



GREAT GATWICK HOT ROD & CUSTOM SHOW SUCCESS!

2,000-plus attendance £1,400-plus raised for charity

American Autoparts' first-ever car event – the Great Gatwick Hot Rod & Custom Show – staged on Sunday September 4 at the Gatwick Aviation Museum, in Charlwood, Surrey, proved to be a winner, with a great mix of exhibits and pleasant weather drawing an attendance of more than 2,000 people. This raised some £1,500 for the four benefitting charities. All profit from the gate and stand-holders' donations was split between the Museum (50%), Royal Air Force Cadets (25%), the Heels for Combat Boots girls' fund-raising for ex-service men and women with Post Traumatic Stress and Traumatic Brain Disorders (15%) and Charlwood Parish Council's appeal to finish interior work on the village's new recreational pavilion *Mike Lintern reports:*



Arena action at Gatwick came courtesy of 5/8-scale Legends racers, whose 122hp 1250cc Yamaha-powered machines really went to town around the Biffa bins and tyre markers. Nathan Anthony's number 29 is based on a '34 Ford sedan and is the world's only Legends panel van, or "sevan". Car 21 (Matt Roach's team) is a tribute to a '37 Chevy sedan, while the third racer (another Matt Roach car) owes its lines to a '34 Chevy coupe. Phil Cooper, of 600 Racing UK, imports these rapid little tearaways and runs the Legends Cars formula. It operates throughout the season at circuits such as Brands Hatch, Silverstone, Snetterton and Anglesey. Check the LegendsRacingUK.com website or email Phil.600@btinternet.com Ian Hunt photo



Who better to take care of catering at a hot rod show than Derek and Pat Drinkwater? We promised the Show would offer great food and that's what was provided. Their virtually-original '48 Peterbilt, with aviation gasoline tanker converted into a mightily-mobile burger bar, has recorded a million truckin' miles Wojtek Samoszuk photo



*Epsom performance dealers TrustFord's brace of new right-hand-drive Mustangs grabbed plenty of attention, and may just have ignited a sale or two. Thanks to sales exec and Mustang Owners Club member James Rowe for bringing the ponies along. Figures released by Ford Motor Co put the Mustang as the UK's top selling high-performance sports coupe in the above 246bhp bracket for the six months to the end of June
Ian Hunt photo*



Wojtek Samoszuk photo

Old Fords that'll never die dominated the Blood, Sweat 'n' Tears club's impressive display, which featured a good mix of Dagenham and Dearborn products, including these neat "sit-up and begs". Club member Barry Ottley, a good friend of American Autoparts and regular helping hand at our Redhill neighbours Dream Cars, coordinated the effort and brought along his immaculate '61 302-powered MkII Zodiac (below)



While Barry's Zodiac is squeaky clean, it is thought to be responsible for a number of long black sticky "smudges" left on roads around our Redhill industrial estate... Wojtek Samoszuk photo



Just in case you thought for a moment this was an all-Ford Show, father and son Alan and Peter Wise added to the colour of the Hoosier Tire stand with their appropriately-shod SS Camaros. Peter's recently-acquired first generation '68 is his first pure racecar, Blue Thunder, an eight-second contender packing a 950hp 540-cube

big block. Al's beautiful ProCharged second-gen '72 runs an 800hp 383-cube small-block in the nines but is also street driven when it's not resting in the American Autoparts workshop Wojtek Samoszuk photo



Local (Cophthorne) drag racers 19-year-old Laura and father Paul Baynton's beautiful Pro ET Capri uses a Chevy small-block to run in the tens at Santa Pod with Laura at the wheel and at Shakespeare County Raceway, Stratford-upon-Avon, when dad takes the tiller Ian Hunt photo



"I think we can squeeze you in, sir...." An irresistible blown '41 Willys

Ian Hunt photo



Universal Studios' 1977 thriller road movie "The Car" was about a mysterious black sedan which went on a murderous rampage, terrorising the residents of a small town in the USA. This Lincoln-based 460-cubic-inch tribute was originally built by Streatham Crash Repairs, with mechanical work by the late American Autoparts chief mechanic Tony Grandsden, for owner Kevin Higham. Today "The Car" is owned by Kevin's brother in law, the ex-Bonneville bike racer Eddie Wallbank, who kindly accepted our invite to appear Wojtek Samoszuk photo



