the material in question is taken from the FSM, it won't even get a court date.

It's called "Discovery."

Discovery is a funny thing. It's a legal term. In this case it means you have to demonstrate ownership, and actual loss. And you have to establish the IDENTITY of the person making the complaint.

So lets just drop all this copyrighted BS and sour grapes by somebody who may or may not have been important in their own mind back in the day, who assumes they have ownership of something that frankly is in question, and may or may not have five thousand dollars to waste on a p*ssing contest that will never get a court date.

Two More Things:

1. Every decent Opel owner, and wrench for Opels, including, but not limited to Rally Bob, Keith, me, and Wrench, among many others, have always been happy to share our Opel Knowledge.

We won't work on your car for free, but we'll be happy to tell you how.

2. The information in question, is so outdated and useless it's beyond funny. OGTS includes instruction sheets with everything they sell that needs instructions, and they include more knowledge than anything ever published years ago.

Besides that, if you ask a question here, You'll get an answer. Now there may be a difference of opinion or two, but taken as a whole, they'll put you on the right track.

Oh, and about Discovery. How do I know about that? When I was a State Inspector, the State of Texas, in Austin, (Police State) tried to hang me. They ran through a car, with a defect and tried to burn me. It had a bad gas cap. It passed it anyway. So I met with the D.A. and was asked: what car was it, what day, what time, what kind of car? The State Patrol, not wanting to give up their undercover operation, did not include that information. Before I could object, the DA explained to me what "Discovery," was. It means you have to lay your cards on the table – who, what, when, and where.

So whoever this is, you can write three pages, but if you can't sign it with your real name, then go away.

As for the State of Texas. I told the DA that I would be happy to go to trial and defend myself, but I would be bringing in two boxes of smelly gas caps I had made owners replace in the last year (yeah, I kept the old ones), along with receipts showing we had sold that many gas caps. Along with paper printouts showing how many times the machine had failed, then passed gas caps, and demonstrating the machines were not reliable or consistent.

They decided not to prosecute me, rather than give up the identity of their alleged defendant, and I suspect the same is true here.

So Mike has my support, my old GT, and my loyalty. That's why I wrote this. I suggest we do all we can to help him. I know I will.

Frozen Tundra GT

I've been posting "tech articles" in gas station bathrooms all over the Midwest.

Cease and desist? Yeah, right

wrench459 (R.I.P.)

There's all sorts of tech that has not been fully covered on this site. Right off the top of my head, Low breakpoint and high slope characteristics of the different Opel fuel injectors for one. They require different tuning to make up the differences. Another while talking in the vain: injector timing (offset).

lowkey (R.I.P.)

I'll join tomorrow, if I can vote Mike for president.

m610

LowKey: Paul has a lot more history with Opels than I do, plus if I took that job I'd have to make you the editor.

In a merry Christmas to me moment I just found out I have been left off the mailing list for the latest issue of *The Blitz*.

Not really wanting to air yet more dirty laundry, but wanting to show how the current but hardly new squabble with that anonymous person has taken another turn, an "election supplement" was recently sent out as if it was *The Blitz*, and for some reason I wasn't on the mailing list.

Most of it is the commentary the anonymous one sent me so I could include it in the December issue. I had it in and ready to go but told the author that he needed to put his name on it. He wouldn't, and neither would he retract it, so I took it back out. The "supplement" is based on that commentary and these give very different views of the job I have been doing. It's worth reading, I think, and some people may even agree with it, which I why I asked him to write up his complaints so I could bring them to the attention of the members.

I talked to a friend over the holidays who told me about several clubs he has belonged to being ruined by a vocal one or two who insisted on taking what is in effect a "possessive/secret society" approach, and as a result running off new members who signed up for a sci-fi club, or hang gliding club, or whatever, and not a ring side seat at

a family quarrel. Oh, well, at least we are not unique, and I hope that by bringing this to everyone's attention we might get enough of a response to be able to pick one side and leave the other behind.

This is not club politics in the usual sense. It's a conflict, for sure, and I guess is one of those "grab a box of popcorn" moments. Anyway, both documents are attached, the original commentary and the supplement.

Mike

P.S. We will get this mess cleaned up and hopefully the secret society days will be behind us soon. If not, I've got other things I need to be doing.

Dec 26, 2014

wrench459 (R.I.P.)

It is what it is.

Not that I'm not picking sides nor care with the squabbles. As far as I know this is just more drama to add to bottomless bucket of the world of Opels.

There I said it... done..over..out.

OpelJim

As far as everyone else ????

We all are Opel owners and we all are a part of an Opel community. I also remember John Seaman as the editor having some of the same problems Mike is expressing now I remember being told that OMC was only for RICH people and they all had a Stuck UP attitude. (Not true at all as, I found out at an OMC picnic.) Sure there are some people who POURED 10's of thousands into their cars and won awards but that was an inspiration to me to make mine better too.

I remember the San Diego Chapter of the OMC was very active not too long ago. Our members came to events and sometimes our people were the largest group of the So Cal participants. I remember people came from New England, Virginia, Texas, Washington, Oregon, Nevada, Arizona, Colorado, Canada, and Louie from the Netherlands, so it was and still can be a GREAT club.

That was then, this is now. Question is, do we (I am thinking about 5-6,000 people who own Opels in the USA)

want to support a CLUB we all are members in and SHOW UP at events that are close enough to attend. I drove my GT from Fallbrook, CA to Tacoma, WA in the SUMMER to attend a meet there and it was GREAT !!! Good thing my GT has AC !!!

I for one am willing to assist Mike with what little knowledge I have and grant access to the EXTENSIVE back issue library stacked in my bookcases.

We really should just share information to keep the cars on the road and to keep our common love for our cars as a group. Call it this, or call it that, it makes no difference as long as it is a REAL club with REAL activities and information that is beneficial to all. BTW, I also joined another Opel Club that was LIFETIME but which lifetime is still unclear and the "club" is also very low in members. I heard that as their last event there were 15 or so attending. OMC one year had close to 500 attendees Wouldn't that be nice to see all of us together as friends in one spot with our CARS.

I hear Carlisle PA is that way. Gary, isn't that an OMC Chapter event ?

Frozen Tundra GT

All that effort and won't put a name on it???

ANONYMOUS D at his best!

Active lifestyle magazine? Pandering to "bad actors"???

If y'all saved that energy for articles without mudslinging it would be a worthwhile publication.

It's hard to make heads or tails of all of that juicy info.

Perhaps a clear, concise, and abridged rebuttal from the editor?

I fully support online-only. Yes, the print version is beautiful, but not if it endangers the treasury and future of OMC

Gary

Talk about getting slammed, Mike!

IIRC, *The Blitz* was going no where until you stepped in and brought it back from the brink. You were given no clear direction for managing it and now you are being taken to

task for your efforts.

Question - How many new members have joined since you became the editor?

Ahh, best end this now...

Gary

Replying to Opeljim: We use OMC/OANA for registrations with the event.

DennisGardiner

Ugh!

I'm sitting here, with my wife of almost four years, and reading this thread and feeling disgusted. I'm not even sure why I'm typing right now. I'm mad, disheartened, feeling used and kicked - Secret Society.

I'm sure I'll feel better tomorrow.

If I only had known, after John Seaman's passing, helping OMC out and then finally spending 80+ hours a month making *Blitz* issues by myself until 2010, how some truly felt.....

Yup,...almost no one sent in an article. I took the photos at events, I edited the pictures in Photoshop, purchased the computer software, purchased back issues of old auto magazines for unique articles, tracked down owners of cars to phone interview them. I stuffed *The Blitz* into envelopes, placed the postage, mailed them.

Guess I wasted that decade of my life, volunteering for that secret society. Life sure does suck. Going to grab another beer, and contemplate once again about selling my Opels.

Dennis, Former OMC 'volunteer' Editor.

Frozen Tundra GT

Dennis,

As a newcomer, and there are many of us, we all know *The Blitz* used to be amazing! and I have a feeling you were a major part of the amazing years.

I could be wrong but I think the secret society feelings are generated when there is a person who won't share his secret

name and threatens copyright, etc. He tarnishes the bright luster of the organizations he is a part of. NOT YOU. Everybody always speaks of you in high regard.

As a reader of old issues, Thank you.

Gary

Dennis all your efforts and work was greatly appreciated. It lives on in those 30-35 issues you published.

m610

As I read through past issues I can clearly see how much people cared about this club and how much they got out of it. It has a great history of service and support for Opel enthusiasts. While many people have contributed articles tech tips over the years, I could also see in those issues as well as now that getting stories from people can be difficult, and to be fair, that's to be expected, somewhat. There are many ways members may be able to contribute to the club, but an article might not one of them. I understand that and will work with that, and as I noted earlier, my approach has been to make *The Blitz* look better so that people might find the motivation to send in a story. I think I have managed to nudge things in that direction.

Like Dennis, I put a hell of a lot of time into this. It's practically a full time-and-a-half job at times. I do it because I really enjoy this whole Opel thing, the Opel community, and writing. And it's not just the time and expense, but the care and love that goes into this that I hate seeing disgraced by this conflict.

The current conflict is between myself and the anonymous one, and two views of *The Blitz*, the old one that was dying, and the new one which isn't. We'll see how this turns out soon enough, after ballots have been counted and the new president takes over.

Rebuttal?

I did that already, in the September issue, point by point. I did that hoping it would not make things worse. For this case I told the anonymous one that I would print his "commentary" as is and without rebuttal, just send it in and stand behind his words.

The E-version Proposal

As for the e-version only option, OMC has 102 valid email addresses for it's current membership of 153. If we went e-only we'd be dropping a third of our members. The number could be a lot worse. Mail Chimp, which I use to

send out notices, says only 70% (usually a little less) of those open the email, and doing the math going the e-route would only reach 45% of the members.

In the November issue I tried to wrap my mind around the issue of costs and where *The Blitz* figured into the picture. If we keep with the current schedule, 6 issues per year and each averaging 45 pages, and color, we'd be out of money in 10 years. If we cut back to 4 issues we'd be building the balance again. Two other opinions were explored as well, 28-page issues and another, I forget at the moment, but those would maintain the current balance.

I really want to make this *Blitz* thing work. As I said above, I think it has potential, not commercial, but potential to make owning and driving a classic Opel a little more interesting. I'd hate to see it go back to what it was before, since, like Dennis said, it would make me feel I had wasted all that time and effort and money.

And Dennis, I studied the issues you put out most carefully. They were great and I could clearly see what kind of work went into them. Above all I wanted to honor those efforts by taking *The Blitz* to what your issues seemed to tell me the next steps would be.

First opel 1981

I like Opels. I abhor politics. Politics... Let's break it down...

Poly = many

Ticks = useless blood sucking creatures that spread disease.

Dec 27, 2014

OpelJim

Dennis, I understand how you feel

We ALL OF US need to get past this BS and work together to keep OUR CLUB alive as well as forget the past the remarks of one person and move forward as a TEAM to make a GREAT magazine for us all to enjoy NOW!

Dennis you can not sell your Opels. They have your DNA in them and I heard rumors you have Opel DNA in your blood, too

The Scifi Guy

I think that this thread has made it's point and it's time to let it slip away. Let's start the new year with a fun new attitude for *The Blitz* and the OMC!

Happy Opeling!

Dec 28, 2014

Anonymous D

You can read all about OMC right now, just by visiting this link [Opel Motorsports Club](#).

ggl

Responding to lowkey's recent post: The web site I was part of was in a copyright battle a few years ago. Someone accused us of violating the copyright on some software belonging to his company. He had a big time lawyer on retainer who threatened to run us all into the ground, and my friend in particular as the editor in charge, if we didn't hand over all our software, in-house tools, and the names of everyone who had access to them.

To his credit my friend told John Henry (yup, the multi billionaire) what he could do with his lawsuit. Unlike other groups, we had actually read up on copyrights over the years as we had been on the other side of the fence and needed to know what was what, so we knew we had done nothing wrong and when it came down to the wire it turned out that John Henry was little more than a thug who tried to bully us into submission.

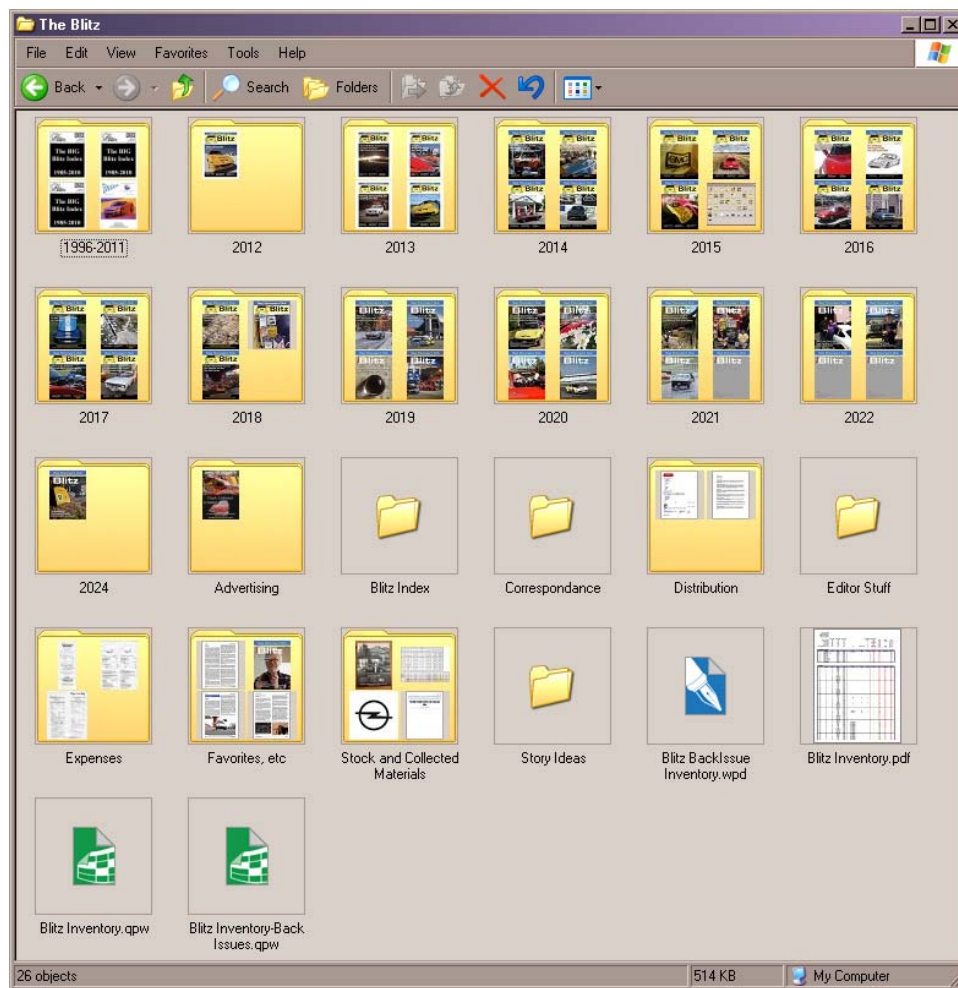
I don't care much for thugs and bullies.

Copyright laws are great stuff for those who actually take the time to read them.

MikeNotigan

I let my subscription/membership expire the summer of 2013. NOT because of the direction Mike has taken it, but simply because it was money I needed to divert elsewhere. LOL, I live in New Jersey on a self imposed fixed income and you'll know exactly what I'm talking about!

Funny thing is, someone there, Mike or somebody else, kept sending me the darn things and in the process, giving me one big guilt trip when the issue arrived!!!!



A screen-shot of my OMC *Blitz* folder. Will there be a 2025 folder?

From this vantage point, early on, Mike made it clear the magazine belonged to each and very one of us members. And yes, I do remember his pleas for input in the form of articles and yes, I do remember his threats (LOL) of including more Tinyvette articles if his cries for submissions went unheeded.

I liked his time spent at the helm as Editor, as I did with Dennis's time, and before him, others who spent time steering *The Blitz*. I have the deepest respect for those who would volunteer for this duty. I know I couldn't do it like these good folks have.

