

# Nines

The Saab Club of North America Magazine



JANUARY-MARCH 2021 #363

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### Editor's Notes:

Cover photograph of part of her brood (Fio and Roxie) getting acclimatized to their new digs by Linnea Krajewski. Read all about them on page 22.

As some of you are aware, this is the last issue of *NINES* that I will helm. The board of the Saab Club of North America and I have entered into an agreement where the club owns *NINES*. I took over the editing and publishing duties lo these many years ago with issue #271 in September, 2004. *NINES* as a magazine had been around since 1986, beginning as an outgrowth of The Saab Club Newsletter well before there even was a national Saab Club. THAT newsletter came from a wonderful broadsheet created and run by Dick Grossman out of Chicago, IL.

The club thought it was time that the club owned its magazine, and I agreed. I decided it was time to step down from being editor of *NINES*, and that brings us to today.

**Editor's Notes continues on page 5.**

# In Memoriam

A towering force in the Saab family is dead, John H. "Jack" Lawrence, 89, of Jamestown, died Monday September 21, 2020, in UPMC Hamot.

Growing up in Ellington, he was born May 14, 1931, in Jamestown, a son of the late George and Edith Raines Lawrence.

He was a graduate of Falconer Central School and attended Alfred State University.

He served in the US Air Force from 1949-52 stationed at Manston Air Base as crew chief of maintenance on AT6 aircraft..

He and his wife of 65 years, owned and operated Motorsport Service which included a machine shop, foreign car repair shop and Saab car dealership. He was also a certified airplane mechanic.

His memberships include Sports Car Club of America, American Legion, Lakewood Rod and Gun Club, Experimental Aircraft Association, Society of Automotive Engineering and Chautauqua Lake Region Antique Automobile Club.

In 1987, he was inducted into the Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame honoring his long and storied career in Sports Car Club of America sanctioned races. He was an active driver for decades winning a national championship in 1983 and was runner-up in 1982.

Surviving are his wife Patricia Cooper Lawrence, who he married April 30, 1955; a sister Mary Snyder of Kettering, OH and nephews Tomas Wigren of Gerry, NY, Gene Cooper of Baltimore, MD, Dana Cooper of Yardley, PA and niece Gale Von Vulkenbug of Atlanta, Ga.

No funeral service was observed.

Memorials may be made to a charity of your choice.



***Everybody should have a favorite memory of Jack. This is mine. I drove my ailing Sonett to Saabs@Carlisle one year, and Jack field-stripped the valve covers, by which I mean he took the valve covers off in the field and re-set the valves by ear. The car never ran better! Thanks, Jack!***  
**Seth D. Bengelsdorf.**



# Letters

## Good One!

Reader Scott Eskwitt of sent us a photograph of his pride and joy, a 2007 9-3 60th Anniversary Edition SportCombi 6 speed.

He was hopeful that it would make a good cover photograph. It would have, if it were in landscape mode. Here it is, in all it's glory:



## Editor's Notes Cont'd

I want to truly thank every one of you for helping me continue my journey.

I thank everyone who even so much as looked at *NINES*. I can never repay your contributions and kind words. Here are some things that I have learned:

- Keep your promises.
- Grant others their dignity.
- Give credit.
- Take responsibility.

- When wrong, offer a heartfelt apology.
- Don't be a jerk.
- Take the time to actually listen to people.
- Volunteer to handle the issue.
- Care.
- Every one of you is a star. You shine from within. Share that light with others.
- Peace.

Oh, and keep on Saabing!

*Yr. Ob. Servant*  
*Seth D. Bengelsdorf*



# From the Archives

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**By Bruce Harbison**

*There are several reasons I chose this article from NINES #273 for January/February 2005 written by Mike Blija for this column. One is that Seth Bengelsdorf had recently taken over the helm as Publisher and Editor and this was one of his first issues - the third one if I'm not mistaken. Another is that I wrote my first "From the Archives" article for this Issue. The selected article below is well-written and I feel it showcases the spirit of many Saab owners who I have met over the years. These owners often take "lost causes" and make them road-worthy again. I count many of these men and women as my friends. Lastly but significantly, the title of Mike's article immediately caught my eye as I was thumbing through the Issue looking for possibilities.*

