

'HONEYMOONCAR'

Ron and Julie Siegrist Provide A Life-Long Documentation On Their Beloved 1952 Oldsmobile '98' Convertible

By Ron and Julie Siegrist

Once upon a time, I was a young man and I had driven my 1946 Chevrolet Coupe through five years of college. It was now 1952 and I was a graduate electrical engineer with a brand new job. I decided I should have a new automobile commensurate with my current station in life.

During my college years, I observed that young women seemed to like guys that drove convertible automobiles. The thought rushed into my mind, why don't I have a convertible? Thus, began my search for a new car. I looked at and drove dozens of cars until one day, I stopped by an Oldsmobile dealer. There, in the number one spot in the showroom was an Arctic Blue, 1952, '98' convertible with blue leather interior and black top. Of course, it was love at first sight. I told myself to be practical because it might not drive as nicely as it looked, and it cost a King's ransom at \$4,000 as equipped.

Drive it, you 'li buy it!

After I convinced the sales people I was serious, a test drive was arranged. Once I slid behind the wheel, the search was over, there was no contest! Other makes and models quickly faded out of my mind and I completely forgot how to spell the word *Chevro...*? When I pressed the accelerator on the Olds, the car seemed to leap forward. It had power steering, so it handled effortlessly. Nothing I had ever driven before was as smooth and responsive.

More shifting gears to start, stop or go around corners. The driver simply steered! I didn't even have to wind up windows or push seats back and forth.

those years did I ever consider selling the car.

Not long after I bought the Olds, I met a beautiful girl named Julie. Soon, my earlier observations regarding girls and guys with convertibles was born out, and with the help of my '52 Oldsmobile '98' convertible, I talked Julie into marrying me. After our wedding reception, we stepped into the convertible and went on our honeymoon.

During the next several years, the Olds brought our daughters, first Susan and four years later Carol

home from the hospital. As the girls grew, they began to call our beautiful convertible 'Old Betsy.' Although it was, and still is difficult for me to accept such an unflattering name, 'Betsy' has stuck and to this day, most people still refer to our Olds as 'Betsy.'

During the ensuing years, we drove our Olds convertible everywhere and were always thrilled with her beauty and performance. I remember when the car was about one year old and I drove it from Baltimore

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Ron and Julie pose between Betsy and their 1948 Chevrolet Cabriolet that Ron also restored. Julie is holding a 'top twenty' award they received at the show. The Siegrists are longtime 'snowbirds', they reside during the winter months in Punta Gorda, Florida and during Spring and Summer in Towson.



Ron and Julie Siegrist's engagement picture. Ron already owned 'Betsy.' Their beautiful daughters Susan and Carol were in the future.

I could just do it all with a button from the driver's seat! After nightfall, I discovered I didn't even have to use headlights. That little chore was handled by the 'Aùtronic' automatic headlight dimmer. The test drive was not long. It didn't need to be, it was immediately apparent this automobile was by far the best I had ever driven. Of course, I bought the car and to this day, I've never had one regret. At no time during all

Article VIII: Dues

At the general membership meeting that was held on Monday, September 14, 2015 a discussion was started regarding an increase to the yearly membership dues. This topic was also discussed at the Board meeting on August 31, 2015. A motion was placed on the floor by John Horn and seconded by Wayne McDaniel that the membership dues for 2016 will be increased to \$25.00 primarily to offset the cost of printing and mailing the Club newsletter to the membership.

So Article VIII would now read as follows:

Sec. 1 The dues shall be \$25.00 per year for Individual and Joint Membership, \$12.00 per year for Student Membership, \$1 000 per year for Junior Membership, and \$300.00 in one payment for Life Membership. Membership status is governed by Article VI

Sec. 2 Membership renewal notices shall be included with the November issue of the Chesapeake Bulletin.

Sec. 3 The annual dues shall be payable concurrent with AACA dues. A member whose dues have not been paid by the AACA dues cutoff date, or who has not maintained his membership in AACA, shall automatically be suspended.

This change will be posted in both the October and November bulletin and then will be voted on at the next general membership meeting. The membership in attendance at the September 14, 2015 meeting voted in favor of this increase, therefore the increase will show on the membership renewal that will be sent out.

=Second printing=-

'Hershey'... continued from page 1

By Bill Wurzell, Editor

Compared to the last few years, the weather for the 60th annual AACA Eastern Division Fall Meeting was stupendous! Well, it did rain on Friday, but Saturday was great, a little chilly in the early morning, but by mid-morning it was sunny and warming.

Rather than my normal 'modis operandi', of going alone to the Hershey Fall Meet, this year Chesapeake Region Secretary, Jim Turner



Jim Turner and I both thought this '89 Lincoln Town Car to be a real bargain at only \$3,995.

accompanied me. I left home at 4:50 a.m. and drove to the newly reincarnated 'Radisson Baltimore Hotel', formerly 'Baltimore Plaza' on Greenspring Drive in Timonium where I rendezvoused with Jim.

We got back onto I-83 north for the next 78 miles to Hershey. This is the first time in many years I can remember not running into major road construction on the Baltimore-Harrisburg Expressway. Arriving at Hershey Park Drive we turned left into the huge 'day parking' lot and coughed up \$15 smackers for the privilege of parking in soft, grassy...muds. Seems to me it was only ten bucks last year. At least we weren't too far from the main gate, about a ten minute walk. That's the advantage of arriving early. In another hour, people will be walking for twenty minutes or more to get into a crossing area. I know, been there done that.

