



Story by Cliff Guinand Photography by Cliff Guinand/ Barn Find pics courtesy Alan Monro

If you've ever had the chance to attend the greatest indoor Muscle Car Show on earth, the Muscle Car and Corvette Nationals (MCACN), you know how mind blowing this show is. Held this year Nov. 19-20 at the beautiful Donald E. Stephens Convention Center in Rosemont, IL this year's edition saw more than 20,000 spectators come through the doors to ogle 566 top notch muscle cars.

This year's show was special to us because there was a great contingent of Canadian-manufactured or dealer-sold muscle cars gathered in a first time display called the Maple Leaf Muscle Invitational. *Muscle Cars: Bone Stock & Modified* were honoured to be the sponsor for this special display. (Thanks Bob Ashton for the opportunity).

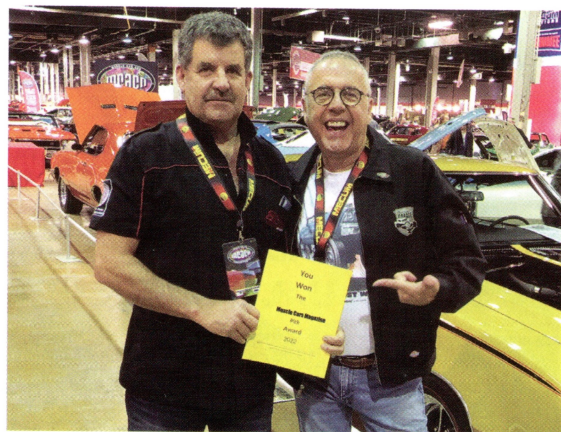
This awesome invitational in part came to be because there are a number of Canadian-only muscle cars (think Beaumonts, etc) along with some very rare muscle cars that were sold or built in Canada but ended up stateside.

After last year's MCACN, Wade Ogle, an absolute great guy and noted car collector out of San Jose, CA started a conversation with MCACN managing member Bob Ashton concerning the good number of Canadian muscle cars

in his collection. Well, one thing led to another and the Maple Leaf Muscle Invitational was born. Canadian cars were sourced in Canada and the US and were invited to participate in this inaugural event. And what an event it was! There were 20 Canadian muscle cars in the invitational plus a good half dozen other Canadian-made or sold cars scattered throughout the show floor.

Ashton said the show featured cars from 42 states and three provinces of Canada. "We filled nearly 400,000 square feet of indoor exhibit space with what we feel was one of the most balanced mixes of American muscle and rare Corvettes, especially brand and model wise, to date," said Ashton. Ashton says plans are well underway for the 2023 MCACN event, which will take place November 18-19, 2023. Go to www.mcacn.com for information or watch the MCACN Facebook page for info and details.

While there won't be another Maple Leaf Muscle contingent happening for a few years there will always be a good sprinkling of our amazing and anomalous Canadian muscle cars making their way south to surprise and educate our American friends.



Gord Martin from Atikokan, ON bought this ultra rare Canadian-survivor '72 Buick GSX Stage 1 455 from the original owner in New Brunswick, just two months before this year's MCACN. Of 44 GSXs built in '72 this is one of the 24 Stage 1 cars and of those 22 came to Canada. We liked it so much that *Muscle Cars* contributor Cliff Guinand, right in the photo about right, gave Martin, left, the Muscle Cars Magazine award.



Dave Saruk, in photo at left, from West Kelowna, BC, had his gorgeous, freshly restored black w/red interior and wing stripe '69 Dodge Daytona, unveiled to cheers. To the left of the black Daytona is Kevin Kuypers' stunning silver w/red interior and black wing striped '69 Daytona out of Sherwood Park, AB. Both were part of the Welborn Winged display. Below right, Daniel Leclerc from Windsor, QC had his 440-powered '69 Daytona in the Wellborn Winged area and calls it his daily driver.



