

SWANKS NEWS

Swanks Car Club

Established 1956

Swanks Newsletter

January-February 2023

Frankensteiner's Car Show

Photos/words: Ron Dahley



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Issue Dates: Jan. 25th, March 25th, May 25th, July 25th, September 25th, November 25th

Going to a car show? Bring your camera and send in the photos for the next newsletter.

Got a project or a new car? Take a few photos and submit them to the newsletter.

Got something to sell? Put it into the newsletter—
rondahley@gmail.com



The Frankensteiner's Ball was held at the Isanti Fairgrounds October 22. A few year's ago, the Frankensteiner's had to move the venue to a larger space and the Isanti Fairgrounds met their needs but after this years event the club may have to look for even a larger space. Another amazing car



Happy New Year Swanks



The Swanks met December 12, 2022, for their monthly meeting, the date was pushed up one day because of the inclement weather warnings for the most of the week. The meeting was held at Jon and Lisa Baumler's shop where we were served a delicious meal and birthday cake to celebrate Jon's birthday. It was quite apparent that not one Swanks Member in attendance can sing a lick, but that did not stop us from singing Happy Birthday to Jon.

The Swanks voted on leadership for 2023 and each person from last year will continue for another year. Thanks to Mark Kieffer, president; Mike Thiel, vice president; Joan Thiel, treasurer, and Jon Baumler, Secretary, for agreeing to continue their good work. Ron Dahley continues to work on the newsletter.

The Swanks website continues to improve. Please look at swanks.org.

Mark and Gary have been working on the Swanks Cars brake system and Jim Foss volunteered to straighten a fender on the car. The next step is to work on the wiring.

Joan suggested we do a Swanks Member Bio and put it into the newsletter and maybe the website. We will begin working on it soon.

Mark reported that the Swanks Garage Tour will be held in March, probably around the Fargo, Moorhead area this year.

Membership dues were collected, so if you have not paid your membership, please get your payment in to Joan Thiel.

Congratulations to Kabe Kost for being voted to feature one of his cars for the 2023 Swanks Car Show dash plaque.

The Swanks News Editorial Staff discussed the possibility of adding a "Recipe Corner" article to the newsletter, like the Minnesota Street Rod Association. After much discussion and debate it was agreed upon to try it for one year, at which time it will be analyzed to determine if this column should continue.

Well **Happy New Year Swanks!** As you can see there is a lot to do within the Swanks C. C. this year and lots of things to look forward to. I look forward to the fun things we will do and the comradery of the Swanks members.

Drag Racing History

July 2, 1950 is frequently acknowledged as the birthday of drag racing as an organized sport. Hot rodders had previously been racing on empty airfields and on the street, but this was the first official race at the old army airbase that would become Santa Ana Dragway, the first commercial dragstrip, thanks to Creighton Hunter, Frank Stillwell, and CJ "Pappy" Hart. In the early days, the sport wasn't organized at all. Track length was inconsistent, rolling starts were common, and the number of cars racing at a time was less arbitrary. The National Hot Rod Association (NHRA), established by Wally Parks (you remember Wally) in 1951, did for drag racing what the SCTA had done for the lake racers: create rules and standards for competition. In addition to providing an organized sport, drag racing's effect on hot rodding was to create two categories of hot rods: rods built for racing and rods built for the street, known ever since as street rods.

When Chevy introduced its 265-c.i. V-8 engine in the 1955 Bel Airs and Corvettes, it was instantly popular. That popularity would never be lost; its impact on hot rodding has lasted 65 years and counting. There is a reason that Chevy small-blocks have ended up in more street rod engine compartments than probably any other engine. The lightweight, easy-to-beef-up "mouse motor," in its various forms, has served in applications from mild cruisers to wild racers with equal success. Today, it continues to be the most popular engine choice among hot rodders, thanks to a huge aftermarket of performance parts. Although some rodders complain that the Chevy small block is an unimaginative and overdone engine in modern hot rod—and they might have a point—we can't think of a more reliable, convenient, and supportable powerplant for hot rods. **Hot Rod**

Swanks Christmas Party

Photos: Ron Dahley

Words: Jon Baumler/ Ron Dahley



The Swanks Christmas party was held at the Cottonwood Golf Course club house on January 13, yes Friday the 13th. The date did not interfere with the festivities as the company was good, the food was great, consisting of steak, shrimp, bacon wrapped sausages, the best mushroom dish ever, baked potatoes and cake for dessert.



