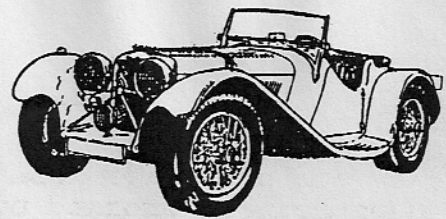


CLBCOM 81

NOVEMBER 1997



Squire SS-100 Registry

SPRING-FLING SET FOR MARCH 1998

After lots of discussion a decision has been made to hold another Western meeting of Squire owners, this one to be held in Laughlin, Nevada on the weekend of March 20th - 22nd. Why Laughlin? Well, a couple of reasons. First, it's easy to get to for the Western members driving their Squires and it's just about as easy for the fly-in's. Second, two of our newest members, Vern & Sorita Jensen (Chassis #18) have offered to host a Saturday luncheon-meeting at their Jensen Ranch at Fort Mohave, just south of Laughlin but on the Arizona side of the Colorado River. That'll be fun, especially for the Easterners attending. You'll see a real slice of the Western mountains and desert.

There are a number of good casino-hotels in Laughlin and we'll work out the best price on this end and announce at a later date. This notice is being made to allow everyone plenty of time for planning. While our "official" dates are March 20th-22nd, there is no reason you can't arrive earlier and/or depart later. Those flying in have two options. You can fly to Phoenix on Thursday where we'll have three Squires and full sized passenger cars driving over on Friday. Or, you can fly to Las Vegas and rent an economy car for the short drive south to Laughlin. There are always cheap airline seats to Vegas from anywhere in the country. More on this subject later.

THE T-5 TRANSMISSION PROJECT

on Ed Spielman's Chassis #32 is completed and performs better than we had hoped for. If you don't mind abusing your tires you can lay a strip of rubber in both 1st and 2nd gears and the RPM drop in 5th gear is dramatic. It's not exactly a "bolt-on" and requires an adaptor from the tranny case to the bell housing, a modification of the rear mount and an alteration of the forward floorboard cover in the cockpit. I'm hoping to con Bill Lieske into doing a drawing to be included with a how-to description in a later newsletter.

SPEAKING OF ED SPIELMAN

he's been spending a lot of time in Vancouver, BC on the set of his Showtime series "Dead Man's Gun". While there he had a chance to visit with Frank Reisner at Intermeccanica and has written it up for this months' newsletter. I will include the mentioned Intermeccanica history with next months letter. Thanks, Ed.

AND ALWAYS REMEMBER

Friends may come and go but enemies accumulate.

FOR THE SQUIRE CLUB NEWSLETTERFROM ED SPIELMAN

My thanks to SID WEAVER for last month's contribution to the newsletter about his chance meeting with Frank Reisner (and Sid's more than kind remarks about yours truly).

As this car club grows and expands in its discovery, restoration and refinement of these wonderful cars, there is a history, a cycle of events from the 1970's to the present. At the risk of being overly philosophical, I cannot help but observe that:

"THERE ARE NO COINCIDENCES"

It is a tenet of many philosophies that "there are no coincidences", or, if you will, "a coincidence is merely The Almighty's way of showing off."

(Yes, there is a 'nuts & bolts' point of reference here. Please, read on...)

Life with an Intermeccanica Squire SS-100 has its curious surprises. As mentioned in a recent newsletter, early in '97, while working on my television show, "DEAD MAN'S GUN" (shot in Vancouver), I spied a Porche speedster replica ... with Intermeccanica emblazoned on it.

Years before, Art (The Prez) and I had tracked down Paula Reisner (Intermeccanica co-owner) in Canada, a charming woman with a photographic memory.

So, I was again in Vancouver in May of '97, working on my show, when our Canadian partner, Larry Sugar (a fellow auto enthusiast) mentioned that there was a custom builder of Porshe speedsters just a few blocks from our production office. He said the name of the firm was something like ... "Intermecanical".

Eureka!

The next day, I called information, got the number again and spoke to Paula Reisner. She was most gracious and I played hookey from show biz and invited myself over to their present digs. The building, at East First Avenue is, as ever, a small coach works with INTERMECCANICA posted on it for all to see (and Sid Weaver to photograph).

I found myself spending some long overdue quality time with Frank and Paula Reisner ("Mr. & Mrs. Intermeccanica") and their son, Henry, who is now an integral part of the current business.

The place is still a small coachworks, albeit now a manufacturer of quality glass replicas. The building is their shop, upstairs office and a small library/archive of Intermeccanica itself.

Frank is a charming man, a kind of elder statesman of the golden age of sports car building...and still at it.

Frank Reisner's story is a remarkable one; Hungarian by nationality, an engineer by training, he and Paula ended up doing what Italian coachbuilders (carrozzeria) did. They competed with the Italians at their own game, on their own soil...and were successful at it.

Frank gave me a four page history of Intermeccanica (included herewith).

As the visit progressed, he seemed to take some satisfaction as I outlined the dedication that the members have to our cars and the improvements we have made.

Reisner mentioned that he would have wished to refine the suspension, do more finishing details and such, but demands from 'the American side' to construct and ship the cars more quickly prevented this, he said.

When I informed him of the improvements we have made and are making...frame bracing, buttressed motor mounts, center pull hand brakes, engine turned dashboards, etc...he smiled. He seemed quite pleased that we were, in effect, doing the kind of thing he wished he had time to do to the cars in Italy.

When I returned once more to Vancouver in late August, I did so with a complete book of Squire newsletters (replete with Bill Lieske's fabulous technical drawings and other goodies). Frank and Paula were not in, but I presented the book to Henry. He was most appreciative and promised to give it to them.

Well, after my sojourn and actually meeting the Reisners face to face, there is a missing piece that now fits.

(Unfortunately, I was also able to discern that there seems to be no trail of existing Squire parts. The Reisners, packing a tight trunk, have nothing stashed away. Even past suppliers and other Italian subcontractors appear to be a pretty cold trail, lo' these 25 years later.

Not only with Intermeccanica, but with Italian and other concerns (including such as the Ducati motorcycle factory), there is little practicality for them in stocking parts or literature. Understandable preoccupation is with present day business.)

My meeting with the Reisners was a memorable piece of this odyssey and presents a curious satisfaction. It has been a quarter century since I first layed eyes on an Intermeccanica Squire at the New York Auto Show, spoke to Mike Wolf (technical designer of the car) and spent a bit of time with Ed Felbin (later visiting him in Philadelphia and appearing on his radio show). Now, having met the Reisners (who were most gracious), the scenario is complete.

Italian-American cars built for a Philadelphia entrepreneur. Research over years and American and international contacts by any number of our club members. And now, I find the Reisners and Intermeccanica just a few blocks from where I work. Coincidence?

I'm philosophical by nature, but I think trying to fit 'the strands of fate' with being a 'motorhead' may overload the cosmos. So, I'll let it go and just enjoy the car...

Warmest regards,