*During the RMSC Tour of Colorado following SOC09 which was held in August at Copper Mountain Ski Resort, I was riding with my good friend Steve McCoy on the last leg of a nearly week-long trip. We were threading our way up the east side of Trail Ridge Road behind other tour members and tourists in Rocky Mountain National Park and were close to the summit when I looked over at Steve and said "We're at 12,000 feet altitude in a \$400 car!" Steve had recently bought a 1977 99GLE in Denver, towed it to his place near Cortez, Colorado, and got it running, and running well I might add. The 99 ran perfectly for the whole trip including being driven back and forth from Cortez. A great memory and I've also had great fun finding "old NINES articles" for Seth.*

*Thank you, Seth.*

\$400 can buy you a lot of things in today's world. I could have spent that amount and paid off a couple of bills or gotten some new hand tools from Sears. I would like a new home stereo amplifier to replace the one that self-destructed two years ago and \$400 would just about cover that. Instead, I bought another Saab, which arrived on the back of a flat-bed tow truck one Fall afternoon. The car was a fairly clean 1987 900S four-door that my wife, Susan, suggested we buy to replace our dog-eared 1989 Ford Aerostar van. I pulled into my driveway to find the Saab parked in front of the garage with a carpet of yellow maple leaves covering the hood and roof. I brushed the leaves away and opened the garage door so I could push the car inside. After scrabbling for traction I managed to get my "new" car parked in the exact center of the garage floor. I switched on the garage lights and gave the car another thorough inspection before heading inside to wait for Susan to arrive home from work.

She arrived a short time later and handed me a white envelope with two ignition keys. We had bought the Saab from a dealership that was in the process of removing the shifter assembly as they had unknowingly bought the

car without the ignition key. After we had paid for the car, I called a local Saab dealer to see if they could cut a key from the VIN number. The service technician that answered the phone said, "Sure, we just need the VIN number and proof of ownership, like the title or license registration."

And the cost? "If you want genuine Saab key blanks, six dollars each. Otherwise, the plain steel ones are about two bucks." Susan left work a little early and handed over \$12 for two brand-new keys. Since we did not know if the engine would even start, we were taking a big gamble that we had not bought an overpriced parts car.

I took one of the keys, clipped it onto a Saab key fob, and headed back to the garage.

I checked the oil and coolant levels, dropped in a spare battery, and sat down in the driver's seat. I put the key in the ignition and turned it to the right. The warning buzzer sounded and the "idiot" lights came on. So far so good. No sparks or clouds of smoke from the engine bay. I paused before turning the ignition key the rest of the way. The engine cranked several times but did not fire. I tried again and this time I was rewarded with a couple of coughs and a solitary "choof" from the exhaust. "Third time's the charm," I said, and this time the engine caught, stumbled, and fired up into a perfect 850 r.p.m. idle. I made sure the gearbox was in neutral before climbing out and placing a large sheet of cardboard under the engine bay. I let the car idle for a good ten minutes, occasionally giving the throttle body a twist to bring the revs up. There were no leaks, no funny odors or hazy wisps of steam coming from the engine, and the timing chain was quiet. I tried the power windows. They all worked. I shut the engine off and removed the key. I tried the power locks. They worked as well. I had to laugh. Fools! They had let a perfectly running Saab slip through their fingers, with almost a half tank of gas in it to boot.

Not that the car didn't need work. The front brakes and hubs were from a newer Saab and I wanted to replace them with the proper running gear from my old platinum blue 900S 3-door. The exhaust was suspect as well. It looked as if it was cobbled together from various cars before being welded together. The catalytic converter was roughly the size of a Campbell's Chunky Soup can that probably came off a Geo Metro. The rear resonator had a definite agricultural look to it. I threw a white sheet over the car and went back inside.

I decided against working on the car before Winter. I knew there would be minor snags along the way and I did not relish the thoughts of working on the car in my unheated garage. "Besides, sides," I told my wife, "I would rather run the van in the salt and slush. This car is still in nice shape." She agreed and the car sat in the corner of the garage all Winter while I slid and clipped snow banks on my way to and from work. I allowed the car to sit until early May when the threat of late spring blizzards is nearly gone

## From the Archives Cont'd

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here in Wisconsin. Susan decided to go shopping with our two girls one Saturday morning to give me uninterrupted freedom in the garage. "It will probably take me most of the day, but we should have a complete and running car by the time you return," I assured her. She left, and I decided to start the car and take one quick test drive before starting the disassembly process.