Had a great Christmas party at the Cottonwood Club House, around 21 Swanks members and spouses were able to attend. Joan Thiel was the overall winner of the Hot Wheels drag racing and everyone seemed to enjoy the new game. There was some trash talking and heated grudge racing, but no one came to blows.

We didn't have a formal meeting but there was some discussion, our next meeting falls after Giving Hearts Day. We decided to make the same donations as last year with some of the dollar amounts adjusted a little. Our next meeting would fall on Valentine' Day, so it was decided to move the meeting to Thursday, February 16th. Jon

Ted Talk with Ted Bryans

I received sad news in October that Tom Hoover, well known Minnesota drag racer had passed away. I met Tom a few years ago at the Gopher State Car Show in St. Paul where he was signing autographs and sharing racing stories with his fans. While at the GSTA show I ran across Ron Dahley and we got to check out the various cars and get autographs from Tom and Doc Halladay another famous drag racer in Minnesota, originally from Fargo, ND. Tom's dragster had been rebuilt and was featured at the show. Later in the day his dragster was rolled out to the street so it could be cranked up and we were presented with the sweet sounds and smell of race fuel being ignited in this powerful engine.

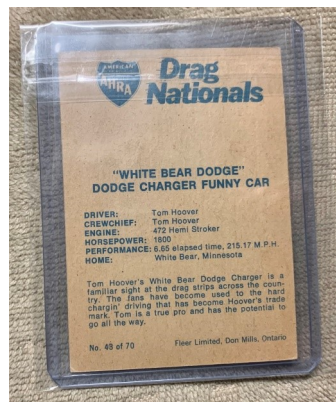


I'm going to share part of his obituary as it will acquaint you with this giant of a man in Minnesota drag racing circles.

Tom "Showtime" Hoover, 81, the internationally recognized drag racer and local Minneapolis business owner attended his "last" major event when he passed peacefully from life, through death, to eternal life on October 21, 2022. Hoover began and ended his story in his favored state of Minnesota. Hoover identified as a "1941 model" and a "car guy" due to his birthdate on May 20, 1941. He caught drag racing fever when he began challenging high school buddies to match races, behind the deserted roads of Osseo Senior High school where he graduated in 1959. Hoover soon graduated further to faster cars. Hoover; however, didn't drive ordinary cars. He started at the top, in the ranks of the professional Drag Racing world, and drove the fastest land speed vehicles in the world: ground-pounding, fire-breathing Top Fuel cars. These cars are powered by Nitromethane, which is seven times more explosive than gasoline and can be currently purchased at \$44 a gallon! Hoover first mastered Top Fuel dragsters in 1964, and then took on the nearly uncontrollable "funny cars" which were thusly nicknamed, because of their large rear tires. Hoover liked these "beasts" because he found them more challenging to tame and because their factory-replicated bodies looked like real cars that were popular with fans. Success quickly followed and continued for 35 years of professional competition, within three sanctioning organizations: AHRA, IHRA and NHRA. For such a humble man, his accolades were numerous. He was the youngest driver to win a professional event at 24 years of age. He was the first Minnesota racer to cover the quarter mile at 200 m.p.h. The "only" driver to have won a place in the exclusive five and the four seconds clubs in top fuel funny car. He made it into the 4-second club with his fastest run down the quarter mile clocked at 4.96 seconds at 309 m.p.h. He won the AHRA World Championships three years straight in 1976, 1977 and 1978 and five NHRA event winning "Wally" awards. Hoover became an internal ambassador for the sport that took he and his family through the United States, and to races further away in Canada, Mexico, England, Australia, Sweden, and Norway. He won the World Championship in Australia in 1995. He was inducted into the Drag Racing Hall of Fame in 2014 and named a NHRA "Legend" of the Sport in 2016. He held multiple other wins in match races and lesser venues. One of the most unforeseen highlights of Hoover's legacy was the honor of a nine-month display of his artistically recreated 1966 "Fishbowl" dragster at the Wiseman Museum in Minneapolis. This iconic car which Hot Rod magazine called the most beautiful front-end dragster ever built was displayed as an "art sculpture."



