

The Allard Register

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Elkhart Lake Reunion; Part I

-Augie Grasis

Allard and Elkhart Lake. Carroll Shelby and Elkhart Lake. Carroll Shelby and the Allard. All linked together in sort of a “six degrees of separation from Kevin Bacon” way. Allards have been inextricably linked with Elkhart Lake as they dominated the front of the field in the early ‘50s when the races were held on the roads and streets surrounding Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin. Burt Levy immortalized the Allard in his story **The Last Open Road**, which culminates at Elkhart Lake and features fictional ex-RAF-fighter-pilot-turned-racer Tommy Edwards wrestling his Allard in famous tracks across the country. Real life drivers such as Fred Wacker truly did race Allards on the open roads surrounding Elkhart Lake.

Carroll Shelby started his career in an Allard. As a matter of fact, he drove MY Cadillac powered Allard J2X (#3146) in 10 races in 1953 and won 9 of them. In January 1954, Shelby raced the car #11 the 1000KM in Buenos Aires Argentina. His 10th place performance (with co-driver Dale Duncan) landed him a ride with Aston Martin and the rest, including a LeMans win, is history. And Shelby is a legend at Elkhart Lake too where he won the Road America 500 in 1957 in a Maserati and later dominated with his Shelby Cobras.

Needless to say, when George, Mike and I learned that Allard would be the featured marque at Road America for the Elkhart Lake Vintage Festival we were excited beyond words. We wanted to make a good showing among our Allard brethren. We

were excited to show the racing world the coolness of one of the most successful combinations of sports car and hot rod. And mostly we were excited to run the Carroll Shelby J2X at Road America—a true horsepower track. We raced there in July 2014 at the Hawk and it was awesome—heart-stopping acceleration, diabolical Allard swing axle handling punctuated by non-stopping brakes! A true 50’s hot rod sports car experience.

We put our learnings to work in our preparation. A taller rear end would get us to our 5500 red-line at the end of the straight. Racing brake linings would stop us better for turn 5. No need to work on the motor—sounded strong to us! Besides the mechanical work to prepare for the race, we began corresponding with Andy Picariello, the Allard Reunion organizer and were surprised and disappointed that, though there were 18+ Allards entered for the weekend, we were the only ones thus far who planned to race. Then, at the 11th hour, enter Vince Vento with his J2X. Vince is a new owner of a beautiful Cadillac powered J2X, and one of only two with a Hydramatic transmission. Vince’s car had been used as a prototype by Zora Duntov in designing the 1955 Corvette.

Vince and his girlfriend Estelle, are brave, optimistic people. Vince decided just 10 days before the event that he was going to race. While running his business and traveling for other events Vince arranged new tires, new brakes and shipping



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from Florida to Wisconsin for a car he had never raced, over his cell phone. Though I have often heard in my business life that “hope is not a strategy,” Vince’s optimism and hope were clearly the core of his plan! Our caravan, including Dan & Brenda’s motor home, rolled into Road America Thursday night. After setting up camp for Team Allard and going through tech we headed for Siebkens, the world’s #1 race bar, for a couple of pre-race beers.. Surprisingly we arrived at the track Friday on time and ready for the first of our two

practice sessions. Vince and Estelle found us, but couldn’t find their car, which was supposed to be shipped to a tire dealer to get racing tires mounted. After several phone calls to the driver and tire guy and many rental car miles, the tires were finally mounted and Vince and his black beauty arrived at the track for the afternoon practice session. The shakedown sessions for both J2X’s were successful, but not without some challenges. The Hydramatic transmission on Vince’s car was slipping out of gear and not shifting properly. While the #11 Shelby Allard set the fastest time for the group, we experienced a late session spin which we later learned was from a differential oil leak spraying oil on the right rear tire.

Friday night Road America hosted a dinner at the track for the competitors Friday with all 18 Allards on display. Despite the cool temperature, the threat of rain, and the free beer inside, many of the racers from other classes spent an inordinate amount of time drooling over the fabulous gathering of Allards. Just as the party wrapped up it started to rain; and rain it did, all night until morning.

