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FIRST QUARTER 2023

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The Freeport factory

From time to time over the past couple of years we keep hearing that the Freeport Henney factory is in imminent danger of demolition. Certainly it has some age on it, and that often attracts developers. It has had a lot of tenants, both while Henney was in the building and since.

We have run a few Internet searches and can find nothing imminent on this topic. So we are going to go out on the proverbial limb and say that the place is safe for the time being.

Henney's long-time partner Packard, however, can't say that. The Packard complex in the Detroit area was vacated in the 1950s; Ford took a lot of it over up at Utica, while various enterprises found homes in the main complex down at East Grand. The Packard Motorcar

Foundation has done a spectacular job of saving much of the Utica buildings and a piece of the test track.

Then politics came in; the city government thought the Detroit complex would make a nice place for apartments or something, and one by one the operating (taxpaying) tenants went away. Vandals, scrappers, and squatters took over, and eventually the bridge over Grand collapsed, to monster publicity.

Most recently, the city foreclosed on the Peruvian developer who had hoped to make a success of the operation.

Demolition began in December and we're afraid to find out what the place looks like now.

If we learn Henneything further about the Freeport plant you can find it in these pages.

On the cover: a Henney awaits you

We have probably mentioned the Henney airport limousines from time to time, but we came across this promotional involving United—pre- “Friendly Skies” days—and thought it would look good on the cover. The nice lady waving at you will show you to your seat. There's also a story to go with these cars, something we learned from an old Henneyhand years ago.

Completed cars came down from the top floor in an elevator for detailing—but the elevator wasn't big enough for these jobs. So they brought down the completed body only, hauled it and the monster chassis out the door, and *finished the cars up in the front street outside the plant.*

If that doesn't return your seat back to its original upright position we don't know what will.



THE HENNEY PROGRAM OF PROGRESS

George Hamlin, Editor

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But—I just renewed the other day!

Well, we know it can seem like that. But it's been a year, faithful readers. We call for renewals yearly not just because our charter says we do, but also in the highly unlikely situation where someone doesn't need to belong to the Chapter Henneymore, we can stop filling that individual's inbox with unneeded material.

We are, of course, a Chapter of The Professional Car Society. There-

fore, our membership requirement is simple and straightforward: PCS membership is required to be a Chapter member. That's it, no dues or Henneything like that.

All that is necessary to rejoin is to reply to the email that sent this issue to you, with some quick-and-dirty expression that can be interpreted as a "yes."

Doing that quickly will spare you the late-night follow-up phone calls.

Postcard of the quarter

A nice pair of what we assume are combination cars from the Loflin Funeral Home in North Carolina graces this quarter's postcard. Well, at least the Henney is

nice looking. And yes, our usual Internet search reveals that the Loflin Funeral Home is still there in Ramseur, on Coleridge Road—in the same building.



Letters

I've started to read an interesting book on medieval manuscripts titled "The Gilded Page," written by Mary Wellesley. It starts with a graphic description of how parchment was made (from dried goat skins). It says on page 24 that after the hair is removed from the skins, the skins are dried and then stretched across a frame known as a herse. It says this word is a cousin of the word hearse, "which originally referred to a frame for carrying lighted tapers over a coffin." Maybe you knew this, but I did not.

Alice Horner

=====

Regarding the Loss car - the logo on the door appears to actually be the Civilian Defense medical symbol for 1942-1945.

Ref: <https://digital.ncdcr.gov/digital/collection/p16062coll10/id/185>

That would correspond to closure of the firm in the 1940s? The Federal Civil Defense Administration was formed in 1951. They promoted the use of the standard CD logo with the service type (fire, police, etc.) listed underneath.

Nick Studer

George: Ready to Serve You, page 13: The "Rambler" referred to is not a Rambler. It is a Metropolitan, 1954 or 1955, sold by Nash and Hudson dealers. Stating with the 1956 models after the Nash/Hudson merger to become American Motors, the grille was changed and the Nash & Hudson ID plates were changed to American Motors, and M replaced the Nash or Hudson badges on the grille and horn button and hub-caps.

Call me a "nit picker" for accuracy.

Andrew Harvey

Something new we're trying

Your Society is going to begin offering Zoom time to Chapters who want to gossip in person. This would have particular significance to non-geographic groups like this one, who meet very seldom (though we do have that annual dinner).

Henneyway, we're going to sign up for one of these sessions just after the new year, and see how it goes. You will be notified via Henneygram.