Tom "Showtime" Hoover



A commemorative Plaque and picture I recently purchased

Happy New Year Ted Bryans

International Women's Day March 8, 2023

Fuelcurve.com

March 8th is International Women's Day. I started to name every woman I know in the industry, but the list was impossibly long and I knew I'd leave someone out, so I went with this story of the earliest hot rodding woman I'm aware of. She was Veda Orr, who began racing at the SoCal dry lakes in 1937 and was the first female member of the Southern California Timing Association. She also ran the Orr Speed Shop with her husband Karl. Most famously, she took over the SCTA Racing News newsletter when the men went off to WWII and wrote letters to servicemen keeping them informed of what remained of the hot rodding scene back home. She's been credited with keeping hot rodding alive during the war. Afterwards she wrote two pictorial books about dry lakes racing, one of which is still in



Frankenseiner's Ball Continued...



Fankensteiner's Ball Continued...



The reason for the success of hot rodding in the '30s is organization. Then, just like today, car guys liked to hang out with each other because they shared the same interests, and because they could benefit from each other's knowledge, share equipment, swap parts, and race each other. They formed car clubs, with names like the Road Runners, Desert Goats, Idlers, Sidewinders, and Throttlers. The Southern California Timing Association (SCTA) was created in 1937 to bring these clubs together to organize and promote the racing on the dry lakes. The SCTA established racing classes. The SCTA Racing News (edited by a member of the Road Runners named Wally Parks), promoted the activities of all the member clubs by publishing news, race results, editorials, and ads.

More Frankensteiner's



The Frankensteiner's put on an amazing burnout contest. Much smoke and lots of popping tires kept the fans on their feet and choking.

Bench Rodding with Steve Olson, Bob Pettinger and Daryl Emery



Left front:
Bob Pettinger
Right front
Steven Olson

This is a sad story regarding the Swanks in the early days of the club shared to me by Steve Olson, Bob Pettinger and Daryl Emery. Most of you know Steve Olson was president of the Swank's in the early days and Bob Pettinger and Daryl Emery were prominent members of the club. Most of the early Swank's meetings were held at Daryl Emery's home. This story begins on News Year Eve in 1963 memories wane, but Daryl is relatively sure it was 63.

Steve: It was New Year's Eve in 1963 and Daryl Emery had invited the Swanks members to his parent's lake cottage for a New Year's Eve party. The cottage was located on Pelican Lake and Bob, and I planned on attending. We were in Moorhead MN when we ran across John Branter and Tom Reger Swank's members. John was driving his new 1962 Ford and told them they would see them at the lake.

Daryl: John was driving his 62 Ford, black two door sedan with a 406 cu. In. engine and a 4-speed transmission.

Bob: It was an exceptionally warm day for December 31, and we even had some melting before it started to rain. Well, the Swanks cruised to the lake and had a fun time at the party. It rained into the night and the temperatures were dropping like a rock.

Steve: late that evening we decided to head home Bob and I were riding together, and John and Tom Reger were in John's Ford.

Daryl: I think we headed out to Detroit Lakes for burgers

Steve: The roads were like a skating rink as we cruised around Pelican Lake. We came around a curve and John lost control of the Ford and it slid into a tree, hitting the tree on the driver's side somewhere near where Zorbaz's Restaurant is today. We were right behind John and Tom, Tom Reger was able to get out of the car, but he experienced a broken leg. Steve was taken to the hospital in Detroit Lakes and then transferred to St. John's Hospital in Fargo ND. In St. John's Hospital they operated on his head injuries and discovered he had a brain tumor, not part of the crash, they removed the tumor, but John would never regain consciousness. John was released from the hospital to his parent's farm, near Felton MN., where his parents cared for him for over 30+ years.

