



VOLUME 6, ISSUE 3 JULY-SEPTEMBER 2009

## News From the Museum Director



Jeff Lane stands with the museum's 1965 Peel P-50 at the New York Auto Show in April.

Summer is in full swing, and the museum had a busy spring. The New York Auto Show was April 10-19, and they invited the Microcar Club to put a display together for them. The Peel P-50 was chosen as one of the cars to be displayed. I attended opening day and helped set up the booth. The crowds were tremendous, and the P-50 was a hit. Fox News decided they wanted to do a Sunday morning piece on the Microcar exhibit. The reporter chose to drive the P-50 but was unable to crank start it once he sat in the car. I leaned in from the outside and pulled the crank to get it started for

him, and he drove it around the building for a couple of minutes. Upon finishing, his comment was, "It's not a Honda Accord, is it?"

James Green took the Twini Mini to the Minis in the Smokies Meet and enjoyed a weekend with 100 other Mini owners, along with a drive on the Dragon (US 129).

May 2nd was our 6th Annual Microcar Drive. The turnout was good, but it was beginning to look like we might get rained on this year. Although we did get sprinkled on, fortunately there was no heavy rain.

I spent most of May in France attending the Leyat exhibit in Meursault. That event is detailed in a separate article in this



The Amphicar emerging from the lake at this year's Microcar Drive was an amusing sight to nearby onlookers. Photo: S. Luboniecki



This little girl takes advantage of the chance for a nap while visiting the museum on Father's Day! Museum staff members were jealous!

newsletter.

The 1935 Adler Trumpf Junior went to the Ault Park Concours in Cincinnati, Ohio. Greg Coston, our Restoration Shop Manager, did a lot of the work on the car, and was able to attend this event. The crowd enjoyed seeing the Adler as it is a rare and unique car.

Father's Day is one of our busiest days, and includes rides and demonstrations for our guests. This year was busier than in the past, and it was nice to spend the day giving rides and meeting almost 600 visitors.

*Jeff Lane*  
Director



# My Summer Vacation

James Green

My summer vacation has left me with an odd compulsion. I check Craigslist several times a day looking at cars for sale by owner that are under \$500. There are quite a few listed everyday and they all cause a short daydream about trying to drive them on a 3000 plus mile rally. The crappier and more obscure the car, the more vivid the daydream. What about a twenty-year-old Peugeot with horrible paint and completely dilapidated interior? Think of the possibilities. It is perfect.

The cause of my new obsession is the BABE Rally. Even though it sounds like a Harley-fest replete with topless dancers, it is a rally from New York City (Big Apple, hence the BA,) to New Orleans (Big Easy, alas the BE.) The first sick twist is that the rallyist (sadist) must compete with a \$500 or less beater. The other sick twist is that the rally takes place during the summer heat of June. Since most \$500 cars don't have air, it can be brutal. And if you do have a/c you're looked down on by the competition, although any twinges of guilt quickly fade as the rally moves towards Louisiana and the humidity level soars.

The lure of the rally is that it is the reincarnation of some crazy road-trip that you see only in the movies. Crazy characters doing crazy things. Partying hard, driving hard (though not at the same time!), and helping each other continue the ride. It is a reason to drive a clunker 3000 miles. It is a nutty road-trip with a bunch of equally minded teams looking for an epic adventure. It is a circus complete with clowns (one team did the entire trip in clown outfits) that travels the countryside and sets up the big top every night in a different small town for a big party.

There were three reasons for my wife and me to brush off the Team Green moniker from the old rallying days and take on this epic adventure. Andrew Duthie, museum

volunteer and mad motor-ing man, talked the event up to us several times. Andrew had competed before and apparently loved the traveling party. Second reason is that the rally ended in New Orleans. We love New Orleans and visit several times a year, so any reason to get back to NOLA is a good one, even if it involves driving to NYC first. The final reason to do it was that I had bought a \$450 BMW off of Craigslist months before even thinking about the rally. The car was a project that came together rather quickly. It was now reliable and had great working air conditioning, so there was no need to worry about the car, save the decorating, which is very important to the BABE rallyist.