Qualifying for our group was scheduled to be first on the track on Saturday morning. While it had quit raining an hour before our group went out, the track was slick as snot and the group 1 drivers tiptoed around the turns. In the meantime, Vince decided that, given the transmission issues, he would forego any preliminary sessions and save the car for the Allard/Jaguar feature race on Sunday. In the end, the #11 had qualified second behind a well driven MG for the afternoon’s Sprint Race.

Saturday’s Sprint race turned out to be a real barn burner. Our #11 Allard took the lead from the start followed closely by the 1933 Ford Indy car of Rex Barrett. The two cars were never more than a couple of car lengths apart the entire race, but the Allard ultimately prevailed by a mere .5 seconds at the checkered flag.

There was no time to celebrate as the Elkhart Lake Road Course reenactment was immediately following our race. The parade of 15+ Allards, many Jaguars and an assortment of other racing sports cars toured the 1951-52 road course around picturesque Elkhart Lake to the waves and applause of fans and locals on lawn chairs in the countryside. The track finally weaves its way on to Main Street where hundreds of race fans are gathered to see, hear and smell the fabulous cars of the past.

I am sure the reenactment was a fun experience for most drivers, (it started that way for my bride Pami and me) but soon became stressful and worrisome as the temperature gauge pegged out as we approached Main Street. A blown head gasket proved to be the end of our race weekend as we finished our “tour” with Pami at the wheel being pushed down Main Street by the crew and myself.

Undaunted, we found our place in the Gather on the Green Concours at the Osthoff Resort facing Elkhart Lake, with a stunning display of 18 Allards of all types. After our long push down Main Street we decided to leave the #11 in “as raced” condition, adorned with the oil, radiator overflow and grime of the track. We were placed next to Andy Picarillo

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and his famous J2. Our cars had met before—at a West Texas Air station SCCA race! Andy brought a photo from 1953 of our cars on the front row, his driven by Dale Duncan and the #11 by Carroll Shelby. The weather was fabulous, the company was interesting, and the cocktails were flowing—life was good, despite our broken car!

Sunday dawned a fabulous day and it was all hands on deck in the Allard pit, to help Vince make a good showing in the Allard-Jaguar Feature Race. The grid truly looked like a blast from the 1950's as Vince was lined up next to the ex-Briggs Cunningham Lister Jaguar from the Collier Collection. Vince drove an inspired race as he lowered his time on every lap. Estelle and I watched from turn 5 and were sure we could see Vince grinning through his full face helmet every time he hammered the big Cadillac motor up the hill! As the checkered flag fell on this beautiful black J2X, it was mission accomplished and a strategy well played!

As we packed up for Kansas City and bid farewell to our old friends and our new friends, I noted a little smile on George and Mike's faces. Was it the satisfaction of a good race weekend? A successful gathering of so many cool cars? Or maybe it was the anticipation of tearing into that Cadillac motor when we arrived home! Until next year...

Elkhart Lake Reunion; Part II

-Tom Porter



The Road America Allard gathering and Jaguar event went very well. My brother Willy and I arrived Wednesday night before the event with the freshly restored E-jag, two TIGA Sports 2000's, and the Allard J2X. By 9:00 pm we had them all unloaded into a track garage space and we were ready to start the weekend. Thursday was a test day – (which we didn't pay for) so we focused on preparing the TIGA's for Friday tech inspection (tires, fuel, battery charging, and nut-n-bolt).

Thursday night the weather brought heavy rain and I was VERY thankful for a water tight garage. The track reported that over 2 inches of rain fell overnight. Due to the threat of the severe weather we had a couple of nice cars "sleep over" in our garage: a 1957 Lister Jag (driven by Walt Hansgen to victory in the 57' June Sprints and a gorgeous white 1953 Allard J2X - one of 2 steel wheel cars - both owned by fellow Milwaukeean and author Colin Comer. Needless to say the "sleep overs" were amazing...the next night we had a beautiful 120 Jag along with Jere Krieg's Allard join us for the night. Friday was overcast and a bit cooler. Willy and I had good fun driving the TIGAS without much issue, other than we don't get enough seat time and stay up way too late drinking and taking pictures of cars sleeping over!

