

The Builder



The Quarterly Newsletter of the National Model Car Builders' Museum

The Shamrock Rides Again! Restoring a Famous Shuklis Custom

PAT COVERT

[*Editor's Note:* This article has been significantly shortened to fit the available space. The original, longer version will appear in an upcoming issue of *Scale Auto Enthusiast* along with a feature article on the acquisition and restoration of the entire Shuklis collection.]

The rods and customs of famed car modeler Dave Shuklis were a tremendous source of inspiration for those of us who lived and breathed the hobby during the golden Sixties. Despite being confined to a wheelchair, Dave built the cutting edge models of the day and his name will be forever etched into the history of car modeling. I remember Dave Shuklis and his models vividly so you can imagine what an honor it was to me when Museum founder Mark S. Gustavson offered to let me oversee the restoration of one of Dave's most famous works, the legendary Shamrock, a custom based on the '61 Corvair.

I set parameters for restoring the Shamrock before I ever set eyes on the vehicle. First off, the purpose of the restoration would be to "restore" Dave's work, not

bring it up to modern day building standards or technology. Altering the work in this way would put a false face on the model for anyone viewing it. Dave's work, though not up to present day building standards, was amply good for its day—and it would stay that way. Secondly, any of Dave's original work would be left alone as long as it did not detract from the restoration. Finally, I felt it was essential to perform a restoration that would last at least another 30 years and hopefully far beyond that time.



Here's the Shamrock as she arrived—or should I say "limped"—onto my table top. Actually, the integrity of the model was excellent, with few parts missing.

After I received the Shamrock in the mail I unwrapped it carefully and spent several nights studying the state of the vehicle in order to assess the degree of restoration that would need to be undertaken. I discovered that the overall integrity of the model was quite good. Mark and I discussed the situation and it was determined at that point that the body would need to be stripped,

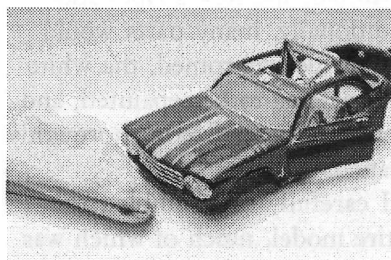
repainted, and new stripes added. Additionally, many parts would need to be rechromed, the white walls needed to be repainted, and everything needed to be thoroughly cleaned.

I carefully disassembled the entire model, much of which was very fragile. Applying the paint would be a critical part of the restoration process that I turned over to Bob Downie of Atlanta, Georgia. Bob's exquisite work was just what was required to get the color and the finish right. Bob stripped the body using Pine Sol cleaner, which removed the candy green paint, gold base coats, primer and the flocking along the interior walls. After using a tiny bit of polyester glazing putty to repair the rear of the body, Bob reprimed the body with an airbrush. Once the gold paint had adequately cured, Bob applied Testors candy green topcoats until he got a nice match

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with that of Dave's original paint. Dave's original finish was absolutely glass-like and flawless and Bob's resto paint job is every bit as good. Bob did not polish out the finish as he felt like it would deviate a bit too much from Dave's original. I respect his judgment. When doing these restoration projects you have to make value judgments concerning enhancement and long term preservation.



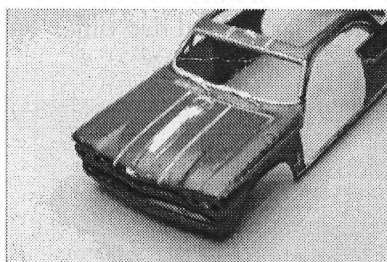
A rub of the paint with Meguiars #3 revealed that the candy green paint Dave masterfully applied had held up well over the years.

As Bob started his work, I turned my attention to the interior, which was carefully cleaned using a Q-tip swab and a straight solution of Novus #1. Next, the engine was given a good look over for possible problems. A few parts needed to be plated, and some of the wiring and plumbing was easily repaired. Once all the parts that needed replating were separated out, they were bagged and shipped off to Dale Shorter of the Little Motor Kar Company in Reading, Pennsylvania. Dale, a Museum member, had volunteered to do any replating we needed for restoration of the Shuklis collection and his help was most welcome.

