

The “Felix” Collection

Written by Malcolm Boardman

A tale of three classic vehicles offered at no reserve on Saturday, October 12, 2019 in Williston, Vermont

They say that some people are born with gasoline in their veins.

Spend five minutes with Felix Bottenhorn, and you'll find that maxim to be true.

Born in Germany in 1932 Felix soon developed his love for automobiles. At the age of 8, Felix went

along for the ride as his mother took her first tentative steps to learn how to drive. Sitting in the back seat, he watched and

listened to the instructor. At the end of the lesson he asked if he could try; he did, and to the amazement of all those in the vehicle, drove like had been doing so for many years. At that moment his love for all things automotive was born and has not ceased to this day.

Arriving in the States in 1946 at the age of 14, Felix surrounded himself with anything and everything to do with automobiles. Felix had gained a great deal of mechanical knowledge through

his father, and was now putting that knowledge into practice for himself.

After a few short years Felix was able to purchase his first vehicle, but it was not to be a Mercedes or BMW of his homeland, nor a Chevy or Ford of his adopted home. Felix had a select admiration for British

sports cars. It was the early '50s, and Felix had one specific car in mind — 1952 Tommy's MG TD. This little roadster had it all and, most importantly

to Felix, it was state of the art in engine design, transmission and suspension. Soon after the purchase of his first MG, another one followed, and then another. Yet, the best was yet to come.

The 1960 Austin-Healey 3000

It was 1960 and a new automotive wonder was introduced to market that, in Felix's own words, took his breath away. The **1960 Austin-Healey 3000**. Felix purchased his Healey and, in fact, was one of the first to purchase the

vehicle brand new in 1960 in the United States.

The Austin-Healey 3000 was mechanically superior to any sports car of its day, and it had turned the head of Felix for that very reason. The best known of all the “Big Healeys,” the 3000 was a true sports car, with a thoroughbred pedigree. Made in the same plant as the MG, the 3000 was a completely different beast. It was a car that was built to race, but be driven by anyone.

Felix has owned his Healey for nearly 60 years now and, with his background as a mechanical engineer, he has taken great pride in meticulously maintaining the vehicle.



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The 1948 Willys Jeepster Phaeton

The next vehicle to enter Felix's collection was another true gem — a **1948 Willys Jeepster Phaeton**.



When asked how he ended up with the Willys, Felix said, "She came to me. I saw her and knew she belonged with me." And who can deny that the '48 Willys is not a wonderful looking vehicle? I would challenge anyone who says they could not see themselves cruising Martha's Vineyard in this beautiful vehicle. It also says a lot for the love and care that Felix put into his collection that, even though this vehicle was produced in 1948 and contains much of its original parts, when you turn it on the hurricane engine purrs so smoothly that you have to double check to see that it is actually running.



The 1954 Chevrolet 3100

Felix now had a growing collection that was already gaining interest from fellow "gear heads" and collectors alike. But Felix was not purchasing these vehicles for any of the attention, he was purchasing vehicles purely out of love. So goes the story with the next "find" that Felix had while driving by a Chevy dealership in the mid '60s. In the back lot Felix noticed a **1954 Chevy Pickup**. He instantly pulled in to inquire about the vehicle. The salesman thought he was joking when he said that he would take the vehicle then and there. After getting the truck home, Felix performed a full restoration and made the truck like new. Once more, he did this because, in his own words he "needed a vehicle to

move chopped firewood." It just happened that every time he stopped to gas up, he would get a crowd of onlookers, all inquiring about his truck. Even his "work truck" had been meticulously

restored and maintained.

In his 87 years, Felix Bottenhorn has amassed a true car lovers collection that we are honored to offer at no reserve. ■



The Thomas Hirchak Company is pleased to present our second Classic & Collector Car Auction of the 2019 season on Saturday, October 12 at 2 p.m. The auction will take place at 298 J. Brown Drive in Williston, Vermont. Registration for the auction is free and begins at 10 a.m.

We will have some incredible vehicles rolling across the auction block! To inquire about consigning your classic or collector car or motorcycle, military vehicle, automobilia collectible, hot rod, vintage auto signage, email chris@thcauction.com