The engine fired right up and I carefully eased the car out of the garage before heading up the road for one slow lap of our neighborhood. As I pulled out the engine hesitated and I depressed the clutch before giving the gas pedal a quick jab. The engine continued to buck and stall under load and I worked the pedals as I lurched up the road. What the hell? Bad gas? Fuel pump not working? I continued on, looking like a high school driver's education student discovering the mysteries of operating a car with three pedals on the floor. I cut my trip short, thoroughly perplexed, and as I started back toward my house the car began to run better. As I shifted into third and at the brisk pace of 30 m.p.h. the gearbox exploded with a loud bang.

"What in the name of salted peanuts just happened?" I asked myself, or words to that effect. "Blasted car, should have known better." I continued on, sounding like a construction worker that just doubled the size of his thumb with a hammer. Either that, or a Saab owner that just realized his \$400 steal from a suspicious car dealer may indeed be an overpriced parts car. I managed to get the car into reverse and backed up to the garage door as the transmission made noises similar to a coffee can full of loose bolts. I climbed out, slammed the door and went into the house for a beer. It was 10:30 AM.

After my blood pressure returned to normal, I went back outside and looked the underside of the car over. I jacked the car up and put a stand under each corner before lying down on my garage creeper and scooting underneath. Nothing appeared wrong. No chunks of metal were sticking out of large holes in the transmission case, but as I rotated the front wheels a slight grinding and clunking could be heard. I rolled out from under the car and decided that a full engine and gearbox swap from my 3-door would be the best way to go. Susan came home later in the afternoon to find me pulling the radiator and cooling fans out. "What happened? I thought you would have been done by now," she said. "There is a problem with the transmission," I replied as I kept working. She started to ask another question but, sensing that there was more to the story, stopped in mid-sentence and let it go at that.

So began the longest engine swap in modern history. It took a full nine months to get the engines exchanged, along with numerous other parts. Since my employer expects me to keep regular hours in return for a paycheck, I worked on the car at odd hours after work and on the occasional free weekend. My cousin, Andy Saksa, helped me pull the

engine from the 4-door. Underneath the layers of oil and grime we found out that the new car's transmission case had split around the flange for the passenger side inner CV joint. Further disassembly caused the rear corner of the transmission to crumble to the garage floor in several pieces. Andy shook his head at the bits scattered around the floor, saying, "20 years of wrenching on Saabs and I have never seen a gearbox fall apart like that." I pulled the differential, finding one large gear tooth among the chips, and then I noticed that the pinion gear was completely void of teeth.

"Mystery solved, at least in theory," I said. The pinion gear must have had one tooth intact when I started my test drive and it had been catching on the ring gear at odd intervals. How the previous owner drove it was anybody's guess. The stress was too great and when the tooth sheared off it wedged in the differential, jacking the gears apart and splitting the transmission open. Andy looked at the bright side. "At least now you have a good spare engine." I nodded in agreement and we loaded the engine onto a cart and pushed it into a corner of the garage. I continued on by myself, swapping in the 200,000 mile plus engine and gearbox from my 1987 3-door. I also changed the power steering rack, engine mounts, brakes, and drive axles. I removed the cobbled exhaust system, replacing it with the MSS bits I had put on the 3-door a few years before. Some of the snags I encountered included having both brake hoses on the rear axle disintegrate when I touched them, and having two of the lower ball joint bolts fuse themselves to the joint itself, requiring careful drilling and grinding with a Dremel tool to remove them. I finished the project in early March and other than replacing a bad fuel pressure regulator and fuel filter, the car has been trouble-free.

How does it run? Just fine, thank you. I miss the wider door openings of the 3-door body style but the rest is pure Saab. It runs and handles extremely well (even though I'm running on old snow tires) and the braking is phenomenal, due in large part to stainless steel brake hoses I bought on eBay. Only a boat anchor tied to the rear bumper could stop the car better. The entire car has that wonderful, built-like-a-tank ruggedness that only a Saab could have.

My \$400 car is now worth the princely sum of \$600, including the cost of the two ignition keys. I plan on keeping this car for at least a couple of years before the dreaded tin worms start eating the floor out from under me. When that finally happens, I will look for another Saab, with or without keys, and start the process all over again.

