

Classy Chassis

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Westerly-Pawcatuck Region AACA

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Phil Panceria Passes

Once again we begin our newsletter on a sad note, the passing of Phil Panciera on January 14, 2020.

Phil was a lifetime member of our club. He was also a former club president. In recent years Phil and his wife Sally attended our meetings regularly and frequently added to our discussions.

Phil's introduction to the Westerly-Pawcatuck Region AACA (WPRAACA) was around the late '60's when a customer of his dad's suggested that Phil get interested in antique cars. That customer was the well-known John Drew. John also invited Phil to join the WPRAACA. After being a member for only 2 months Phil accepted an invitation to be the vice president of the club. Phil was already busy at this time since he was chief engineer with the Misquamicut Fire Department which only recently (2017) recognized Phil for his 61 years of service by attaching a bronze plaque in his honor to the side of their Custom Ferrara Pumper.

Later in the 1970's Phil became president of our club, a position he held for 11 years.



Here Phil is seen at home surrounded by auto memorabilia. He will be missed.

A Message from our President, Merrill Moone

Our club has been pretty much inactive since the fall because of the COVID-19 restrictions. My experience with Zoom meetings has not been satisfying so I haven't tried to get them going. Besides, since there has been no place to go there has been nothing to plan or do. Hopefully this spring is going to bring changes. I suspect that by the middle or end of March most of our members, being over 65, will have received vaccinations. I just heard on the radio that R.I. is allowing bars to reopen today. If progress continues I believe we should have places to go and things to do beginning in April or May. We should also have our meeting places open to us again. Therefore, I have put March 24th and 30th on my calendar for executive committee and general membership meetings. It will be good to see everyone again.

Local Car Shows in 2020: the Time of COVID-19, by Gerry Lynn

I am certain that our members noticed that there weren't a whole lot of car events to go to this past year. Kudos to our club for making the effort to gather in a Westerly parking lot on Granite St. and at the site of the Oak Harbor cruise night on Rt. 2 in Exeter. We also participated in two drive-by birthday celebrations. Here's a quick review of three local events that had a wider participation:

Tom Leferriere's Classic Car showroom in Smithfield RI. <https://www.tomlaferriere.com/>

This one gets my vote for the best local event of 2020. Tom is a member of our club and has a business selling classic cars on consignment. I had a few doubts as we made our way to a warehouse off of Rt. 44 but boy was I wrong. He has a fantastic collection of pre-war cars, mostly Packards, but also Lincoln, Cadillac and even Rolls. If that wasn't enough for you, many of the 250 or so spectators brought their own rolling gems. I saw everything from a Crosley Hot Shot racer to the latest Acura NRX sports car.

Tom is a member of our Westerly AACA club and he has come to a meeting to give us a talk on the antique car business. His business in Smithfield is mostly selling old cars on consignment and he has done that with our members' cars. Check out all the pictures from the show on our website and his business ad is posted there also.

There were many people but they were safely spread out over a large area. There was adequate food and restrooms and A&W root beer was next door and, best of all, it was entirely FREE!! We even had a local celebrity, Dick Shappy <http://dshappyclassiccars.com/> from Warwick, probably the largest pre-war car dealer in the state. He even has a picture of him with Jay Leno on his web page.

Audrain car museum "Cars and Coffee" <https://www.audrainautomuseum.org/2020-cars-coffee> This was one of only two regularly occurring cruise nights in Southern New England this

summer. The museum ran it every two weeks alternating between Ft. Adams Newport and the Newport polo grounds in Portsmouth.

The trick with this one was knowing how to get in. You had to sign up in advance. Since the maximum attendance was limited to 250 people per RI COVID-19 regulations, they limited each "cars and coffee" to 100 cars with no more than two people per car. The museum would send out an email announcement of the event at noon on the Monday before the next Sunday's cruise where you could respond if you wanted to register. Often they would get responses making reservations within 5 to 15 minutes of sending out the email announcements!

This cruise would attract some more modern super cars than your average cruise night. Porches, McLaren, Ferrari and Lambos were all represented. There was a food truck and the museum pushing annual memberships and logo clothing. IMHO, worth the trip if you were lucky enough to get in.