The wheels and tires were the last parts that needed attention. The old front and rear whitewalls were peeled off with the aid of a #11 hobby blade and set aside for repainting. I chose to reapply the whitewalls using a brush, just as Dave had done. I used Tamiya Flat

white acrylic as a medium because of its superior characteristics. The silver-painted rear wheels had been banged up quite a bit so I stripped the paint off in a solution of Pine Sol cleaner for repainting. The gas tank and wheels were painted in Testors aluminum metalizer and topcoated in sealer to enhance their longevity. The front wheels appeared to be in good condition.

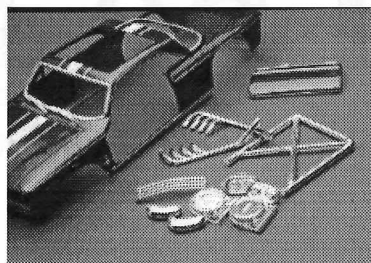
After Bob returned the repainted body, complete with a special mixture of yellow and green flocking on the inside, chrome silver paint was applied around the windows and emblems, the rocker panels were foiled, and a sweet set of racing stripes were applied using white decal film. For the crowning touch Bob duplicated Dave's delicate signature on the driver's side door in gold paint using what must have been a single hair plucked from the brush.



The decision to repaint was due to the degradation of the striping. It would have been impossible to remove the material without damaging the paint.

All that was left was reassembling the various components. The Shamrock went back together beautifully and was slowly transformed back to its original state with each part applied. Even after being bypassed by thirty years of technology and design tech the model still has a mysticism about it that defies time. It was a real honor to be able to work on restoring this magnificent model and a special thanks goes out to Bob Downie for his incredible contribution to the project.

I hope you enjoy the ride just as much as we did!



The refurbished body a la master painter Bob Downie would be complemented with a batch of newly plated parts from Dale Horner's Little Motor Kar Company. Nice job, folks!



The Shuklis Shamrock rides again! Here's the restored model ready for display at the National Model Car Builders' Museum.

Publisher's Note

MARK S. GUSTAVSON

Well, here's another issue of *The Builder*. I continue to be astonished at the time it takes on the part of all those who contribute to publishing this newsletter. I can't imagine what it would be like if we had to do it more frequently!

The Trustees received a box full of great compliments on the last issue of our newsletter, in which Paul Anagnostopoulos debuted as our new editor. With his services, Pat Covert and I, along with the other Trustees, can concentrate on writing articles, updating the Museum web site (November 15 of this year), and handling other tasks for the Museum.

The next issue of *The Builder* will be out around Christmas. In that

issue—to be *larger* than this one—we will feature a raft of informative articles on historical items in the Museum, our plans for 1999 (wow, wait until you read them!), a list of new acquisitions, and other details.

Thanks to those of you who were able to help us out financially. Frankly, your generosity guaranteed not only the survival of the Museum this year, but permitted several of our programs to continue on uninterrupted. I am always astonished at the passion and dedication of all of you! It is so heartening to enjoy your financial and other support. You certainly make it easy, on this end, to keep the faith.

See you in December. Thanks again for your help!

Donation Corner

MUSEUM STAFF

Since the last newsletter, donations to the Museum have exploded! Never before have so many diverse items been received from so many supporters of the Museum. We are surely on our way to acquiring, archiving, and preserving the important artifacts of our great hobby so that future generations can understand and appreciate all that model car hobbyists of our generation, and preceding ones, have accomplished! Here's a brief run down:

BILL BOZGAN. Donated some of his magazine models: 1967 Oldsmobile (CM #48), 1937 Ford Pickup (CM #44), 1932 Ford Coupe highboy (SAE #106).

WILLIAM LINDIG. Sent in some back issues of rare magazines (in much better shape than items in Museum): *Car Model*: Sept 1963, May 1964, July 1964, Oct 1965,

May 1967, Dec 1969; *Car Modeler*: Jan 1998.

CUYLER OTA. Also donated excellent copies of the *AMT Model Car Handbook*; *Car Model Racing Handbook*; *Model Car & Track*: Feb 1964, June 1968; *Model Cars Illustrated*: June 1964, Sept 1964, Nov 1964, Dec 1964, Jan 1965.

STEVE ALLEMAND. Donated two issues of *Model Racing Replica News*.

PAUL C. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS. *The Complete Car Modeler* by Gerald Wingrove. Also the domestic Kits of the Year for 1993–97. We are seeking donations of the other domestic KOYs and all foreign KOYs.

