



Vintage Views

The official publication of the
Garden State Vintage Stock Car Club

Dedicated to the Preservation of Stock Car Racing History
January, February, March 2021

NORTH EAST MOTOR SPORTS MUSEUM

article and photos by Linda Cooper

Last September, I had the opportunity to attend the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour race at New Hampshire Motor Speedway in Loudon, NH. While in the area, I was sent on special assignment to visit the North East Motor Sports Museum.

The museum is located on property adjoining the speedway. It's easy to find on NH Route 106 North. The



museum's exterior has an unassuming appearance that belies the treasury of items on display inside—a treat for the motorsport fan's eyes.

I had an enjoyable visit from the moment I stepped in the door. I was greeted by friendly volunteer staff,

paid my entry fee, and stepped into displays of amazing variety. During my visit, I met the museum's Executive Director, Tom Netishen. I enjoyed speaking with him about the facility and the similarities between our respective organizations.

The North East Motor Sports Museum opened in June of 2017. The nearly 10,000 square-foot building houses a



wide range of race cars and motorcycles, all with a New England heritage. The museum exhibits cars, trophies, helmets, engines, and vintage racing attire. There is a library with books, photos, videos, posters, and magazines. The theatre shows footage of early New England racing. Some elements allow visitors to participate – a slot car track and an iRacing computer simulator are big hits.

While display items vary, you may see the 1915 Duesenberg that raced on the



one-mile dirt oval in Boston; the successful King & Marshall front engine NHRA dragster; Joey Logano's first winning NASCAR Cup car (and the trophy he won that day); 1950s open wheel cars driven by Joe Sostillio and Johnny Thomson; and Eddie "The Savage" Sarno's drag

motorcycle with a huge Buick engine. There are dozens of trophies to see, an extensive helmet collection and walls covered with photos of New England racing in days gone by. The Museum has agreements with other museums and private collectors to display their cars and priceless historic artifacts for limited periods as well as permanent gifts.

The museum cites its purpose as one that discovers and shares the history of Northeast motorsports. It honors the past, brings visitors to the present, and inspires motor racing's future for young people. Education is an important component of its mission. For this reason, the museum's first major project was the creation of a book entitled "A History of Auto Racing in New England." The book is available at www.sprintcarstuff.com or the museum.



The museum is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. It was built and is maintained entirely by donations of funds, materials, time, and effort. It is staffed by volunteers except



for Mr. Netishen, who is the sole museum employee. Fundraising is a continual process, employing a variety of opportunities: car shows held on museum grounds; a variety of sponsorship levels; willed estate donations; engraved



GVSVC meetings are held on the 3rd Wednesday from January through November, 7:30 p.m. at the West Long Branch Firehouse, Rt. 71 (Monmouth Road) and Cedar Ave. West Long Branch, NJ.
For directions call 732-330-8349 or go to www.gsvcc.org.

brick paver purchase; and rental of the facility for meetings, weddings and birthday parties (all of which can be catered!). I was told that, after only three years of operation, building expansion is planned for the near future. That's impressive.

Museum President Dr. Dick Berggren, a former racer and of racing print and television renown, was an integral part of the museum's founding and continues to be involved in its running. I was lucky enough to meet him and chat a bit during my stay. His enthusiasm for the museum is obvious. It was a pleasure to meet him.

The museum is open on Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. You can check out the museum's website at: <https://www.nemsmuseum.com/welcome.html> for contact information, admission fees (reasonably priced), and other interesting information.

Oh – you may be wondering what the “special assignment” was that took me to the museum. When it first opened, GSVSCC sent several items on loan for display. On my way to the track, club President Ray Shea asked me to collect the items the club loaned. My arrival was unexpected, but I was able to retrieve the helmets of Joe Kelly and Don Stumpf. Several trophies remain in the care of NEMSM. Naturally, this means I'll have to go back...