Daryl: We put John into my car and took him to the Detroit Lakes Hospital where they treated him and sent him to a hospital in Fargo. I don't know if the brain tumor was the cause of the accident, for sure the accident made everyone aware of the brain tumor which they removed. We don't know if the accident or the tumor created his long lasting condition.

Bob: I went to his parent's farm several times to visit John, but he did not know I was there, it was sad.

Daryl: I was good friends with John and after the accident I visited him often and when I went into his room, I would call his name he would open his eyes and look around the room. I feel he could hear me and recognize me but could not speak or move. After the accident I bought his car and swapped out the running gear into a 60 Ford Convertible my sister drove.

Steve: John's parents cared for John until his father passed and his mother became too old and frail to care for him. At that point in time John was moved to a nursing home where he lived out his life.

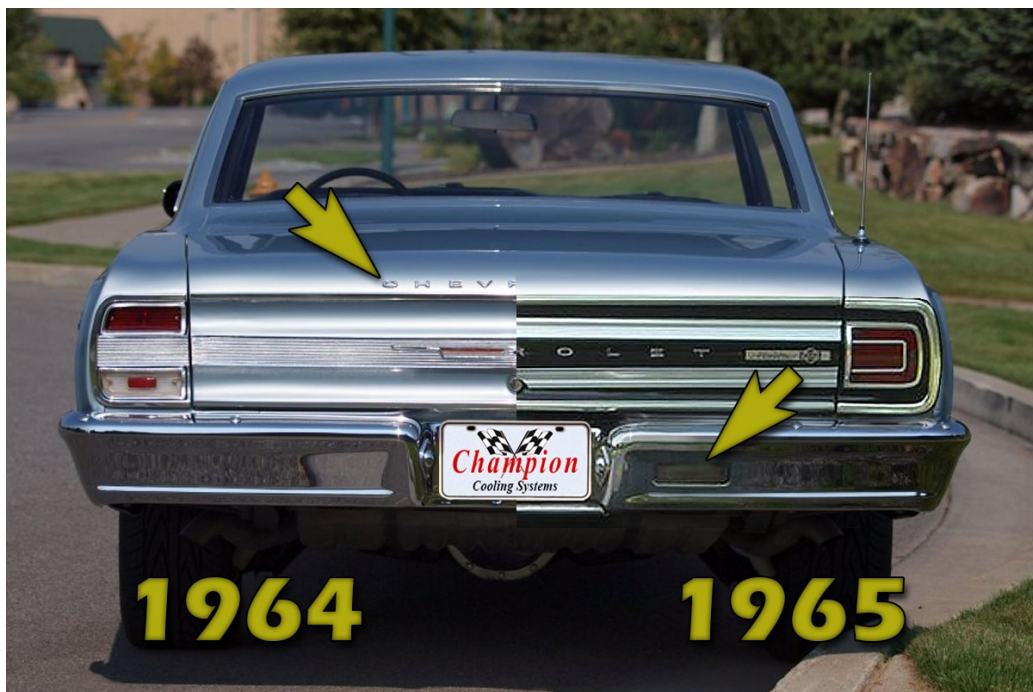
Daryl: I believe John lived with his mother until her passing and then moved into a nursing home where he passed away shortly after his mother.