For the Allard event Saturday, cars were displayed at the Road America Center. We had around 20 Allards show up, which I was told was a great turnout; by far the most I've ever seen in one place! All the cars were gorgeous and the folks that own them couldn't have been more pleasant to spend time with. Of special note was Bob Girvin's 1957 Allard GT Coupe (1 of 2 cars built) and the last car off the Allard production line. Saturday the weather turned spectacular, sunny and warm combined with the trees changing colors in the Kettle Moraine Area; it was amazing.

That night we all met at the Ostoff Resort in downtown Elkhart Lake for a car show called "Gather On The Green" where the 20 Allards and approximately 100 other beautiful cars showed up including a 120m Jag, Lister Jag, 300SL, 166 Ferrari among others (that I can't remember) were displayed. Many of the cars in attendance drove a lap of the original

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road course, which was a blast. At the end of the night, after the cars were judged; we came home with “Best of Show – Allard Group” a distinguished honor for sure!

Sunday morning we put the Eddie Jones #9’s on the car (as it was in circa 1952) and I drove the Allard at Road America for the Allard parade lap. I wore Bill Cooper’s 1955 drivers’ suit and my father, Bill Porter’s helmet and we really looked the part. Having all 4 of Dad’s cars there (and all of them running!) was a special moment. Sunday afternoon and night we got them all home and put away, still running and straight which is always an accomplishment. Special thanks to Andy Picarrello, Deb Kornelli, VSCDA, and the great folks at Road America for making this a fantastic ELVF event!

The P1 Road Test

-Colin Warnes

I’ve always had a soft spot in my heart for the Allard P1. Let’s be honest, it’s not the prettiest car in the world. However, when you compare it with the competition at the time, I think it was actually pretty attractive from a “form follows function” perspective. The competition featured a lot of chrome and sweeping curves that made them look more glamorous than they really were. Engine-wise, all of the P1’s compatriots at the



time were powered by straight 6 engines (or less), while the P1 and Ford Pilot were powered by war surplus Flathead V8’s.

We’re all familiar with Sydney Allard’s 1st place finish in the 1952 Monte Carlo Rally. But the Guv’nors P1 was by no means a standard P1. It was more of a P1X, featuring coil sprung front suspension and a DeDion rear suspension. The flathead powering the car was also the more powerful Mercury 24-stud flathead with Allard dual carb manifold and aluminum heads*...plus a few other tricks that we don’t know about. When you think about it, the P1 was really one of the first muscle cars – in stock trim it was relatively anemic, but with a few of the option boxes selected, you could blow the doors off of just about any other tin-top on the road.

Unfortunately very few P1’s remain today, we know of a little over 40 cars out of the 559 cars that were built – and a handful of those 40 or so cars have been converted to J2 replicas. Even rarer is finding a running P1 here in the USA, we know of only 3 or 4. Fortunately one of those cars resides at the Tampa Bay Automobile Museum. The TBAM owns chassis #1885, which was originally sold through Bristol Street Motors on January 13, 1950. It was painted grey with a maroon interior. The car was imported to the United States in 1958. Emmanuel Cerf was kind enough to take me for a spin in the car and he even offered me the keys!

1885 is in very good mechanical and cosmetic condition. It has been lightly restored and maintains what appears to be the original factory build quality. The doors close with a solid clunk, but there is a fair amount of flex. The seats are comfortable and I must say the suicide door entry is a pleasure – it’s a shame the design is frowned upon today.