Our perfect car came accessorized with mud flap girls on the front grilles, so she quickly became known as Mud Flap Girl. I guess the previous owner was a fan. The girls seemed odd to me at first and my wife wanted them removed immediately. But once we realized that the car had to be appropriately tacky for the rally the theme was obvious. There is an amazing amount of junk in the shape of mud flap girls on eBay and we bought much more than our share. Pins that blinked, t-shirts, ear rings, bumper stickers, temporary tattoos and the list goes on and on. A local sign company designed and made the beautiful vinyl graphics that made Mud Flap Girl so lovely and tacky. I sourced some actual mud flaps and installed some girls on



*Mud Flap Girl at the end of a run on the Tail of the Dragon, Highway 129, in east Tennessee.*

them from a local big rig chrome shop. An Anna Nichole Smith bobble-head finished the decorating committee's duties. Mud Flap Girl is no longer a wallflower.

Before beginning the rally we decided not to worry about being competitive. We've stressed about finishing well on rallies before and ended up not having a good time or arguing with Rallymasters about rules interpretation. This is not something we wanted to do for a week. So, Team Green's only goals for the rally were to laugh a lot and not eat in chain restaurants.

*Continued on page 5*



# Now Featured!



## 50 Years of the Mini- Presented by MINI of Nashville

The museum is currently displaying an exhibit of 14 Minis, old and new, as part of our celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Mini.

Many of the cars in the exhibit have been part of the museum collection but were never displayed until this exhibit. Following are a few of those featured vehicles. For more information about the exhibit, visit us online at: [www.lanemotormuseum.org/mini](http://www.lanemotormuseum.org/mini)



*Our Current Exhibit of New & Classic Minis*



*2006 BMW MINI Cooper S Works GP*



*1967 Austin Mini Moke*



*1960 Austin Mini Mini*



*1973 Morris Mini 2-3 Scale*

## 2006 BMW MINI Cooper S Works GP

In 1994 BMW purchased Rover Group which included the Mini brand. In 1995 BMW began working on a replacement for the famous Mini which had been in production since 1959. In early 2001 the first version of the new MINI was produced by BMW. The new MINI was an instant success and has been a strong seller since its introduction in 2001. BMW decided to slightly redesign the MINI for 2007 to keep it updated. The car you see here was purchased new by the museum in 2006 because of its uniqueness. The last 2,000 MINIs produced with this body style were all the same; they had the John Cooper Works package (higher horsepower, stiffer suspension, bigger brakes, unique wheels) and no back seats to reduce weight. Each car was numbered, and only 400 of the special edition cars came to the U.S.

## 1967 Austin Mini Moke

The Austin Mini Moke began production in 1964. It was designed as a simple jeep-like utility vehicle for the British army. Although it was rejected by the military because of its low ground clearance, it became popular around the world as an inexpensive “fun” vehicle ideal for hot climates. As you can see, the Mini Moke is a minimal vehicle. It has no doors or roof, but can carry four people in its tub-like body. It is based on the successful mini drivetrain and suspension. Through its life, the Mini Moke was produced in England, Portugal, and Australia. Production ended in the early 1990s. An odd feature of this car is the fact that you can remove the gas cap (which is located to your left hip) and check the fuel level—all while you are driving.

## 1960 Austin Mini Mini

This is a custom-designed Mini built on a stock Mini drive train. As you can see, the car has been cut in half. The back seat was removed and approximately 2 feet has been cut out of the body. They are referred to as “Mini Mini” or “Shorty Mini.” A few are known to exist in the U.S. and Europe. This custom job was done by a man in Alaska. He then gave the car to his nephew in Oregon. Its third home is Tennessee.

## 1973 Morris Mini 2-3 Scale

This “car” was built from body parts taken from a 1975 Mini, skillfully “shrunken” to approximately 2/3 the size of a “real” Mini. The body is all steel, and the time to fabricate it was over 400 hours, or about 10 weeks of full-time labor! It is not fully complete, as one can see by closer inspection – it lacks pedals and controls, a working steering gear, and general finishing. Sharp-eyed viewers may note the new MINI badge on the front as well. There is a working Honda four-stroke engine in the rear, which will couple to a centrifugal clutch and transmission. Purchased at a Classic Mini meet in England, the 2/3 Scale Mini is a perfect example of a shrinking car.

*All of the vehicles featured here are currently on display!*



## Propeller-Driven Cars

Propeller-driven cars are a rare and unique automotive oddity. The total number produced was roughly 100; a minuscule quantity in contrast to automotive history which spans 100 over years. The majority of propeller-driven cars were prototypes, and many of them were very crudely done.

Marcel Leyat was the only serial manufacturer of propeller-driven cars. From 1919 - 1926, Leyat produced 23 cars of 3 different models. The lack of adequate financial resources kept him from producing more cars. Leyat's cars were exquisitely designed and engineered with approximately 200 drawings needed to build the vehicle. The bodies were a wooden monocoque much like an airplane, and great efforts were made to streamline the car. The complete car weighed only about 500 pounds. Of the 23 cars made, two still exist. One car belongs to a museum in France and the other original Leyat belongs to an individual.