Inside the gate, we were immediately in the car corral, but which way to go? After getting confusing directions from an elderly chap in a green iridescent vest, we set out onto the car

corral roadway that encircles Hershey Giant Center. While eyeballing all the nifty cars for sale, we could see show cars arriving, driven by their owners. Later on, we waved to Gary Ruby driving his 1951 Ford Victoria, followed closely behind by President Paula Ruby driving their 1985 Buick LeSabre. Both cars would finish 'in the money' by securing their 'Senior' designation. After all, that's the whole idea of displaying one's vehicle on the showfield for judging, and seek admiration from spectators.

Jim and I have very similar taste in cars, but we looked at everything, except some obscure European cars that we have no identity with. We viewed cars that we believed to be way overpriced. However, we also found cars that were very reasonable price. Case in point: an absolutely outstanding 1989 Lincoln Town Car, Signature Series. It had a simulated convertible top, excellent interior and exterior, paint was nearly flawless. The Lincoln had less than 80k miles and was priced at only \$3,995! Buy it, take it to a show and win a trophy. Another example was a 1949 Buick Super four door sedan. This model is near and dear to my heart. My grandparents purchased a green

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there were many hairpin turns that slowed vehicles to 15 to 20 miles per hour. When our Olds would come out of such a turn, it would simply rocket up the hill to the point that you thought that the other guy was standing still. The 303 cubic inch rocket V8 engine had unbelievable pickup compared to the other power plants of that era. For the first fourteen years of her existence, we drove 'Betsy' day in and day out, to work and to all kinds of places in all sorts of weather. In fact, Betsy's original top was ripped off while we were trying to outrun an oncoming hurricane from a place where we had been vacationing. The years passed quickly and, alas, she was now fourteen years old and showed 185,000 miles on the odometer. It was time for a new car. What to buy was an easy choice; we purchased a 1966 Oldsmobile '98' convertible. What to do with 'Betsy' was a more difficult decision. We still loved her, moreover, she was still quite pretty and very serviceable. On the used car market at that time, she was worth about \$100. We just couldn't part with her, so we put her in the garage and started driving our 1966 Olds '98' convertible. As you probably know, the '66 is still in the family and has been completely restored.

During the next fourteen years, 'Betsy' sat in our garage and had very limited service. She was driven only on those occasions when one of the other cars would not start or was in the shop for service. Even during those years, Betsy would always start and run; we kept her looking respectably. Now it was 1980, and a friend got me interested in old cars. I joined Oldsmobile Club of America, the Antique Automobile Club of America, Chesapeake Region and a little later, the National Antique Oldsmobile Club and I was soon 'caught-up' in the hobby. Then one day I said to Julie, "we have to restore an old car." Of course, Julie asked a very sensible question, "Why?" To which I gave her a sensible reply, "because that's what they do in this hobby" I'm sure by now, you have guessed what's next: "Let's do the '52 Olds convertible sitting in our garage!"

The restoration was the usual story, one that old car hobbyists know well: keep going to the auto parts

flea markets until you get the parts you need; spend hundreds of hours researching, cleaning, sanding, painting and rebuilding components and assembling it all. Get mad as hell when things don't go right, calm down and do it over again! Although I knew very little about automobile restoration when I started, I knew a heck of a lot about it when I was finished! I had one big advantage. Since I was the original owner, I knew how 110-t things were supposed to look and Operate. It should be noted that the original engine and Hydramatic transmission went 193,000 miles with virtually no new parts until they were rebuilt during restoration.

It's now 35 years since 'Betsy's' restoration and we have enjoyed driving her just as much as we did during her first fourteen years. Since restoration, we have driven her 46,000 miles. 'Betsy' has now accumulated a total of 239,000 miles. We have driven Betsy to dozens of national meets and countless local shows and events.

In 2006, hurricane 'Charlie' blew the garage door down on the car, badly scratching and ruining the paint on the trunk lid. At the time, the paint was 26 years old; we decided on another total paint job and 'touch up' restoration where needed. 'Betsy' is now in pristine condition and is the only 1952 Oldsmobile '98' convertible in the world that is still owned by the original buyer! Quite a distinction.

'Betsy' was manufactured in Lansing, Michigan in 1952, purchased by Ron from Chesapeake Cadillac-Oldsmobile in Baltimore, and stayed in the Baltimore, MD area for most of her sixty-three years. In 1987, we drove her to Lansing, Michigan to celebrate the 90th anniversary of Oldsmobile. Ten years later, we drove 'Betsy' to the 1997 Indianapolis '500' race festivities; which was celebrating the 100th anniversary of Oldsmobile. Betsy took part in the downtown parade and then did two laps around the track on race day.

Later in 1997, we drove to Lansing where 'Betsy' represented the year 1952 in the 100 years of Oldsmobile Parade. At sixty-three years old, we still think she is a very beautiful automobile!

TECH TALK

Technical Director, Gary Ruby
Wants To Know: Is Your Old

Car Talking To You?

This month I thought I would discuss: How your CAR CAN TALK (TO 'YOU'). Yes, you just have to listen to her. Here's one way it will tell you she has a problem. The steering wheel pulls to one side or the other when our driving and when you're braking. Here are some of the main causes; but not all of them. Your brakes could be out of adjustment or incorrectly adjusted, or the brake shoes might be worn out. Also, there could be grease or oil on the brake pads, possibly caused by a faulty grease seal, or a leaking wheel cylinder will do it too. If you just changed your brake shoes, you could have the shoes reversed. Remember short shoe on the front. The brake drum could be worn or scored! A ease! One could just be your front tire is air. Front end could be out of alignment or if you drove through a lot of rain or standing water that will do it too. If your old car has king pins and they are worn that could do it too.

Something else I've seen even on newer cars is the brake hose will separate on the inside and keep pressure on your brakes and you can't see it; also check your wheel bearings, they could be failing or have leaked up. Hope this will give you some help in trying to figure out what your problem might be. Remember, if your car is talking to you, ...listen!. See ya at the meeting or at the shows. Gary