DAVIS LAUER. Sent in many other significant back issues: *Modelers' World*: Summer 1963 and Spring 1964; *Model Car Science*, April 1968, May 1968, June 1968, July 1968. Also three original handbills/judging rule sheets representing the Revell/Pactra (1963), Revell/Open (1964) and Revell-Testors (1965) contests. These contest documents are exceedingly rare and are a valuable addition to the Museum's collection.

BILL RAY. Donated a rare, original issue 1907 Revell Highway Pioneer kit.

FRED BELL. Donated a fistful of early model car advertisements and an excellent copy of the Sept 1963 issue of *Car Craft*.

PAT COVERT. Donated five test shots: (a) Two of 1/16 Aurora engines; (b) Surfite, originally acquired from Paul Madsen, Roth collector; (c) '50 Ford on display at 1994 IPMS Nationals, donated by Bill Lastovich of Revell; (d) Testors' Chezoom sent to Pat by Ernie Pettit, one of first two produced.

AUGIE HISCANO. Donated a full set of large photographs of the hand-

built mechanical parts mentioned in the last issue, plus more of the parts from that series.

JOHN R. ANTczAK. Donated a box full of back issues of the *AMT Blueprinter*, as did **DOUG DUARTE** and **GARY WARD**. Between them and including issues already on hand, we now have a complete set.

Financial Support

MUSEUM STAFF

In response to our plea for financial help in the last issue, many individuals and several clubs and organizations graced the Museum with their financial help. Several of the donors prefer anonymity, but here is a list of those who have helped out (it is the Museum's policy not to divulge the dollar amount of individuals' donations, but be assured that they were very generous):

Individuals

- ◆ Michael Hemp
- ◆ J. Knapt
- ◆ David Lumen
- ◆ Tex Ouder Kirk
- ◆ Tim Pentecost
- ◆ Brad Peterson
- ◆ Ted Rapacki, Jr.
- ◆ Bill Slayton
- ◆ Norm Veber
- ◆ three donors who wish to remain anonymous

Organizations

- ◆ Tri-State Model Car Club, \$350 for 1997, pledge of \$500 for 1998 (plus goodies from NNL East)
- ◆ Detroit Area Auto Modelers Association, \$300
- ◆ MAMA, \$200

- ◆ IPMS/USA, \$500
- ◆ The Moonlight Modelers Club in Phoenix, AZ, \$500.
- ◆ Bob Bergedick helped out with some corrections to the First Age in our *Hot 150* list.

Special Note: Bill Slayton, one of the most generous of all Museum sponsors, is currently recovering from a broken leg and pneumonia. With a select group of other individuals and groups, Bill regularly makes a substantial monetary donation to the Museum as well as offering other support to our efforts. Museum members are urged to send Bill a get-well card:

Bill Slayton
8908 Haddon Avenue
Sun Valley, California 91532

IPMS/USA Endowment!

MARK S. GUSTAVSON

As evidence of its continuing effort to expand its appeal to model car builders everywhere, the IPMS/USA E-Board (its governing organization) has endowed the Museum again for 1998 by donating \$500 to the Museum. The significance of this endowment—following up on an earlier one in 1996 that helped us remodel the Museum by painting the establishment and install carpeting—can scarcely be underestimated. The money is important, of course: we will use the money to support the *Hot 150/Clone the Past* program. As significantly or more, this endowment is an eloquent statement on the part of the IPMS/USA to reach out to us. Traditionally military in nature, the IPMS has abandoned its historic preoccupation

with military topics only, and now welcomes model car builders to its contests and publications. I have taken over from Pat Covert the AutoFile column in the 6-times-a-year IPMS publication, *The Journal*. The IPMS prints GSL ads for free, and permits me to boldly promote the Museum, the GSL Championship and other hobby events as well as to champion the best builders in our hobby by printing dozens of photographs.

The IPMS/USA is a different creature these days. It is, frankly, a wonderful organization that I wholeheartedly support. Please consider joining the Society so that it can be strengthened and, in turn, can support our part of the hobby. I have included a flyer on the IPMS—send in your membership dues and become part of this great organization.

[Publisher's Note: In concert with the article encouraging you to join the IPMS, here is the text of an editorial that was a part of my recent AutoFile column in *The Journal*. This editorial represents only the opinions of the author and not necessarily the Museum, its Trustees, its members or any other individual or group supporting the Museum. This article is reprinted with the permission of the IPMS publication, *The Journal*.]

