

The Preservationist

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Fall 2016

Fall Dinner Event Features Kiekhaefer Mercury Marine Race Team of the 1950s

The HRC Fall Dinner Event will be held at the historic Siebkens Resort on Thursday September 15th. Cash bar at 5:30 and dinner at 7:00. The guest speaker will be retired Chief Engineer of Mercury Marine, Charlie Strang.

In 1955, Carl Kiekhaefer, founder of Mercury Marine decided to build a NASCAR racing team to promote his company's image.

Building the team around the best cars and drivers, Kiekhaefer dominated NASCAR in 1955 and 1956 winning the championship in both years.



Kiekhaefer addressing his team in 1955.

The Kiekhaefer team brought a new level of professionalism to NASCAR. They transported their cars to the track on flatbeds when most drivers drove their cars to the track. With cars painted and detailed professionally and team members in uniforms, the team was considered to be the first super team in NASCAR history.

This is expected to be a well-attended program so be sure and get your reservations in early and join your fellow HRC Members and guests at the HRC Fall Dinner Event.

Summer Dinner Event Wrap-up

Ninety-five members and guests attended the Summer Dinner Event in the Victorian Village Resort Theater Thursday July 14th. After the cocktails and conversation reception, attendees were served a delicious dinner featuring braized shortribs enjoyed by all. The guest speaker was author, historian and HRC member Fred Egloff who was a central figure in the Chicago Region of

the SCCA in the 1950s and 60s. Fred knew all the early members including Kimberly, Wacker, Hamill, Sheldon and more. He attended the 1951 and 1952 races in Elkhart Lake as a guest of Ernie Erickson and was given a press pass that gave him access to the pits and timing



Fred's original press pass

stands. A born story teller, Fred shared many of his experiences as a Chicago Region member and award winning editor of Piston Patter, the Region's newsletter, including how he and a fellow member won the Michigan 1000 rally... twice. Their "sports car" was an Isetta! (*Fred donated his original Press Pass to HRC where it now resides in our archives.*)

Setting the Record Straight

HRC has always gone to great lengths to accurately report the historic sports car races in Elkhart Lake. Beginning with the history recorded and published by Peter Laun, we added our own research and information obtained from others to our archives. Mostly we got it right but once in a while facts are discovered that were missed and need to be corrected.

Peter Laun attributed the winner of the under 1500cc novice event to Larry Whiting Jr. driving a Simca 8 cabriolet. Whiting owned both a Simca 8 and an MG-TD and both were listed as entries in the Official Program, however, it was the MG-TD that he raced in the event not the Simca.



Fred Wacker congratulates Larry Whiting Jr. on his victory in the over 1500cc Novice race where he drove his MG Looking on are GiGi Whiting, Bayard Sheldon and Chief Starter Sandor Kremer.

It also appears that, Ted Boynton who won the over 1500cc Novice race, previously thought to have been driving a supercharged MG, actually drove Kimberly's Healey Silverstone. (*Perhaps it was thought that Ted raced a supercharged MG-TD since he owned an MG and supercharged MGs were required to compete in the over 1500cc class.*)



Ted Boynton behind the wheel of the Kimberly Silverstone chats with wife Shirley Boynton.

In the above photo the driver, thought to be Fred Wacker was in fact, Ted Boynton. Fred Wacker in the dark shirt and Bayard Sheldon are in the background. The young man in the passenger seat is unidentified.

(HRC thanks member Fred Egloff for supplying the information and helping to set the record straight.)

D19 – The Healey Silverstone Revisited

In the winter 2016 issue of *The Preservationist* we covered Donald Healey's contribution to automotive history and touched briefly on the history of Jim Kimberly's Healey Silverstone chassis number D19. In this article we will take a closer look at D19 and its fascinating history.



July 1949 introductory ad for the Healey Silverstone.

The Silverstone was designed as a two passenger race capable car that could also be driven as a personal touring car. The cars were powered by a Riley 2443.cc engine that featured hemispherical combustion chambers, twin camshafts mounted high at the sides of the cylinder block and two SU carburetors.



The Riley 2443cc engine

Producing nearly 100bhp, the engine gave the car a top speed in excess of 100 mph making the Silverstone both powerful and fast for its time.

Chassis D19 was one of the first two Healey Silverstone's imported into North America. After taking delivery, Kimberly made one change; he cut the body in front of the scuttle and fastened it there with dzus pins allowing his mechanics to more easily remove the nose and get at the engine.

Silverstone D19's first race was in the June 1950 sports car races at Bridgehampton with Fred Wacker as the driver. Wacker finished 1st in class D and 6th overall. Fred (*who had been racing an MG-TC*) had his first class win and thought the more powerful Silverstone was "just a great car". The car's next outing was at the July 1950 races in Elkhart Lake. Kimberly had acquired a Ferrari 166MM that he preferred to drive but, always a generous man, he brought Silverstone D19 to the races in Elkhart Lake for others to drive. The car was loaned first to Charles "Ted" Boynton to drive in the over 1500cc Novice Race, then to Sally "Sammy" Chapin in the Ladies Race and finally to Fred Wacker in the Main Event for experienced drivers. Although the Silverstone was racing against more powerful 3.5 liter Jaguars 5.5 liter Allard's, it was amazingly successful. Boynton finished 1st in the over 1500cc Novice Race, Chapin finished 1st in the Ladies

Race and Wacker finished 2nd overall in the Main Event.



Sally "Sammy" Chapin behind the wheel of D19 in the Ladies Race.

Following its very successful outing in Elkhart Lake, Kimberly sold D19 to friend and fellow Chicago Region member Jim Simpson who is reported to have repainted the car yellow. Simpson raced the Silverstone at Bridgehampton in June 1951 finishing 3rd in the S3.0 race and 11th overall in the 100 mile Main Event. He brought the Silverstone back to Elkhart Lake in August of 1951 where he entered the car in the Main Event for experienced drivers in Class 4. Unfortunately he crashed on the first lap and failed to finish. In October Simpson entered D19 in the SCCA National Races in Reno but was again unable to finish. After his untimely death his widow gave the car to Simpson's mechanic.

The ownership of Silverstone D19 between 1957 and 1965 is shrouded in the mists of time. Its recorded history picks up in 1966 when Tony Carroll found the car on a dealer's lot in

Wisconsin painted a metallic green. Tony had the car repainted to British racing green and campaigned the Silverstone in numerous VSCCA events. Carroll is reported to have sold D19 to Nathaniel "Nat" Day in 1972.

Day occasionally competed in vintage racing events but drove the car mainly for pleasure and the pure joy of ownership. While in his care, the car underwent a complete ground-up restoration including a new engine and new paint that returned the car to the original Kimberly red. Completed in 1987 it was thought to be one of the most complete and original Healey Silverstone's in the United States. It received the Chief Judges Award at the Greenwich Concours in 2004.



Healey Silverstone Chassis D19 on display in the 60th Anniversary Concours. Owner Bob Seymour is on the far left.

Coming full circle, D19 returned to Elkhart Lake in 2010 in the hands of Robert Seymour. Seymour entered the car in the 2010 HRC 60th Anniversary Concours (One of eight historic race cars entered in the Original Elkhart Lake Race Car class.) where it was awarded 2nd place behind the Cunningham C2R that finished 1st in the 1951 Main Event driven by John Fitch.