Pete Grave

In the automobile hobby, some names stand out. From cars-in-general folks like Jay Leno to many make-specific and club-specific people; we have some in this organization.

But in the Packard, Studebaker, and professional-car communities, there is one name that everyone knew, and everyone who interfaced with him had a positive experience. That name is Pete Grave.

Pete died recently and this hobby has lost a major

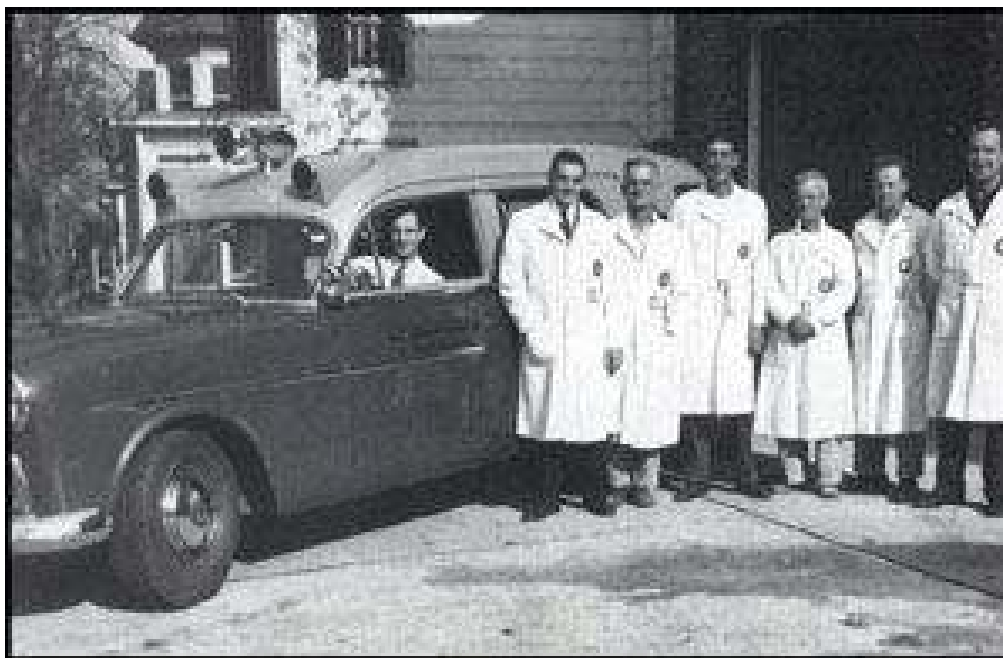
linchpin. If you needed something, or needed some advice, Pete was the one to go to. He ran a salvage operation in Pennsylvania that supplied more than a few of our faithful with things they could never have found otherwise, and provided fellowship and advice for as long as we can remember. His long experience with these unusual vehicles taught him many things that he passed on to the needy. He leaves behind a wonderful lady named Jan and all we can say to her is, we're so grateful for your sharing him and so sorry to see it end.

When they were new



Above, from Mike McDonald: Fallbrook, Cal.'s first brand-new 1954 Henney ambulance, looking proud after the squad's years of having to get by with well-used "hand-me-downs" in prior years from larger cit-

ies and counties. When I was 7 years old in 1954 I went with my dad to an open-house show casing Fallbrook's new "state-of-the-art" ambulance that even had hot and cold running water in the patient's



compartment. Decades later, I found it abandoned in a grape vineyard near Napa, Cal. with the engine and transmission removed, but otherwise intact still showing its original (but faded) gold-leaf graphics. — Mike McDonald

At left, from Mark Silvester: the Princeton, N.J. First Aid Squad's new 1953 Henney ambulance. As with so many of these photos, the photographer was more interested in the squad than in the car. Sigh.

Feature Car: 1927 Henney combination

Many of you in the Henney and PCS community have met our feature car before: an in-line eight, Continental-powered 1927 Henney combination. This 5000-pound beauty began its career at P .C. Hawkins in McGaheysville, Virginia (near Harrisonburg); the Berkeley Green Funeral Home in Herndon bought it from the Hawkins estate in the late 1950s. Mr. Green used it in a couple of parades, but the hydraulic brakes failed at one

Text continues on page 6



point in the last parade and it was necessary to use the hand brake to get the vehicle back to the funeral. He put it in his garage, next to a horse-drawn coach, and there it stayed until PCS's second president, Bill Alexander, bought it in 1976.