Driving the car was a bit of a mixed bag. Acceleration is quite good, especially when keeping in mind that this was a British passenger car from the late 40’s. The steering was heavy and the car wallowed a bit, but it was smooth at speed. My biggest frustration though was with the 3-speed column shifter. The shift linkage is quite complex, consisting of what can best be described as a couple of scissor linkages that miraculously shift gears with a deft movement of the shift lever. I

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struggled with finding first gear from neutral – at one point the linkage jammed completely at an intersection. Fortunately the Cerf’s mechanic came to our rescue and was able to fix it after a few minutes. Apparently the scissor linkage can lock up on itself when handled incorrectly by a ham-fisted American like myself.

Other than that, the car was fun to drive. By no means does it handle like a ’56 Chevy Bel Air, but they are two completely different cars. A Chevy or Ford from the mid 50’s had the benefit of being created by hundreds of engineers and designers; and put together on a production-based assembly line. The J1/2, K1/2, L, M, and P1 cars essentially shared the same chassis layout with the only variations coming in wheelbase and a later switch to coil springs. Allard had just a few draftsmen & engineers; the cars were styled by Sydney and friend Godfrey Imhoff! Even comparing Allard with its contemporaries of Austin, Alvis, Jaguar, and Triumph – what Allard accomplished with the P1 and the other cars was pretty amazing.

When driving the P1, I could imagine the car with 50% more horsepower, tuned suspension, and fresh tires blasting through the Alps like Sydney Allard. Sadly the shifter quickly brought me back to reality. However, with some more seat time I’m sure that I could come to grips with that blasted shifter. If I ever bought a P1, I would give serious consideration to converting it over to a floor mounted shifter. Sacrilege! I know, but in the name of drivability, it should be considered.

While the standard flathead was fairly anemic, it was easily tuned. In America, there was a wide variety of tuning parts available to the intrepid hot rodder. Unfortunately American tuning parts were nearly impossible to obtain in post war Europe – while exporting was essential to rebuilding post-war economies, importing foreign car parts wasn’t exactly at the top of the governments priority list.

*Note: The Allard dual carb manifold is a direct knock-off of Eddie Meyer’s manifold – it was replicated without Eddie’s permission. The Allard aluminum manifold was a direct copy of Edelbrock’s flathead manifold, which was apparently done with Edelbrock’s blessing. The parts were acquired by Reg Canham on a trip to the US in 1948 and smuggled back to Britain as carry-on baggage aboard his Trans-Atlantic flight.

For Sale: Allard GT-7105 CHR Coupe.

Vintage racing enthusiasts are quite familiar with the iconic cycle-fendered Allard J2’s and J2X’s from the early ’50’s. These competition models comprised about 10% of the 1900 Allard cars produced between 1946 and 1954. By ’54 the ‘big boys’ like Jaguar and Ferrari had caught up with, and were surpassing Allards on the race venues, so the Allard Company prudently chose to shift their focus toward other endeavors.



Sydney Allard’s US

connections subsequently enticed him to entertain ideas of partnering with Chrysler to develop a sports car to compete with the Corvettes and Thunderbirds. Allard responded by making seven Palm Beach Mark II prototypes with newly designed bodywork, and lighter and more rigid twin-tube frames. These cars were also equipped with a MacPherson strut/sliding pillar front suspensions in lieu of the standard Allard Ballamy swing axle. Allard concluded this series of prototypes with a pair of fastback coupe-bodied Allard GT’s.

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Sydney Allard fitted the first GT coupe with Jaguar power, and kept that car for his own personal use, and sold the second GT to Willis DuPont in late 1958. DuPont specified that it be fitted with a highly modified Chrysler 392 Hemi. However he soon tired of that beast for daily transportation, and replaced the engine with a stock 1958 300D 392 Hemi.

Not much is known about GT #7105 over the ensuing 20+ years before Bob Girvin purchased it in 1982. Bob made some minor improvements and commenced racing it for the next few years. He recognized the GT's advancements over Allard's preceding models, but also realized that the car needed more development to be a safe competitive racer.