Ralph and Kathleen Avis and black Labrador "Shelby" arrive in their genuine '66 Shelby GT350 Ian Hunt photo



*A striking '32 Deuce Roadster with what looks like "incoming missiles" for exhaust stacks. Who needs fenders!
Note the lady's coordinated hair-do Wojtek Samoszuk photo Below, a '32 with the lid on Mark Stevens photo*



On the subject of Deuces, this is an ex-US Army World War II pattern "Duece-and-half", so named because it has a two-and-a-half ton payload, and this is one of more than half-a-million produced in virtually-identical form by GMC, Chevrolet and Studebaker. The "4th US Infantry" re-enactors, with Jeeps and Dodge Weapons Carriers, created a realistic battlefield checkpoint within the showground woodlands in an encampment coordinated by Kevin Rowlett. Thanks Kevin

Wojtek Samoszuk photo



A separate group of Vietnam-era American military hardware included (below) James and Anna Mannering's M38 Jeep (foreground), Andy Pockner's M38 "Charley Chaser" and Ian and Jane Brightman's M109 Reo "psyops" support truck, used for anti-Communist propaganda around 1961 to 1974 Ian Hunt photo



Logistics involved in preparing for the following weekend's FIA European Championship Finals meant that at the last-minute Santa Pod Raceway's very own Top Fuel Show Dragster could not be transported to Gatwick, but we did have the mighty "Gladiator" '08 Mustang Fuel Funny Car of FGR Motorsport, displayed by race car owner/builder Roy Phelps. Roy also had on hand an FGR-built Junior dragster, one of many introducing young blood to the sport. Watch out for "Gladiator" in battle at Santa Pod in 2017 Wojtek Samoszuk photo



This stunning 1949 Chevrolet 3100 was packing a very serious twin-turbocharged small-block under the hood – see Wojtek’s pic below left

Mark Stevens photo above



Mark Steven’s shot (above right) shows Adrian Wright’s 480bhp LS376 Chevy crate motor neatly shoe-horned into his 1967 Vauxhall Cresta PC Estate along with a six-speed Tremec gearbox



Our last-minute decision to donate to the Combat Boots appeal was timely in that just a week prior to the Show it was announced that thousands of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans with Combat Stress Disorder and other problems were no longer going to be supported by the major military health charity – Combat Stress – due to “donor fatigue” and falling income. The girls, who form the British chapter of the American organization, also raised money by fluttering their eyelids and rattling their tins

Wojtek Samoszuk photo

This ex-British Army EPS Springer all-terrain cargo vehicle (above right) is a UK-built version of the American Tomcar, which was designed to move combat supplies from helicopter landing sites to forward operating bases, and is an ex-Afghanistan veteran itself

Mark Stevens photo



The 4th US Infantry guys set up an authentic encampment with Jeeps and Dodge Weapons Carriers

Wojtek Samoszuk photo



Brian Smallcorn is the proud owner and creator of this pair of Gatsby roadsters shot by Roger Phillips, ex-Custom Car chief shutterbug. The “daddy” car is on a '70s Caprice chassis with a big-block Chevy



A tastefully-dropped 59' Mercury Country Cruiser Commuter station wagon, also shot by Roger Phillips



Shades of Clockwork Orange. Many visitors to our Gatwick event reckoned this imaginative Smart car was the Star of the Show. We think it's owned by a local Confederate because it had been seen scuttling about the area a couple of days before. This downsized Dukes of Hazzard tribute to the "General Lee" becomes "General Flea", keeping the Rebel flag flying... in a small way

Ian Hunt photo



At the other extreme, American Autoparts' automatic transmission specialist Darryl Setchell was there in a big way in the form of his pristine classic '60 Cadillac Coupe DeVille. Fintastic!