Bill had several parts custom made and the brakes repaired by an expert mechanic in Herndon. It took one year to get the vehicle on the road. "I used it in several parades," says Bill. "My three sons and I took it back to McGa-

Text continues on page 10





Top left: the famous Continental engine. Top right: The Henney escapes a monster flood that hit the set for “Get Low.” Above: the world’s most inconvenient gasoline gauge.





Feature car, continued



Owner 1: P. C. Hawkins

heysville to drive it in the annual Firemen's Parade, a big event there which took place in the fairgrounds (owned by the Fire Department) on the edge of town. It was exhibited there for two days for everyone to come and see it. On the second day of the exhibit, a woman and her husband approached me and said that her father had been the original salesman for my Henney and another (sister Henney) that had been shipped by rail from Freeport. Howkins bought one, the other went to a funeral director somewhere around Harrisonburg. I made several inquiries about the sister car and was told by a teacher from Harrisonburg High School that the auto shop teach-

er owned the sister car, and had used it for instruction at the school.

"When he left he took the car with him; it supposedly went to a barn somewhere in the Harrisonburg area. I made many inquiries and phone calls but never could locate the sister car."

The Henney was trailered to Freeport for a PCS International Meet at the Henney factory in 1973. Bill used it for several years in parades and lent it out to movies, including "Radio Days," "Brighton Beach Memoirs," and "Once Upon a Time in America." In 1992 he sold it to Bill Peoples, where it is now part of that collection of fine coaches and has appeared in yet another movie: "Get Low" (2009). Each of these movie appearances has, if we recall correctly, resulted in some, um, major refurbishment afterward.

The Peoples display card points out that in those days, fewer than 100 professional cars a month were being built by the various builders such as Henney. "Since neither sophisticated tooling nor machines would be justified for such low production numbers, highly skilled craftsmen were required to do this work." The



Owner 2: J. B. Green

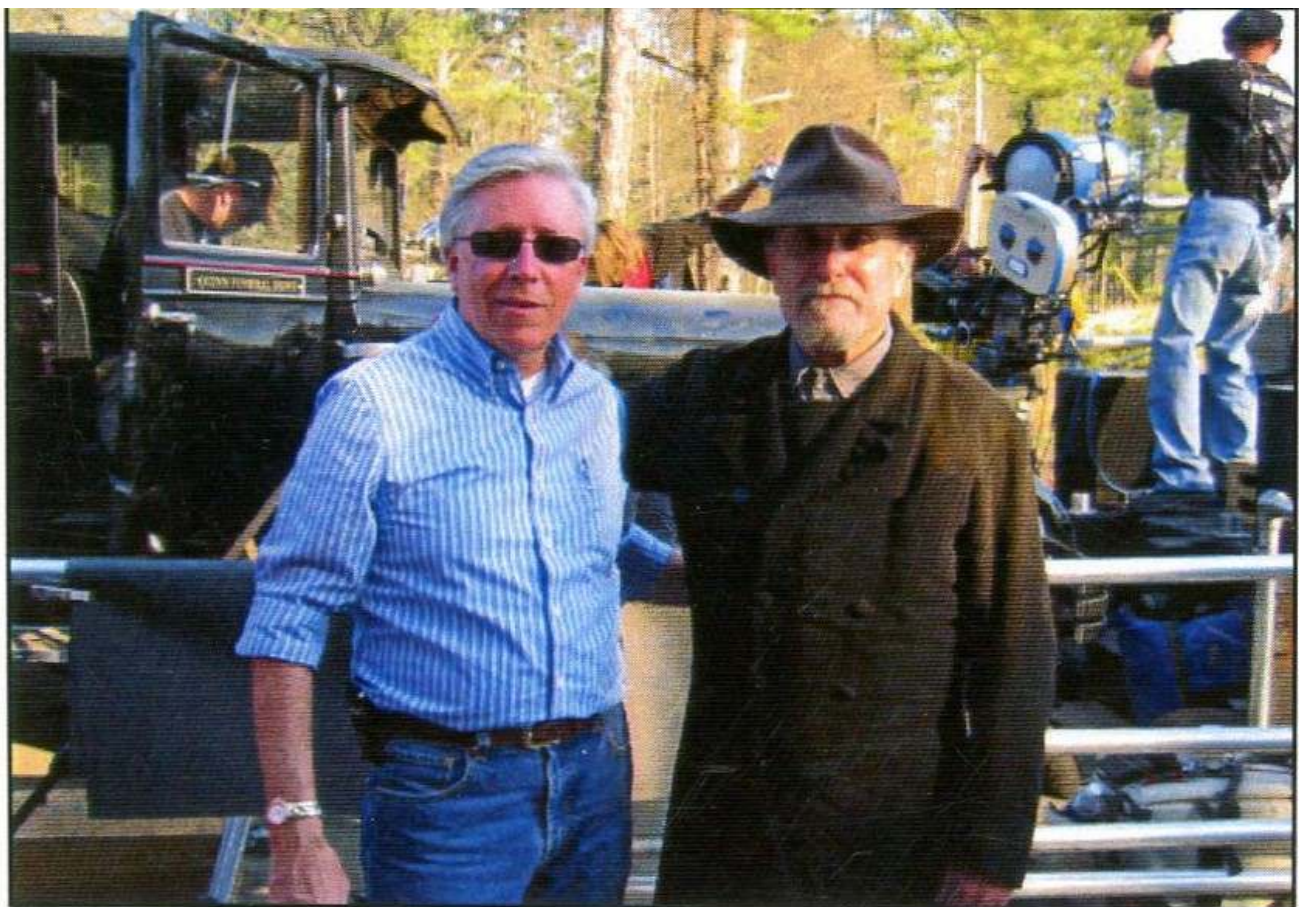
car has fewer than 17,000 miles on the odometer and serves as a reminder of a time when hand craftsmanship was highly prized.

