

SQUIRE SS-100 REGISTRY

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Occasionally, the old adage that "The simplest ideas are often the best ones" is once again demonstrated to be true. Example: I recently stated that we now have a source for wheel knock-off wrenches for those of you that are missing them. Michael Lindgren in New York ordered one and then called to say that it worked just fine but he had improved it. These replacement wrenches are mild steel and are flame and shear cut before welding. Michael filed down the inside of the box and then lined it with teflon tape to avoid scratching the chrome on the wheel nut. He next took a two foot piece of stainless tubing and flattened one end in a vice, just enough to slip over the handle of the wrench. Finally, he drilled a 3/8" hole between the two and installed a pin so he could secure the two pieces from slipping apart. Michael states that the extension adds just enough leverage to tighten the wheel nut by hand without beating the wrench with a hammer. When traveling, separate the two pieces and throw them in the car.

I hate it when I hear things like that because my first reaction is "Why didn't I think of that?" For three years I've been carrying both the wrench and a five pound hand sledge, beating my knuckles raw and in the process, most likely over-tightening the wheel nut and tearing up the chrome. Ah well!!

Meet Mel & Carol Peterson, 2125 Ashland Ave., Santa Monica, CA 90405 Home: Area 310+452-6309. Mel met member Ed Spielman at a local car show a few weeks ago and fell in love with the Squire. He has joined our group and would like to acquire one so those of you that are interested in moving yours can contact him directly.

This month we have a very nifty attachment from our friend Ed Spielman in Los Angeles. Read on. It's self explanatory.

OWNERS CLUB NEWSLETTER

FROM: ED SPIELMAN

JAY LENO REMEMBERS THE SQUIRE SS-100

On Saturday, October 17th, I found myself and my red Squire roadster (#32) at the 17th Annual Verdugo Vintage Vehicles Car Show in La Crescenta, California, near Glendale.

It was a neat show, low-key, held in a small park. About 60-70 vehicles were there and no more than several hundred people. This was not a glitzy gathering like the Beverly Hills Car Show or the Pebble Beach Concours. We're talking a fun Saturday afternoon with the field showing everything from an air cooled Franklin to hot rods, foreign sports cars and pick-up trucks.

As usual, the Squire created it's share of interest. There were the usual exclamations; "Wow! What is it? Who made it?"... etc. It is a very rare individual who is knowledgeable about our cars without being reminded of Intermeccania coachworks and the other milestone cars produced by them in Italy.

So, I registered some surprise when I heard a pleasant voice behind me say; "Gee, I remember these cars. They have Ford power..." I turned to congratulate the expertise of whoever said this, when I found myself looking at ...Jay Leno.

Here is America's most visible (and perhaps most insightful) comedian dressed simply in jeans, a blue denim shirt and old sneakers. This is the same Jay Leno that, a year before, I had forked over big money to see on stage at the Sunrise Musical Theatre in Florida. I had taken my Mom, Harriet Moss, my Aunt Addie Shapiro and my 12 year old daughter Julie. The place was standing room only. For over two hours, Leno had the place roaring and applauding. And with what kind of material? That which was as relevant to a 12 year old kid as to an adult (an impossible feat). And this, without a four letter word or hint of blue material. His insights were brilliant and outrageously funny.

I bumped into Leno (almost literally) at the Laguna Seca Vintage Road Races, held in Monterey at the end of August. Anywhere there's Classic Iron, you'll find Jay Leno.

So, here's Leno in this small car show in La Crescenta, California and recalling the Squire. I asked him how he knew about the Squire as they're rare and few collectors know much about them.

Leno said, "I used to work on these cars."

"What?"

He went on to explain that as a young man, he had worked for Foreign Motors in Boston, Mass. (in the years 1969-'73). The owner was a man by the name of Tom Mix (no relation to the cowboy actor).

"He used to send me down to the docks to pick them up," Leno explained. "And I had to 'prep' the Squires before Tom sold them. I think we had about five or six of these cars. That's how I remembered the Ford power..." Leno recalled, looking at my 'old #32'.

After a bit more Squire talk, Leno strolled the field. No entourage, no bodyguards, just a guy in jeans talking motors and torsion bars with the rest. He kibitzed and showed real enthusiasm for each vehicle. Leno is a walking encyclopedia, who knows each car inside out. Though in the public eye, he still has the heart of a kid and out of sheer love of it, spends a good deal of his time at the working end of a wrench .

I cannot but take the time to make the following observation:

I have been in what is laughingly called Show Business for most of my life. I started as a Page on Johnny Carson's quiz Show, "Who Do You Trust" when I was sixteen. I have seen numerous important personalities at the heights of their powers. Fame is a curious commodity. Those who achieve it must often pay a heavy price. They become insulated. They cannot mix with 'the crowd' for a variety of reasons. Firstly, everybody wants something. Usually, it's just an autograph or to be near the famous person (as if by some magic, their fame can make others more important. Or, perhaps a bit of it will rub off). Then, there are those who really want something. "Send a picture to my Aunt Tilly in Dubuque..." or, "I want to be on your show..." , or "Maybe you can help me get my movie made...". Fame is an aphrodisiac, but it usually drives the famous away from personal intimacy with the audience that is the source of their celebrity. Elizabeth Taylor cannot stroll into the Seven-Eleven for a pack of gum.

So, here is Jay Leno, who that very day was on the cover of TV Guide as one of America's best dressed (and he is), but who now is meandering around the Packards and Buicks while wearing the clothes he wears to wrench his own cars. He was, for a few hours, just another 'car crazy' out for a couple of hours of fun.