Source: www.nemsmuseum.com



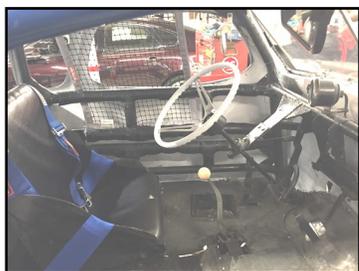
VINTAGE CARS IN THE SUNSHINE STATE

The 2021 Modified Reunion was held once again at New Smyrna Speedway in Florida on February 12. The Florida Ground Pounders vintage group organized the event. The cars were on display in the front parking lot during the afternoon. They had a practice session before qualifying began for the night's racing divisions. Later on, the cars had track time again. A certain correspondent (LC) was on the scene and brought back these photos:



"A.J. KITZ" AND HIS HARBACH TRIBUTE COLLECTION

by Linda Cooper



Since its inception in 1991, the Garden State Vintage Stock Car Club has counted vintage race car owners among its members. This year's newsletters will include highlights of some of the club's car owners. For the Winter 2021 issue, I talked with Alex Kitzen about his restored #18 coupe and #x90 Cavalier, both formerly driven by standout Long Island racer Fred Harbach.

First, a little about Kitzen: currently a resident of Goshen, NY, he is from Huntington, Long Island. He met Fred Harbach in 1981. The following year, Harbach invited him to join the pit crew (while dating Harbach's daughter Joanne) and gave him the nickname "A.J. Kitz". Kitzen remained on Harbach's crew until Harbach's retirement from racing in 1992. Kitzen said he enjoyed those ten years and has a lot of entertaining stories to tell about those days. Kitzen is a retired Police Sergeant. He and Joanne have two daughters - Candace, Kristina, and Kristina's husband, Mike.

"Kitz" joined GSVSCC in 2019. He also belongs to other vintage clubs. He has been restoring Fred Harbach-driven cars for several years now. In addition to the two in this article, he is currently working on a 1982 Troyer Pinto that Harbach raced in the 1982 and 1983 seasons. He said he's always on the lookout for more Harbach cars! When asked about his interest in vintage clubs, Alex said that he is as interested in preserving the history of auto racing as he is interested in preserving the history of Fred Harbach's racing and that era - the races, the friends, the parties. Alex maintains that "Fred would have loved it!"

MICEIKAS' "HOT LITTLE NUMBER" - #18 COUPE

The 1937 Pontiac coupe was built by Long Island's Butch Miceika in 1966. Not only was this car a versatile racer, it was a *winning* versatile racer, and a workhorse at that. The car was run at dirt and asphalt tracks on the Island (Islip Speedway and Freeport Stadium) and off the Island, in NJ (Old Bridge Stadium, Wall Stadium, and Trenton Speedways), PA's Langhorne Speedway, and MA's Seekonk Speedway. Harbach drove it in the 1969 and 1970 seasons. His last race with it was the 1970 Orange County Fair Speedway Eastern States 200.

The coupe also saw action in the All Star Stock Car Racing League. Harbach brought it in for the checkered flag at Islip's All Star Race in August of 1969.

Although Harbach parted ways with the #18 coupe in 1970, it had more laps left in it. It continued to be raced into the 1975 season.

The car has seen a number of modifications over the years. A Chevy big block engine originally provided the power. This was changed to a small block, fuel injected 350 horsepower engine. Now it has a 402 c.i. engine. In 1969, racing and chassis setup legend Ed Flemke, Sr. replaced the original four-link, I-beam front suspension with a torsion bar front end of his own design. Additionally, this car was one of the first race cars on Long Island to be fitted with power steering, also in '69.

As with many vintage race cars, its whereabouts have varied since that last checkered flag in 1975. Fellow Long Island racer and racing historian Marty Himes restored the coupe in the early 1980s. Ray Herold bought the car from Himes later in the decade. Herold had the car for about ten years before selling it to Jim Mulcare. Kitzen bought it from Mulcare about two years later, in 2016. The Hot Little Number is finally "home".