Fredrickson Farms Car show <https://www.newenglandautoshows.com/event/ri-north-scituate-classic-car-night-at-frederickson-farms/> This hard survivor on Wednesday afternoons also in Smithfield, RI kept the car hop cruise show tradition going. I don't have any first hand reports about how well it was going but they did do a show at the end of the season with Crusin Bruce of Worcester MA as DJ so they must have done pretty well

Hank's dairy Bar Plainfield CT. <https://www.facebook.com/hanksdairybar/> Here's another holder of the cruise night torch to keep the tradition going in these troubled times. Hank's established in 1957 has had a cruise night on Thursdays since like...forever and they were able to keep it alive this year. Thanks to the efforts of our Al & Sandy Bernard they agreed to host a get together for our club only after the end of their regular cruise night season. Our thanks to club members Al & Sandy Bernard for arranging a special cruise night at Hank's just for the club.

Klingberg family services show <https://klingbergmotorcarseries.org/> **New Britain CT.** Through innovation and technology they were able to keep this usually fabulous car show going. They did it by having a drive-through show. That's a fantastic idea if you have the space. The show cars were all displayed an appropriate distance apart on the lawn and spectators drove through the show route in their own cars. The show cars all had descriptive placards with owners socially distanced nearby to answer questions. Every spectator car got to drive through the field twice and I believe there was even narration you could listen to on your car's FM radio. It was just like going to the Drive-in in days of yore only you're seeing cars instead of movies.

I know, I know this summer was nothing compared to the usual 4 or more cruise nights a week and at least a car show every month, but at least it was something to help get us through these crazy times.

Everybody wear your masks now and get the vaccine on tap for this Spring and, hopefully, we all should get back to a normal schedule of old car events next summer

Motor Head Mag. Lives On, by Gerry Lynn

When I first moved to Rhode Island 10 years ago I stumbled on this excellent magazine for old car guys. Motor head is a FREE monthly magazine about motor sports in RI, Mass and CT. It consists of 78 pages and is about the size of the old Life magazine. I recently spied a stack of 10 copies just before you exit McQuade's hardware in Westerly. You can also pay a subscription to have a copy mailed to you.

The articles cover all kinds of motor sports in RI mostly but also MA & CT. By all I mean it covers old car shows, quarter mile drags, as well as Seekonk, Waterford and Thompson track news.

The articles are nice but I thought the most useful part for me was the ads. Are you looking for an engine or transmission rebuilder? They've got them. Want an electrical or audio specialist? They're in there. Need frame straightening, steering or suspension specialists? Look no further. Want a dynamometer test to see what your horsepower is at the wheels? Step right up. They've also got ads for rust removal, stripping & dipping places and body shops that do old car restoration services. They also have ads from speed shops and 4-wheel shops.

In short, I've never seen another single source for leads to all the unique services we old car guys are looking for. Most of the shops are near Providence but they also have ads from CT and MA. Who would have thunk that you can get leads to all these services for FREE!! They also list all advertisers with reference to their phone and ad page in the magazine.

Their web address is www.GetMotorhead.com or on [Facebook](#) look for "Motorhead Magazine". Because they survive on ads they don't make any reviews or recommendations but it sure is a better way to find repair specialists than asking your guy if he knows a guy. Their phone is 401-965-9012 .

Interesting Internet References, Gerry Lynn

The Finest Vintage Cars of the 1960's: [The Finest Vintage Cars of the 1960's Golden Age - Daily Choices \(daily-choices.com\)](#) Gerry Lynn (GL)

Working at a Kansas Assembly Plant in the 1960's: [Claycomo \(I was there: Passing out from exhaustion at Ford's Claycomo plant... | Hemmings\)](#)) GL

Interview, Newport Car Museum: [Gunther Buerman \(Rhode Island PBS Weekly | Wonderful Works of Art | Season 1 | Episode 105 | PBS\)](#)

The History of the Glove Compartment: [The History of the Glove Compartment \(aaa.com\)](#)

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