What's the Diff? 1964 and 65 Chevelle

Spotters Guide



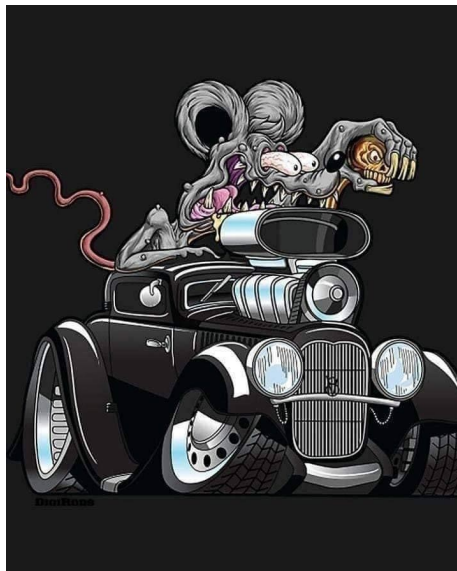
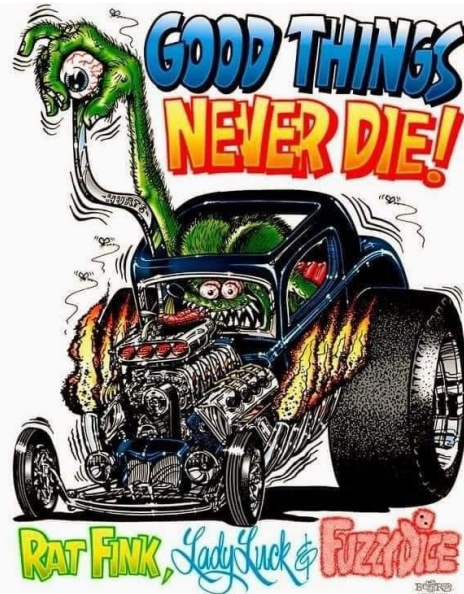
The 1st generation Chevelle is probably going to be one of the simplest to identify, because the car has the easiest changes to identify. Though the hood and fenders are different, the grille on the 1964 has the same pattern, top to bottom and left to right, and the 1965 has a horizontal bar across the middle of the grille. The bumper for the 1964 has a smaller opening filled by the turn signal lamp, while 1965 the bumper has a wider slot with the signal lamp at the outer edge.



From the rear, the 1964 has a split lamp with the backup lamp in the lower lens, and the Chevrolet lettering on the edge of the trunk lid. In 1965, the lettering is on the trim panel, and the tail lamp will be a solid red lens, with the reverse light in the bumper.

Hot Rod Art

Pictures from Pinterest





Richie Valens, the forefather of the Chicano rock n roll movement

Oh, Donna!

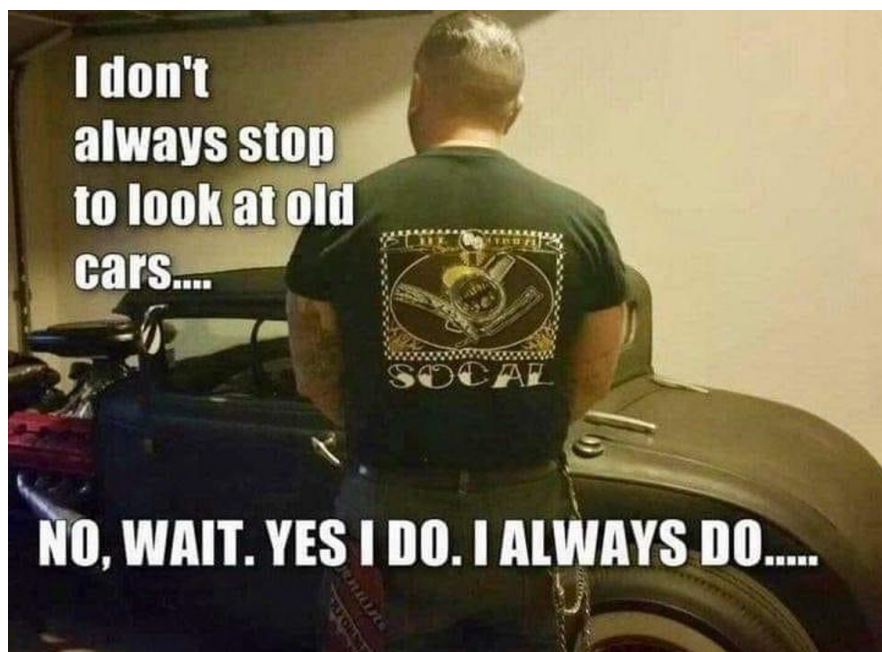
“Oh, Donna was by singer, song writer, & guitarist Richie Valens as a tribute to his high school sweetheart Donna Ludwig in 1958, featuring the “50’s progression.

Valens version was positioned at No. 3 on the Billboard Hot 100 pop singles charts when Valens’ died on Feb. 3, 1959.

March 28, 1959: Three weeks after Valens’ death, the song peaked at No. 2 on the Billboard Hot 10. On the Hot R&B Sides Chart, “Donna” went to No. 11.