THE CAVALIER - x90

We're going to jump forward in time by about 28 years to take a look at Harbach's 1992 Troyer Cavalier. This was the last racer Harbach owned. He bought the chassis and sheet metal new and built on it from there in about two months' time. He drove this car to his last race, which he won, at Riverhead Raceway on Long Island in 1992.

Naturally, this car was well-equipped: it has a Bill Mitchell 358 small block engine. Here's something that's pretty neat: as a tribute to Harbach, Mitchell had the valve covers engraved with images of the race car. A dry sump oil system keeps the engine lubricated. A Chevrolet 390 carburetor sits on top. The 4-speed transmission gets the power to the Frankland quick-change rear.

After its competition days were over, the car sat at Harbach's business, T&F Auto Body in Huntington, and in the care of Harbach's widow, Gerry, upon his passing. After much persistence on Kitzen's part, she allowed him to take the car in 2018 for rehabilitation. She knew her husband would have been pleased to see it in fighting trim again. Kitzen went to work, taking the entire car apart. Fuel lines and oil lines were replaced; the carburetor was rebuilt (twice);

the fuel cell was fitted with new interior foam, as the original foam had disintegrated (leaving a huge mess). Also receiving attention were the ignition system, linkages, and fittings.

Despite being covered up for the past 28 years, dust found its way in everywhere. Pieces that weren't replaced had to be thoroughly cleaned. Some components were updated/upgraded in the interest of safety, like new safety belts and a new Butlerbuilt seat.

Harbach drove this car for only one season. Nevertheless, it was perfect as his last racer. He referred to his later cars as Cadillacs or Lincoln Continentals when he considered how Spartan his earliest jalopy and a few "s***boxes" in between were! He had earned himself a quality ride, and he made the most of it. What a great way to retire from the sport he loved.



THE HAULER

Most racing enthusiasts, particularly "old timers", agree that it's exciting to see race cars riding on open trailers as they travel to the track (or back to the shop). Open trailers are also great passive advertising for racing in general. Nevertheless, enclosed trailers keep the cars and the gear clean, dry, and safe, especially when stopping for a bite to eat or an overnight hotel stay.

As mentioned earlier, Kitzen's tribute cars travel in comfort and style nowadays in a custom-designed enclosed trailer. It's really a mobile Fred Harbach Museum that includes a variety of photos and artwork about Harbach's racing career. Kitzen is happy for folks to take a tour through, not for his own sake, but for those who want to learn about Harbach as well as those who remember him well and want to reminisce.

It's hard to miss Kitzen's hauler in the pit area. Friend (and current NASCAR Modified racer) Timmy Solomito of Natural Designs Concepts and Apparel in Patchogue, NY covered the hauler with a fabulous, vibrant red and black color scheme and artwork of Harbach cars.

Inside, the walls are covered with captioned photos and racing posters relating to Fred Harbach's racing career. Amenities include folding chairs, a mini-fridge, microwave oven, a large fan (alas, no A/C), a small heater (for those chilly outings). Naturally, a portable generator was needed to provide power for all these little extras. Kitzen jokes that the only thing missing is a "comfort station" (NOT the term Harbach would have used)! Of course, if they used a camper to tow the trailer...

In addition to these improvements, Kitzen replaced the original fluorescent overhead light fixtures with LED fixtures. As an added touch, son-in-law Mike installed LED strip lighting (that changes colors!) to enhance the experience. Kitzen said, "Fred would definitely have been partying inside this trailer, both at the track and in the driveway...the only thing still missing is our old jukebox, hmmm".

On the "business" side of things, the tire rack is full and the workbench is fully equipped – after all, this is still a race hauler.



THE SHOP

The enclosed trailer is not the only source of tribute to Harbach. Kitzen's garage/race shop is the mother lode, containing items that won't fit in the hauler. Case in point: two former racing seats (including the #18 coupe's school bus seat) that accommodate visitors when they stop by to enjoy a chat. Trophies are on display, as well as steering wheels, jackets, banners, more photos and wall art. Black-and-white checkered pennants add to the atmosphere.