In the history of Hollywood/Show Business, there have been many real auto enthusiasts. Clark Gable once remarked that, as a young man, if someone had given him a good car to drive and care for, he would have been very happy to have been a chauffeur.

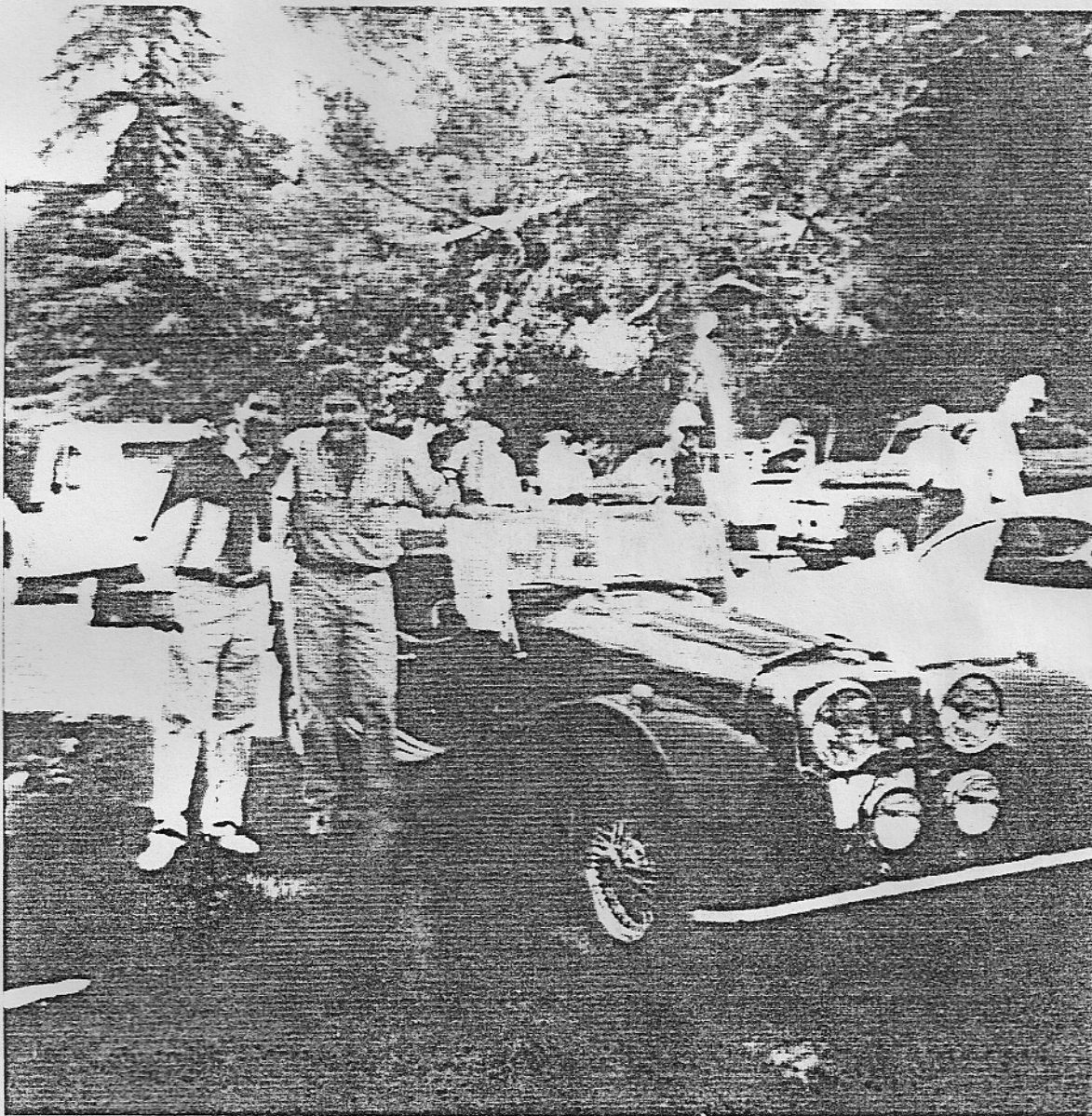
Leno, is a true enthusiast, whose collection of vintage cars and motorcycles reflects his lifelong passion. He drove to the show in a Duesenberg (LeBaron Coachwork) equal to anything one would find at the Pebble Beach Concours. Still, he viewed it objectively, without any undue fanfare. He had brought it to share with others who would appreciate it.

He left the show in the Duesenberg... and came back an hour later! Now, he was driving a 1915 Hispano-Suiza engined 'Brooklands' style record car! The thing was mind boggling; spartan aluminum coachwork, half a block long and powered by a WWI SPAD aero engine (Hispano-Suiza). The car had come from Australia. Leno hung out discussing the fine points of this unique Hispano. He knew every nut and bolt in it.

Anyway, with all the pressures of celebrity, "The Tonight Show" and bee hive of media attention, Leno spent his Saturday afternoon being with other kindred spirits. You've gotta love this guy. He's a national resource.

So, here's to Jay Leno, who in a small way helped to get a half dozen of our Squires on the road. He's one of us. Long may he prosper.

ED SPIELMAN
NORTHRIDGE, CALIFORNIA
October, 1992



Ed Spielman with Jay Leno and Spielman's Squire SS-100 (#32)

Oct. 17, '1992
17th Annual Vintage Vehicle Show
La Crescenta, California.