*Mike has written for the Milwaukee Saab Club newsletter and is also a past contributor to NINES. He was a crew chief for Jerry Sweet, owner of Sweet Motors, who ran a SAAB 99 in the SCCA Pro Rally series.*



# Sadie Lives!

*By Tim Winker*

On a beautiful September Saturday, members of the Minnesota Saab Club met to help move an old friend. Long time Saab Club members will recall the white-over-red 1962 Saab 96 that Larry Williams drove cross country to nearly every major gathering of Saab aficionados. Larry called her "Sadie". After passing through the hands of a couple Saab collectors, Sadie was going to live at the Saab Heritage Car Museum USA in Sturgis, SD.

Larry was a long time figure in the Saab community, and a particular fan of the two-stroke machines which earned him the nickname "Stroker". Stroker wrote an entertaining column titled "Ring-A-Ding" for NINES in the 1990s, several of which were published after he passed away suddenly in 1998 at the age of 62.

Stroker's wife, Katha, sold the collection of older Saabs and parts to friends and Saab collectors. Sadie was purchased by Greg LeBaron of Minnesota. When Greg retired and moved elsewhere, Jack Johnston bought Sadie.

One of Stroker's rescues was a 1950 Saab 92 that turned out to be the earliest known serial number in the U.S., #218. He towed it to the Saab Owners' Convention in Kenosha, Wisconsin in 1993, the last few miles behind Sadie. A highlight of the weekend was when Stroker gave the 750cc 2-cylinder engine a workout on the autocross course. Though it wore a bit of the original green and some flat black primer when Larry owned it, Tom Donney acquired it and restored it, and that 92 now holds a special place in the Saab Heritage Museum.

Recently Jack came to the realization that he could no longer give the old Saabs in his collection the attention that they needed. He offered two of them, a 1967 96 two-stroke and Sadie, to the Saab Heritage Museum. Now, instead of being hidden away in a basement shop in Minnesota, Sadie will be on display where people can learn the tale of a man and his pet Saabs.

Chuck Andrews organized the effort to remove the two elderly Saabs from the Johnstons' shop. Both cars had sat unused for many years in the damp basement garage and the brakes were frozen due to rust. With the help of Jeff Schille and Marty Adams, the brakes were freed, and the engines brought to life. Both cars made it up the steep drive to the front of the house without assistance and onto trailers for transport, initially to Iowa, eventually to Sturgis.

Jack and Rita Johnston acquired their first Saab, a used 93, to replace a gas guzzling Oldsmobile in the early 1960s. The two-stroke engine that propelled the Saab was not an oddity to Jack as his father had been a commercial fisherman, and his boats were powered by two-stroke outboard motors. The 93 was followed by a two-stroke 95

wagon which had a little more room for their children. When the model 99 arrived they chose a 4-door sedan, white with a black vinyl roof. As their youngsters became teenagers of driving age, multiple Saabs shared the garage. Saabs continued to be a part of the family through the years, with some handed down to sons or daughter. A favorite was a 900 SPG, and 9000s also graced the driveway. There is a 9-3 convertible in their garage now, along with a 95-V4 that belongs to one of their sons, a Sonett III, and an MGB.

"The Saabs were not boring cars," said Jack. "Who wants to drive a boring car? It's kind of fun to drive something a little different... something unique."



**Chuck Andrews and Jeff Schille working on loosening the rear brakes on Sadie. Marty Adams was working on the front brakes while John Johnston held the trouble light. Photographs by the author.**





# Head Scratcher

*By Chris Pavlou*

I have always been a European car fan, especially German models. My first new car was a VW Scirocco, and then at the age of 27 I purchased a Porsche 944 (the early models were somewhat affordable back then). I always had a "daily commuter" car that I would use for commuting to work and running my errands. However, about four years ago my 944 (31 years old by then) started to act up and I was "persuaded" to trade it in along with my commuter at that time (Volvo C30 - another fun car) for a Porsche Cayman.

The Cayman then became my daily ride and the miles started piling up. When I switched jobs and my drive to work was going to be more stop-and-go, I decided to look for an inexpensive commuter car that could get me back and forth to work.

I decided to try out the local auction place a few miles from my home. After looking at what was available, I focused my attention on two cars: A Mini Cooper and a 2005 Saab Arc 9-3 Convertible.

After I was late for the Cooper auction, I concentrated on the Saab. This was it; if I didn't get this car I would walk away. The car had 115K miles, but it looked like it was in very good shape and the interior was very nice and clean (hard to find in auctions at low prices).

