

Ruby's Mutt

By Gary Ruby

OK, so a lot of us are car enthusiasts who enjoy many different aspects of the old car hobby. It's one thing to find a great restoration project '60s muscle car, or a big finned late '50s Mopar and then do most of the restoration work yourself. But sometimes you come across an aspect of the hobby that's a little out of the mainstream of just collecting the BIG IRON. I'm talking about little iron, not automotive toys – but pedal cars.

There are regional car shows that have special competitions for restored antique pedal cars. Some of the restorations rival the quality of the best show cars. Last year AACA national commissioned twelve newly designed and produced pedal cars from well-known restoration shops to auction off for the benefit of the AACA Museum and the Library. The pedal car auction raised money and was a popular feature at the Hershey Friday collector car auction. AACA national plans to have

a second group of pedal cars made this year.

About four years ago I went to look at a 1951 Chevrolet that was for sale. When I got there and looked over the car carefully, I decided that it was not one that I wanted.

However, I spotted something of interest in a corner of the man's garage; a '41/'48 Murray Pontiac pedal car. I explained to him that I wasn't interested in the Chevrolet, but did want to buy the Pontiac pedal car, and asked what he wanted for it. This guy was pretty crafty. He told me that the pedal car wasn't for sale, but if I bought the Chevy he would give me the pedal car. So after some haggling, I ended up owning two cars – a big one and a little one.

I brought my two-car purchase home and promptly sold the Chevy and put the pedal car in the garage. About two years ago, I took the little Pontiac apart

and started getting pieces chromed when I had the extra bucks. Then I stripped it to bare metal, but I kinda forgot it for a long time because of big car projects that I was working on.

If you look into pedal cars, you'll find that there are nice reproductions available of all the classic ones made in the past. And if your interest is in restoration, many of the parts are available too. These little cars are toys to a degree, but if you look at the exploded drawing, there are dozens of parts and sheet metal that is fairly intricate.

Well, my little car started to get some surface rust. So I had to get to work on it, plus I got tired of seeing it looking bad. I had a guy who works at a Chevy garage paint it for me in a Corvette color and trimmed it in silver. Next came a ride up to a stainless steel shop for all of the fasteners. This pedal car came out great, I'm very pleased.

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Gary Ruby's restored Murray '41/'48 Pontiac pedal car



Two of the AACA pedal cars that were auctioned off during the Hershey Fall Meet – a '55 Chevy and a Packard

Ruby's Mutt - continued

Murray Pontiac

LOADS OF FUN!

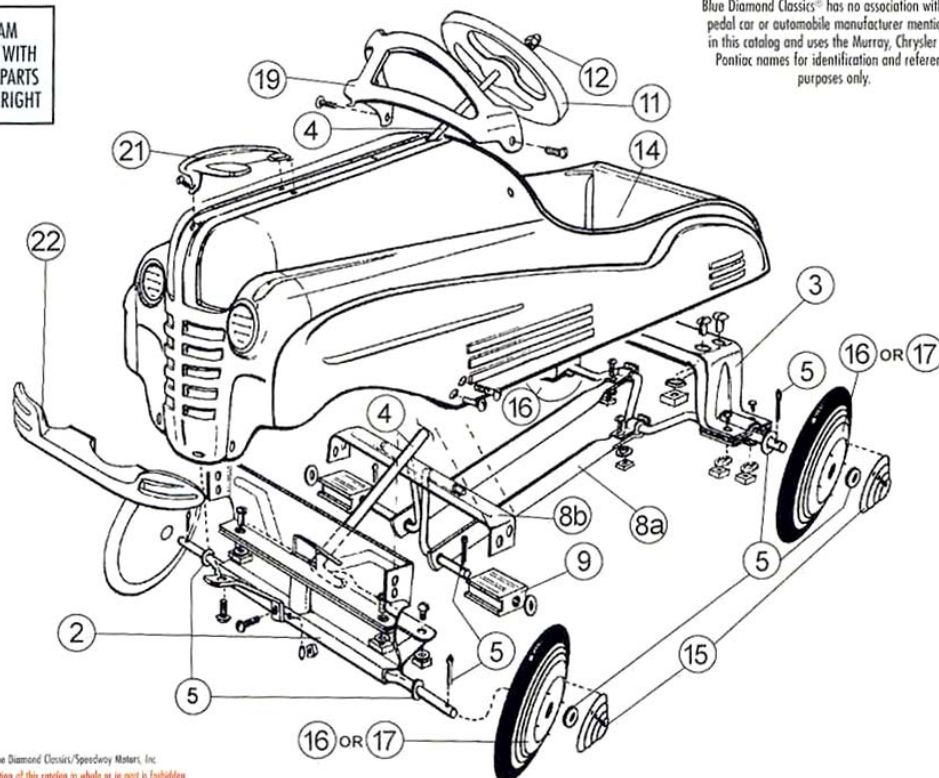


The 1948 Murray "Pontiac" was first introduced in 1941 as a style change to the '41 Chrysler pedal car. The molds for the newly designed "Pontiac" were used from March through December of 1941. Manufacturing then ceased as Murray's facilities, like many others in the U.S., dedicated their production towards the war effort, leaving the barely used molds for the "Pontiac" shelved and it's fate in question.



In 1948 Murray decided to dust off those molds for a two year run of the "Pontiac" which produced a Star automobile, a Pontiac, and a Pontiac Fire Chief in sedan form. Murray then added an extended rear area and a step to produce the Hook and Ladder and a Station Wagon with a working tailgate. At some time during the interrupted production time a Service Truck with an authentic wrecker boom was among the offering from Murray. The '48 ('41) "Pontiac" was very popular, considering the odd production run, and today is a great find for any collector.

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