HENNEY IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS FOR THIS CAR

ENG NO	S8S14855
MODEL	28
SER NO	1145



Owner 3: Bill Alexander



Owner 4: Bill Peoples (L) on the "Get Low" movie set with Robert Duvall

The military ambulance

We're looking for a nice military ambulance to feature, but in the meantime, we thought we'd visit this topic because the unit shown below is getting a lot of time on the Internet lately.

It's a 1951, probably used during the Korean conflict (although lots of them stayed Stateside and served at military bases and hospitals). The two major distinguishing characteristics of a military ambulance are the air intake fixture

no cranks, no handles inside or out.

This particular 1951, once retired from active duty, went to the Fire Department in Sparta, N.C., where it became red (we don't know if it was originally Air Force blue, Navy gray, or Army green).

The body style has not been forgotten by the model community; Brooklin made a really nice 1951 in Navy livery and it can be

found on the Web; it's current, and priced at \$178.

We fear that we may have unwillingly contributed to the shortage of these interesting units; once, a few years back, we were parting out a 1952 ambulance and a shop phoned. They had a customer who needed a rear door and all the gadgets. Um, why? Well, seems that the job he bought had just panels where the doors should be. He figured someone had done that as a quick fix after some kind of damage

“Oh, wait,” we said, “that sounds like a military ambulance. They're rare. Talk him out of the rear-door idea.”

No avail. Guy insisted on the door and gadgets. Having insufficient pride, we sold it to him. Sigh.

LEFT: Sparta's 2413 as it is today, weathered. BELOW: Brooklin's CSV-23 Navy ambulance in 1/43.



on top and the lack of a rear side door.

Cost is important when one is making a government bid, and for their part, the services saw no need for the back doors—those were niceties not required on the battlefield—so the manufacturers of these rigs just welded in a panel. No locks, no latches, no windows,



Henneymoney

BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD	\$ 619.08
RECEIPTS	
Subscriptions for newsletters by post	
Contributions	\$ 120.00
Merchandise sales	2.00
TOTAL INCOME FOR 2022	\$ 122.00
EXPENSES	
Postage	\$ 23.36
Copies	4.41
TOTAL EXPENSES FOR 2022	\$ 27.77
NET INCOME FOR 2022	\$ 94.23
BALANCE CARRIED TO 2023	\$ 713.31

One never knows what will...

Well, this was a surprise. One of our faithful contributors was skimming the Internet recently and found this product, from an outfit called Car-Horse Miniatures in France.

We never heard of a model Kilo-watt before; didn't think the Outside World even knew about them. But it's an obvious one for a French firm, which probably already had the tooling up for a Dauphine (even the box cites Renault and Dauphine), so here's what it looks like.

Good luck finding one, though; we doubt there are many left out there.