So when the Saab pulled up for the auction I was there in front row making sure I could hear what the auctioneer was blabbing. It went down to me and another buyer. The bidding started at \$1600 but by the time it got over 2K the two of us were left. The other person bid \$2200 and then I topped that at \$2300. Then silence. That was it I had won the bid and the Saab was mine!

I felt like I had just won the lottery. I was getting a Saab, a convertible (my first), with a five-speed, a turbo engine, and leather interior! A \$49,000 car when it was new! This was much more than just a commuter car, it was going to be a very fun and sporty daily ride!

So I went and picked it up the next day, had it checked by a local mechanic (everything good, the car actually had just been serviced by the prior owner) and took it home. The next day I went for a quick shopping excursion. It was a hot August summer day, and on my way home I started to feel the clutch getting a little "rubberish," and by the time I reached my block the clutch got lodged to the floor and I wasn't able to engage gears. Did I just buy a lemon? That's what you get for getting a cheap car at an auction, I then thought.

After a few hours after it had cooled off I went back to the car and the clutch was engaging again so I brought

it back to my house. After doing some research on the car it turns out the prior owner had this problem and had replaced the clutch slave cylinder. My mechanic, after looking over the car, believed that the slave cylinder that was installed was probably defective and suggested he put another one in first, before taking the costly plunge of replacing the clutch and master cylinder. I opted for that but the problem reappeared. I got a little bit more creative in that I would pull the clutch up with my foot before it would get stuck to the floor. However, one day coming home from work I got stuck in traffic and the clutch pedal eventually froze to the floor. I was able to pull aside and called my wife to come pick me up. While waiting I figured out that by pumping the clutch pedal fast with my hand it would build enough hydraulic pressure and the clutch would become operational again! In a way I had resolved my clutch problem while waiting for my wife without having to take it to the shop! I just have to work the shifter and the clutch pedal on occasion--that's all, so what?

Besides that, so what if the tachometer and speedometer don't work all the time (after 40 years of driving I can judge speed). So what if the headlight switch doesn't work and the lights are always on (look at it as a safety feature). So what if the side mirror controls switch is not connected to anything (my hands can adjust them just as well). So what if the alarm buzzer goes on and off because it thinks the driver's back seat isn't latched (I just crank up the radio). So what if the CD player sometimes refuses to play the first 5 songs (at least I can get some to play). And finally, so what if the top leaks and floods the rear footwells and drips water on the driver's seat when it rains hard (I got plenty of towels)

Regardless, I am so impressed with this car that I even joined the Saab club! Maybe some day I will try and address the various "issues" the car has, but right now I view them as minor nuisances.

The 9-3 is a fantastic ride and a joy to look at, and I always look forward to driving it. These days I have to think hard which car I want to drive. If I want to pretend I'm on a track I guess I'll pick the Cayman. But if I want to feel the breeze of a cool sunny day and cruise the streets in style and work that manual trans, then the Saab is the obvious choice!



*Photograph provided by the author.*

# Vintage beats COVID



*Photograph by the author.*

## **By Greg Andresen**

Beth admits Greg has a bad case of cabin fever. Our long distance vacations have been cancelled. We will not board an airplane until there is a vaccine. But we do have Interstate 80 East. I was on my way to the golf driving range with the objective of improving my game. The mobile phone rings and it is Sam Girgis, of Oakbrook Illinois, a suburb west of Chicago. Sam is a Saab lover with a soft spot for Saab fans.

Sam was made aware that Zakk Snedeker purchased a dark red 1969 Model 96 near Milwaukee and needed the car transported to Clifford, PA. Now it just so happens that Zakk's father, Don Snedeker, hosts the Vintage Saab meet called "Endless Mountains Vintage Saab Jamboree" each September on 20 grassy acres of his farm in Clifford, PA. Clifford is about 731 miles from Mokena Illinois or Oakbrook, a long drive for one road warrior. Would Greg be willing to be co-pilot and navigator? Greg enjoys being married, so like most good husbands, I asked Beth if she had any objections of me traveling three days with Sam. Beth said OK, and the plans started to take shape.