Not sure why the recent events had to be set in motion. I just want to thank Mike for doing a fine job in the role of editor. He's done a great job at the helm.

Best Regards,
Mike

Closing Pandora's Box

The Story of Alex's 1973 Opel GT

By Alex Zaychenko

If you live in the greater Sacramento area, you may have noticed a small, bright green, sports car driving around. Maybe it was a decade ago, when it looked okay but had a misfire, and an exhaust leak, and left a trail of gear oil wherever it went.

Maybe it was 5-6 years later, when all of the clear-coat was failing and large swaths of the multicolored car, brown, gray, red, and chalkboard black gave that car that certain look. But appearances be what they may, the engine sounded a bit more smooth, and the exhaust wasn't piercingly loud like before, and the idle had the characteristic lope of a hotter cam, and the click of solid lifters was noticeable.

Or maybe it was yesterday, when apart from a few rock chips the paint was uniformly glossy and bright green, and the exhaust was louder and popped and burbled when the car was rolling to a stop, where upon idling the engine was louder than before, but silky smooth and steady.

That was me, and my 1973 Opel GT.

I must've first seen it as a junior or senior in high school, where it was a class project that the shop teacher wanted to put together for his daughter to commute to college in. I later learned it was bought somewhere in the Bay Area and was a running, driving (if somewhat worn) car, Jade Mist exterior, with black interior, 4-speed, and no other special options.

I knew nothing about Opels, but I thought it looked pretty and was cool. A year or so after I graduated, I went to the metal shop and came to an agreement with the shop teacher to buy the car, and worked a crappy retail job, giving him probably \$300-400 every two weeks until I paid it off. I also started a thread on Opelgt.com that became Pandora's Box (Ubernoob's GT Update).

Here's where the first problem

came about. He said he would sell me the car for \$2,000 and I would have to fix the wiring (which he later admitted he torched) or \$3,000 and he would. Being the naive kid I was, I agreed to pay \$3,000, as I had no experience doing electrical work.

Well, as it turns out, neither did the shop teacher. After ignoring explicit advice from the previous owner, he rolled the headlights over, and likely popped the fusible link from the starter to the fuse box, then bypassed the fusible link, and then burned the entire harness from the headlights to the ammeter.

At some point, he (or his students) hacked the footwell and absolutely butchered the original wiring. Along the way, he re-gasketed the engine, (dropping a cylinder head bolt into the oil drain hole), re-gasketed the transmission (lost the lower two bell housing to case bolts and stuck *whatever* into the lower two holes), and then generally ignored the missing torque tube rubber, leaking pinion seal and wheel cylinders, broken brake hardware, and the fluid-soaked brake shoes.

He destroyed everything he touched on the car, and his contribution to fixing the wiring was telling me how to trace wires on a diagram. (Spoiler: use your finger to go from one end to the other.) He wouldn't budge on the price, and was a scumbag through-and-through, though I only figured that out in hindsight.

His daughter was uninterested in keeping the car because of



Before...



... after.

the reliability issues, and had trouble finding parts for it. She liked the car, but as a small-statured young woman, did not feel comfortable with the attention from men that the car received.

My first drive in my GT was about a half-mile from the high school to my friend's house, as my parents wouldn't allow me to take it home. It was terrifying.

The car was absolutely gutless, it barely idled, it smoked, it would be very difficult to get rolling, and once it was, there was a crunching noise from the transmission, which was caused by incorrect and loose bell housing bolts. It made a grinding, hellish noise at any speed above stopped, although it certainly did get louder the faster I drove. That was thanks to the lack of a torque tube donut.

Stopping was hardly better than going. The shoes on the left side were dragging thanks to broken hardware, and both sides were soaked in brake fluid.

It was awful and disheartening. Likely the only reason I kept the car was the fact that before I even paid it off I went on the drive to Opel GT Source in the spring of 2011 and got to meet the wonderful community. I rode there and back in Evan's pale yellow GT and Don Michaelson's arctic white Sport Wagon. I met Gil and Dave, and all of the other extremely kind and supportive folks who owned these lovely little cars, and it gave me hope.

So I plugged away, spending a lot of time and most of my money on repair after repair, getting the car on the road, only for it to break down or reveal another issue.

I opened up the original engine, and it was pretty far gone, so I put in a used engine, and destroyed that in short order because I didn't replace the pitted rod bearings. That breakdown was on the way home from Gil's, my first time driving it up there. The process of getting it towed home was incredibly humiliating, and it somehow ended up parked at a friend's house, along with myself after I got kicked out.

I eventually got a job, and snuck the GT back home at night while

listening to the increasingly loud knock from way too much bearing clearance. When a dangerous situation developed at my friend's house I had to leave, and I figured my now having a way to pay rent would soften the sting of my dad finding me curled up in his living room.

While I worked the new job, I bought engine parts and put together a bored-out, solid-lifter-cammed 1.9. This was the engine that probably served me the longest, although the torque wrench I assembled it with was uncalibrated, causing numerous issues due to under-torqued bolts. It was at this point that I named my GT Bianca, after a model who had similarly good looks and exotic appeal!

While I drove with this engine, the body and paint got worse and worse, and this probably peaked after I rear-ended someone in the rain and folded the front bumper and lip up. I did get air conditioning during this time, though!

Eventually I got another job, and saved up enough to get the paint work done. While I was at work I was approached by an unfamiliar man, who asked me in Russian if I knew who he was. I did! We had chatted through Facebook and he recognized the GT parked outside, then asked one of my coworkers where I could be found.

His name was Vlad, and he asked if I was interested in a 2.2 or 2.4 from one of his Opels. He was trying to register his Opel Rekord and Omega in California, but the Air



Resource Board was having none of it.

I put a deposit down, and a few months later lost the job due to some health issues. After the car was painted and on the road again I saved some more, and picked up the 2.2, along with all of the EFI parts. I also helped Gil with a GT in his shop, which helped fund the rebuild and install of the 2.2.

When my Honda Civic blew a head gasket, I decided to concentrate on installing the 2.2, going at it for a month and a half, mostly alone. My good friend Victor did a lot of TIG welding for me and helped pull the 1.9, and he stopped by to help with cam break-in and tuning as well.

I feel like the last few months have been the culmination of

over a decade's worth of work. The crushing disappointment and fear of breaking down have faded with every turn of the key and every successful road trip. The GT is finally fun, and with that I can put a lid on the endless stream of issues that was Pandora's Box.

And with the closing of that chapter, I look forward to fulfilling the purpose for which the GT was built: grand touring. Long drives into the sunset, windy mountain roads, road trips with someone game for being an accomplice to my shenanigans. Hopefully I can set down my wrenches, pick up my keys, and see where the steady rumble of the engine takes me.

The New Recruit

By *Kyler Norman*

If you are reading this article now, in 2024, you almost certainly own an Opel GT. Some of you may have branched out with a Kadett "B2" from 1968+, and maybe two or three of you have a Kadett "B1" from pre-1968, the one with the rear leaf spring suspension. However, I'd be very surprised if any of you have a 1962-1965 Kadett "A" in your stable of automobiles unless you are one of the two people I sent this article to proofread.

Most Opel owners I've talked to have never heard of the Kadett "A," or at least didn't know it was sold in the USA. Of the Opelers that are aware of its existence, the vast majority know it from Top Gear's "Botswana" television special, where Richard Hammond acquired a little Kadett "A" that he referred to as the "happiest car in the world" and gave the name "Oliver." The little car survived a grueling journey across Africa and Hammond decided he had to take the car home. He still owns it to this day.

This article will try to tackle in 4,000 words what I have gathered and mapped out about the Kadett "A" history from 178 different documents (2.2 GB of data after scanning and compressing) that I have painstakingly acquired over the last six months. I will also tell you a little about my particular Kadett "A".

My Caravan 1000

Over the decade, I've been obsessed with all things classic Opel; I have seen only two Kadett "A's" show up for sale within 500 miles of me and only about four nationwide. Of those, only two were drivable, and only one was restored.

My "dream" Kadett "A" showed up about 8 months ago, and it was NOT one of the two drivable examples I spoke of. No, this little Kadett Caravan 1000 needed some love. It was last registered in around 2001, in Lubbock, Texas, to the original owner, who bought it in 1964, brand new. The car had found its way down south of Waco, Texas, where it sat on a homemade drill pipe trailer that had probably delivered it to the field, which should have been its final resting place. Alas, I saw it on the Opel Owner's USA Facebook page, where someone was asking for its value. Long story short, \$500 and one notarized bill of sale later, and I was the proud "owner" of one the last remaining Kadett "A" Caravan 1000s in the world. Was the car full of Lubbock sand in every crevice imaginable? Yes. Did it easily have over 100,000 miles on it based on the holes in all three pedals? Yes, but I'll never know because the PO deleted the speedometer internals. Did it have any salvageable interior or rubber bits? Not really. Is it such a cool car that I couldn't resist trying to fix it? You bet your a\$\$ it was.

One Liter One Billion DM One Incredible Car



Before and after photos of my Kadett Caravan.



What a difference a little paint makes. And a little buffing, and scraping, and Bondo, and, and, and... But the effort was well worth it!

What I've Completed Since May 2024

I'll keep this part of the story short because you can go to the OpelGT.com forum and find the entire story in an almost day-by-day journal-form account. A summarized executive summary of the ongoing project of bringing this little car back to life would be something like this:

Steps 1-10: Registration

Cutting through excessive red tape to get a bonded title because the original owner died in 2014, and the second owner left the title open before he died in the 2020s. The Texas bonded title process involves going to TxDOT to submit documents and request a VIN inspection, then scheduling a VIN inspection at the ONLY sheriff department in a 14-county area that conducts them. Here's the really fun part. This one sheriff's office, 2 hours from me, serves a population of 4 million people over a 12,346 square mile area, AND they only do this inspection for four hours in the morning, one day a month. It takes months to get scheduled, and in that time, you are accruing tax penalties for not titling the car within 30 days. After the VIN inspection, you go back to TxDOT, and then they send you to the tax office. Then, you wait several more weeks until a shiny bonded title shows up in your mailbox.

Step 11: Fire It Up

I wanted to see if it would run. I did a compression test, dry, on all four cylinders as soon as I repaired the starter. The old girl had over 150 psi. I wasn't expecting that at all. At the time, it was still wired for 6V, and it had the original coil and ignition parts that appeared badly worn, not to mention the leather seals in the Opel-manufactured Carter Carburetor clone were completely dried and cracked. A friend and I still said, "What the heck," and we stuck the inlet hose from the stock fuel pump into a can of 2-stroke mix gas I had nearby, hooked up a 12V battery to the coil, and jumped the starter with a screwdriver. It fired up after the float bowl filled up, and it was immediately able to idle and rev.

Step 12: Parts

Armed with the knowledge that the engine ran, I promptly ignored it and began ordering carpet, headliner, brake parts, lights, lenses, window seals, and everything else I could find and afford. Some lessons were learned here. Opel GT Source understandably has next to nothing for Kadett A's; Opels Unlimited has everything, if they can find it, but at prices much higher than anywhere else except eBay. Opel Classic Parts and Alt Opel Hi Life in Europe became my

best friends very quickly. They had excellent selections of parts for the "A" at a quarter of the price of USA options, even with overseas shipping and other fees included.

Step 13: Make the White Paint Pretty

Try wet sanding and polishing all of the crappy white paint.

Step 14: Uncover the Lapis Blue

Get it very glossy, but also discover that a lot of the original Lapis blue paint beneath the white paint is intact. So, spend hundreds of hours scraping the white paint by hand with razor blades because no chemical or sanding-based methods worked.

Step 15: Make the Blue Paint Pretty

Polish all of the blue paint and discover several panels with old Bondo work that you can't be happy with until fixed.

Step 16: Get Ready to Paint

Decide to try out the HVLP gun you got for Christmas ten years ago. Watch some videos, mix up some paint as close as you can get it to the right, and painstakingly prep and mask off everything but the areas you want to repair.

Step 17: Paint It All

Realize it came out pretty okay, actually, and decide to paint the entire car inside and out.

Step 18: Parts Car

Get a parts car way too late in the project and get pissed off about how much time you spent remaking broken parts from the project car.

Step 19: Red Interior

Magically turn the red interior of the parts car blue and spend hundreds of hours finishing it and making it presentable with sub-par parts because no new items exist and upholstery shops are too expensive.

Step 20: Fuel System

Hook up the only thing actually needed to make it run—the fuel lines—and watch it magically fire up, idle, and rev off the key and throttle pedal for the first time.

Step 21: Suspension and Brakes

Installed new shocks, upper ball joints, brakes, and outer tie rods, poured in fresh fluids and drove it around the block successfully, but with a list of a few more minor things to fix.

The History of the Kadett "A"

So, here's a part I've spent probably as much time nerding out about as actually working on the car. The Kadett "A" has probably the coolest history of any Opel passenger car. Let's take this year by year, starting in 1957, after a short primer:

1936-1957: The Prequel: Kadett K38

Opel entered into a new competitive car market with an affordable car with a small 1.0-liter water-cooled engine, the Kadett K38 or Kadett "I", in 1936. This market was called the "one-liter class," and the Kadett was an immediate hit, with 107,000 being sold before the start of WWII. The war hampered things just a bit. The Germans were a little busy with... other things during the war.

The last time Opel workers saw the tooling for their precious Kadett was when it was being loaded onto a train for the Soviets as part of reparations. In 1945, Joseph Stalin personally selected the Kadett to become the first mass-produced car for Soviet Russia's general populace. On June 14, 1946, 59 freight cars were loaded with 850 tons of tooling and equipment, purportedly rescued from the rubble of the bombed-out Opel factory, and delivered to Leipzig, Germany, on the Soviet side of the wall. Unfortunately, only the tooling required to make a 2-door model survived, and Stalin wanted a 4-door. A year later, in 1947, the 4-door Moskovitch 400 was rolled off the line. By 1957, 247,439 Moskovitch copies of the Kadett had been produced.

1957-1959: Planning the Anti-Beetle

In 1957, Opel and General Motors were fed up with being the 2nd biggest car company in Germany, and GM gave Opel the go-ahead to do something about it. Opel Chief Engineer Hans Mershiemer took up the daunting task of designing the perfect anti-beetle. Cars belonging to the one-liter class from all the main competitors were purchased, tested, and analyzed, and then calculations were run to determine the best layout for the car. Everything was considered from front-engine front-wheel drive to rear engine rear wheel drive. Mershiemer decided that despite the added cost versus a rear engine arrangement, it was important to give something new to the car that their competition (the Beetle) didn't have—a trunk and a heater that wasn't stinky with oil and exhaust fumes. A traditional water-cooled front engine rear wheel drive layout was chosen. Some 30-odd hand-built test cars were made and put through their paces in Europe and Detroit.

1960-1962: Umm, We Need a Factory

In 1960, GM approved Project 51, the new Kadett (as it had already been named). The only problem was that the Russelsheim plant was already overextended, with many workers commuting from over 50 miles away due to the limited labor pool. Certain Opel employees were instructed to lie to their family and coworkers, take on fake identities, take non-Opel cars, and meet up in odd places to avoid detection, as they'd disappear at odd hours to survey 50 different proposed locations for a new factory. Eventually, they settled on the perfect place, or at least one that had a high chance of working out.

Bochum, Germany, and the Ruhr region surrounding it were in quite a pickle. The German government was concerned as more and more coal mines in the region closed from being stripped clean. Plans were being put in place to retrain and relocate around 58,000 coal mine workers to new jobs over the next three years to avoid an economic catastrophe. Bochum was especially worried as two nearby mine sites had already closed, and the sting on the economy was palpable.