Bob took a two-year hiatus from vintage racing the GT in the late 1980's to conduct a full restoration which included rebuilding the chassis and driveline, installing a roll cage and a highly modified, Hilborn fuel injected 392 Hemi. Bob remained a strict adherent to the principles of 'period correctness' – as is evidenced by the VSCCA, SVRA, VARA, VRG and VARAC sanctioning bodies.

Bob Girvin vintage raced this Allard extensively over the next three decades. His logbooks document the fact that his GT has competed in close to 200 race events at 24 different venues around the US and Canada – where 7105 has held its own with a wide variety of Kurtis, Aston Martin, Ferrari, Lister and Jag racers, winning it's class at several Lime Rock Vintage Festival's. In the course of his 16000 racing miles, Bob has blown four highly modified Chrysler 392 Hemi engines. He has since done some minor 'de-tuning' to make the engine more reliable. Compression was reduced to 11 to 1 from 13 to 1 and timing backed down to 28 degrees which reduced the HP from 570 to 500. 7105 is arguably the most extensively raced Allard – ever.

Bob retired from vintage racing a couple years ago, and has decided to offer 7105 for sale. Installing a double pass radiator and conventional exhaust system with mufflers makes street use possible while vintage racing is still an option.

This past September Bob transported his GT from Massachusetts to his winter home in Sedona, Arizona, and made a side trip through Wisconsin. He stopped by the Elkhart Lake Vintage Festival enroute, and displayed his Allard where the GT was awarded the well-deserved Peoples' Choice Award.

The car is being offered for \$375,000. Interested parties should email Bob at rgirvin3@gmail.com.

Monterey 2015

-Chuck Warnes

If you are an automotive enthusiast, the Monterey Car Week cannot be missed. If you have the means and have not attended yet, you should make your reservations now. There simply is no other event in the world that brings together such a diverse range of cars. The only disappointment has been the steady decline of Allard's on the Monterey Peninsula – be it on the track, the show lawn or the roads. However there is never a shortage of Allard enthusiasts on hand.

Steve Schuler was on track at the wheel of his Allard J2 (3rd place finisher of the 24 Hours of Le Mans in 1950) bracketing this year's nine day Monterey Car Week. Steve's week began with the Monterey Pre-Reunion at Laguna Seca Raceway on August 8 & 9, and concluded on Sunday, August 16 where he raced to a 7th place finish at the Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion – despite the fact that his brakes went out in the early laps of the race. Steve had a busy weekend as he was also racing his insane IMSA Roush Mustang that keeps trying to destroy itself.

Three Allards were on display at various car shows in the course of the week. David Rossiter showed his immaculately re-restored red K2 at Tuesday's Concours on the Avenue in Carmel, and on Wednesday Martin Allard's cream-colored K3 earned the Blessed and the Best of British Cars award at the 3rd Annual Carmel Mission Classic. Jim Taylor's unique red & white J2X was one 150 vintage sports and racing cars gracing the prestigious field at The Quail – A Motorsports Gathering on Friday.

On Friday we had a nice visit with Jim & Lisa Stec, who came out from Wisconsin to witness the sale of their Allard K3 at the Bonham's auction. This K3 also happens to be the car that my son and I rebuilt and traded with Lisa's uncle Paul a couple years ago. Paul passed away a few months ago and the family regretfully decided to divest themselves of much of

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his eclectic collection of preserved classic cars. We were all on pins and needles when the K3 drove up the ramp. Although the car did not hit the \$100,000 estimate, it did sell for a respectable \$87,500.

Martin Allard invited me to join him on his annual Thursday morning 'mini-tour' toward Big Sur to witness a part of the Pebble Beach *Tour d'Elegance* as the tour participants traveled out to Highway 1's iconic Bixby Creek bridge before returning back to go on display on Carmel's Ocean Avenue.

On Sunday morning, three generations of Warnes' rolled out of bed at 4:30

am, and with credentials in hand, partook in the Pebble Beach *Concours d'Elegance* 'Dawn Patrol'. Despite the early hour, it is a special privilege to gather on the 18th fairway of Pebble Beach Golf Links to witness the Concours entrants make their way onto the show lawn at the picturesque Carmel Bay.