THE CREW

Kitzen enjoys taking his show on the road to vintage events. Taking the coupe and the Cavalier onto the track never gets old. Talking to other race car owners and spectators is always a pleasure. Of course, a certain level of work is involved. Helping him at the track are his wife Joanne, their daughter Kristina Kitzen-Harlan and Kristina's husband Michael Harlan. New to the crew is Kitzen's nephew David, who is eager to take part in the 2021 season and learn all he can about racing.

Two very special ladies have been essential to this whole operation. Kitzen credits Joanne with "putting up with his racing craziness and madness" and thanks her for her continual support, as well as the encouragement of Kitzen's mother-in-law, Gerry. They both appreciate his efforts to preserve the history of Fred Harbach's racing career and present it to others.

Many hours of time and effort have gone into creating Alex Kitzen's collection of equipment and memorabilia that honor his favorite driver and father-in-law, Fred Harbach, and telling his story to younger generations. Talk about a labor of love! I have a feeling Harbach would be pleased, don't you?





NEW MEMBER

Michael Fillian—Wall, NJ

GET WELL WISHES

Aliceann McGann



It's not too early to look forward to Spring and the Patterson Greenhouses' Family Fun Day! The car show/vendor fair/fundraiser is scheduled for May 2, 2021.

WHEN /STHE BANQUET?

You probably know the club's 29th Annual Hall of Fame Awards Dinner, originally scheduled for March of 2020, was rescheduled twice due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Unfortunately, it is necessary to reschedule the banquet once again. The new date will be **March 20, 2022**.

We appreciate your patience and look forward to getting together next year to honor racing folks, chat and tell stories, and enjoy a nice meal.

MONEY MAN



The club was recently in need of a Treasurer. Member Jim Kelleher has stepped in to the role. Thanks for serving the club, Jim.

CORRECTION

We send our apologies to Debbie Gastelu. In the Summer 2020 issue, we offered our condolences to Debbie on the passing of her brother; it was Debbie's mother that passed away.

CONDOLENCES

on the passing of:
Mary Anne Hayes' brother;
Tom Holding;
Alex Kitzen's mother; and
Hank Partenfelder's wife, Carol

BILL MARTENS

It is with sadness that we report the passing of Bill Martens on February 7, 2021. He was 83 years old.

Bill was a fixture at Wall Stadium on Saturday nights for many years. He was a dedicated member of the GSVSCC. He was one of the 50/50 Raffle Crew and made the rounds in the pit area during practice, along with fellow members Tim Day and George Klein. He also helped out with other projects as he was able.

"Bill was dedicated to our club and loved being at Wall Stadium each week to support our organization and the track", reflected club President Ray Shea. He was always quick with a greeting and a story or a joke. He and I discussed a wide range of topics and shared some laughs during breaks in the on-track action. He always had something interesting to say. He will be missed. -LC



Bill tidies up with the vacuum in the Museum. *Photo by Ray Shea*



Your friendly pit area 50/50 crew (L-R): Tim Day, Bill Martens, and George Klein. *Photo by Linda Cooper*

BOY, OH BOYD!

The 2021 Winter display at the Vintage Automobile Museum of New Jersey in Pt. Pleasant had a variety of fine race cars on display. One of the entrants was under wraps until Donna and Lenny Boyd, the car's original owner and driver, could pay a visit. Lenny Boyd is an accomplished driver in Modifieds as well as Three-Quarter Midgets. Having retired from racing, he and his wife Donna own TOs in active competition. GSVSCC members Ray Liss and Larry Housman coordinated with VAM staff for another great display. Several GSVSCC members also arrived to see the goodies. Here are some photos from the exhibit. *Photos by Linda Cooper*



PHOTO TRIVIA ANSWER

from the Fall 2020 issue



Scott Belknap Collection

You didn't get to the All Star League without having plenty of driving talent. This photo is packed with it. Can you guess the identities of these three drivers?