In 2005 Claude Gueniffey (the world expert on propeller cars) gained access to Leyat's old workshop attic in Meursault, France to find hundreds of drawings and some original parts of Leyat's first car. This is truly amazing as these artifacts had been laying there dormant for over 60 years.

In 2006 Lane Motor Museum embarked on the task of building a 1919 Leyat from the original drawings that Claude discovered. Mutual friend Andy Zikmund was invaluable in his analysis of the drawings, and his ability to get all the metal parts produced. The Museum would like to thank Andy for his very valuable contribution to this project. Eccora, located in the Czech Republic, took all the pieces and assembled the car. The Museum restored a Harley V-twin motor that powers the Leyat. The museum would also like to thank Eccora for assembling the giant jigsaw puzzle, and getting the Leyat functional for the Meursault exhibition.

## Leyat Exhibit – May 16-24, 2009 Meursault, France

Jeff Lane

**O**n Saturday, May 16, Claude Gueniffey did a 1½ hour presentation on Leyat's life works. I was not at the exhibit during the week, but returned for the second weekend to meet people and demonstrate the Leyat.

Claude Gueniffey spent thousands of hours reading and organizing documents that were found in the attic of Leyat's home. Claude and many residents of Meursault put together a wonderful exhibit detailing Marcel Leyat's works. Leyat lived

in Meursault from 1922-1946 and designed airplanes, propeller-driven cars, and a new way to play musical instruments. The exhibition was held at the fabulous Château de Cîteaux in Meursault. Although propeller-driven cars were the biggest focus of the exhibit, all phases of Leyat's works were displayed. The exhibit also featured original parts found in the attic, and many videos of Leyat's cars and planes in action.



**FROM TOP/CENTER** (moving clockwise): Madame Roulot & Jeff Lane in front of the Château de Cîteaux; a propeller-driven car; Vítěslav Hinner (red shirt), President of Eccora, leans against the front of a propeller-driven car; a view of the Château de Cîteaux in Meursault, France; Claude Gueniffey.



After some initial problems getting the car started on Saturday, we rolled the Leyat

down to Mr. Danby's (a plant that makes wine barrels) for a demonstration. The plan on Sunday was to drive it around his large industrial building several times so the crowd could see it in action. Fortunately, we had perfected the starting procedure and the Leyat

## Summer Vacation *continued from page 2*

The competition portion of the rally consisted of fun things to do and silly things to take your mind off the long drives everyday. Take pictures with a digital camera of personalized license plates, cracked windshields, GT Mustang convertibles with the top down, state troopers from six different states in one day, and so on.

The second day had everyone dressed as astronauts (we knew to be prepared for this ahead of time and we got to papier-mâché for the first time in decades. Thanks Mrs. Qualls for the inspiration and instruction!) That day's challenge was to take a picture in front of a building bearing the town's name from a list of towns along the route. We also had to have our car in the picture, a local, and us dressed as astronauts. There were many conversations that day that began with, 'I'm not crazy, but I need your help'.

The rally itself is not about competition although some teams did exceptionally well in finding even the most obscure challenge item. We didn't even bother with trying to find a hot air balloon in flight in the New York/Philadelphia area. (There is one at the Philly zoo on tethers that they use for rides.) The rally is about hanging out in the parking lot at the end of a long day and hearing other's tales of breaking down, meeting law enforcement officers, and tracking down that day's challenges. And fixing each other's cars. The broken cars were a constant theme. I was shocked by the condition of some of the cars and complete lack of mechanical understanding of some of the rallyists. Amazingly all but one of the fifty plus cars rolled into New Orleans under their own power.

We laughed a lot each day. I'm proud to say we did not eat in a chain restaurant for the week. We discovered great local restaurants and diners that were a bit out of the way but worth searching out. Missions accomplished. It was the most fun I've had on a car related vacation and I can't wait until next year. Now back to Craigslist for the perfect beater for the circus next year. Where did all the Yugos go?



started on the third pull (it's a pull start similar to a lawn mower). We did two laps around the building and everyone was happy. Mr. Danby asked us to wait another 20 minutes and do it again as more people were coming. So 20 minutes later, we repeated the demonstration before an even larger crowd. They were elated to see the Leyat run, and in Meursault

they have a custom of

*Continued on page 7*

front of the Leyat; Pierre Bouzereau helping to start the Leyat; François Scheid against the Leyat; Jean Ghio & Claude Gueniffey; Annie Gueniffey, Madame once where the Leyat Exhibition was held **CENTER-** The 1919 Leyat Replica