Sam had arranged for the Red Model 96 to be transported from Milwaukee to his home in Oakbrook. I suggested we leave about 8 am Friday, Sept 11th, but Sam had a few appointments early and arrived at our home in Mokena about 11:30. Beth, Sam & I made a brief inspection of the 96 and Sam & I were off on the 731 mile journey. As navigator I had no idea how far we could travel, what was the expected weather or what was our

endurance? We were lucky. The GMC Suburban with a 20 foot trailer could cruise between 70 and 75. We stopped for fuel and coffee about every two hours. Sam had booked two rooms in Clifford, but I doubted if we could make it. As navigator, I estimated we could make 500 miles, and had plotted towns with hotels about every 50 miles pasted DuBois PA, the 500 mile mark. When we passed Scranton, PA, I knew we could make it. Pulled into the Microtel Hotel at Clifford about 12:30 Eastern time. Time for rest.

Saturday morning, we finished the journey, completing the final 10 miles to the Jamboree. Sam sometimes does not communicate, or I do not ask enough questions. About a year ago Sam purchased a 1950 Saab Model 92A, Vin # 004228. It was a barn find and was turned over to Claude Hutchison Sr and Jr, to address a few mechanical issues. Chris Cashion worked on the paint which required about 40 hours of detailing. Sam exhibited the 92A at the Jamboree. Lots of positive feedback. We loaded the 92A on the trailer about 4 pm as the event was winding down. Back to town, gas up and hit the road.

It gets dark early in Clifford and there are many challenging hills on Rt 81 South until we reach Rt 80 West. So how far should be push it? Youngstown, Cleveland, maybe Toledo. We pulled into a Marriott near Toledo about midnight. Up early Sunday morning. Sam and I arrived in Mokena about noon. Beth was excited to see the 1950 Model 92A. I took the pictures, front, side and rear. We enjoyed helping Zakk, visiting with Vintage Saab owners, and transporting the Model 92A to our home area. I am sure you will see this car in the near future.



# Vintage Boat beats All!

By Tom Donney

The board members of the Saab Heritage Car Museum USA in Sturgis, SD have all voted on this and we have purchased the boat in Sweden. We were called contacted by a family looking to liquidate an estate in Sweden and had help from Peter Backstrom at the museum there.

I'm sending this group email to a few people who have helped us at the museum!



Note...I'm not gonna post it on Facebook yet till I'm sure the boat is on a ship and headed to USA!

Fredrik Ekendahl from Sweden helped pick up the boat in getting it shipped to New York and Jim Hutchinson is going to help pick up the boat at port.

Saab made these boats while they were trying to figure out what to do besides building planes! These are extremely rare and not many copies made. We will set up a display in the museum using the Saab-O camper and a station wagon! Should be pretty cool. .

PS there is a little lake up the road called Dalton Lake. Would be a lot of fun to take this boat there and catch some trout!



Hi You all!

Just back from a 2-day trip picking up the boat and deliver it to Nord trafik in Gothenburg for shipping to Baltimore. Pick up needed to be done ASAP since Sellers has sold the estate and was only available in weekend. Nord trafik only open in weekdays.

Driving was 800miles + one hotel night in Gothenburg. All these expenses for this trip I and Gerda Persson donate to the Saab Heritage Car Museum USA. We also needed a van to transport this Little boat so Mats "On The Roof" Berglind (Red 95 2Stroke Racing driver) was kind to lend us his van for this trip

Daughter of owner since 1968 told me a lot of stories from when she and her brother were young, racing with this not so easy to steer rowing boat. They got it together when the family bought a sailing boat. Boat is in very good shape compared to other Saab boats that often are very corroded. In my opinion a very good purchase for the museum!

Fredrik & Gerda

*Update from Tom Donney:* The Viking ship has arrived on the shores of the USA!!! First ever Saab boat to cross the Atlantic! Let the raiding and pillaging begin!

The International shipping as usual is a huge fiasco and ended up costing more than the purchase of the boat! But I think it'll be worth it.