Bochum had a lot of boxes ticked after the Opel "secret agents" surveyed it. The area had a massive labor pool of skilled and unskilled workers who were out of jobs and soon to be out of jobs. There were more than enough options to fill the projected 14,000 soon-to-be-open positions and more than enough labor force to construct factories and improve the estimated 370 acres required to build a factory capable of 240,000 Kadetts a year. Opel also quickly found out that Bochum would essentially bend over backward for them to seal the deal. As early as March of 1960, Bochum was officially brought to the negotiating table. The final deal from Bochum was as follows:

- Bochum couldn't find 370 acres to offer Opel, but they reached a compromise that STRONGLY favored Opel. Bochum purchased two closed mine sites east of the city limits: 160 acres at Dannenbaum and 164 acres at Langendreer.
- Bochum purchased these sites from the mining companies for roughly 7 DM and sold them to Opel for 2 DM. In terms of today's USD, Bochum paid \$23.4 million and then sold the land to Opel for \$6.7 million. It didn't end there, though. Bochum also agreed to bear the costs of any damage due to the mine tunnels and to reimburse some of the cost of specialized building foundations for stability on the mined land. (Somehow, the mining companies agreed to pay part of this, too.)

- Opel complained about the winding highway leading up to the sites, so Bochum and the German government agreed to pay to build a new highway system.
- Opel needed power and steam, so Bochum agreed to purchase a nearby power station (presumably owned by a mining company) and paid to install the infrastructure to connect to the new Opel facilities.
- Bochum also possibly assisted Opel in its successful efforts to obtain 60 million DM in loans from a German mining union. The union actually had to revise its regulations to allow this loan to be made as it was supposed to be only available for steel and mining companies (since only steel and mining workers had to pay union dues to get it). Opel also received a low-interest loan (really, a promissory note) from the state of North-Rhine Westphalia for 150 million DM. The mining companies were rightfully pissed off, especially when they found out that each year Opel had been paying GM US dividends greater than these loans. They were still in the green (it was later discovered that Opel was using a loophole in the tax code to save over 15% in federal taxes as dividends were taxed at lower rates due to a German-American agreement. Essentially, Opel sent up to 83% of their profits as dividends to GM USA (their only shareholder), and the USA sent the money back later for Opel to use to build capital).

May 1960: Coal

Opel agreed to the deal. (How could they not?!) In my opinion, Bochum really saw the bigger picture and made the right calls, though. It was only a short time later that it became clear that coal mining in the Ruhr region was going to be a long-term and extreme strain on the German government in the form of subsidies, guaranteed coal purchases, reimbursing power plant operators for the more expensive German coal, etc. Around 1957, German coal became 4 time more expensive than imported coal. But enough about that, you're here to learn about the Kadett Factory... or was it the car?

August 1960: Orders Were Placed

Yes, the timeline moved THAT quickly; the deal was closed. Two months before the deal was closed, Opel had already ordered and scheduled delivery of a large portion of the materials needed and had already written up thousands of manufacturing processes as they designed the buildings. On the ticket was:

- 543,000 cubic yards of concrete
- 21,800 tons of reinforcing rods

- 16.5 million bricks
- 68,000 tons of structural steel
- 13 miles of rails, materials for 6 miles of roads
- 114 miles of piping and
- 3 acres of glass.
- 230 presses, 45 transfer machines, 144 gear-cutting machines, 77 grinding machines, 155 pieces of grinding equipment, and more.

1960-1962: Breaking Ground

The fast pace continued into the construction phase.

September 1960: Breaking Ground

280 contractors in two shifts broke ground and began moving 1.6 million cubic yards of dirt at Plant I. According to accounts from the time, the contractors quickly demolished the old mine buildings and flattened up to 30 meter-high hills in front of the site.

November 1960: Plant I Work Begins

Concrete began being poured for Plant I.

January 1961: Plant II Work Begins

Work began on Plant II. Around this time, a portion of 400 initial plant foremen was sent to be trained in Russelsheim for at least 6 months.

March 1961: Plant I Buildings

Buildings began to be erected for Plant I.

July 1961: Plant II Buildings

Buildings began to be erected for Plant II.

September 1961: Plant I Operational

Enough of Plant I was completed to be able to begin producing radiators for the Russelsheim plant.

April 1962: Richtfest

The roofs were set for Plant I and Plant II. On the 12th day of the month, Opel held a huge traditional celebration called the Richtfest for the 5,500 workmen. The celebration included raising a fir tree to the roof of the total 6 million square foot buildings. Opel provided sausages from 250 hogs, 1.3 tons of sauerkraut, 1350 pounds of rolls, 1,800 gallons of beer, 70 gallons of Schinkenhäger, and 64,800 cigarettes. A fun fact: Germany allowed the Richtfest celebration to be written off as part of the building cost. Opel wrote off the cost of the celebration at a rate of 1.5 glasses of beer a day until 2012.

Summer 1962: Parts are Being Made

The galvanizing plant and press shop were completed, and the Kadett parts banks began to be filled. One weird piece

of info I haven't figured out is that Opel's production records show 59 Kadetts produced in August and 93 in September before the claimed "first Kadett off the line" the following month. My best guess is that the first cars may have been built in Russelsheim, or as test cars were not officially rolled off the line.

October 1962-July 1965: Kadett "A" First and Last

The timeline continues a year ahead of schedule, to the surprise of everyone involved. Much of the area surrounding the factory was still a mud bog at this time. The fire department told stories of climbing out of their trucks and sinking elbow-deep into the soft, saturated ground. The factory workers at this time were jokingly called "the rubber boot" generation of factory workers.

October 1962: The First Kadett "A"

About 25 months after ground was broken, the first Opel Kadett "A," a sedan (all cars produced in the first calendar year were sedans), officially rolled off the line at a scheduled press event. (Some insider sources later claimed this car was not really finished and was not completely built-in Bochum.)

1962-1965: Production Years

Cars finally start rolling off the assembly line.

November 1962: Initial Production Rate

The Bochum plants were slowly picking up steam, up to 270 Kadett "A" sedans per day. Furthermore, almost all the foremen had been hired, and about 8,500 of the 11,400 planned personnel had been hired. This quick acquisition of personnel was likely due in part to a government regulation that was enacted to give compulsory Christmas bonuses to workers employed by November.

March 1963: The First Caravan 1000 and Kadett "L"

The Bochum factory produces the first Caravan 1000 and the "Luxus" sedan. The Kadett "L" or Luxus is essentially a slightly better-optioned Kadett for about 500 DM more. It has about 24 minor differences, including chrome wheel rings, a clock, a cigarette lighter, nicer upholstery, and two ashtrays in the back—for the kids.

April 1963: Profitability Threshold Met

The Kadett "A" production hits 700 cars per day, which is the "profitability threshold," the expected rate of production at which to begin making money.



**Ein
neues
Werk**

**ein
neuer
Wagen**





Eine feierliche Stunde für die ganze Familie: Der neue KADETT ist da.

In guten Händen



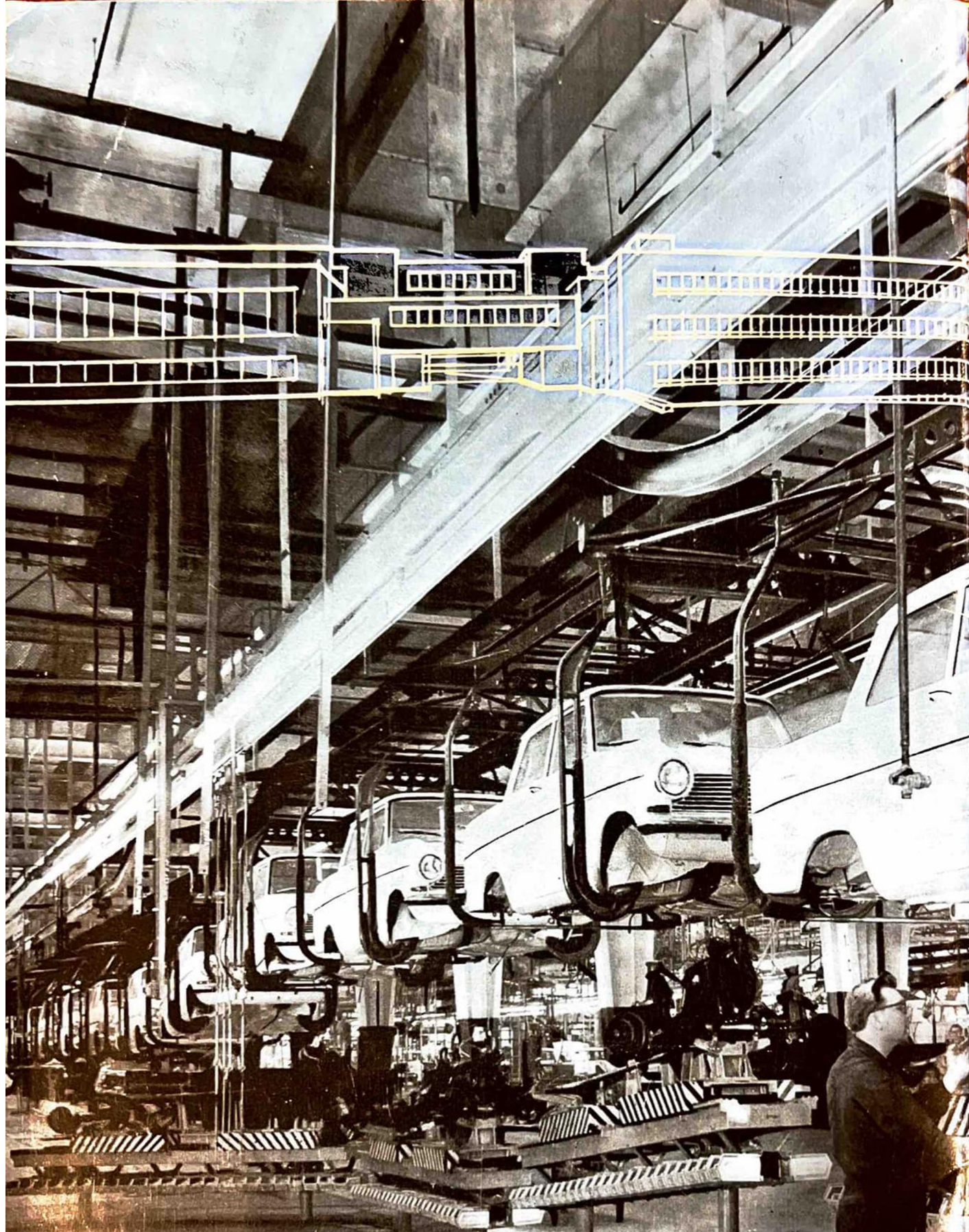
Je länger Sie, lieber Autofreund, für die Anschaffung eines neuen Wagens gearbeitet und gespart haben, um so festlicher sind Sie gestimmt, wenn Ihnen Wagenpapiere und Fahrzeugschlüssel ausgehändigt und Sie mit einem „Gute Fahrt!“ zum ersten Ausflug im eigenen Wagen beglückwünscht werden. Sie sind überzeugt, daß nun ein gutes Auto in gute Hände gelangt ist. Aber leider genügen die Liebe und Sorgfalt eines Wagenbesitzers nicht ganz, um das „gute Stück“ in voller Frische über seine jahrelangen Runden zu bringen. Um den Wagen unverwüstlich, munter und jung zu erhalten, muß er auch in fachmännisch guten Händen sein. Es bedarf eines Kundendienstes, der wirklich Dienst am Kunden ist. Das ist nämlich der Unterschied zwischen dem Automobil und vielen anderen industriellen Produkten: Mit dem Kauf sind die



Radmontage und einige Handgriffe am Motor beenden die Produktion, bei der schon im Entstehen des Kadett alle Sonderwünsche seines Bestellers berücksichtigt werden.

Auf Schiene und Straße geht der Kadett aus Bochum schon kurz nach seiner Geburt auf die Reise zu seinem künftigen Besitzer.





OPEL KADETT
kurz gesagt **O.K.**



Photo credits: The preceding pages are from Opel literature released when the Kadett was first introduced.

May 1963: 900 Kadetts per Day

Opel increased its number of personnel to 12,800 and began producing 900 Kadetts per day after increasing the required work week to 44 hours. They are still 100 cars behind their target for May.

June 1963: 100,000!

The 100,000th Kadett is produced.

September 1963: Sport Coupe Kadett "A"

The first Sport Coupe Kadett "A" is produced. It features a redesigned front end, most of the features of the Luxus sedan, AND a 1.0S (super) engine with higher compression via a thinner head gasket, a larger manifold/carburetor base plate, a more aggressive camshaft, and recesses in the piston pistons to clear the valves. This engine makes an honestly impressive 48 hp out of the little 993 cc sewing machine. It wasn't quite as awesome as putting the I6 Rekord engine in could have been, but Opel engineers tried that, and wound that the transmission tunnel was too small.

Also, in September, the Kadett officially took down their first major competitor, the Ford 12M (Taunus), in terms of registration numbers, thanks to Opel's shiny new factory already being capable of producing double the number of cars per day as Ford's 12M plant.

November 1963: Kadett Caravan in the US

The first Opel Kadett Caravan 1000 is hoisted off the deck of a refrigerator ship docked in the Los Angeles harbor. 8,000 more cars followed behind it in harbors around the country, though the rest arrived on newly built auto carrier ships.

December 1963: Out-selling the Beetle

German registrations of all Opel passenger cars rose from 177,852 units (1962) to 301,844 (1963), accounting for a 69.7% growth in the company and a 50.1% increase in production, while Volkswagen actually shrunk by less than a percentage point to around 377,900 units sold.

January 1964: Bringing it to the US

On January 17th, the Kadett was officially being sold in the USA following and during a marketing campaign that included commercials, TV shows, exhibits, etc. Prices started at \$1625 (\$16,500 in today's dollars, which is \$1,750 cheaper than the cheapest car sold in the USA right now in 2024), and they are given a 2-year, 24,000-mile warranty thanks to the widespread band of established Buick Dealers. VW could not match the warranty, but the basic Beetle was \$25 cheaper than the base Kadett, which allowed it to hold

the title of the cheapest car in the USA. Probably the next cheapest mainstream competitor was the Chevy Corvair at \$2,000.

June 1964: Sales Lagging in the US

Kadett sales in the USA lag behind expectations by 30%. Only 14,000 of the expected 20,000 cars will be sold by June. A magazine article from June gives an anecdote about asking 10 people on the street what they thought of the Kadett and finding that nobody has heard of it.

February 1964: Competing with the Beetle

The 250,000th Kadett rolls off the line. Sales figures show that the Kadett took a good stab at sales of the VW Beetle 1200, and for the first time in VW's history since WWII, sales of the Beetle declined from the previous year (by about 55,000). Around this time, VW began working on a redesigned front suspension for the Beetle to increase the capacity of the trunk. Luggage capacity was considered one of the main selling points of the Kadett.

Winter 1964: Production Rates Soar

Production rates surpass expected maximums and reach 1,120 Kadett "A" per day.

1965: The Last Kadett "A"

Information begins to die down in the press as Opel begins shifting gears to advertise and produce the new Kadett "B1" beginning in August 1965. In January, the 500,000th Kadett is produced, and in July, the final Kadett, number 649,512, made its way out of the Bochum plant as retooling for the new Kadett began.

Estimating the total sold in the USA is difficult because the available data does not distinguish between the number of Kadett "A's" and Kadett "B's" produced. I have calculated a reasonable estimate of 33,624, and I'd suggest that this number is accurate, plus or minus 1,000 cars. In the last month of Kadett "A" production, Ford actually surpassed Opel sales in Germany for the first time since the fall of 1963. Opels share of the German auto market plummeted from 23% to 17% in 1965 and it took quite some time for them to regain 2nd place. By mid-1966, Opel was trying to get back into the market with the Kadett "B" Rallye as it put out more and more feelers for the Opel GT, but that's a story for another day.

Was the Kadett "A" a Success?