While there were no Allards in this year's field, Jim Taylor showed his 1954 Cunningham C-3 Vignale Coupé where he earned 2nd in the Post War Cunningham Class. We also had a nice visit with Wayne Carini ("Chasing Classic Cars" on Velocity Channel). Wayne was sharing his enthusiasm about the Allard J2X that he recently purchased from long-term owner Bill Bauder. Wayne plans on keeping the car in his personal collection and has big plans to enjoy his new toy.

It may a be a bit premature, but you may want to pencil in the dates for Car Week in 2017...we'll keep you posted if anything interesting develops!

Allards on YouTube?

-Colin Warnes

Have you ever tried to find Allard videos on YouTube? You can search for terms like "Allard" "Allard J2" or "Allard Race", but you'll often get a whole bunch of non-Allard car related videos. Fortunately we've made it easy for you. Just go to our YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/allardregister> . There you'll find 150+ Allard related videos ranging from in-car race footage, vintage footage, movie clips, etc.

Navigating to our videos can be a bit of a pain, especially since YouTube is always tinkering with their web site interface. Here's a few tips on how to get around:

- Go to <https://www.youtube.com/user/allardregister>
- Look for a button that says "Playlists"...click on it
- You'll go to a new page that has three thumbnails on it, click on the "Favorites" thumbnail
- Again, you'll go to a new page and a video will start playing. To the right, you'll see a scroll-able list of videos that says "Favorites" with a bunch of preview thumbnails. This list contains links to all of the Allard videos that we could find on YouTube.
- Scroll through the list and click on any video that interests you. Enjoy!
- If you have an interesting Allard video that you would like to share on YouTube, but are unsure how to do it, email us at allardregister@outlook.com. We can either help you do it...or do it for you.

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Allard Motor Works News

-Colin Warnes

We just received a press release from Roger Allard's Allard Motor Works announcing that he was moving vehicle manufacturing from Montreal to Valencia, California (just outside of Los Angeles). This piqued our interest so we quickly sent Roger an email to see what was going on.

Basically the time had come to split with his fabrication contractor. After a search for a new fabrication partner, Roger found the right team in Valencia. The shop has lots of experience building specialty cars for Hollywood along with several high-end hot rods. Once fabrication is underway, a new Allard assembly shop will be opened next door. This new setup should also help reduce lead times.

Along with the transition to a new shop, a new and improved J2X will be coming, the MkIII. The new car should feature a heater, full windshield, an optional sports windshield, adjustable steering column, adjustable foot pedals, one inch more of ground clearance, a RHD option, power steering, an automatic transmission option, and shortly after...an removable hardtop (t-top) option. AMW is also exploring having aluminum bodies fabricated. The plan is to launch the J2X MkIII in June of this year. Given our proximity to Valencia, we are looking forward to bring you a road test of the new car.

There's one other important feature the new car will come with...an engine. This year, the US Government passed a piece of legislation called the "Low Volume Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Act of 2015" which basically allows companies like AMW to finally deliver cars with the engine installed. Previously, buyers had to had source the engine and have it installed by a 3rd party. Available engines include the modern Chrysler Hemi, Cadillac and GM RamJet V8s, ranging from 350 hp to 700 hp – and all emissions compliant.

We wish Roger and Allard Motor Works the best of luck in this new phase of his business! Please visit <http://goo.gl/2mJ5lj> to read the full press release from Roger.

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The Allard Register Needs your Help!

You've probably noticed that fewer print editions of the Allard Register have been published lately. Truth be told, Colin would rather focus on posting stories on www.AllardRegister.org and our Facebook page than layout the printed Register. If you have an eye for design, are proficient with MS Word and the photo editing software of your choice, and would like to give up 8 to 12 hours of your time a few times a year...the Allard Register would love to add you to our team. We hope you can help us get back to publishing three times a year.



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