Above left, this banged up '70 Plymouth Superbird became a YouTube sensation as one of two winged cars damaged by Hurricane Ian in Florida. This Superbird was on its roof in the street after Ian was done with it. A restoration was already scheduled as the car was soaked in salt water which means rust was already beginning to take hold. At left, before the '69 Dodge Daytona, Dodge tried to quell NASCAR driver's complaints of poor handling Chargers with the '69 Charger 500. These two examples are both 426ci Hemi cars. Main factory mods was the flush-fit '68 Coronet grille and headlight bezels and a flush rear window.



Nick Smith's 1964 Fairlane 427 Thunderbolt was out of Stuart, FL. Just 100 were built — 49 4-speeds and 51 automatics. T-bolts were 11-second cars and Gas Ronda won NHRA's Top Stock crown behind the wheel of a T-Bolt.



The 1975 Chevelle Laguna Type3 S3 replaced the SS option and this colonnade style Chevy, above, is owned by Gary Dinges. These cars may have been powered by anemic 350ci small block Chevys but they were sporty and very successful in NASCAR racing. At left, a big block 396ci '66 Chevelle SS is scrutinized by MCAACN judges.



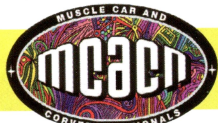
The 1970 Chevelle SS LS6 454 (450hp) was often referenced as the King Kong of muscle car V8s. LS6 Production in '70 (including El Caminos) was 4,475. This Classic White LS6 Chevelle (above left) is owned by Canadian Oliver Pask. Above right, this 1967 Beaumont SD396 — SD stands for Sport Deluxe not Super Duty — is part of the Pat Biase (Richmond, VA) collection. This Canadian-manufactured model is based on the '67 Chevelle architecture and was sold at Canadian Pontiac dealers. Still has it original wheel covers which are very difficult to find these days.



At left, this 1968 Cougar 427 GTE is owned by Finley Ledbetter out of Mineral Wells, TX. Mercury only produced 393 GTEs in '68 so rare car and the 427ci side oiler V8 was the popular choice as 356 of those GTE's came with one. Above, Loren Baldwin's 1969 Cougar Eliminator.

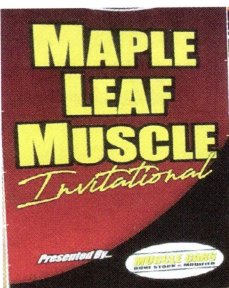


Clockwise from above left, William Tate's 1964 Plymouth Belvedere, Ed Sobczyk's '68 Pontiac Grad Prix with 428ci (not sure if it was the 375hp version or the 390hp HO 428). Jimmy McKeague's '70 Olds Cutlass convertible Pace Car is one of 358 produced. There were 268 '70 442 convertible Pace Cars produced as well. At left one of the 1,806 produced '71 Boss 351 Mustangs. A 1-year only model, this Cleveland-platform 351 produced 330hp and 370 lb-ft of torque. Colour is Pineapple Yellow. Owned by Scott Skalitzy. A 1969 AMC SC/Rambler (Scrambler) owned by Tom Guarr of West Olive, MI. 1,512 were produced. 390ci/315hp.



Muscle Car & Corvette Nationals

James Kryta recently acquired this super neat Saturn Gold survivor, bare-bones, 1-of-17, 455-powered '72 442 W-30 holiday coupe. It was originally ordered to be drag raced. As it was in the Pure Stock Muscle Car Drag Racing display, is Kryta, who races a few cars in the series already, going to race this one there too? Below, we were honoured to sponsor the Maple Leaf Muscle Invitational display which included among many cool cars. George Pappas' Vancouver, BC-based '67 Beaumont SD Cheetah.



Pappas '67 Beaumont SD 'Cheetah' was sold at Conroy Pontiac in West Vancouver. The 'Cheetah' conversions started in '65 and went to '69. (There was also an Ontario-based Conroy Pontiac). Between '66-'68 10 were built with an L72 427/450 hp V8 and this is one of them. It also came with a 4-speed and 4.10:1 gears and more.

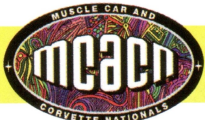


1-of-2 '72 Buick GSX Stage I 455 4-speed cars, sold new out of Armstrong, BC, now owned by Jereme, ID's Michael Sobotka. Below, Michael Lamberth's '77 Pontiac Lemans CanAm in the Malaise Era display. Standard engine was Trans Am 200hp, 400ci Pontiac and also had the Trans Am shaker scoop. Released mid-year to boost Lemans sales.