So, the Kadett didn't take down VW as the overzealous Opel marketing teams had claimed, but honestly, Opel obviously knew this wasn't going to happen. In 1960, when the factory in Bochum was started, it was only designed for an output of 1,000 cars a day, which wasn't enough to even

come close to the 3,500 1200 VW Beetles that were produced per day. About half of those Beetles were exported to the USA, while only a peak of around 7% of Kadetts made it to the USA (7 Kadetts per day allocated to the USA vs 1,750 Beetles a day). What Opel did manage to do was:

1. Successfully invested 1 billion DM (240 million USD in 1960, which is equal to 2.5 billion USD in 2024 dollars) in the production of a brand new car in a market that Opel had been out of for the previous 25 years, and they did it at the most advanced factory in Germany. The only investment of this size in the history of automobiles at the time had been the ill-fated Ford "Edsel" project, which cost Ford about the same amount of money and ended in absolute failure after just over 100,000 cars were made.

2. This caused domestic VW sales to drop for a one-year period for the first time, and the Kadett almost immediately exceeded sales of the Ford 12M until the very end of production.

3. Opel managed to build a car with a traditional rear-wheel drive, front engine layout, and a water-cooled brand new 4-cylinder engine. The Kadett was also lighter, had more power, a larger trunk, and (generally) was a more comfortable driving experience than all of its competitors.

4. Opel managed to produce a brand new car in a brand new factory staffed by a brand new workforce. They did this with only approximately three dealer service programs, or service bulletins, yet no recalls until the 1970s. These issues included the fixing of loosening ring gears on some of the first 80k cars by welding the bolts or installing larger bolts, the addition of a rubber seal for the steering shaft, and the replacement of a number of poorly fitted steering knuckles. In comparison, the VW Type 3 produced at around the same time had over 100 service bulletins!

5. Despite the lower-than-expected sales performance in the USA, the Kadett "A" sales put Opel Kadett "B" on track to become the 2nd most-sold import in the USA by 1967. In 1959, Opel had peaked in the USA with 33,006 Opels registered and on the road, but by 1963, only 379 remained! In the first year of Kadett "A," sales launched up to around 15,000, which accounted for about 0.19% of total cars sold in the USA. This is similar to the market share of Corvette C8 today. I am not completely sure about this statistic, but based on the sources I have, Opel hit a peak of around 0.50% (+/- 0.10%) of the total cars sold in the US in 1970. They never got close to VW, but they did make a dent.

I'd say the Kadett "A" was a massive success overall and a

lukewarm success in the USA. In the end, Opel made a profit. There is still an enthusiast following for the car in Europe, and it was successful enough to lead to the Kadett B, C, D, and E having the same name. Heck, the majority of the technology from it was used virtually unchanged until 1973. It wasn't a Ford Mustang or Chevelle in terms of popularity, but it did give us the Opel GT! That's a fairly good legacy in my book.

A Brief Look at the Technology of the Kadett "A"

General

Engine Location:	Front
Drive Type:	Rear Wheel
Body / Chassis:	Steel unibody
Production Years:	1962 - 1965 (Model years 1963-1965)
Price:	\$1,625-\$1,820
Weight:	1479-1658 lbs, depending on body and options
Combined MPG:	31 (based on average of 3,000 owner reports)

Performance

0-60 mph:	21.2 seconds 18.9 seconds with 1.0S
Top Speed:	75 mph 82 mph with 1.0S
Weight to Power:	37.0-41.5 lbs/hp for the 1.0N 30.8-34.5 lbs/hp for the 1.0S

Fun Facts: The Kadett "A"s power to weight ratio was significantly better than all of its competitors. The VW 1200cc Beetle had to move 49.4 lbs/hp; even the VW 1500 outside of the "liter class" with 39.7 lbs/hp could only match the fully loaded Caravan 1000 Kadett with lots of added options. Even more laughable is VW's Type 3 1600 TL, their fastest and most expensive car available at the time, which was mentioned in a road test as being outrun by a Kadett 1.0S sport coupe. The 1600 TL weighed 670 lbs more than the Kadett "A" and only had 6 more HP than the 1.0S.

Engine and Transmission

Type:	Inline 4
Displacement:	993 cc
Power:	40 hp net @ 5200 RPM 48 hp net for the 1.0S
Torque:	54 Ft-Lbs (73 NM) @ from 2800-3600 RPM
Bore :	2.8 in 72 mm.
Stroke:	2.4 in 61 mm.
Compression :	7.8:1 or 8.8:1 for the 1.0S
Main Bearings :	3

Overly Detailed Engine Info

- A short-stroke engine design with a low average piston speed results in low wear due to the favorable bore-to-stroke ratio.
- A raised camshaft allows for lightweight construction in the valve system components, such as the rocker arms and pushrods.
- Designed to deliver maximum torque over a wide speed range, providing excellent acceleration for its class.
- Three-point engine mounting system.
- Two engine supports welded to the front axle absorb static load, engine torque, and working pressure forces.
- Damping blocks with oil and weather-resistant rubber isolate the engine from the supports.
- A stop on the left damping block limits and dampens engine movements.
- The right damping block conveniently makes it almost impossible to access the starter.
- A rubber-mounted support on the rear axle joint, attached to the substructure, provides additional support.

Cylinder Head

- Made of chrome-alloyed gray cast iron.
- Intake and outlet ports are located on the right-hand side.
- Machined compression chambers prevent hot spots and detonation.
- Integrated water distribution pipe ensures optimal coolant temperature at valves, valve seats, and spark plugs.

Crankshaft

- Forged from tempered steel with three induction-hardened and ground bearings for wear resistance.
- Supported by removable "three-material bearings" with steel backs.
- The middle main bearing handles axial pressure.

Pistons

- The full-skirt design is made from a lightweight metal alloy with a cast-in steel expansion strip.
- The bimetallic effect of the strip limits thermal expansion, maintaining consistent skirt clearance.
- Three individually cast piston rings made of special cast iron.
- The chrome-plated top ring protects against high combustion temperatures.
- Conically ground middle compression ring ("minute ring") manages oil on the cylinder wall.
- An oil scraper ring with two slots allows oil to flow back, lubricating the piston pin bearing.

Camshaft

- Made of tempered malleable cast iron and located in the cylinder block on the left-hand side.
- Driven by a timing chain instead of gears.
- Supported by three removable "three-material bearings" with steel backs.

Valve System

- Overhead valves are made of alloy, draw-tempered steel.
- Exhaust valves feature a welded chrome-nickel-titanium alloy coating for increased heat resistance and longevity.
- The sheet steel rocker arm rests on a ball piece secured to the threaded bolt by a self-locking nut.
- Specially guided pushrods transmit cam movement to the rocker arms.
- The valve control geometry prevents lateral bending moments, resulting in quiet and wear-free operation.
- The rocker arm self-aligns with the valve stem for optimal performance.

Timing Chain

- Automatically adjusting chain tensioner compensates for chain elongation.
- Calibrated compression spring tensions the chain when the engine is stopped or idling.
- Engine oil pressure increases chain tension at higher speeds to accommodate centrifugal forces.
- Oil pressure acts on the sliding and pressure segment, adjusting to the next notch level as the chain stretches.

Intake Manifold

- Vertically oriented intake ports enhance cylinder filling and increase average working pressure. The Opel-manufactured copy of a Carter downdraft carburetor carries the mixture straight down into the vertical ports. A fun fact here is that Opel was the only manufacturer in Germany at the time that was still making its own carburetors in the factory. Almost all other companies had switched to buying from Solex.
- The bypass ducts near the exhaust outlets preheat the fuel-air mixture with hot exhaust gases. This was important because many of the exported Opels were sold to Scandinavian countries.

Lubrication System

- A gear oil pump provides pressurized circulating lubrication. Oil passes through a fine-mesh sieve and the main flow filter before reaching the main distribution channel.
- The oil pump housing is internal to the crankcase and, unfortunately, cannot be easily accessed like on the later CIH engine.

- Crankshaft and camshaft bearings are supplied with pressurized oil.
- Oil thrown off by the crank drive lubricates the cylinder bores.
- A sickle-shaped pocket in the middle camshaft bearing directs oil to the cylinder head for valve system lubrication.
- Oil collected by the oil scraper ring lubricates the piston pin.
- The timing chain and gears are lubricated by oil spray from the chain tensioner.

Special Features of the S-Engine

- Increased output of 48 hp, compared to the standard engine's 40 hp. That's an increase of 20%.

Pistons

- Reinforced base and narrower piston ring grooves for the upper compression rings.
- Two reliefs in the piston top accommodate the larger valve lift from the special camshaft and lower cylinder head, preventing valve-to-piston contact.

Cylinder Head

- Lower head height to achieve a compression ratio of 8.8:1.
- Stamped "8.8" marking on the front left mounting bracket.
- Requires a thinner cylinder head gasket (0.6–0.8 mm) compared to the standard engine (1.4–1.6 mm).
- A semicircular notch in the gasket, located on the left side under the middle support bar, allows for thickness verification using a feeler gauge.

Valves

- Identical in dimensions to the standard engine but made of a different material.
- Feature a "Z" marking on the shaft end.

Camshaft

- Special camshaft with modified cam profiles for larger valve opening paths and improved cylinder filling.

Intake Manifold

- Larger opening cross-section on the carburetor flange (38 mm) compared to the standard engine.
- Features a raised cast "10 S" symbol for identification.

Transmission and Driveline

- 4-speed manual on the floor, all synchromesh.
- Belleville-type dry single-plate clutch with cable operation.
- Unusual layout with the rear engine/trans mount being made by a steel tube around the drive-shaft to the

torque tube mount.

- 3.89:1 final drive.

Suspension

- Unequal-length control arms with special semi-elliptical transverse 3-leaf spring mounted below the lower control arm for the front. This design was intended to have a low center of gravity and a roll-stabilizing effect.
- Parallel traditional rear leaf spring suspension with innovative 6" forward offset mounts and angled shock absorber mounts for a roll-stabilizing effect.
- The rear axle utilizes a torque tube to an unusual central joint that also acts as the rear engine mount, allowing for a flat floor. The torque tube geometry also creates a great anti-dive effect under heavy braking.
- The first GM car with a rack and pinion steering system.

Body And Rust

The body was very efficiently made from twelve major pressings. The state-of-the-art plant allowed Opel to make complex panels and to make the non-structural body section sheet metal thinner than what was previously used on cars. There are plenty of accounts of owners denting the "paper" thin body but being able to pop the dent back out with a well-placed smack.

Opel did do some minor rust treatment, but it wasn't particularly effective. The cars were bonderized, which is more commonly known as a "paint grip" phosphate coating. After bonderizing the panels, the body was dipped in a black epoxy solution to the belt line before being painted. I have seen some remnants of this black epoxy as chips of exceptionally thin paint in the bottom of the frame rails on both of my Kadett "A"s. Clearly, it did not adhere well. In my opinion, Opel did not prioritize rust-proofing on the Kadett "A." It was expected to be a cheap car and replaced before the tin worm finished it off. The body panels in multiple locations are assembled without adequate drainage.

The wheel wells are especially bad. ALL Kadett As will have some rot around the headlight buckets. There is an inaccessible open shelf that narrows into a sandwich of unpainted bonderized steel where the headlight buckets and the fender meet. This area is filled with road debris and cannot be cleaned or drained. I removed over a pound of sediment from each side of my Kadett here. The rear of the front wheel well has a similar issue. Opel included drain holes at the bottom of the fender here, but they quickly get clogged. My Kadett had easily 2 pounds of sediment, rocks, metal, and mud here. This area staying wet results in a major structural disintegration where the A-pillar meets the rocker. Almost all Kadett A's have a hole through the

fender, rocker, and into the driver's footwell due to this design flaw. Finally, the passenger rear rots away on most Kadett A's due to an easily fixable oversight of a non-sealed gap near the gas tank floor support and the fender.

Conclusion

This article has already gone on way too long. If you made it this far into this article, I salute you. I could add a dozen more sections to this, but I need a stopping point.

My final closing remarks will be this. The Kadett "A" is my favorite Opel of all time. Why? The car is almost completely unique in terms of shared design and parts with Opel cars from before it. Of the major components, basically, only the drum brakes are shared with the Rekord. The instrument cluster and a few other items are closely related, but that's about all. In reverse, almost every lower middle-class focused Opel from 1965-1973 shares dozens, if not more, slightly adjusted components from the Kadett "A." Heck, the freaking 1.0L OHV engine that was designed specifically for the Kadett "A" was used virtually unchanged up to 1993 aside from displacement changed (1.1L and 1.2L). The CIH outlived it by a few years, but the CIH had MANY more changes in its lifetime. It has been neat to see the similarities side by side between all of my Opels.

Speaking of the engine, the 993 cc OHV that comes only in Kadett "A"s is the magic recipe for doing a high-performance 1.1L Opel-powered engine build. For some ungodly reason, Opel drastically shrunk the intake port sizes from 28 mm to 18.5 mm in the later model Opel OHV engine, like the 1.1L SR and even 1.2L engines, even though the valve diameters were increased. The later castings, even with 1.2L valves, cannot be ported to get even close to the flow capabilities of a ported 993cc with stock valves. I am currently working on building an 80 hp and 7,500 rpm naturally aspirated street engine from a 40 hp 993cc OHV. The engine will have stock replacement 1.1L pistons, 1.1L stock-sized valves, a stock head gasket, a ported and milled head, a header, separated exhaust ports, and a very mild cam 219° @ 0.050", and a custom intake for a DCOE style throttle body. Once I'm done and the power number is found, I'll write articles on it. In race form, 128 hp has been achieved, naturally aspirated, and inexpensively. There's no telling what can be achieved in the modern age if the well-kept secret of this engine's tunability is shared.

Anyway, I hope you enjoyed learning all about the Kadett "A" and early Opel history. If any of you reading this need any historical documents, factory service manuals, etc, to help you with your Kadett "A"s, send me a message on the OpelGT.com forum (my username is knorm65). I would be

happy to share what I have scanned by request.



In the literature and advertising this car could be referred to as the Caravan, CarAvan, and even CarAVan. *Photo by Kyler Norman*

California GT 1972 – A Family Car

By Olaf Moldzen, Ratzelburg, Germany

This Opel GT rolled off the assembly line on February 15, 1972, in Bochum, Germany. It was delivered to Putnam Buick in Burlingame, south of San Francisco, California. A few weeks later, Joe Thomson, an attorney from Alameda, bought the GT for his son Jim. Joe was 59 at the time and Jim was 24 years old. After a year, Jim apparently wanted a different car and his sister Lynn, then 18 years old, took over the GT.

Joe's daughter Lynn wrote: "The first Opel GT was purchased new for my brother, and when he tired of it, it was passed along to me. I drove it to college in nearby Hayward, CA, in 1973 - 1975, and loved it. It was particularly fun to drive in the summer of '74 when I had a job in Concord and would drive the car on a tiny windy road called Crow Canyon – windows open, radio on, responsive little car on a challenging road through beautiful California live oaks. Then I got married, gave it back to my dad, and I moved to Alaska, where such a car wouldn't be very practical! My dad later picked up the 2nd Opel GT from someone, mostly for parts. He certainly didn't need another car, but liked projects, or at least the thought of one."

The Opel GT was probably only driven until 1976 or 1977. Many parts and the condition of the body suggest that the odometer reading corresponds to the displayed 15,387 miles. The GT had slight front damage during this time, and



Joe and Lynn, in 1974

the upper air deflector in the front area was replaced and the GT was painted white. Joe died in 1994 at the age of 81, his son Jim in 2002 at the age of 54. It is not known when the GT was stored, but it was insured until spring 1989 and registered to Joe Thomson until March 2019.

Lynn continues: "They had been sitting in a garage for a quarter of a century since my dad died, with good intentions to sell or refurbish, but life gets in the way."

In the spring of 2019, Lynn wanted to rent out the garages and that's how Jesse Cortez came into play. Jesse cleared and cleaned the garages and got both GT's in return.

Jesse wrote in March 2019 at opelgt.com: "I was just recently gifted two Opel GT's, one is a '72, the other a '73. Both have been in garages since 1989. The '73 is a bit nicer and didn't have raccoons living in it, so I think that's the one I'm going to work on getting running first (it's the one in the back in the photo). The story on them is that I got them from a woman here in Alameda, CA who has several rental properties that have been in the family for years. One of the cars was her daily driver during college in the '70s, and the other one belonged to her father. She needed them out of the garage because she wants to rent the garage to a tenant, so she gave them to me because I was brave enough to evict the rodents, and deal with the DMV. I've always liked these cars, so I'm excited to get them running."