As the handwriting shows, these accomplished racers are (L-R) Gil Hearne, Fred Harbach, and Pat Moon. These racers made up the Islip Speedway All Star Stock Car Racing League Team in 1967. The team finished fourth out of eight teams in the standings that year. Here's a little about each driver:

Gil Hearne raced in the League on the Islip Speedway team in 1967 and for the Wall Stadium team in 1968 and 1970 through 1973. Hearne started racing in Hialeah, Florida in 1957. He enjoyed success in Modified competitions in the South, as well as NASCAR Grand National, ARCA, and Late Model races, until the lure of big money at Northern tracks brought him to chase NASCAR's National Modified Championship. Eventually he settled in NJ and won at the local tracks. Although Hearne developed his skills in dirt racing, he is known more for his asphalt racing, particularly at Wall Stadium, where he was the Modified Track Champion 8 times. He won the Garden State Classic 4 times, and 3 Turkey Derbies. Hearne stopped racing in 1993. He is enjoying retirement with his wife, Carol and helping his son Jason, who competes at Wall and PA's Mountain Speedway.

Fred Harbach competed in the League for Islip in 1967, '68, and '69. Harbach was one of Long Island's native sons, hailing from Huntington Station. He had one of the most unique nicknames – "The Flying Dutchman". Harbach began his career in the Jalopy division at Freeport Stadium in 1952, at just 15 years of age (although his dad fibbed, listing him as 16). He was a skilled racer on dirt as well as asphalt tracks. By the time he retired in 1992, he accumulated 20 track championships, including at three Long Island asphalt tracks – Freeport, Riverhead, and Islip. Harbach won the first All Star race, held at Albany-Saratoga Speedway. Fred Harbach passed away in 1995 at age 58.

Pat Moon raced on the Islip team for the 1967 season. Moon, also a Huntington resident, was a Long Island racing scene regular. The Modified driver started racing in the late 1950s. He was skilled at racing the bullrings of the Island – Freeport, Islip, Dexter Park - along with fellow teammate Al Hansen. Moon also raced elsewhere. He tied with Rene Charland for the 1965 Old Bridge Speedway (NJ) points championship. Records show Pat Moon listed in the Grand National ranks in the 1957, 1959, 1960, and 1961 seasons. Moon's racing career lasted into the early 1980s.

The All Star Stock Car Racing League began in 1967 with a great idea: participating tracks made up a team of three racers each; the series was run at each of the tracks. Versatility was in demand here, as the tour stopped at dirt and asphalt tracks, from 1/5 mile to 5/8-mile lengths, from PA, NJ, NY, MA, and VT. The series ended with the 1973 season. The League came along at just the right time to make heroes out of local racers and legends out of team hot shoes.

Contributions to this piece by: www.catamountstadium.com; www.longislandjam.com - "All Star League" by Dwight Clock; Marty Himes, www.thehimesmuseum.com; www.thirdturn.com; and Gil Hearne.

PHOTO TRIVIA



Here's a trophy that's as tall as the winner! It must have been for a pretty important race. What do you know about this photo? Photo from www.progcovers.com

Look for the answer in our next issue, or go to our website www.gsvscc.org if you can't wait that long. Sometimes the website answer contains more information than we have space for in print.

Reader photos are welcomed. Contact the Editor.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

We will be celebrating the club's 30th anniversary all year long! As part of recognizing this milestone, we would like to hear from our members. We invite you to share a memory or two. Maybe you'd like to recall the reason you joined the club, why you're still a member, fun at track events or shows, group trips, or a practical joke or two.

To receive a paper form, contact Linda at (732) 456-3947. You can also send your thoughts via email to Linda at info@gsvscc.org, or use the Contact page on the club's website instead: www.gsvscc.org.



VINTAGE VIEWS, THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE GARDEN STATE VINTAGE STOCK CAR CLUB

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