May 1959: It was a #3 UK hit in for Marty Wilde. Cliff Richard covered it twice, first in 1958 on his debut album Cliff and second in 1983 on Give a Little Bit More in the U.S. and Rock “n” Roll Silver in the UK the later version was released as a single in the US during and peaked on the Adult Contemporary chart.

The song was notably covered by Los Lobos in the 1987 film La Bamba which portrayed the life story of Richie Valens, The American rock n roll pioneer & the forefather of the Chicano rock movement.



Feature Car

The Isky Roadster

By Joe McCollough

4/12/2021

Tags: Museum of American Speed, Hot Rod History, Isky Cams This little black Model T has plenty of stories to tell. That it happens to be one of the greatest hot rods of all time, built by one of the greatest hot rodders of all time, only makes those stories a little more interesting. Those are big words, but it's hard to argue the fact that Ed Iskenderian, the little T roadster that he built when he was just a kid, and the racing cam company that bears his name are hugely responsible for making our hobby and industry what they are today.

The story of this now immortal Model T starts with Ed's lifelong friend John Athan. After purchasing a pile of Model T parts from a guy named Buzz, he started piecing together a hot rod as a very young man using Essex frame rails and a Rajo head on the Model T engine. Athan soon tired of constantly breaking the hopped-up T and decided to move on to something else. His next car, a black, flathead V8 powered Model A roadster was not only the first A on Deuce rails known to exist, but also appeared in the 1957 Elvis film *Loving You*.



In the 1930's, hot rodding was far from the international phenomenon that it would become after the war. Instead, it was just a spark that was starting to burn in garages and back-alley shops across the country. Isky and Athan grew up in the same neighborhood in Los Angeles. They saw hot rods and race cars going together in a few local garages and started collecting parts to build their own. Ed has said numerous times that the term "hot rod" didn't even exist at that point. Cars like the cut down early Fords that he and his friends were building were called "gow jobs." They didn't have magazines to tell them how to do it. Instead, these founding fathers of hot rodding relied on ingenuity and their generation's legendary work ethic to figure it out on their own. Once Ed acquired Athan's Model T around 1937, he pulled the broken four-cylinder in favor of a then only five-year-old flathead V8 from a '32 Ford. The flathead was soon fitted with what would become one of the car's trademarks, a very rare set of Maxi overhead valve heads. These heads were developed for Ford trucks to solve the flathead's famous cooling woes. The intake valves remained in the block, but the exhaust valves were moved overhead. Maxi heads were delivered with two short valve covers per side, but Ed had the cool one-piece covers that bear his name cast by a friend. After some experimentation with different intake manifolds, carburetors, and ignition systems, Ed would settle on the Edelbrock triple manifold and Vertex mag that are still on the car

The Essex chassis was fitted with a '32 Ford front axle using '37 wishbones to mount the spring in front of the axle to lower the car. The front brakes are not the Ford juice brakes that you might be expecting. Remarkably, the Ford factory was just switching from mechanical brakes to hydraulics as Isky was building his hot rod. Since those brand-new brakes were likely all but impossible to find in the junkyard, Ed used Plymouth hydraulics on the front. In the rear, the spring was mounted ahead of the Ford banjo axle to lengthen the wheelbase. Both ends use Houdaille shocks, fitted after a particularly rough road trip to Mexico in the T. Kelsey-Hayes wire wheels mount tires that date from sometime around WWII and miraculously still hold air.

The interior features a '37 Ford banjo steering wheel and a gauge panel from an 8-cylinder Auburn. Now a rare and coveted hot rod accessory, it was just a neat part on a car in the junkyard when Ed picked it up in the late 30's.

The tach is mounted in a cool column drop that was built by young Ed. The leather upholstery is secured to the cut down T body using a trim strip that Ed created from half-round stock and had plated.



Isky T Continued...