Jesse then offered the 72 GT for sale at opelgt.com in May 2019 and that's how it came back to Germany.

At the end of August 2019, my wife and I flew to San Francisco to pick up our '67 Rally Kadett from Gil. We then drove from Tuolumne to Alameda and visited Jesse and also took pictures with Jesse's GT and my Kadett. I reported on this trip in *The Blitz*, October 2019.

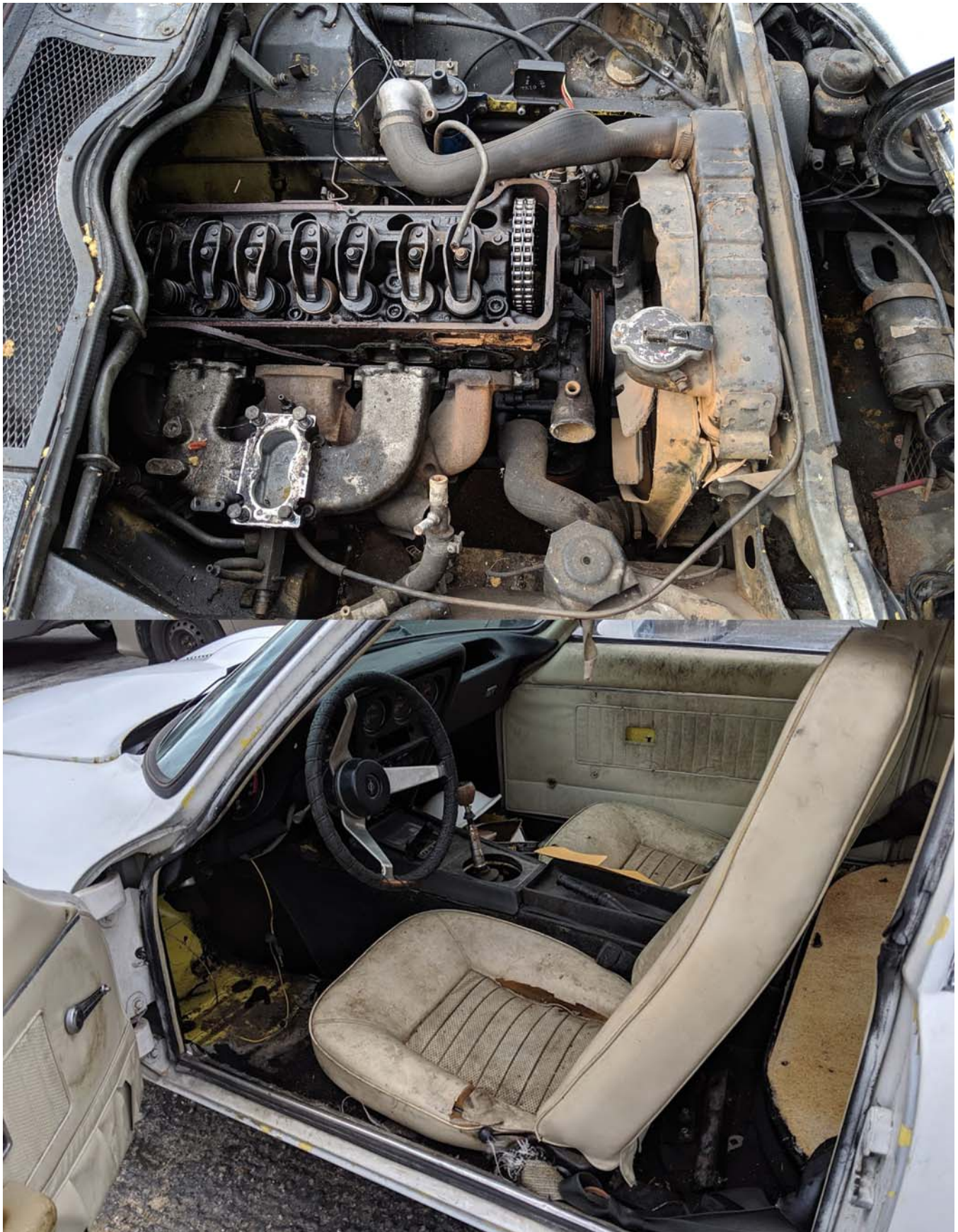
After this trip, I started to disassemble the GT and restore it completely. Due to some other projects and a long break for personal reasons, the restoration was repeatedly delayed, but is now scheduled to be completed in September 2024.

On the body, the lower air deflector and the rear trim strip were replaced with original Opel new parts. Almost all of the add-on parts are also original Opel new parts. After more than 30 years in one of the Thomson's garages, several generations of rodents had unfortunately lived in the interior, meaning that the "buckskin" interior could no longer be cleaned. It was replaced with a



new one. The engine, gearbox (Getrag 5-speed), and axle were also completely overhauled.

Lynn continues: “I loved getting the photos of our Opel’s new life, what a trans-formation! It looks like you’re doing an amazing job - my dad would be so tickled. I’d love to see what the finished product looks like, when everything is said and done. Hope you’re having fun - as we say here, ‘You’ve made a silk purse out of a sow’s ear!’ It would be wonderful to meet you sometime, and to take a spin, definitely.”







Bonneville 3.0

By Mike Meier, John Wurdinger

I can't believe it has been ten years since the Tinyvette had run at Bonneville. Back in 2012 we ran it there for our first time, and turned in a not-bad 117 mph, but we also blew the motor. The 2013 event got rained out but we were back in 2014. We ran that event on a slightly less tuned motor, and while our top speed was down a little, 111 mph, we still had a running car when we got home, which meant we'd be able to run in the following week's Lemons race at Thunderhill.

At that time I decided there was no point in going back to Bonneville until we had substantially more motor, and now in 2024, we have Charles Goin's fantastic 2.5L motor and his new EFI system. The power difference is quite noticeable on the tracks out here, so if we took it to Bonneville we should be able to turn in some much better numbers. So it was decided, the Tinyvette was going back to Bonneville. We'd be participating in the "World of Speed" event in September, running on their 2-mile course, not the much longer land-speed record course.

Then COVID happened. It hit both myself and Kurt, my accomplice in this endeavor, at the same time. We beat it

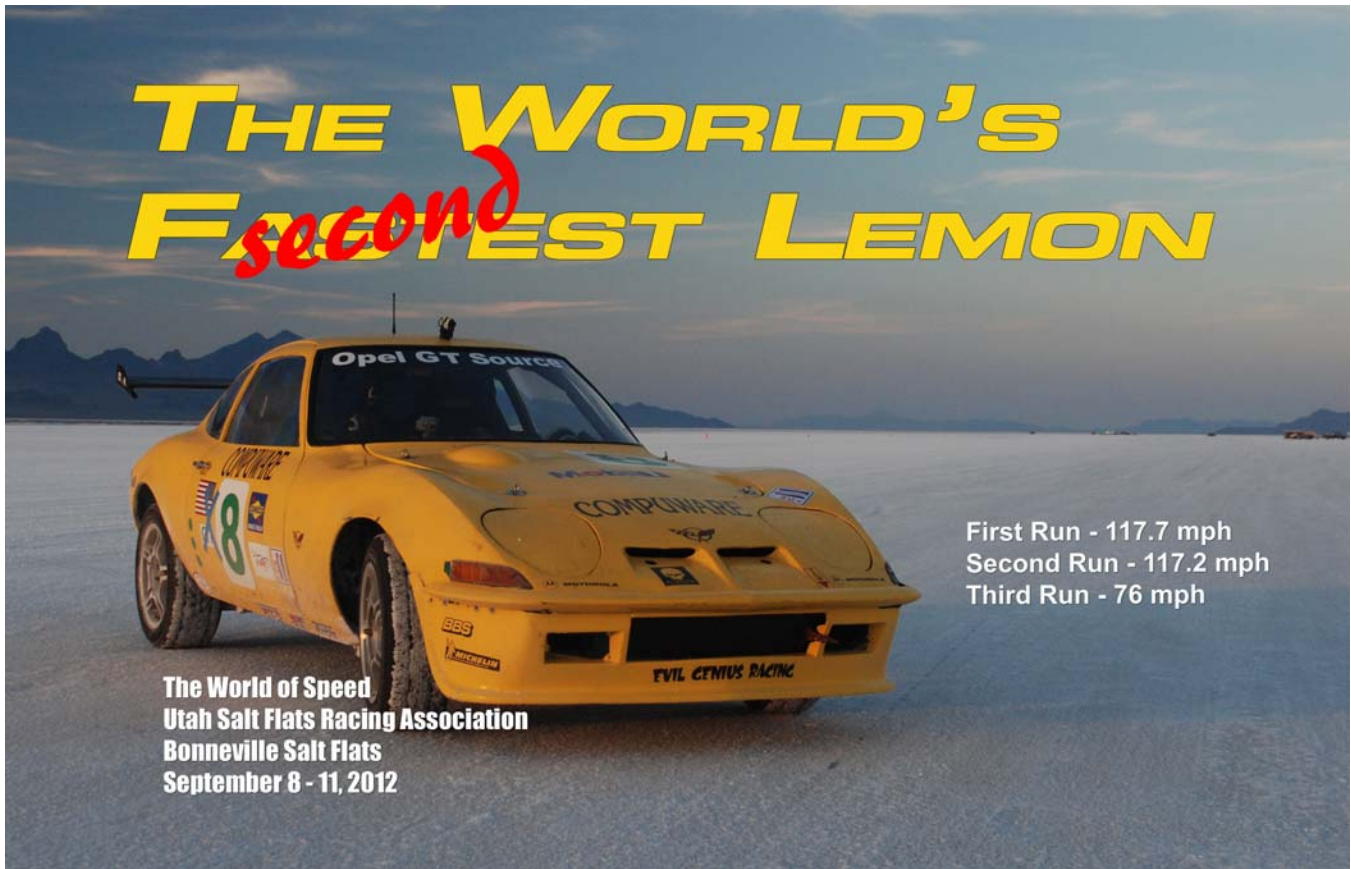
okay, but it cost us a week, and by then I was watching reports online about the cars that were running, and lo and behold, another Lemons car was running. For the past 12 years we had been "The World's Fastest Lemon," mostly because no other 24 Hours of Lemons teams bothered to show up and make a run. Now that one had, our title was in jeopardy.

Our nemesis was a 1959 Pontiac Bonneville, which seemed appropriate for this event. The team, Full Metal Jacket Racing, had been racing in Lemons for a year or two and had done well. We had hoped to meet them and hang out on *The Salt*, but it was not to be.

I messaged the team on Facebook and got the team's story, which follows:

You can say that our original team name was 'Salt Flats Racing' when we debuted the car at Buttonwillow four years ago, but we had to change it after we found out that you guys were actually the kings of the salt and we would've just been posers.

We wanted to make it out to the salt the last two years. However, one year it was flooded and the other year the car was broke. Now that we've run there, we're on the fence if we are going to make it back there to try to make another





 A promotional poster for 'The World's Fastest Lemon' event. It features a woman in a yellow dress standing next to the red Opel with number 762. The text includes the event name, location (Bonneville Salt Flats), dates (September 6th-9th 2024), and a list of race results.

The World's Fastest Lemon

24 LEMONS

The World of Speed
Utah Salt Flats Racing Association
Bonneville Salt Flats
September 6th -9th 2024

First Run 130.22250 MPH
Second Run 133.40425 MPH
Third Run 131.41298 MPH
Forth Run 133.13907 MPH
Fifth Run 146.15648 MPH
Sixth Run 149.53255 MPH

Full Metal Jacket Racing's 1959 Bonneville at: Thunderhill Raceway (top), the start of their 130 MPH Club run (middle), and at the end of the event. They barely missed getting into the 150 MPH Club.

To get ready for this run all we did was change the rear gear set from a 3.43 to a 3.23. Mathematically, it should do 152 miles an hour at 6,200 RPM.

We didn't change the jets in the carburetor, which we should've done as it was running fat, and we should've retarded the timing a bit as we were running in the 6,200 RPM range. Normally for Lemons we have the MSD rev limiter at 5,700 RPM

The first day we went out on the 130 mile track. The world of speed had some issues with the amount of timing equipment that they had, so they ran the 150 club on the big track.

Our first day there we could've had as many passes as we wanted on the 130 track. After receiving our 130 mile an hour club hats we re-registered for the 150.

We lined up on the second day at 8 AM, with Phil Mingus in the driver seat, and didn't get our first run until 2:30 as there were beetles in the timing equipment.

Our second pass on the big track was at closing time at 6 PM on the second day. That's when we hit 149.5 miles an hour.

That night we put higher octane fuel in the car and increased the timing. The next morning we did our pass and it fell flat on its face at 5,700 RPM and didn't want to go any faster. Even so, I'm pretty positive we can do 150 in that car at Bonneville.

Unless someone beats us, I don't think we have a reason to go back.

run to get into the 150 MPH Club. We have the motor to do it, but we'd have to change the rear end out.

Editor: The Tinyvette needs to give them a reason to go back!

The Ultimate Car Show

By Mike Meier

We all go to them. Some are local, others regional, and occasionally they are National. There are the big shows in Charlotte, Carlisle, Minnesota, and other states where our Opels make appearances. Once in a while we'll see an Opel at the really big shows in Reno and Las Vegas. Less frequently we'll see an Opel at Bonneville. "But wait," you protest, "Bonneville is not a car show." Well, obviously you have never been there.

Picture a paddock, two miles long and over a half-mile wide, perfectly white, under an incredible blue sky and surrounded by barren, sculpted mountains. As you slowly drive through it you'll see every kind of hot rod that has ever made a serious run, anywhere. Next to them will be a trailer and tow rig, and maybe a motorhome, and in many cases a canopy that provides shade for the people making last-minute preparations for the main show.

A few miles back, close to where you first drove onto this exotic race surface, you'll see two, and maybe as many as four, quarter-mile-long lines of cars you will never see anywhere else in the world. You'll see 30-foot long streamliners, lakesters that are nearly as long, highly modified cars based on modern sedans and on cars from decades past. And if you are lucky, you'll see a semi or two. You'll see unlikely cars such as Volkswagen Beetles and vans, tiny British sports cars, and you'll even see motorcycles. You'll see just about every class of car you can imagine, and they are not here just for show. Nope, each

and every one of them are here to put on a show.

The cars you are looking at are works of art, aesthetically, and technically. Lowered, streamlined, with air dams and wings, tall tires with moon caps. Some will have hood scoops so large you wonder how the driver can even see where he or she is going. And the roll cages are serious business.

As each car rolls up to its starting position you can watch the team make those last second adjustments. Then the push car comes up and gently contacts the car making the run, and the two calmly await the signal from the track marshal to start their run, to put on their show. Then, when it is time, the push truck gets the car up to about 70 mph before carefully peeling off. The car struggles with gearing meant for much greater speeds, but soon the sputtering engine is running smoothly and now it is a completely different beast. Within 10 seconds or so the car disappears from view, but the glorious sound of its engine reassures you it is running, and running strong.

If you had positioned yourself down range a mile or two you'd see the car come by, about a half mile out from where you are standing, and it will be running strong and steady. But it'll be the doppler effect that you will remember best, and are likely to never forget.

Trust me, four times a year Bonneville hosts the most fantastic car shows on the planet. You simply have to go to one of them at least once in your life.









Thunderhill 16.0

By Mike Meier

I've been driving and instructing at this track since around the year 2000, and I've been racing there since 2010. This year, 2024, was my 16th time racing at Thunderhill in the Tinyvette.

The Tinyvette had not raced in two years. I should be sent to prison for letting that happen. But, circumstances. First, Eric and I were racing the Opel wagon, then... Okay, that's an excuse. The truth is, after the car's 2022 race I took the motor out and cleaned out whatever debris the damaged lifter would have left behind. Then life got in the way.

