

Membership Updates

New and Renewing Members

Barker, Doug - Victoria Harbour ON
Bradette, Daniel - Laval QC
Cayfor, Alan - Tilsonburg ON
Corbran, James - Tonawanda, NY (USA)
Dupont, Rene - St.Denis-de-Brompton, QC
Dykstra, Bill & Vicki - Aurora ON
Enders, Jerry - Inverary ON
Fedele, Angelo - Mississauga ON
Humphrey, Peter - Simcoe ON
Johnson, Glenys - Chesley ON
Johnson, Rick - Campbell River BC
Johnston, Steve - Pottageville ON
Legroul, Brian - North Lancaster ON
Mann, Lorne - Toronto ON
Mason, Ken - Mono ON
McKnight, James - Washago ON
Mollins, Charles - Dawson Settlement NB
Ouderkirk, Morley - Ottawa ON
Paquette, Leonard - Laval QC
Pryor, Nancy - Tiny ON
Rose, John - Hanmer ON
Stakenvicius - Athens ON
Trudeau, Michel - Saint-Sauveur QC
Wheeler, Mike - Toronto ON

Important Reminder

Send Renewal and New Applications, and payments, **ONLY** to the Treasurer. Mailing to other members of the executive delays the member "set-up" and "renewal" processes".

Ron Morrison
176 Sheardown Drive
Nobleton, ON L0G 1N0

Your e-mail Address Needed

The club is using e-mail more and more to provide reminders, updates, notices of cars or parts for sale, or wanted. So don't miss out. Provide us with your current e-mail address if you haven't done so already. If you don't have one, can you use your partner's, family member or that of a friend. To provide updates:

ronald.ron.morrison@gmail.com

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Member Cars

Wayne Barron of Kelowna, BC sent along a picture of his beautiful 1979 Pacer wagon. Equipped with the 258 straight-six engine, complimented with a three-speed automatic transmission. The car was found in Florida and underwent a complete restoration (inside and out) three years ago. Wayne owned a number of AMCs in his younger years and is presently working of the restoration of a 1977 Gremlin X with a rebuilt and modified 304 engine. The Pacer is pictured at the historic "Father Pandosi House, circa 1800's.

An advertisement for Lant Insurance. The top half features the text "DRIVEN BY MEMORIES" in white, bold, sans-serif font against a dark background. Below this, a photograph shows a dark-colored classic car driving away on a winding road through a scenic, wooded area. The bottom left corner contains the Lant Insurance logo, and the bottom right corner provides contact information for Collector Car Insurance.

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Belated Happy Anniversary Eagle

By Ron Morrison



Well, we missed it. Last year was the 40th anniversary of the Eagle. But then again 2020 was quite a different, and most would say, and difficult year. The “Eagle” first landed the fall of 1979 as a 1980 model. Based on a raised Concord platform, the drivetrain was the 258 “six” paired with a 4-wheel drive system borrowed from the Jeep Division. No one said it at the time, the term was not framed until many years latter, but Eagles are arguably the first cross-over vehicles.

Initially available in four-door, two door and wagon versions, variants using the Spirit platform vehicle were developed in keeping with the best AMC traditions of innovation and a focus on niche markets. More on the off-spring, latter.



Gracing the cover is a fine example of the Eagle wagon which sales-wise was the most popular version. In the writer’s humble opinion, it is the most attractive model

in the line-up. With roots going back to the Hornet “Sportabout”, it’s flowing lines and perfect proportions render the car timeless. Dress it up with woodgrain panelling and it is the “best”. Alf and I traded opinions recently on the Eagle, and being a station-wagon man, he agreed. He further noted that the interiors exuded a level of luxury not found in vehicles at this level, in the day. He additionally found the execution of the interior not out of place with today’s expectations. But I digress. Back to the launch.

The Eagle was the brainchild of Roy Lunn, vice-president for engineering. It appears that development proceeded without much in the way of market research, but rather more on intuition. The board was surprised to say the least with the proposition but approved it never-the-less, and as they say the rest is history.

In early 1977 a company called FF Developments was contracted to build prototypes which it did based on production Hornets equipped with the 304 V-8. The concept was proven feasible with Lunn, however, opting for the 258 straight six coupled to a three-speed automatic transmission.

The technology at work was really advanced for the day. An automatic clutch was housed in the transfer case and the fluid coupling allowed the cars to be driven in 4 wheel-drive mode (50/50 split front to rear) all the time regardless of the surface.

The cars were equipped with 15-inch wheels and gaps in the raised wheel-arches were reduced by the addition of plastic wheel-well flares. The cars differed from the Concord with distinct grills and other trim details. Standard equipment, in addition to automatic transmission, included power steering and power front-disc brakes. A "Sport" package and a trailer-towing package together with a multitude of options, as was the practice of the day, were available.

Lunn, and his sense of the waiting market, was right on. Reasonably sized, comfortable, well appointed, and blessed with decent ride and handling, Eagles "behaved more like mountain-goats" when off -road according to Popular Science. The cars appealed to those in snow-bound states/provinces, where customers must get through regardless of winter road conditions such as medical professionals, police, firemen as well as the winter sports-minded. The cars became almost ubiquitous in the American north-east and north-west. For the first time in awhile AMC had a backlog of orders with the car becoming an instant "best seller". Some 46,500 were sold in the first year of production representing 20 per cent of the company's output. Selling usually close to list, the cars provided a burst of profits for both dealers and the factory. Over the Eagle's nine-year run, equipment, trim and option offerings evolved. Not to bore you with the minutia of these changes, I have noted the major updates, by model Year.

