



2016 Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix July 16-17, 2016 - Schenley Park

July brings one of our favorite events of the Summer, the annual Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix. This year marked the 34th anniversary of the race through the streets of Schenley Park. It is always fantastic to meet old friends and enjoy the carnival like atmosphere of the PVGP. The Races at Schenley Park close out ten days of car related happenings in the area.

Driver's Reception - Squirrel Hill



Festivities kick off with a drivers' reception in Squirrel Hill on Friday night. Cars caravan over from the paddock. While spectators enjoy a car show along the closed Forbes Avenue, the drivers and crews are treated to a dinner at Orr Jewelers. We very much enjoyed our evening there.



— ALAN MANN RACING —
ESTABLISHED 1964

1965 Lotus Cortina - Mitch McCullough

McCullough's racecar was converted from a street Lotus Cortina in Europe in the 90's where he told us it captured a Dutch Historic Touring Car title. The car is a clone of one Alan Mann Racing campaigned in the 60's in the British Touring Car Championship (BTCC) right down to the trademark Mann red and gold paint scheme. McCullough has raced the car extensively in the US as witnessed to by the various window stickers. An engine problem cut short his track time, we hope to see the car at another event.

1953 Nash-Healey-LeMans

Leonard McCue



The Nash Healey can lay claim to being America's first production post-war two seater, beating the Corvette to market by a couple of years. Power comes from a straight six of 252 CID more commonly associated with the Nash Ambassador equipped with Carter side-draft carburetors. Early cars were built in the UK, before Pinin Farina took over production in Italy. In period, the car would rack up an impressive endurance racing record.



1970 Lotus Europa

Luke Bittenbinder

We have featured Bittenbinder's Europa before, but as is common with racecars, it continually evolves. Based on the "Lotus" valve cover, we thought he had re-engined the car, but it turns out it is still a Renault engine with a custom valve cover designed to give it a Lotus Twin Cam look. Additional modifications to the steering and pedal box help Luke shoehorn his 6'3" frame into the Europa. A Pittsburgh native, he now lives in South Carolina, but returned to compete at his old stomping grounds.



1973 Porsche 914-6
Scott Ryan

When sorting pictures, it looked like we had flipped some images until we realized Ryan's car is RHD. The original builder, an aeronautical engineer, thought this gave an advantage in locating apexes at numerous tracks. The steering, pedal assembly and shifter were all modified to accommodate the RHD change. The builder also went so far as to construct an extra, triangular brace to stiffen the car and fared the roll bar into the Targa bar. Have to admit, the color and graphics are certainly distinctive.



1965 Mini Cooper - Robert Hoemke

Hoemke's Mini is steeped in racing history. After being pulled off the showroom floor and converted to a racer, it would contest the ARRC five times, coming away with three championships and the President's Cup. But the story doesn't end there, the car also competed in the Trans Am, taking a class win at the Marlboro Twelve Hour. And just to top off its racing legacy, it was once raced by Pedro Rodriguez at Green Valley in Texas.

Royale Formula Ford Challenge Series



Formula Ford racing returned to Schenley Park as part of the Royale FF Challenge series. Christian Morici would come away with the win and a new overall lap record for the Schenley Park circuit, shaving over two seconds off the old mark. The podium picture is (L to R) Daniel Helman-2nd, Tammy Lynn Calef, Winner-Corner Workers' Trophy, Christian Morici-1st and Chris Cogswell-3rd.



Turn 4 - The Hay Bale Chicane



The hay bale chicane slows the cars on the long "straight" and lets just say not everyone clears it. The corner workers are diligent in keeping the chicane intact. I spent some time there and found two generations working in the "Hot" area while behind the fence a third waited their turn to serve, boding well for the PVGP's future. It is not uncommon to find long-term competitors, spectators and participants at PVGP, such is the loyalty it enjoys.



Alan Patterson - 33 Years



Robert Deull - 31 Years

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Christopher Morici - 30 Years

This year PVGP inaugurated a Legends of Schenley Park to recognize drivers who had raced there 15 or more years. Over 50 drivers received patches celebrating their achievement. We counted 25 who also participated this year, including these three 30+ year pilots. Hope we got them all, please advise if we missed anyone.



Anatoly Aruntunoff - 15 Years



Michael Barstow - 21 Years



Ed Cronin - 17 Years



Bob Fairbanks - 15 Years



Manley Ford - 22 Years



John Guehl - 15 Years



Roy Hopkins - 15 Years



Steve Konsin - 22 Years



Rich Maloumian - 19 Years



Christian Morici - 17 Years



Frank Mount - 14 Years



Paul O'Malley - 15 Years



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Not to leave anyone out, we'll take three slides to recognize those who were so honored. Our own experience with PVGP goes back to 1989. Over that time, we have spectated, worked and photographed the event from both sides of the spectator fence. We can remember heat, cold (once) and rain, but above all, always enjoying ourselves.



Victor Pastore - 22 Years



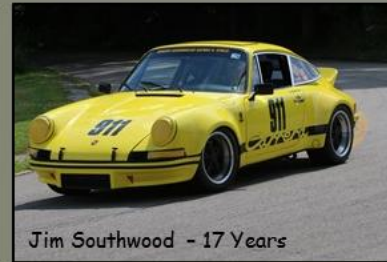
J.J. Rodman - 23 Years



George Shafer - 31 Years



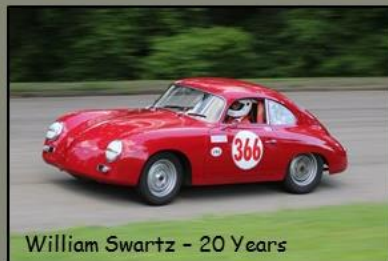
Monroe Snider, Jr. - 21 Years



Jim Southwood - 17 Years



Michael Stein - 16 Years



William Swartz - 20 Years



George Vapaa - 26 Years



Stefan Vapaa - 14 Years



Michael Zappa - 20 Years

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Last, but hardly least, here are the last of our Legends. Next year's race at Schenley Park will be held the weekend of July 15-16, 2017 with a 35th anniversary celebration. Camaro will be the featured marque. Festivities will kickoff a week earlier with a vintage race at Pittsburgh International Race Complex. In between the races there is a week long list of activities.



2016 Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix

A special thanks to Susan Gera, Dan DelBianco and Steven Weber for their help in covering the PVGP; and to all of the fantastic volunteers who work diligently to present an outstanding event. Every year it seems to grow better.