Now, almost two years later, I needed to finish the job. Everything had been bagged up and kept clean and dry, so all I needed was some free time and motivation, and that motivation came when Charles Goin called and said his new fuel-injection system was ready for its big day at the races. That did the trick, and as for life getting in the way, everything else got put on the back burner.

With about a month to go before the race, I got busy, and while still not doing all that well fighting off various distractions, I took my time and I got the engine all back together and in the car before Charles boarded his plane in Virginia. The day before he left I took the car out for a bit, and it seemed solid enough running on dual DCOEs, so I parked it in the garage, took the DCOEs off, and when Charles got here, I turned the car over to him.

What followed was, well, pretty much what you might expect for a last minute modification. We got it done, but it was a struggle.

We were off to a good start. I had already installed the fuel pump Charles sent in advance, and after that pretty much all I did was fetch tools for him.

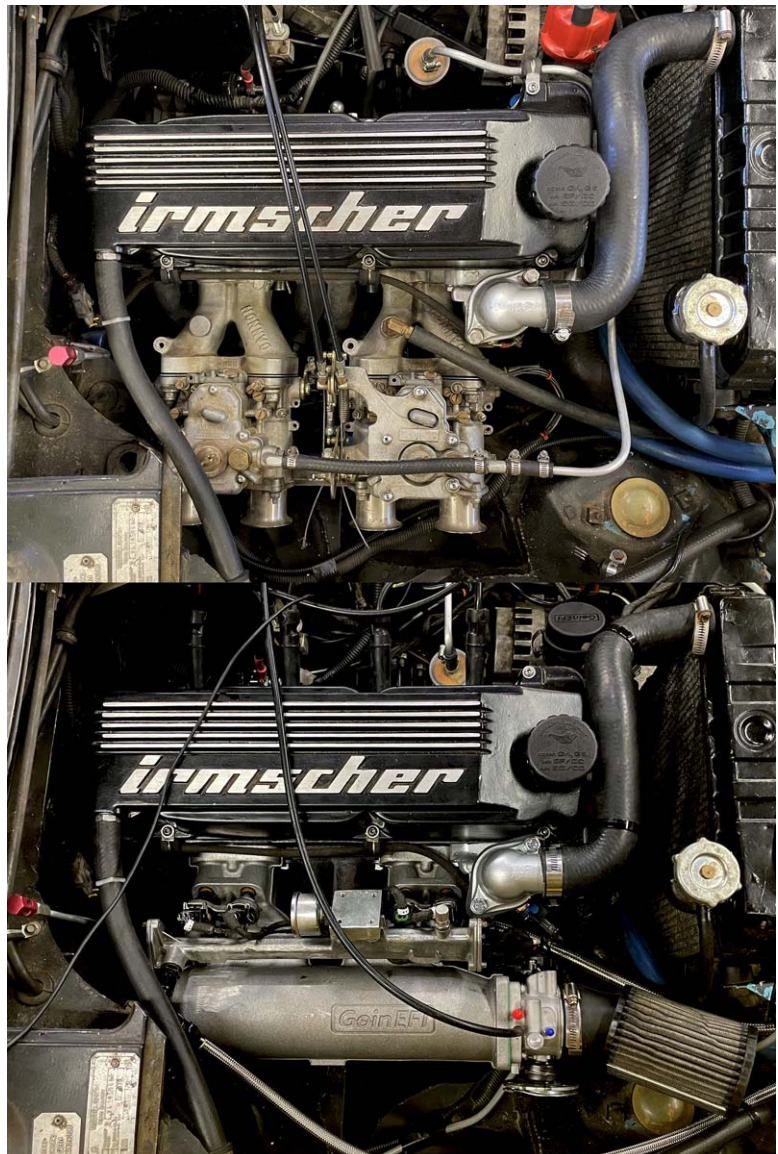
By Wednesday night Charles had everything bolted in, but it had been a long day for him, plus time zones, so we quit, saving the tuning for Thursday.

The initial tuning looked encouraging, but then, nothing. Charles could not get the engine to run right. After hours of trying, swapping injectors and moving them around, and the many other tricks he tried, and now it was already past 2 AM on Friday morning, and I had hoped to be at the track on Thursday afternoon. Best laid plans, and all.

Charles, now disgusted with how things had gone, was about to leave, but I insisted on one more thing we could try. Let's pull the valve cover and make sure everything was okay in there. Charles wasn't interested. He was already thinking about the nice bed at his hotel in Woodland, and had resigned himself to picking up in the morning where we left off, while still not knowing what else he could do.

As I grabbed some tools I told him it would only take a minute, and once I had it off we could both see that a rocker nut on the #2 cylinder had backed off. Cylinder number 2 was not playing nice with the others. Still disgusted, but now guardedly happy, Charles left for the night.

Early the next morning he was back and making good progress with the tuning, while I started packing the



Top, Charles' motor in the Tinyvette, with dual DCOEs.
Bottom: The same, but with Charles' EFI system installed.



Charles in the Tinyvette, taking it out for a few test laps, and Charles' first chance to turn laps on a race track.

Charles was back before I could get much done. He had completed only one lap and decided this was not for him. Full credit and respect for him making that call. You'll find plenty of others in the Lemons paddock who feel the same. They love building the cars, and they love being at the races, but they are not interested in getting in their own cars and racing them, or as one of these people once told me, "I know better."

One of the last things we had to do before we could take the car through tech was to install the fire extinguisher that I had just had re-certified. Simple enough job, right? While hooking up the cable (incorrectly) and pulling the safety pin, I vented the bottle. Now we were screwed. There

was no way we could pass tech with an empty fire bottle. Silverado and hooking up the trailer. We finally wrapped things up a little after noon, and an hour and a half later we were at Thunderhill. The rest of the team was already there, waiting for us.

I had to figure this out. After checking in at the Thunderhill store and making a few phone calls, it was not looking good. After walking the paddock asking other teams for suggestions and maybe for a spare bottle, the guys running the Plymouth Satellite said they had a spare in the "Chicken Car" back in Woodland, not far from where I lived, and where Charles' hotel had been. One of their team members, would be coming up I-505 about now and he could divert to Woodland to get it for us. Those guys saved our butts.

We needed to get the car through tech, and Charles still wanted to get the car out on the track for a few practice/test laps. Meanwhile, I needed to set up our pits and get our paperwork in order. As Charles drove off, his first time ever in the car, and his first time ever on a race track, I got busy with my chores.

Early on Saturday we got through late-tech and BS okay, while Gary suited up. He'd take the first stint. Gary got out on track during the warm-up laps, and spun on his first lap after cresting the hill at T5. How in the heck? The race had not even started. Whatever, he reported in for his black flag then rejoined the race.



Sunday morning, first driver getting strapped in.

Note to non-Lemons racers: one black flag (BF) gets you a finger-wag and a mild scolding, two gets you a humiliating and time-wasting penalty, three gets you parked for a couple of



gave us a chance to go over the car. Charles immediately got busy downloading the data from the ECU while the rest of us looked the car over.

I had known that we had a minor oil leak at the bearing on the rear axle, driver's side, but other than having to keep the diff oil level up, that didn't bother me. But, we decided to do something about it, so the axle came out, a new O-ring went over the bearing, and we put everything back together.

Early Sunday, my first pass, the fantastic Plymouth, the guys who loaned us their fire extinguisher.

While the axle work was going on, Mouse showed up. I had met

hours, and four... put it on the trailer.

Mouse and his sister Cora at the big national Opel event (50th anniversary of the Opel GT) back in 2018, out in Las Vegas (The event included a 1,000 mile tour of the west, hitting Kingman, Flagstaff, Grand Canyon, Durango, Zion, etc.) and while we didn't do much since then in terms of keeping in touch, he had heard we were racing and drove all the way out from Indiana to hang out with us. That made my day.

Gary's stint seemed to be going okay. We did not hear from him over the radio, which tells us he was happy with the car. Then he spun. I forget where, or how, but he reported in and we got our second BF of the day. It's been years since we got even one BF, so this was a bit embarrassing. Nevertheless, the guys bought some get-out-of-jail free cards, which funded a charity, and we resumed the race with minimal delay, and humiliation.

I took the first stint on Sunday. In the cool of the morning, and the car count down more than a bit, it was really nice being out on track. Charles' engine ran strong, and there were a few times when I put it to good use, passing a couple cars by powering by them, which is not something the Tinyvette is known for. But, for some reason, I could not keep my head in the game. I don't know why, but I never got a full lap where I maintained my mental focus, and, yes, I guess it was inevitable, I spun. It was one of

Next up was our new guy, J Farina. He had posted on Facebook looking for a seat at Thunderhill, and being a driver short, I contacted him. He had been racing in Lemons longer than I have, and in a much quicker car, so he'd be a great addition to the team.

J had gotten a few laps in the car on Friday and was reasonably comfortable with it. His stint was going well and he was turning some quick laps, then he spun. Seriously? Now I wondered if there wasn't something wrong with the car. Anyway, we all met at *Penalty* and with this being our third BF of the day, we'd get parked in impound for three hours. Chris Overzet, who was handling all this, let us take the car back to our paddock space to see if we could find the problem, if indeed there was one.



Being back in our paddock space, and temporarily out of the race,

My stupid spin.

those momentary lapses that had me entering a turn a half-second late, but no big deal, two wheels off won't be a problem. Those two wheels off turned into a spin that shot me back across the track going backwards. I waited for the flagger to give the all-clear then proceeded to *Penalty*.

In *Penalty*, I got the deserved finger-wag and was sent on my way. Back out on track, things were going better, and I had some nice dices, then on the back section, entering the straight with a number of cars around me, I got hit. It was not a hard hit, and it was in the left rear quarter, but still. There was no good reason for it, plus, the car was now difficult to drive. I managed to get it to *Penalty*, reported what happened, and Chris Overzet, who was running the show in *Penalty*, told me the left rear tire was flat. Well, that explained the difficult-to-drive part. I returned to our paddock to get a new tire and install the next driver.

Next up was Jon. Like me he had not driven on Saturday, so this was his chance. He drove his whole 2+ hour stint without a problem, as far as the rest of us knew. Once he was back, and we had sent J out in the car, he told me how the car was very difficult to drive, how there was a problem with the steering or front suspension. After J came in, at the end of the race, he also commented on the problem. Once parked in our paddock space I looked at the car, and it sure looked like we had 2-3 inches of toe-out. Something must have broken, possibly a tie rod, or ball joint, or maybe even the steering rack itself, although none of these sounded right, but what else was there?

Back at home again, late on Sunday, I was too tired to unpack, so I left that for the next day. By late afternoon the next day I had the Tinyvette off the trailer and figured I'd drive it a bit to see if I could duplicate what Jon and J had experienced. Rolling slowly down the driveway the car definitely seemed to want to pull to the left, but not badly. Once I got the car on the street and gave it some gas, man,



Top: Me "letting" the Chotus get by in turn 12.

Bottom: Jon at the wheel.

it was impossible to drive! The car wanted to go left really bad. I got it into the garage and the next day looked into the problem. The photo on the next page shows what I found. We had torn the suspension cross-member itself. The welds were okay, but the steel was being ripped apart. After looking at it more carefully, I could see that the crack, or rather, the tear, had gone around the back. That crack had traveled through half the cross-member, and since crack growth rate increases as the crack grows, because there is less and less metal left to handle the load, I'm not sure we had another half-hour in the car before it would fail completely.

I mulled this over. We had not hit anything, but we sure had spun a lot. Then I remembered how years earlier we had started bending the upper control arms. The stress of racing, with better brakes and bigger tires than the car originally came with, was too much for them. They got



Obligatory team photo. From front left to right: J Farina, Mouse, Gary Murph, Jesse Murph, Jon Harlan, Charles Goin, Mike Meier.

reinforced and we never had another problem with them. It seems the problem simply moved inboard a bit and now we have to reinforce the cross-member itself.

I had spare front cross-members, and the work would not be complicated, just don't let the leaf spring break an arm while you are taking it off. If I can get a couple of days free I can fix this, and after that, there's Bonneville.

With Kurt Bainum's help the car is back together, and in a few days (This was written in mid-August) it will join the other oddball cars in the Concourse d'Lemons, and few weeks later it will make its return to Bonneville, Kurt again supporting the effort. (In turn would crew for him the following weekend when he went hang-gliding in Yosemite Valley.) There might be a race to run in December, but I think I'll try to get Eric to run the Opel wagon instead.



The red arrow points to the crack, which also traveled around the back.

Some of My Best Work, But Not My Best Performance

By Mike Meier

For some time now it's been too dangd hot to work outside, and just as often it was too hot to work in the garage, even at night. Today it was a merciful 90°F out at noon, which means I'd see a high in the neighborhood of only 105°F. Yesterday it was 90°F at nine in the morning, which led to a high in the 100-teens. And its been like this since mid-June, when one day it hit 119°F. And while I suppose I could use this as my excuse for not finishing Craig's Ascona, that doesn't account for the previous year.

Back in late October of 2021, Craig flew me down to Phoenix where he lives (Surprise, AZ), so I could get his Ascona and bring back to my place to assemble and get running. It was just a shell, freshly painted before he bought it several years earlier. The engine was nearby, out of the car, as were other parts, but the car itself was on its wheels.

With Craig's brother's help, on the night before I was to return, we put the engine and transmission in the car, then we pushed the car onto a tow dolly. With that done, we filled both the Ascona and the Trooper to the brim with parts and supplies. The next morning, I was off, in his Trooper, for the 800 mile tow home, where I'd work on the car at my place.

I had gotten a later start than we wanted, but I was making good progress, until about two hours after leaving Surprise That's when I saw smoke in my mirror and the Ascona not tracking straight. Before I could get stopped I was passed by one of its wheels, which ran down a semi that had just gone by me and disappeared under its trailer. I fully expected that trailer to leave the ground, but it thankfully didn't.

I gave Craig a call and he and his brother set out immediately with tools and a spare tire. While they were in route I searched for and found the runaway wheel. It would not be going back on the car, and the fresh gouges in the road surface helped me understand why.

Back at the car, I checked the other wheels and all of the lug nuts were loose, and the other rear wheel was thinking seriously about abandoning me.

There's a saying in racing that goes something like, "Show me a man who has never forgotten to tighten his lug nuts, and I'll show you a liar." We forgot to tighten the lug nuts on the Tinvette for its first race, but never since.

On the corner where the wheel was missing, one wheel stud

was broken and another was bent, but for a simple towing situation, I should be fine. Once Craig showed up we installed a replacement wheel then went into town in search of the tool we needed to properly tighten the other lug nuts. This car was not using standard hex lug nuts.

A little before dark I was on the road again and Craig was heading back home. Soon it was dark and that's when I realized the tail lights on the tow dolly were not working. I pulled to the side of busy I-10 to see what I could do about it. The wiring that connected the car to the dolly was damaged, and while I could not get the tail lights to work, I did get the brake lights working. That was not ideal, and in heavy traffic and at night, not safe, so I constantly watched my mirrors and anytime another vehicle approached from behind I touched the brake pedal and kept the lights on until that vehicle got safely past me. I was not enjoying this part of the drive.

At around 2 AM I had had enough and pulled into a parking lot behind a truck stop in Quartzite, tossed the gear in the passenger seat into the back, and slept as best as I could for a few hours. At just before sunrise I was on the road again, and I finally got home late in the afternoon. That day's drive had been rather pleasant.

So now I had this cool Ascona in my driveway and it needed everything, except body work. Plus, I had Craig's faith in me, which was really cool, although I might not have it now.

I told Craig I would not be able to start working on the car right away, and he understood. In January, after completing projects I had going before retrieving the Ascona, I got busy on this again, but before I started in on the Ascona, the Trooper needed some work. All of the belts on the engine were going bad and the radiator mounts were broken, and one of the door handles needed to be replaced. Once all that was done there was still the issue of the trailer lights. I bought new connectors and rewired the sections that needed it. While I was at it I replaced one of the marker lights. The Trooper had other issues, all minor, and while I was not planing on dealing with them, eventually I would.