A quick search of the internet will tell you that the unique grille is made up of two '33 Pontiac grill shell top halves welded together. You will also find that the unbelievably cool flying skull hood ornament was cast by Ed himself in his high school shop class. But, unknown to most and visible only when you have the privilege to be close to the car, is the engraved medallion inside the winged emblem from the long-forgotten Pontiac that gave up its grill shell. The medallion is engraved "Iskenderian" and there's a little racing roadster engraved below the name. This is just one of the many examples throughout the car that show the care and attention to detail that went into it. Ed and John were not just kids throwing a hot rod together. This is a carefully planned and well-executed car, and even by today's standards the results are exceptional.

This car has received plenty of press over the years, including a cover story in the sixth Hot Rod Magazine from June of '48. But what we've never seen mentioned is a description of just how it feels to stand in the presence of this amazing little roadster. For lack of a better word, the car has a glow about it. Sitting static, it almost vibrates with the energy of a life well lived. Articles about the car from the past 20 years or so always describe it with adjectives like "scruffy", "tarnished," and "faded." (Ed was famously once refused entry into the L.A. Roadsters' show because his car didn't meet their standards.) It may be showing some wear, but all the scuffs, tears, and weathered chrome only add to its charm. Its soul isn't buried under an over-restored candy shell. It's an open book, and it's earned those scars from over 80 years as a hot rod.

So, what is this roadster doing in Nebraska, far away from its California birthplace? For one thing, it fits right in with the other legendary cars, engines, and speed parts in the Museum of American Speed. It also doesn't hurt that the only other pair of Maxi heads known to exist are bolted to an engine only a few feet away. But maybe the biggest emotional connection comes from the rugged old cam grinder that's displayed next to it. That was Ed Winfield's cam grinder, and Isky's lifetime of impact on racing and hot rodding may just have started at the controls of that very machine. Winfield worked with Harry Miller and was a legend in the early days of racing. He was among the first to really figure out the concept of regrounding a cam to improve an engine's performance. When an eager young Ed Iskenderian approached Winfield about having a cam ground for his hot rod, Winfield took a liking to the curious, mechanically inclined kid and showed him the basics on this machine. The two remained friends until Winfield's passing in 1982, at which point Isky purchased the trusty old cam grinder that started it all, later donating it to the Museum.

The Museum of American Speed exists to tell the stories of the people who have built the industry that we love into what it is today. Few people exemplify this principle more than Ed Iskenderian. Ed turns 100 this year (2021). We're beyond thrilled to call Ed our friend and feel privileged to work with him as we share his car and stories with our visitors. It seems appropriate that the cam grinder that started it all for a young Ed sits within feet of the car that will always be known as the Isky Roadster.



Drive Careful Swanks

And They Walked Away "Without a Scratch"



Strength and safety of the Nash Unitized Body and Frame were dramatically demonstrated when both driver and passenger in this "600" climbed out "without a scratch" after the car had been sandwiched between two streetcars in Winnipeg, Canada. The car was photographed in the service department of the Winnipeg Nash dealer, Leonard & McLaughlin.

Ron's Helpful Hot Rod Tips



Up Coming Events 2023

Please call to ensure the events have not been cancelled.

Jan. 28 Jamestown Classic Car Club Car Show

February 3-5, Winterfest of Wheels, Sioux Falls SD

March 4-5 El Zagal Duster Bismarck ND

March 18-19 Motor Madness Car Show, Duluth MN

April 1-2 Toppers Car Show West Fargo ND

April 1-2 Gopher State Timing Assoc. 65th annual car show St. Paul Fairgrounds

April 15-16 Prime Steel Car Show Grand Forks ND

April 29-30 Valley Vintage Car Show West Fargo ND

May 6-7 Spirit Of America Bike/Car Show Alerus Center Grand Forks ND

June 2,3,4 Devils Run Devils Lake ND

June 17-18 Lanny's Can Am rendezvous Mayville ND
NDSRA Pick site

June 23-25 Back to the 50's St Paul MN

June 30-July 2 Good Guys Heartland Nationals Iowa State Fairgrounds Des Moines Iowa

July 14-15 Prairie Cruisers 40th annual Car Show Dickinson ND

July 27 Cruise to Casselton, Swanks Car Show Casselton

Swanks Cooking Corner

BLACKENED CHICKEN RECIPE



1. Clean Chicken
2. Place Chicken in Oven
3. Go check your Facebook