What we THINK is a nice 1931 Arrowline

From Stuart Blond of The Packard Club, an intriguing photo. Pretty sure we are dealing with a Henney Arrowline here. Henneyone with a solid idea is invited to write in.

The car is a 1931, Pierce basis, and by a neat twist of fate, it is serving the Pierce Brothers Funeral home in Los Angeles.

If one goes to the Internet to search Pierce Brothers, one will find an amazing complex of mortuaries, parks, and conservancies—all of which, we can only imagine, sprang

from this business.

In this fraternity, we refer to them as Henney

Pierces, but in reality they were marketed as The Henney Arrowline, an own-make Henney.



Stuff

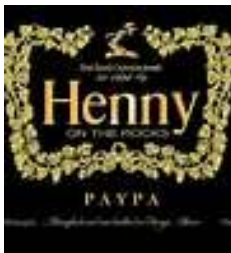
In a recent “Jeopardy” episode, none of the contestants had ever heard the term, “Shave and a haircut, two bits.” They didn’t know that the term referred to 25 cents.

§ # & ^ ¶ ¥

When they launched the electric Henney Kilowatt, does anyone suppose they could have foreseen 2022’s big news in electric vehicles? The new Hummer—just the thing for somebody or other—weighs 9000 pounds, costs \$112,595, has 1000 horsepower, and will take 3 days to charge if you do it at home with a 110-volt supply. Good grief. And oh yeah, a full charge, we now learn, can cost \$100.

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There’s a new premium foodservice equipment company named: Henney Penny. Great - another generation learning to misspell Henney. Not to mention, “Henney” is now urban slang for a brand of cognac called Hennessy.



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If Henneyone is not keeping track of new automotive language, we’ll help. A few issues back, we passed on the new term for “bumper,” that is, “nudge bar.” Now comes a new one: “running boards” are now “assist steps.”

The other day we came across an interesting theory about why drivers of cars shown in old movie scenes kept moving the steering wheel back and forth. This theory was that they were trying to simulate the twitch of running across a tar strip before the days of radial tires.

We had to chuckle at that one. We’ve done some movies, and we know *exactly* why they did that. The director told them to twitch the wheel back and forth to simulate actually being on a road, so moviegoers wouldn’t twig to the fact that there was no road—just a rear-screen projection. In real life, you didn’t correct for the tar strips; they pull one way a little, and then immediately back the other way, no need to move the wheel.

That kind of director is a first cousin to the ones who put up ALTO signs in movies set in Spain, because they fear that audiences will say, see, they’re so dumb that they didn’t even change the STOP signs, this movie was shot in Kansas. Fact: all stop signs in Europe say STOP.

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If you went to sleep with Mr. Van Winkle a couple of decades ago, you would not recognize some of the automobile landscape today. Rolls-Royce: owned by BMW (Germany). Land Rover and Jaguar: owned by Tata Group (India). Bentley: owned by Volkswagen (Germany). Stellantis now has 21 brands worldwide. And we only recently learned, Volvo: owned by Zhejiang Geely Holding Group, a Chinese company which owns over 15 other vehicle makers.

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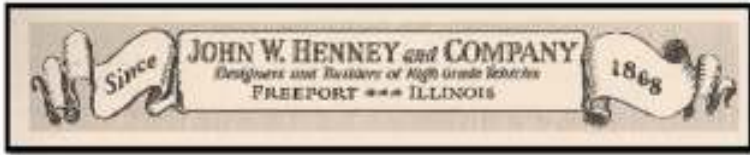
If you’re taking your Henney to lunch and stopping to fill up the tank on the way, be sure to wash up before eating. Recent research says that the two dirtiest things you will touch today are your steering wheel and the gasoline-pump handle.

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Strange things are going on with the Dodge brand. A few years back, it was rumored that separating the Ram brand from Dodge was done so that Fiat Chrysler / Stellantis corporate moneychangers could shout, see, see, Dodge sales are tanking, get rid of it. Recently the only Dodge TV commercials have been touting it as the new hot rod, with screeching takeoffs and the slogan “The brotherhood of muscle.” And now we understand that the Challenger and Charger nameplates will disappear by the end of the current model year. Rumor has it that there will be a new Charger: an electric job. Hang onto your electric Henney...

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As the years pass, people’s memories seem to fade. We do a lot of crosswords, and a clue that is popping up frequently lately is something along the lines of, “failed Ford.” And the answer is: Edsel. Even some scale models are now called “Ford Edsel.”



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