It wasn't until March that I could dedicate myself to this project, and over the next couple of months I worked nearly every day on this nice car. (It barely rained at all that year or the next.) After unloading what seemed like a ton of parts and supplies, I pulled the motor and put it on my test stand. To it I added my 32/36 carburetor and other essential parts, and did the cam run-in. That went well, but instead of putting it right back in the car I set it aside so I could deal with other issues first. With the car now up on



Safe and sound at my place again, Craig's Ascona would have to wait a bit before I could begin working on it.

somewhere between my place and Arizona. At that point I carefully inspected the rest of the front suspension, and from that point on I would not assume any previous work had been done correctly.

The front brakes job itself went well. The car got new rotors, wheel bearings and seals, and I wire-brushed then painted the "big brake" calipers red. They looked great!

By now it was early May and I had to stop to get ready for a race. (We didn't win. We never do.) Once that was behind me, I was back on the job.

Now the nose of the car was calling for my attention. The headlights, for some reason, were partially red inside, so they

jack stands I got to work repairing the wheel damage and rebuilding the rear brakes. All of that was pretty straightforward and went well, and they sure looked nice. But that's when I could see that the hard brake lines were rotten, so those came out and got replaced. After being under the car a bit I inspected everything again and, not meaning to brag, it all looked great.

While under the car there was still a ton of stuff to do, such as paint over the silver over-spray that was visible when standing next to the car. Also, the return fuel line was crap so I removed those sections of it. I also installed a new fuel pump and all of the vent and filler neck vent lines. So far so good, and so far all fun.

Next up were the front brakes, and as soon as I started in on those I noticed that the lower control arm bolts were loose, or rather more than loose, the nut had backed off almost far enough that it could have disappeared on the road

got replaced, and the headlight trim pieces, they got cleaned up and painted. The bumpers were in good shape but they still needed a couple hours of polishing. Once they were done they looked great, even without the rubber bumper parts.



Brakes, front and rear, were rebuilt, and looked great!

Finally there was the grill to take care of. Craig had sent me home with three, but the two plastic ones were broken at their mounting tabs, so I went with the metal one. It got a lot of straightening, a lot of detail work, then a good cleaning and light polishing, and a little paint. It came out looking pretty good.

Now I focused my efforts on the interior. The carpet needed to be installed correctly, and the seat belts either repaired or replaced. The fronts were not terrible, but the rears were awful. Craig said he didn't care about rear belts so I removed them and threw them away. After taking care of other minor details such as the panel behind the rear seat, and running speaker wires for a future stereo system, I installed the rear seat. It looked great.



The instrument cluster got a good cleaning and inspection, and LED lights. After replacing the left-most gauge, everything bench tested good.

Next, I pulled the instrument cluster and took it inside to my electronics bench. There I disassembled it, cleaned it and found that I needed to replace the left most cluster. Fortunately I had one, left over from the Sport Wagon project. Also, the dash dimmer switch was broken, but I managed to fix it, and all that went together nicely and back into the car.

Next up was making repairs to the inner fender, in front. The previous owner, for some reason, had cut out a roughly 4-inch by 12-inch hole. Maybe he wanted to route the exhaust out that way, or long horns on the carburetor(s). I have no idea, but I got some steel, cut out a patch, hammered it into shape, then cut out and hammered another patch, one that would fit better, and borrowed a friend's welder and welded it in. I am a terrible welder, but with patience and plenty of do-overs, and a side-grinder, it came out nice, I think. You'd have to look twice to

notice the patch.

Before I could install the motor and transmission I had to repair the section of the tunnel we cut out so that we could install them when in Phoenix. The transmission, a Getrag,



It took some doing, but I got the dimmer apart, made the repairs, then found some brass tubing that fit and managed to get it all back together, and working. Not all car repairs involve a wrench.



Before putting the engine back in I needed to repair the big hole in the inner fender.

did not have the correct shifter. It was too long. I took the shifter to the shop of the Lemons head tech guy and he took care of shortening it. While he was doing that I repaired the cuts we had made to the transmission tunnel.

The center console needed cleaning and repainting, so that got done, and where the ash tray had been, I installed a

transmission mount, went surprisingly well, even if it did mean more time on my back under the car. At least it wasn't 119°F out. (The high for that summer was 123°F.)

While a lot of progress had been made, it was now August and there was still plenty to do, starting with the underhood wiring. The original harness had been hacked, and

parts had been cut clean off and were gone, so that took a little work, figuring out which wire did what. I strung the wires for the lights and horn, then the senders and gauges, and finally the ignition. For that I went with a Petronix ignition and Fireball coil. I also built a small panel that provided the fuses that in a stock system was handled by fusible links, and I installed relays with fuses to handle the starter, and both radiator fans. I think it came out well.

With the carburetors being dual DCOEs, I knew from experience that they do not produce enough vacuum to support power brakes for more than one or two pushes of the pedal, so I installed a vacuum reservoir, the same kind



The engine was ready to be installed.

I have in the Tinyvette. It looked really great!

By the way, the DCOEs needed some work. Craig had sent me home with four of them, two 45s and two 40s. I convinced him the 45s were too much and then I started working on the 40s, the discovered that the main housings of both of them were cracked. Craig sent me replacements and I got busy with them. They looked great but would need a few parts, and by this time Craig didn't want to hear about DCOEs any more, so I offered to loan him my 32/36. (Later Craig would opt for a Sniper. I have a separate article here about that.)



By now it was getting cold out and I was juggling projects, I had just finished Paul's GT. We did that work at a friend's place, in a spacious building, cold but spacious, well-lit, and dry. With that done, I moved the Ascona there and for the next couple of months that's where I would work on it.

While the rear seats were easy to install, the front seats would be a challenge. They were not the original kind of seats and it would be very difficult to install them using the original hardware. I found a sticker under the seats that identified the seller, and I tried to contact them, but they were long gone.

Fortunately, about this time, Eric gave me the seat mounts he had made for the Sport Wagon that we race. He wanted to make a nicer set, so I got his original one. With very little modification I got them to fit. I did have to cut and install aluminum panels under the seats to give me something to attach the sliders to, but after only two tries I got it right. All I had to do was make another one for the passenger seat. That was fun. Not really, but it got done.

The solution to the radiator fan problem was to install two small fans.

Craig had sent me home with a new Chinese-ium aluminum radiator, and it was finally time to install it. This turned out to be a little complicated as we were going to run an electric fan, and there was no room for it between the radiator and the engine. Plus, I was going to install an A/C, so I also



The interior was coming together. The center console looked like new, the gauge cluster was in and the A/C console, too.



The DCOE 45s were too big, and the first pair of 40s was damaged, but the second pair looked good. After ultrasonic cleaning the small parts the carburetors still needed a few parts. At that point the plan to use DCOEs was abandoned.

needed to install that condenser, meaning I would not be able to install fans in front of the radiator.

The solution to the fan problem was solved by the good folks on OpelGT.com, who pointed me to small electric fans that I could mount, two of them, directly on the radiator. As for the A/C condenser, that took some fussing, but I eventually worked out a good way to install it and run the hoses to the compressor.

Installing the A/C console in the car was more work than anticipated. I did a couple of test installs, without hooking anything up to it, and realized I'd need to modify the glove box door so everything would fit. So, after some cutting and fitting and more cutting and fitting and glueing the pieces I had cut off back in to fill the holes, that was ready, but only after installing a felt liner to make it look nicer in the inside, and hide all of my hacks and glue joints.

Once all that was done, and after a half-dozen more test fits, the console was in and I hooked up the hoses and electrics. It was now ready to be charged, but I decided to hold off on that until I knew everything else worked correctly.

With this done, I convinced a friend I race with (Eric, he owns the Sport Wagon we race.) to come out and help me install the exhaust. He was an excellent welder, and between us we gave the car a nice exhaust system, one that exits

ahead of the passenger-side rear wheel.

Surely now the car could be driven. After adding brake fluid and flushing the lines, it was, so I drove it back onto the tow dolly so I could get the car back to my place. After a little more fiddling with it here I took it out, but not far, just down the road a bit. That was all I needed. The brakes worked fine, other than not having power brakes, and the clutch did not engage until the pedal was almost all the way up. The steering was okay but I would be taking the car to an alignment shop anyway.

By this time, late in 2023, I had been juggling projects for a time. I was becoming more and more busy helping a friend get his 1936 Ford back on the road. His

great-grandfather bought it new, then his son took it from his too-old-to-drive dad. In turn, his son inherited it and it wasn't driven much after that, and it got parked in a barn in 1957. Now we were going through it to make it drive-able again. It is not a restoration. It will look and feel just like the car his father had driven, mechanical brakes and all.

While that was happening Paul Camilleri came by to look at the green '69 I got from Richard Council a few years prior. He was looking for a GT to buy, but mine was not a good fit for him. He ended up getting one from another guy in Sacramento, and it looked great, but it needed a lot of work, from replacing the headlight wiring on down. We ended up taking out the interior, including the dash and heater, the windshield, one door-window, and much more. We finished that car in early 2024. It's running great now and Paul has just taken it to the big Hot August Nights show in Reno.

Shortly after that Dillon Ramos had recently purchased a very nice looking GT, one that needed work, nothing horrible, but still a couple of weekends of work.

And soon after that Dillon's brother made a down payment on Richard's car, and that's when we started getting together to work on it. I had already done a lot to it, but it still needed a few things, like a new fuel level sender, some instrument panel work, and some tuning. While we were at it, I gave him a carpet kit I had and we installed that. The car will need a few more days work but then it should be

ready for the road.

And then there was Tom's Miata. A year or so earlier he had me go down to San Jose to retrieve it, keep it at my place, and when he was ready, we'd get to work on it. Last spring he was ready, so I was juggling that project. It was going well and it should not take long before I could get it out of the way and get back to work on the Ascona. But then it got hot, and like the Ascona, that project got put on hold. Clearly I need a large, air conditioned garage, but then don't we all.

Oh, and I forgot to mention Keith's Austin-Healey Sprite, which is taking up space in my garage for too long.

For most of 2023 work on the Ascona would come a week or so at the time, then I'd be off to take care of something else while I waited for the rebuilt brake booster to arrive, for instance. Then my four months off for an unexpected medical did not help. Anyway...

The pattern here is, one project gets stalled, so to keep rent money coming in I need to move on to the next one, and so on. It's the same with my writing. One book is done but is stalled while we work out the details of how to get it out. Meanwhile the next book is stalled about mid-way through while I wait for relatives of the people in the story to get back to me. Hopefully they are still alive. They are at that age where you would wonder. And now, with it too hot to work outside after 10 AM, two book projects stalled, one GT project on hold, the Ford project waiting for its owner

to return to the country, the Miata, and the Sprite, I start this issue of *The Blitz*, and to top that off, I have started thinking about doing a second edition of "How On Fire Are We?" Plus, Monterey Car week is coming up and I'm taking the Tinyvette down there to be in a show. I guess I'll never learn. With so many distractions, how is a person expected to get anything done.

Meanwhile, I drove Craig's Trooper once in a while, to keep the battery charged, and at one point had to replace the fuel level sender. Then the brakes were screeching, so the fronts got new rotors, bearings, and pads, while the rears got new pads. At least I was doing something productive.

By now it was June of 2024, and all I needed to do was get out there, crawl under the car again, and adjust the clutch. I kept putting that off until we had an under-100 degree day, but I finally got that done, last week. On that same day, while doing some basic under-hood cleaning and inspections, I noticed the brake fluid reservoir was near empty. Odd, I thought, but I refilled it. I might have a problem.

As frustrating as the current situation is for me, it must be much worse for Craig, the Ascona's owner. I am sure he is frustrated, and while I don't see him as the patient type, he has been patient with me.

Mid-November Update: The repaired brake booster and master cylinder are back, and as soon as I can push the white GT out of the way I can finish the Ascona.



Two New Tinyvette Books

By Mike Meier

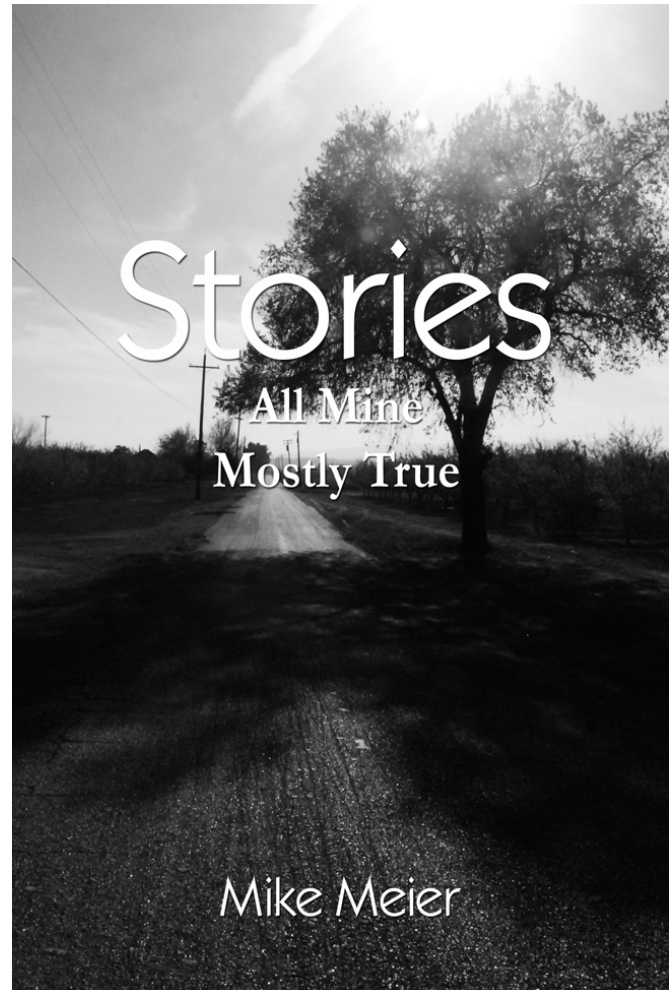
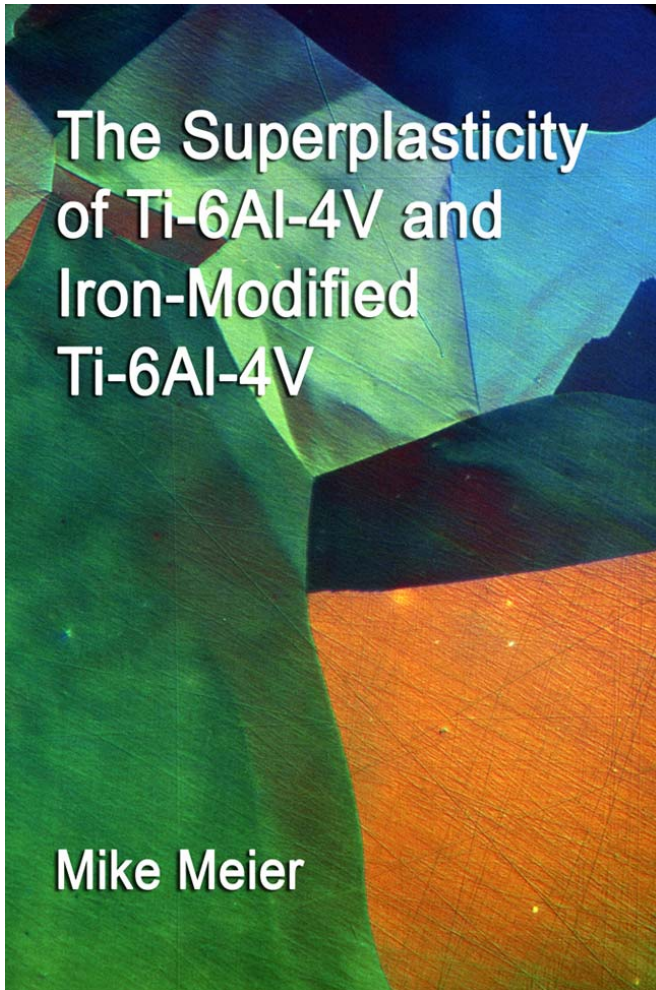
Last year at around this time, I was out of commission. There would be no racing, no wrenching, no picking up a bag of groceries. So with so much free time on my hands, what's a former Opel newsletter editor to do? Catch up on writing projects! So that's what I did. I cranked out five books, two of them about the Tinyvette and the fun we have been having with the sweet, little, yellow car.