1981

The GM "Iron Duke" 4-cylinder engine with 4-speed manual became standard equipment. The 258 six with automatic combination continued as an option. Production dropped to 37,400 units.

1982

For the first time a 5-speed manual transmission was optionally made available. The "select Drive" system that allowed a switch between four-wheel and two-wheel drive became standard. The car had to be stopped to allow for this switch. Production increased slightly to 37,900 units.

1983

AMC introduced its own 4-cylinder. Production dropped dramatically to 17,700 units.

1984

The "Select Drive" system was revised to allow for a switch between 2 wheel and 4-wheel drive on the fly. Production recovered, totalling 25,500 units.

1985

The revised "Select Drive" system was now made standard equipment. Production, again, dropped to 17,000 units.

1986

Production dropped 8,200 units as the platform, which dated to 1970, was showing its age.

1987

With the Renault Medallion on the horizon, no changes of note were made. Production totalled 5,000 units.

1988

The last year of production, all models except the wagon were dropped as a result of the AMC/Chrysler merger. Renamed the Eagle Wagon, production declined to 2,300 units.

Those who have owned these vehicles love them and the current market is active, with many well-preserved examples on offer making for an attractive and practical possible addition to any driveway. A good choice for the collector, many are found still in day-to-day service, particularly in those geographic areas where their reputation was made.

In closing, the variants of the Eagle, such as the SX-4 twins represented some of the best in the AMC spirit and their production numbers were not insignificant. Their story will be saved for another day.



Special Interest Items



Hotrod.com in a post dated Mar 3, 2021 carries a pictorial article on AMC muscle, titled "AMC 'Muscle cars That History Forgot'". Thirty-eight pictures are provided supported by a review of each car.
<https://www.hotrod.com/articles/rare-amc-muscle-cars-1968-amx/>



dragzine.com on March 6, 2021 posted a video link under Teck Time on "How to install a MSD Digital 6AL Ignition Box". A must read for anyone contemplating an electronic conversion of the ignition system.
<https://www.dragzine.com/videos/industry-news/tech-time-how-to-install-a-msd-digital-6al-ignition-box/>



Hemmings on-line on March 2, 2021 posted an article entitled Spring Swapping: "A few things to know before changing coils". The piece contains almost everything you need to know before venturing in to this area, whether looking for OE equivalent replacements or modified springs.
<https://www.hemmings.com/stories/2021/03/02/spring-swapping-a-few-things-to-know-before-changing-coils>



Hemmings online January 6, 2021 carried a piece titled "Did AMC Really Poach the Rambler V-8 Design From Kaiser-Frazer?" The engineering talent behind the KF engine was hired by AMC and this article provides new insights to fuel the speculation.
<https://www.hemmings.com/stories/2021/01/06/did-american-motors-really-poach-the-rambler-v-8-design-from-kaiser-frazer>

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which has an upside, even if the coin-op disappears altogether. Like changing oil yourself, or even a light bulb, what was sort of a chore has become a pleasure for the connoisseur. Which some of us always knew, just like knowing our ordinary cars from American Motors were classics, which they are.

From Our Club Store

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ORDER FORM, page 28



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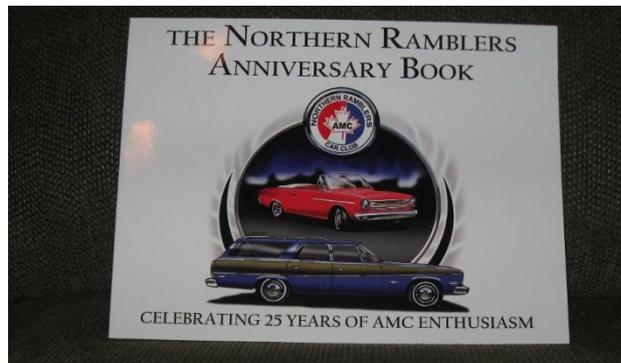
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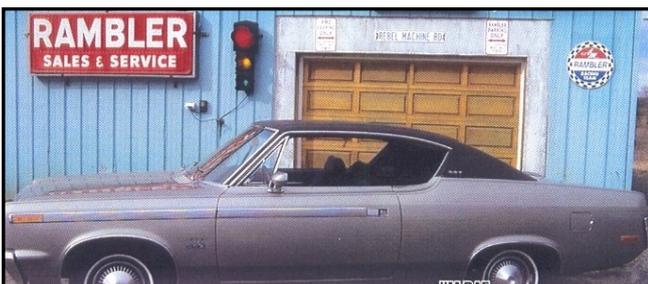
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CLUB STORE ORDER PAGE

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 (jojavelin@hotmail.com or phone 416-999-1812) for details regarding availability, combined shipping costs on multiple purchases, or if you have any ideas for new Club Store items.

REMEMBER that 100% of the Proceeds From the Sales of Northern Rambler's Store Items Goes Directly to Support Your Club's Activities

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