# The Peel P-50 at Amelia Island (Part II)

Jeff Lane

I had such a great time driving the Peel P-50 on Friday at Amelia Island that it made perfect sense to use it Saturday also to get around. It made even more sense when you realize that parking at Amelia Island is always a problem. Arriving at the trailer lot about 11:00 am, I unload the Peel from the back of the van. I'm going to drive into Fernandina Beach for lunch. This is about a 7-8 mile drive on a nice two-lane road along the ocean. Speed limit is 35 mph so I should not hold up traffic too bad. After a couple of miles and many people waving as they passed me, a Minivan pulls up next to me and I thought it was going to pass me also. Instead, the driver maintains the same speed as me, the side door opens, and someone starts to video. They record about 45 seconds before it is necessary to pull back into their lane; after passing, they also get some footage of me from the front.

I arrive in Fernandina Beach and park the Peel by the marina. As I get out I see the crowd of people already heading my way, and I am asked the usual questions: "What is it?" "You don't drive that on the street, do you?" "Did you drive it from Nashville?" The crowd disperses after 20 minutes, and I find a nice pizza place for lunch.

After lunch, I need to drive back to the Ritz-Carlton to register for the show on Sunday. The first five miles pass routinely, and I turn onto the winding road that leads to the hotel. Almost immediately the Peel dies. I crank it over a couple of times... nothing. I get out to look at the engine, and someone has stopped to see if they can help. Removing the engine cover, I realize the spark plug has popped out of the cylinder head. Just then it hit me – when I changed the plug yesterday I got in a hurry and did not tighten it down. (My own fault – I just have to let it cool for a few minutes, then put it back in

the cylinder head). The Peel is on the side of the road so I'm not in the way, but the number of people stopping to help is growing and we are certainly stalling traffic.

A sheriff who had been on duty yesterday and saw me driving the car stopped to shake my hand and offer assistance. She said everyone in the department loved seeing the car going down the road. I thanked her for helping out with traffic control. I figure I better get the plug in and get going or the traffic jam will continue to grow. With the plug in, it acts like it wants to start, but won't. Someone offers to give me a pull start, and I said, "NO THANKS!" I asked for a gentle push start... no luck. Now a sheriff on duty has stopped to see why there is a traffic jam. He asks if I need help – I tell him about the plug problem, and I am just having a little trouble getting it started. About 30 seconds later it fires – the sheriff steps into the road to stop traffic and I'm off. Since I have been there about 30 minutes now, the line of traffic behind me is LONG. I get in the bike lane and people begin to pass me, some crossing the yellow line because it's a curvy road. After about four cars passing, the sheriff is now behind me. I'm not certain he is okay with me driving in the bike lane, but I also don't want to block traffic, so I drive half in the bike lane and half in the road. He seems happy to follow me and does not pass.

The Ritz-Carlton is about two more miles away and now there are cars parked alongside the road everywhere. I continue right up to the main intersection by the Ritz-Carlton and stop on the side of the road. The sheriff stops behind me and states, "You have a license plate like everyone else, and I didn't like people passing you by going over the yellow line." He is obviously amused by seeing the Peel drive down the road. He



*Tired of narrow parking spaces where once you get your car in them you can't open the door? Drive a Peel!*

shares a story about him owning a Morris Minor in college, and he thought that was small. The sheriff asks why I stopped here and I tell him I am going to park here and walk up to the Ritz-Carlton to register for the show. I pick up the back of the Peel, carry it between two cars, and park it behind them. The sheriff busts out laughing, gets back in his car, and leaves.

So it was two wonderful days with the Peel, doing about 50 miles on Friday and 25 miles on Saturday. I realize it will probably be many years before I put that many miles on it again!



## Leyat Exhibit *continued from page 5*

singing this special song (in French) if they are happy. They sang the song, and I was very honored by their kindness.

We then pushed the Leyat back to the château, and that afternoon we started it and drove it around the château. For the duration of the exhibit the Leyat was started in the morning and afternoon to be demonstrated.