One book is a lot of work, but five, in a matter of months? Superhuman! Actually, not. Two books, my master's thesis and PhD dissertation, had already been written, but I wanted an attractive book version, something that would look nice on my bookshelf, instead of the bland, chunky letter-size, velo-bound, double-spaced tome the University had asked for. Even so, the job of importing the text from vintage 1993 WordPerfect files, redrawing some of the illustrations, and scanning countless graphs and diagrams, that was work, and I loved it. I had a couple copies printed and gave one to my then girlfriend, who helped me proof-read the original, and whom I am still close to. Other than

her, and perhaps a few family members, that pretty much ends the distribution story of that book project, unless someday the Nobel Committee wants to talk to me.

A book project that took a little more work and involved quite a bit of writing was "Stories, All Mine, Mostly True". This one is a collection of little stories I had written over the years. Some were based on dreams I had, others were based on incomplete family histories, and several were about things I actually did, such as ride my bicycle to California, from North Carolina.

For that last one, I had kept a journal in which I wrote down my daily progress and impressions, so that part was easy, except it only covered the first third of my journey. But, I still had the hand-written (no computers in 1979) account in which I had that described the last third of my journey. All I needed to do was figure out the middle-third part, and after going through the notes in the back of my journal, in particular the names and addresses of people I met along the way, and after spending countless hours on Google Maps, retracing my route, I had it, the story. In my research there were times I employed street-view so I could make sure that was indeed the bar I stopped at that night at



10 o'clock when I rolled into Ness City, Kansas after knocking off a very long 150 mile day. Wow, did that effort bring back memories, such as rolling into the city park in Leoti at around 5 PM the following day and there meeting a guy, a sign-painter, (I had noticed his handiwork in towns I just passed through.) and his dog, which seriously checked me out before letting me sit at the picnic table with his owner.

Or another, leaving a small town near the Kansas-Colorado border and for a change I was feeling really, incredibly, good on my bike. The weather was perfect, and for the first time in over a week I didn't have to fight that persistent Kansas wind. It was cool out, and sunny, and the pavement was perfect, practically new. The road was curvy and it undulated a bit, totally different from the straight, flat road I had been on for nearly a week. While riding I watched my red-LED digital watch, and got my time between mile-markers. Taking out a pen and doing the math on my thigh, I calculated 22 mph, which is not bad for a fully loaded touring bike, or for any bike for that matter.

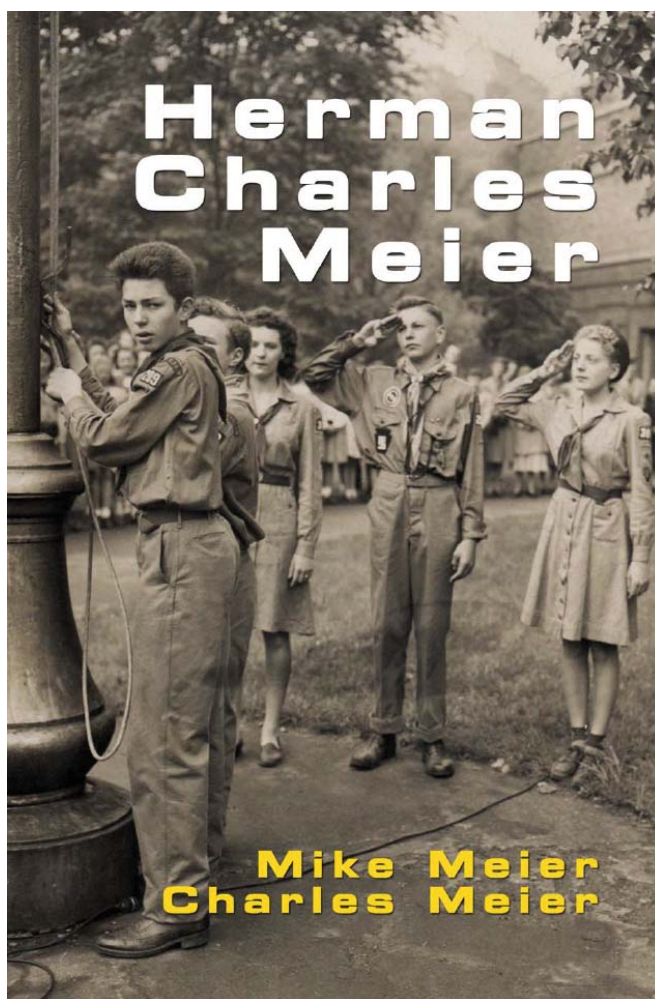
It might seem I have gotten a little off track here, telling you about book projects unrelated to Opels, but I'll get back to that later.

And then there was the sad story of my mother. I had written about her before but this time I really wanted to dig in and bring out all that had happened, for my sake and for my brothers, who barely remember her.

It's amazing what you can remember, forty and even sixty years after the fact.

I gave a copy of "Stories" to my brother when he came down for Thanksgiving. With me still on the mend he wanted to help out by cooking the turkey, and since we rarely saw each other, a visit was due.

During dinner we agreed that "Stores" had pretty much left out our father, but then as we thought about it more, we barely knew him, or rather barely knew him as a person. That's when we agreed I should do a book about him, but all I had to go on was his military records and a high school yearbook, which my brother had brought with him. I also had a subscription to Newspapers.com and believe it or not that helped fill in some gaps from his early childhood. The resulting book was not much in the way of narrative, or page count, but it had a fairly detailed timeline, and tracing his military record provided some insights into his life. Apparently he was quite the dynamo at work (B-52 crew, Strategic Air Command, US Air Force), and much the opposite at home. I guess a guy has only so much energy to burn in a day.

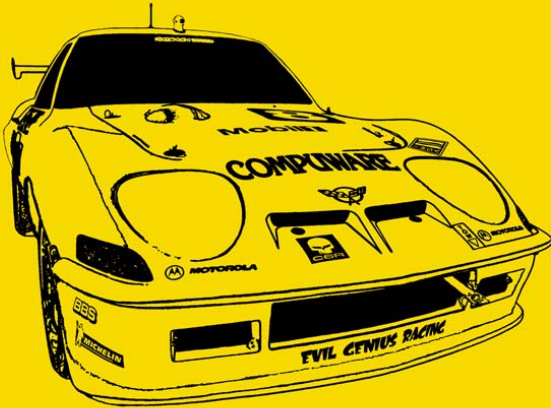


As you probably know, I've been writing about our races in the Tinyvette since before I took on the job of editor of this publication, and while many of those stories appeared in *The Blitz*, a number of them, especially from the early days of our racing, did not. And, my teammates knew I had written about them, but few had ever been able to read those stories, so I sat down to collect them and put them in a book I could give to them, and holy cow, I had written a lot! By the time I was done I had over 500 pages and countless photos. This would have to be a two-volume set. Imagine that, a two-volume book set for a crapcan racer.

It was a really fun project, collecting and re-reading all of those stories, reliving some of those adventures. For example, our first race, where we broke the transmission in the first hour, then went on to collect enough black flag penalties to get us parked for the rest of the afternoon, only to resume racing on Sunday with an engine that was overheating, bogging horribly, steering and braking were going south on us, and we were going through gas like crazy. In left handed turns some strange liquid was being misted onto the windshield, and that should have been a hint, but there

Team Tinycvette

Today Lemons, Tomorrow Le Mans!



Thirty-four races on five different tracks, 18,874 miles in 6,592 laps, two events at Bonneville, one Cannonball Run, countless memories, and lifelong friends.

Mike Meier

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Team Tinycvette

Today Lemons, Tomorrow Le Mans!



Thirty-nine races on five different tracks, 18,874 miles in 6,592 laps, two events at Bonneville, one Cannonball Run, countless memories, and lifelong friends.

Mike Meier

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was already so much going on, and anyway, we did not catch fire. That was a day to remember, and easily forgotten, had I not written it down.

And that's my point, well, one of them. The first is, if you've enjoying reading about our racing adventures over the years, I think you'd like these books. And second, my main point for this article, is: Write. It. Down. Make yourself and your family and heirs a book about things, things you did or thought or wished you had done. Tell your story. It does not have to be a biography, and it doesn't have to be something that your local library would want. It could even be just a picture book featuring your Opel, or other life events. Just do it for yourself and those close to you.

I'm writing this at a time when I just finished a book about the life of a storied crop duster from the early days of that profession, and am now deep into the story of a friend's grandparents, who also led extraordinary lives. Ordinary people themselves, they were part of the rise of steel in this country, were almost casualties of it, and were finally spit out after the nationwide strikes of 1919 failed. Then, after moving to California to start over, the father took a job

stringing power lines downstream of the newly completed Saint Francis Dam. If you know anything about that dam you know how that turned out for him. Picking up the pieces, the single mother of five in the 1930s got her family through the depression, the dust bowl, and World War II, after which she and three of her kids, all now grown, took off to Alaska to become homesteaders. Their story is being written down, so it will endure, and their grandchildren and great-grandchildren and so on will know who these two people were.

And one final point, recalling those old memories was fun, and telling those stories even more fun. Think of Grandpa sitting in his rocker going on about the good old days. He's probably having a great time. And I've known a number of people who have listened to Grandpa's stories and had wished they had written them down. And I know racers who had wished they had written down their old uncle's stories about racing back in the day. I had an uncle who raced in early stock cars series, in a lower level than NASCAR, but often against the future big names such as the Allison brothers. I'd love to be able to read his story. Alas.

Photo Gallery

By Mike Meier

The following pages contain photos from previous issues of *The Blitz*, photos taken by Gil Wesson during his visits to Germany, and still more that people sent in for this gallery.

- Page 81 Four Opel GTs at the Road Trip Café in Capay, CA, during a winter meet-up. *Photo by Mike Meier*
- Page 82 LT's 1971 Opel GT. *Photo by Mike Meier*
- Page 83 The Opel emblem on Alan Brattesani's Opel GT. *Photo by Mike Meier*
- Page 84 Paul Camilleri's under his GT, with a 1936 Ford looking on. We'd have the car back on the road soon. *Photo by Mike Meier*
- Page 85 Paul Camilleri's GT, getting a thorough going-through. *Photo by Mike Meier*
- Page 86 Linda Delp's GT "BluFire," on it's way to Carlisle. *Photo by Mike Meier*
- Page 87 The Tinyvette, at home, undergoing post-race maintenance. *Photo by Mike Meier*
- Page 88 Paul Camilleri's GT at the Road Trip Café in Capay, CA during a winter meet-up. *Photo by Mike Meier*
- Page 89 LT's 1971 Opel GT, in the hands of it's new owner and heading for its new home. *Photo by Mike Meier*
- Page 90 GTs at a car meet in Germany. *Photo by Gil Wesson*
- Page 91 Alex Zaychenko's 1973 Opel GT at Paul's place in Mountain Ranch, CA. *Photo by Alex Zaychenko*
- Page 92 Pascal Kemna's 1970 GT at a car show at the Berlin Olympic Stadium. *Photo by Pascal Kemna*
- Page 93 Kyler Norman's GT at a car meet in Oklahoma City. *Photo by Kyler Norman*
- Page 94 Jeffery Widder's Opel Manta Luxus at Ambler's Texaco gas station on the historic Route 66, in Dwight, IL. *Photo by Jeffery Widder*
- Page 95 Phoenix Racing's Opel GT in for a driver change during a 24 Hours of Lemons race at Sonoma Raceway. *Photo by Mike Meier*
- Page 96 Alex Tillman's Opel GT, out for a drive after an early snowfall. *Photo by Alex Tillman*
- Page 97 Linda Delp's car "BluFire," at Bonneville, during a brief stop on its way to the big Carlisle show. *Photo by Mike Meier*
- Page 98 Charles Goin's 1996 Calibra, at Omaha Beach, in France. *Photo by Charles Goin*
- Page 99 Rob Fisher's GT, having gotten a good work-over after sitting in a garage for over a decade. This car is now in Canada. *Photo by Mike Meier*
- Page 100 The Tinyvette, parked on a dry lake bed the morning before it's first runs at Bonneville. *Photo by Mike Meier*
- Page 101 The Tinyvette, enjoying a sunset at Bonneville. *Photo by Mike Meier*
- Page 102 Eric Beckman's Opel Sport Wagon racing at Buttonwillow Raceway. *Photo by Mike Meier*
- Page 103 Philipp von Weitershausen's SC Bitter #243, running in the rain during a 24 Hours of Lemons race at Sonoma Raceway. *Photo by Todd Lappin*
- Page 104 Kyler's Opel GT at his home. *Photo by Kyler Norman*
- Page 105 Joe DeBattista's 1964 Opel Kadett. *Photo by Rob Morell*
- Page 106 Gary Murph racing at Buttonwillow Raceway, CA. *Photo by CaliPhotography*
- Page 107 Gil Wesson's tribute to the famous Conrero Opel GT. *Photo by Mike Meier*
- Page 108 Don Michaelson's fabulous 1975 Sport Wagon. *Photo by Joshua Gatlin.*
- Page 109 Jessa Jorgensen's 1972 Opel GT and kitty named Jones, *Photo by Jessa Jorgensen*
- Page 110 Bill Ward's Opel GT at Bonneville. This car reached well over 200 mph. *Photo by Ray the Rat*
- Page 111 Erhard Schnell. *Photo by Gil Wesson*
- Page 112 Erhard Schnell. *Photo by Opel, probably*

































































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Send ad copy and payment (payable to Opel Motorsport Club) to *Blitz Editor*.

Article Submissions

We are always interested in receiving articles, photos, club events and news. Submissions can be hand or typewritten, or preferably a common electronic document such as ASCII Text, WordPerfect, Open Office, or Microsoft Word, Publisher, or Works.

Illustrations: Drawings and photos are also welcome. Please submit these electronically using a common file format and with sufficient resolution to look good printed, minimum 180 dpi, ideally 300 dpi.

Deadline: We can usually accept submissions up to about two weeks before our mailing deadline.

Photo Opel Submissions

For *Photo Opel* submissions we are looking for great photos, not snapshots, of Opels and Opel-related subjects. If you have such a photo, and you either took the photo or own the rights to it, by all means send it in. If selected it will appear in an upcoming issue of *The Blitz*. Please note that your photo will be printed at roughly 6"x4" and we will need 180 ppi minimum and ideally 300 ppi images.

Opel Centerfold Submissions

Could your slinky, sultry, shiny, sexy Opel, boldly if not provocatively posed, under seductive lighting, possibly be centerfold-worthy? Is your Opel one of those few that “everybody wants,” one that sets a standard for beauty and grace, one that gives all other Opels hope while making all other marques bitter and jealous? Well, we want to see it. Everybody wants to see it! Send in your best photo of the car, one that is suitable viewing by children and full page landscape printing, along with a smaller photo of you with the car, along with the car’s back story, the personal version, not your build diary. And don’t forget to provide your car’s vital details, including “Best Features,” “Turn-ons,” and “Turn-offs.”

Copyright Policy on Submissions

Your submission does not become property of OMC. We want to encourage people to tell the world about their Opels and the fun they are having with them, so if you later manage to convince Road&Track or Grassroots Motorsports or others to publish your story, we don’t want to get in the way. We do, however, need for you to grant us permission, in perpetuity, the use your submission in OMC projects and publications, such as *The Blitz*, posters, banners, reprints, books, post cards, videos, on the web site, Facebook page, calendars, etc. And obviously, you must hold the copyright to your article or photos, i.e. be the creator and have not transferred the copyright to anyone else. Also, in this same spirit of openness, if another publisher wants to reprint your submission (article, artwork, or photo) we will contact you to make the proper arrangements.

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Hub knock-offs from Eric Patton's Opel GT, indicating that there was once an Opel club in the Sacramento region.



Opel Clubs Past

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