Albert Galdi out of New Jersey calls his '69 Beaumont Custom, bottom left, the Blowmont. Story is a Canadian nurse got a job in NY City and sold her 307-powered Beaumont some time after.





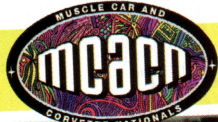
Now this is a Barn Find, a '69 Yenko SC 427 Nova originally sold out of Wisconsin. Yenko built just 37 '69 Nova conversions. No signage was with the car so we don't know all the details. We dig the finned Mickey Thompson big block Chevy valve covers. Don Yenko couldn't get Chevy to install the L72 427 from the factory so he had to order COPO 396 Novas and then install the 427s himself. The combo was so potent Yenko himself said he probably shouldn't have built the cars as they were dangerously fast. As delivered the '69 Yenko SC 427 Nova was capable of running under 11 seconds in the 1/4 mile.



This crusty 440-powered '69 Charger 500 was heading to MCAACN's Barn Finds and Hidden Gems display. Steve Lucas out of Kentucky owns the Charger 500 which has one of the most interesting colour combinations seen on a 500 — Y3 Cream with F8 Green interior. It was a driver and looked like he was having fun with it.



Ron Novitski from Indiana brought his super rare black and gold 1972 Hurst SSJ Pontiac Grand Prix to the show. '72 was the last year of the '70-'72 Hurst Grand Prix models and the lowest production, estimated to be as low as 60 or as high as 200, with white and gold being more common than the black and gold. The 400-ci 4bbl Pontiac V8 was standard but they could be ordered with a 455, though we don't know which V8 is under this car's hood.



Muscle Car & Corvette Nationals



16-year-old Caroline Straub of Michigan, a frequent participant at the Pure Stock Muscle Car Drag Race at Mid-Michigan Motorplex, brought her survivor '72 Duster 340 to MCACN. She just broke into the 12-second club at this year's event. Flip over to page 28 to see coverage of this year's event.



Richard Straub (Pierson, MI) owns this survivor '69 Dodge Coronet R/T. At right, John Kenneally's '69 Hurst AMX 390 Super Stocker out of Winnetka, IL. AMC had Hurst and H.L. Shahan build 52 cars for NHRA competition, equipped with 390ci V8, dual quads & 4-speeds.



Rick Simpson, a Mopar aficionado from Strathroy, ON brought his '70 Hemi, above left, that was originally sold new in Burlington, ON. It was judged and just missed getting Concours Gold by a couple points. Jesse Heberling from Overbrook, KS brought his 426 Hemi-equipped '70 Challenger R/T, above right, to the show to put on display in the Barn Find display.

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John and Sharon Oehler have quite the collection of 1977 Camaro Z/28 survivors and this trio was on display as part of the Muscle Cars Malaise Era display. In '77 the Camaro outsold the Mustang for the first time and also marked the return of the Z/28 which had gone away after 1974.



Mark Bender brought his Canadian-sold '70 Olds 442 W-30 convertible down from Burlington, WI. I wasn't able to get the details on this one, but it is one of the 264 versions made. Only 3 of the 116 '69 L88 435hp/427-equipped Corvettes came to Canada and this is one of them. Originally bought through Beare Motors in Port Perry, ON. Phil Silva from Sandwich, IL owns it now and after winning tons of hardware, had a little fun with it by building it as a vintage Baere-themed SCCA race car.



Here's an example of a Canadian "Plodge" this sweet '64 Dodge Polara 500 came off the Windsor assembly line getting for the most part, a Plymouth interior with a few other Plymouth touches. Plus it has a 426ci Street Wedge V8 which was rated at 365hp. It's owned by Mike Woodard of Ottawa, ON.



Gibsons, BC's Dale and Lani Ingram own this super rare Canada-only '71 Swinger 340 Special, in FC7 Plum Crazy. It caused quite the stir and picked up the 'The Brothers' favourite car award, picked by Charley Lillard.