Mark Stevens photo



Truckin' back in the day. Tony Frost's right-hand-drive Model-AA truck is one of many assembled in Ford's Manchester factory, and was first registered in 1930 by Mitcham, South London, haulage contractors A&J Bull. It's just completed a three-year mechanical restoration by Merstham-based Curran Autos and after appearing at the Gatwick Show was due to be auctioned by Tony (pictured, waiting for a load?) Wojtek Samoszuk photo



Quality restoration indeed. This mellow yellow 1946 Ford pickup imported a few years ago by Colin Goodridge of Bradley Building Services, a family-run construction company based in Morden, South London. The truck runs a Chevy 350 small-block (now a 355) with a TH350 trans and a Ford nine-inch rear end with airbags. Neil Melliard of Prosign, Wallington, Surrey, handled the signwriting and tailgate pinstriping Wojtek Samoszuk photo



Heads turned and jaws dropped as this super-cool Boss Hoss ride made probably the most memorable entrance of all exhibitors. "Blub, blub, blub, blub" burbled the Chevy small-block as it made its mid-afternoon arrival. We understand the bike is for sale at £26,000, but only for the caring... and brave



This fabulous Harley chopper was trailed in behind an equally-cool low-riding tangerine dream of a '69 Chevy C10 pickup

Wojtek Samoszuk photo

Mustang muncher. Steve Wibrow's mint '68 440 Dodge Charger, captured by Wojtek Samoszuk,



American Autoparts' '59 Chevrolet El Camino, making its only show appearance this year, shot by Ian Hunt



"Torque of the Devil", Peter Hawkins's 1950 Buick Super 263-inch straight eight pictured by Roger Phillips, and a heavenly '32 Ford coupe photographed full-frontal by Wojtek Samoszuk



*An iconic '57 Chevy four-door with Bel Air trim, looking just like it's straight out of the box!
Roger Phillips photo*



Sheilas' Wheels very own '58 Mercury Monterey convertible graced our showground, but unfortunately there were no Sheilas to be found for Rogers' camera!



Pure black magic in the shape of a '34 Ford three-window coupe shot by Roger Phillips



Rod Currie's '55 Chevrolet 210 street machine packs a 540-cube 850-plus horsepower Chevy big block put together by master engine builders Jeff Bull and Tony Gransden Roger Phillips photo



The American pickup truck is seemingly immortal. More than 50 years separate this 1951 Chevrolet stepside and the state-of-the-art Dodge Ram dually behind Roger Phillips photo



Robert Watson and Vicki's mechanical half-scale Spitfire flight simulator may be aimed primarily at youngsters, but whenever it "flies" at outside events there are always "big kids" queuing-up to bag a Messerschmitt 110. Nowadays a flight in a Spit will set you back £3,000. However, this ride was a fiver Wojtek Samoszuk photo



Opened for the first time at Easter, Gatwick Aviation Museum's new hanger at last provides a proper home for precious combat aircraft that previously resided in the open, and was a worthy element of the Show's "Hot Cars – Cool Rides – Cold War Jets" theme. RAF serial ZF579 is a "live" ex-Saudi Air Force 1,500mph English Electric Lightning F3 interceptor fighter, one of a batch that served between 1968 and '81 Mark Stevens photo



Even more live at the event was Turweston Helicopters' Bell 206B-3 JetRanger, which proved a winning addition to the range of attractions, busy selling five-minute flights right up to the close of the Show. These are the same guys and gals that operate heli-rides at Santa Pod Raceway. Our thanks to Capt Phil Turvey and Ground Ops Manager Robert Puzey for adding a valuable dimension to the Show Ian Hunt photo

That's the show report, folks

AWARD-WINNING FLAME BURNOUT SHOT



Julian Hunt has been selected for the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame's Sydney Allard Media Award for Photo Journalism in recognition of his flame burnout photo of Bob Hawkins in his blown and injected Chevy methanol dragster. The shot was taken at Santa Pod Raceway's Dragstaglia meeting in July of this year