IPMS: The Last, Best Hope for Hobbyists Everywhere If . . .

MARK S. GUSTAVSON

You know, old prejudices die hard. There was a time when our Society did not openly court and hospitably treat builders in my corner of our wonderful hobby. I was told,

more than once when entering a Regional show 20 years ago, that scale cars didn't stand a chance and that the entry had to be made entirely from plastic. From where we all stand now, that attitude seems almost quaint (though there still is some resistance to recent changes in some quarters of the Society) We have made such incredible progress opening up the Society to scale automotive builders at the behest of pioneers like Pat Covert and the E-Board, as well as ground swell of hobbyists who have (gradually) came to understand that exclusionary attitudes cut off the Society from a rich and diverse source of support.

But, you know, there are problems with scale auto builders, also. Whenever I've had the chance, I've been promoting the Society to anyone who would stand still and listen to this old windbag attorney. Often, I've made some progress. I am thinking particularly of John Mahaffey, an early and passionate supporter of the National Model Car Builders' Museum, who was willing to listen to my entreaties about the present and ultimate good that the Society can do for all modelers. John joined recently—welcome, John—additional hobbyists also have responded well to my “missionary work”: I am now thinking of close friends who have “seen the light,” (the newest being past GSL Best of Show winner George Layton) and make up the Utah Miniature Automotive Guild (the newest Region 10 Charter Club). UMAG is proud to be a part of the IPMS family. Unfortunately, other efforts, though few in number, haven't been so fruitful. Too often, some model car guys seem content to point to decades-old IPMS attitudes as an excuse for failing to

catch the vision that active participation of scale auto modelers in IPMS will finally purge the association of its historic exclusionary practices. The problem is that, despite nearly talking myself hoarse, I've not been successful because these guys have memories and they aren't willing to let go of the past. Of course, persistent anti-scale-auto bigotry in a few quarters of the Society (evinced, for instance, when IPMS contest promoters don't mention local points of automotive interest and name their contests after military events) is used as evidence that the Society hasn't changed, or hasn't changed enough, to justify participation. And that's where things sit sometimes.

There is no easy answer to this dilemma. Old attitudes just die hard. But everyone, in whatever corner of the hobby, needs to understand that most people in the Society have changed their attitudes and are working to banish from the Society its historic exclusionary biases. Model car guys need to wake up and face the music: for the most part, they are now welcomed in the Society that, alone, represents the interest of all hobbyists. More model car builders can only help to accelerate the process of democratizing the Society. IPMS/USA can grow into a better voice for all of us, but only if the Society continues to reform itself and welcome model car guys who will, for the most part, be pretty timid about stepping into this big pond. But the future of IPMS rests squarely on its ability to move into the future and genuinely welcome everyone with good faith, cordiality, and the mutual celebration of good will and sharing. Let's work together!

Hot 150/Clone the Past Program

MUSEUM STAFF

One of our current Museum projects—to identify the most influential models in our hobby and either acquire or clone them—is off to a good start, but, frankly, we could use more help. Here is a run down of recent developments and the status of this program:

First, Member Bob Bergedick helped with some corrections to the information contained in the First Age of our *Hot 150* list. Bob is a passionate historian of our hobby in the Fifties and early Sixties and can be counted on to put a fine polish on Museum's efforts concerning that era. Thanks, Bob!

Second, the following cloning projects have been picked up by members of our Museum:

DAVID LUMEN. Indy Car Model by Wayne Thomas. *Model Car Science*: Sept 1964, pp. 24–27.

TIM PENTECOST. "Nervous Nomad" by Paul Sable. *Car Model*: May 1964, pp. 55–61.

RICHARD KEMP. 1929 Ford Pickup by Don Jolley. *Rod & Custom*: Oct 1961, pp. 35–36.

BILL TAYLOR, RICK WRIGHT. "Dixie Bee" by an unknown builder (probably *Car Model* staff). *Car Model*: Oct 1963, pp. 21–30. This is the first cloning effort by a team.

MARK S. GUSTAVSON. Astrodan by Lonio Stern. *Car Model*: June 1964, pp. 13–19.

Third, the following models (owned by the Museum) on the list are being restored:

MARK S. GUSTAVSON. MCS-XI by Jim Keeler.

HAROLD PERRY. Turbine Tub by Jim Keeler.

Fourth, the following models have already been restored:

PAT COVERT. Shamrock by Dave Shuklis.

