

The Buick Y-Job



The Buick Y-Job, considered to be the first futuristic concept car, is the latest vehicle selected by the Historic Vehicle Association for inclusion in the National Historic Vehicle Register.

The car, designed Harley Earl and his General Motors Styling team, joins such vehicles as the New York-to-Paris winning Thomas Flyer, the first Meyers Manx dune buggy and the GM Futurliner in the register, a project being done in partnership with the U.S. Department of the Interior, the Historic American Engineering Record and the archives of the Library of Congress.

"The Buick Y-Job is a true American design treasure and an incredibly appropriate vehicle to document during our National Laboratory grand opening," Mark Gessler, HVA president, said in a news release.

"Harley Earl and the Buick Y-Job expanded the boundaries of car design and drew the blueprint for concept vehicle design and execution," said Michael Simcoe, GM Global Design Vice President and the latest successor to Earl. "We thank the HVA for ensuring the world's first concept car is documented and preserved for future generations."

The HVA announcement noted that GM's design and engineering teams worked together in the late 1930s on the (Continued on page 7)





Car of the Month

1961 CORVETTE

Owned by Ralph Ridge



I have owned this car for almost twenty years and it has quite a story over that period of time. It is an original Fuel Injected car that I restored to NCRS standards. It achieved an NCRS Top Flight award in 1998. In 1999 I drove the car to a NCRS regional meet in Zion, UT and then to the NCRS national meet in Sun Valley, ID where I achieved the Founders Award.

The car has subsequently been driven to NCRS national conventions in Galveston, TX, Monterey, CA, Hershey, PA, Charlotte, NC, Hampton, VA and Novi, MI. For the road trip to Novi, this car was selected to represent the year of the '61 on the convention t-shirts.

During the various road trips, I have had the opportunity to drive the car on the Texas Motor Speedway, Laguna Seca, Road America and the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

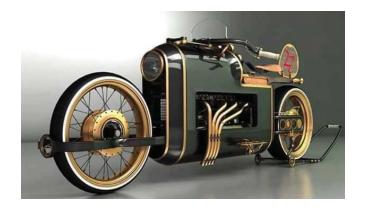
In 2005 this car was also selected to represent the '61 on the Motorama II tour organized by the Corvette Museum and sponsored by GM.

It was on the road returning from Hampton, VA that the car was rear ended by a semi and totalled. I was able to retain the car after the insurance settlement and am in the process of restoring the car as a resto rod. It will have a tube chassis with '93 Corvette suspension. The engine is a GM Ram Jet 350 crate motor and the transmission is a Tremec 5 speed. The rear end is getting a special treatment with six tail light with LED lights and sequential flashers. There will also be some other unique changes to the car as it will never be original again.

The car is in the CARS body shop in Colorado Springs right now and should be painted by the end of January. I hope to have it on the road by late spring. I am considering naming the car "Phoenix" as is has risen from the ashes.



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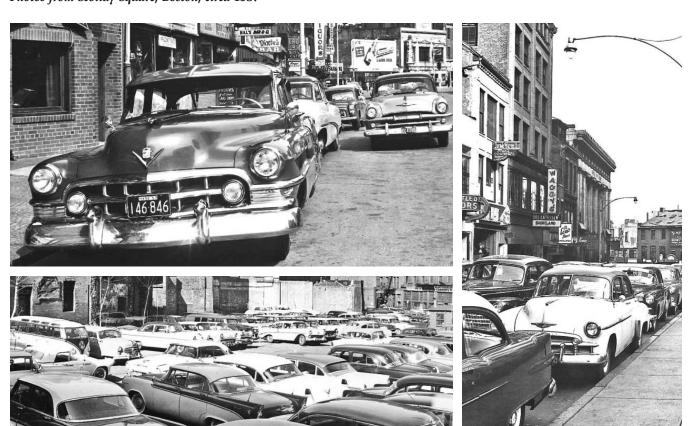




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WHY, IF IT ISN'T MY OL'



By Jay Piersanti







The Buick Y-Job (continued from page 1)



car, which included such features as a rain sensor on the center console so the convertible top would close automatically while parked should inclement weather develop.

"The Buick Y-Job was created under the direction of GM's legendary design chief, Harley J. Earl," the HVA said in its news release. "The car was described at the time as a 'convertible coupe' hand-built on a custom Buick chassis and powered by a Buick Series 50 engine with special experimental features.

"The Y-Job foreshadowed many design features that were adopted over the next several decades. The low and wider design eliminated the need for running boards and improved stability. The car incorporated 13-inch wheels and brakes with features used on airplanes at the time.

"The body was beautifully streamlined and extended front fenders into doors. The rear of the car featured a fully concealed convertible top, boat tail design, and the hint of the tailfins that became iconic design elements of cars in the 1950s. The grill was far lower and wider than what was typical of the period and included novel retractable headlamps. The hood was described as 'alligator-type' of one piece that was a departure from the two piece hoods from the time."

The announcement of the Y-Job joining the register was made at the grand opening of the HVA National Laboratory, a purpose-built facility for automotive photography, photogrammetry, 3D scanning, videography and the HVA's growing physical and digital archives. The HVA said its laboratory was built to standardize and streamline the expansion of the National Historic Vehicle Register program and includes a 40×40 foot white room with infinity walls on all sides and a turntable integrated into the floor for documentary photography of

historic vehicles.

"The facility is believed to be the only facility of its kind in the world," the HVA said, "The work done here will provide current and future generations a highly detailed, accurate and consistent record of some of the nation's most significant automotive treasures."



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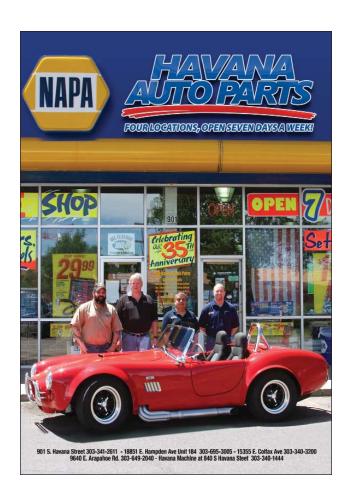


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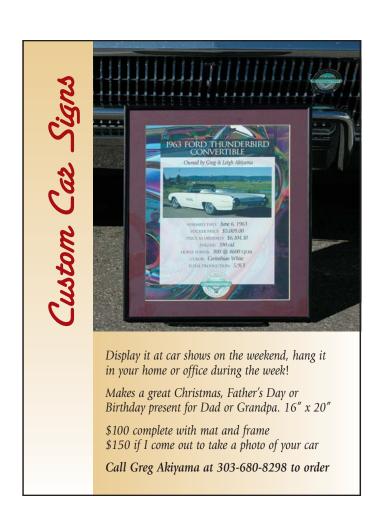
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ED: I am looking for other Cars of the Month. These cars do not have to be concours award winners, just cars that have owners who are proud to own them. (Don't we all feel that way?) To nominate a car and owner, please contact me at gakiyama@earthlink.net. Thanks. ED: I am always looking for more subscribers. If you know someone who you think would enjoy getting my newsletter, please have them send me an e-mail complete with their name, club affiliation and phone number. I ask for a phone number because when (not if) an e-mail stops working, I can contact that person for an updated e-mail address rather than just stop sending them the newsletter. My e-mail address is: gakiyama@earthlink.net. Thanks.

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