I had encouraged Claude to find a deserted road outside of town where we could drive the Leyat. Meursault is a small town (1,600 residents) in southeast France. It is surrounded by vineyards, and has many small roads running through the vineyards. At first Claude was against it since we had no license plate, but I asked him to check with Pierre Bouzereau, a local resident who knew everyone in town. Pierre said it would be no problem. On May 23 around 9:30 in the morning, we rolled the Leyat down to a small road leading into the vineyards. Pierre took me down the road in a regular car first (very level and smooth) and after about half a mile we could see the town of Meursault behind us on the hill. I thought it was the perfect place to drive the Leyat. We decided I would drive out about half a mile and stop, and then Claude would drive back. To make the journey even more interesting, we were beside a graveyard, and ironically our starting point was near a memorial to a man that was killed

in a Leyat propeller car crash. The car starts right up, and I realize for the first time I will be driving the car mostly in a straight line. All the other times, I was driving around a building so there was lots of turning. The car picks up speed pretty quickly, and I throttle back to idle, but I am still gaining on the camera car in front of me. I have to apply a little brake and that slows me down. I get up to about 20 mph, but easily see how the car could go 50 mph being so light and having such low drag. My ride is over in only about two minutes, but is a very special moment to be the first one to drive a propeller-driven car on the streets of Meursault since the 1940s. I turn the car around, and Claude takes his turn – I tell him, “Lots of brake.” It goes perfectly, and in a couple of minutes we are back at the graveyard. Claude is very happy with his drive too.

The Leyat is pushed back to the château and is demonstrated for two more days until the end of the exhibit on May 24.

The exhibition was a tremendous success, and Ecorra is now painting the Leyat which will be coming to the Museum by the end of the year. It's a unique and thrilling piece of history, and I know everyone will want to see it when it arrives. Bill Warner has already invited it to Amelia Island in March 2010.

If you want to learn more about the Leyat, you can go to [www.helica.info](http://www.helica.info) and click on the English version. If you click on the 2009 exhibition, there are videos on that page of the Leyat running.



**Children from Left to Right:** Evan Dov, age four; Tessa, age six; and Elena, age 7. In back is their father, Andre.

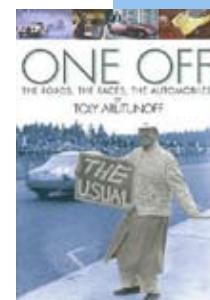
## With Thanks!

Our sincere thanks to the Fresco family for their generous donation of toy vehicles that will be wonderful additions to the museum's children's play area!

## One Off

### By Toly Arutunoff

Review by Jeff Lane



Toly Arutunoff was fortunate enough to not only live through the golden age of motor racing but he participated in many of the famous races that we can now only read about.

Toly's book covers only a fraction of his many experiences in the motoring world. Growing up in Tulsa, Oklahoma you would think Toly would not be a car guy. Nothing could be further from the truth as Toly lived and breathed cars from the very beginning. Toly spends a lot of time talking about racing in the early days when there were fewer rules and obstacles to having fun.

The car passion is obvious in the book but Toly also expresses his common sense philosophy that is interesting and unique. I highly recommend *One Off* because it is informative and entertaining.

The book is available in the museum gift shop for \$39.95. Remember, museum members save 10%!



*Toly Arutunoff (L) and Bill Pryor (R) pose with a photo from their 1963 Targa Florio race that hangs in the museum gallery.*

# Upcoming Events



## Summer CRUSH

Saturday, July 25, 2009; 11am-4pm

[www.lanemotormuseum.org/nashville-summer-crush](http://www.lanemotormuseum.org/nashville-summer-crush)

It's been two years since Lane Motor Museum's 1959 LARC-LX has had the chance to CRUSH anything but that opportunity is coming soon! Join us for a day filled with fun activities with the main attraction at 2:00! Visit our website for all the details!

## 6th Anniversary of Lane Motor Museum Sunday, October 18, 2009

Join us for a celebration of our 6th Anniversary! Plenty of fun activities will be offered including rides, demonstrations and tours of our basement collection !

## Free Day for Veterans and Active Military Monday, November 9, 2009

All veterans and active military get in free on Veterans Day! Don't miss the display of military vehicles representing the U.S., Austria, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Switzerland, and the U.S.S.R.

## Day After Thanksgiving Fun Friday, November 27, 2009

Join us on this great day for the whole family! We'll offer special tours, demonstrations and vehicle rides!

# In This Issue

- ❖ News from the Museum Director
- ❖ My Summer Vacation
- ❖ Now Featured- Vehicles From our Mini Exhibit
- ❖ Propeller-Driven Cars
- ❖ The Leyat Exhibit- Meursault, France
- ❖ The Peel P-50 at Amelia Island (Part II)
- ❖ Review of "One Off" by Toly Arutunoff



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