MARK S. GUSTAVSON. Crusader by "Smitty" of *AutoWorld*.

Fifth, the following model has been cloned and is now in the Museum:

RICK WRIGHT. '49 Mercury by Paul Sable.

Obviously, we need a *lot* more qualified builders to take on the task of cloning one of the models on the First and Second Ages of our hobby. Such a project is a real challenge because you have to replicate a model from long ago *exactly* the way it was done then. No modern parts, no improvements, just the way it was built back then. Please consider taking on such a project. If you need another copy of the documents for this first phase of the project, please send in two unattached first class stamps to the Museum. Thanks to each of the builders who have taken on a project!

Comments from the Workbench

COMPILED BY THE MUSEUM STAFF

The following comments were received by the Museum, sometimes via our web page, a letter, or from notes left during a tour:

♦ "I am glad to now be aware of your little corner of the Web. I look forward to reading more of the many restoration projects that you are now covering, from the Shuklis pieces, through the Crusader and others. Maybe, you can eventually do a few page story for one of the printed magazines." *Mark A. Hubbard*, e-mail via web site

- ♦ "I really like the new graphic style and design that Paul Anagnostopoulos has done to take some of the strain off you other guys. Welcome aboard, Paul, from Maryland, and thanks to all of you for the great job!" *Mike Hemp*, letter [Editor's Note: Thanks!]
- ♦ "The Museum was quite a treat for me, my wife, son, and nephew! We loved it!" *John Schmidt*, letter
- ♦ "I received the "Tour Video." Who needs the "Titanic"? Your movie was the blockbuster of the summer for me! I really enjoyed it!" *Russ Whaley*, letter
- ♦ "This is an awesome site! Great work done by all involved. I have three sets of the *AutoWorld* decals . . . let me know. I have no problem giving some up for the hobby. Keep up the great work. See you later . . ." *Thomas Constanza*, stationed aboard the *USS Tarawa*, e-mail via web site

Museum Tour Video Available!

MUSEUM STAFF

Just when you thought we would never do it, the long-promised Museum Tour Video is ready! In fact, there are 46 copies waiting for purchase. Everyone and every group that has contributed at least one month's rent in the past have already received their video, as have eight purchasers following a note in the last issue of *The Builder*.

Don't be fooled, however: this is *not* a professional production by Spielberg. There are no computer graphics or titles, no background music, no special actors reading a scripted narrative. Far from it.

This is a "walk through" video, shot by Mark S. Gustavson and Mark J. Benton and narrated by both. There is a lot of coverage of the magazine collection, the materials in the filing cabinet, the Oakland Roadster Show Diorama, the vintage model car memorabilia, the models in all the display cases and other items in the collection. The video is a bit bumpy but it is sincere, and the viewer will come away with a very good idea of the extent and significance of the collection. Nearly 75 minutes of video should satisfy almost every interest in the Museum.

How do you get your copy? Well, if you or your association have every donated the equivalent of one month's rent (whether at one time or in the aggregate), you get one free. Others can obtain a copy for \$25 postpaid (all the net proceeds will be deposited into the Museum fund, of course).

Just send your check, made out to "National Model Car Builders' Museum." We will send out your video immediately, by priority mail.

Custom Car/Custom Hot Rod Research Bibliography

Remember that an extremely extensive research bibliography, with 1,507 lines of information on virtually every custom car and hot rod with custom body work, is available from the Museum. This list, updated frequently (as recently as October 8, 1998), was prepared by Mark S. Gustavson for his forthcoming book on custom model car building. The book is due out next June and will retail for \$17.95. This list also provides research information on general, "generic" customizing techniques (e.g., headlight restyling, frenched antennas, scoops, rear fender styling, and so forth).

This printed list is available to anyone for a \$10 donation, post paid. All net proceeds will be used for the *Hot 150/Clone the Past* program. Send your donation to the Museum today!

Ed Roth Article

In the last issue of *The Builder*, we told you that Ed Roth had autographed photocopies of articles from the November 17, 1997 issue of Salt Lake's daily newspaper, *The Tribune*. As you might expect, the article chronicles Ed's zany sense of humor as well as his intelligence, commitment to the car hobby, and religious disposition. We still have 10 copies of the article left for a \$15 donation to the Museum, postpaid. Each copy will be sent flat in a large envelope—no folding! This is a rare opportunity so order now.

Thanks for your support.

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