# Two Unique Saabs

**By Paul Blank**

*Ed's Note:*

*It's about time we published a history of these unique Saab cars. Because there has to be a twist, this accounting comes to us from Australia. Publication permission granted from Unique Cars Magazine.*

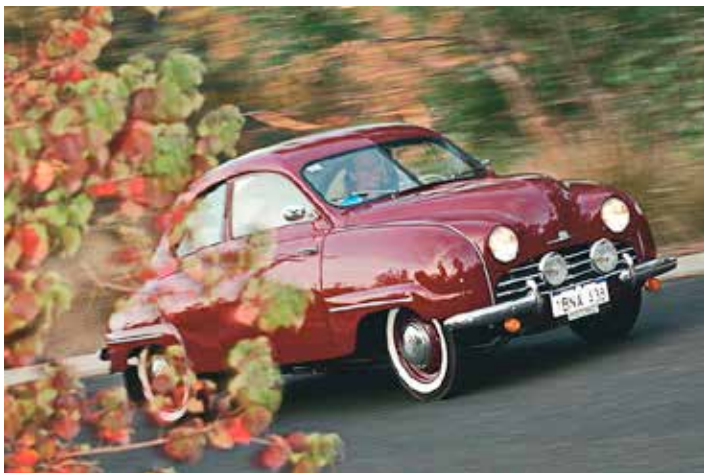
*Before GM got its mitts on it, Swedish aviation experts Saab built some of the most stylish and technologically advanced cars. Here are two of them....*

The name Svenska Aeroplan Aktiebolaget really didn't mean a great deal to a lot of people much beyond the amusingly named Swedish town of Trollhättan in the late 1940s.

But the SAAB name eventually grew to great heights, the brand becoming renowned for advanced designs and rally success. Unfortunately, after being taken over by GM in recent times many of the company's traditional strengths became eroded.

Back when WWII was looming the need was seen by Swedish authorities and industrialists for assembly of aircraft and SAAB was set up to do this. By war's end demand for military aircraft was drying up and the company began developing civilian models – but realizing sales would be very limited they cast around for alternative products to suit their factories.

Consideration was given to prefabricated houses and whitegoods but ultimately the company decided to keep within the world of transport and decided to develop a SAAB car. The team of designers had expertise in



**Saab 92B featured suicide doors and Art Deco styling. Photographs by Paul Kane.**

aeronautics, but not motor cars, so their viewpoint was somewhat radical – especially when compared to Sweden's established car maker Volvo, which produced very staid, conventional designs.

In pre-war Sweden, the German-made DKW was a very popular car. The small front-wheel drive DKW had a two-stroke engine, low-slung bodywork and very good handling.

SAAB's design team used the DKW as the inspiration for their new car but added its own specialist areas of expertise – and its access to a wind-tunnel. The team enlisted the help of Swedish Industrial Designer Sixten Sason whose clients had included Swedish icons Husqvarna, Hasselblad and Electrolux. Sason developed styling along aerodynamic lines which morphed into the first prototypes.

With enclosed wheels, teardrop shape and faired-in lights, the prototypes were as radical as the innovation beneath the sleek skin. Today a transverse engine and front-wheel drive are commonplace, but in the late 1940s this was most unusual. The cars also featured rack and pinion steering, hydraulic brakes and independent suspension by torsion bars.

Support was given by Sweden's biggest car importer, with a very confident pre-paid order for 8000 cars, enabling SAAB to go full steam ahead with production.

The car was named 92 – the first 91 SAAB designs having been aircraft. Production began in 1947 with over 20,000 made by the time production ceased in 1956.

These early SAABs were never sold in Australia and even knowledge of their existence was sparse here. As later models gained sales and success overseas, so interest in the marque here eventually grew. The later Saab (the name changed to upper and lower case) 93 became a rally star, winning European championships, first with two-stroke, then Ford V4 engines.

Then in 1967 the all-new 99 series came out, with Triumph-derived four-cylinder in-line engines. While it retained the high level of advanced engineering, the new model was far more normal looking and became successful around the world, including Australia.



## Two Unique Saabs Cont'd



In the meantime a handful of early models had trickled into Australia in the hands of private owners – and they continue to arrive in tiny numbers with people who appreciate their unique designs.

Prime candidate for owner of the rarest Saabs in Australia is Henk Ossendrijver. After visiting Australia several times in his capacity as an expert in plastic insulating tubing for electronics, a casual remark saw him offered work in Perth and moving from The Netherlands three years ago.

Henk brought two Saabs with him – a 1955 92B and a 1971 Sonett. We'll get to those two shortly. But first, what makes someone bring two such unusual cars around the world?

Henk and his wife Ellen have been Saab enthusiasts for 25 years. While they've owned other makes as well, Henk's long standing passion for the Swedish marque stems from his admiration of the shape of the early model -the "droplet shape" as he describes it being called in Europe.



A couple of decades ago Henk bought a V4-engined 96 as a project car. He restored it and used it as an everyday car for the following 16 years. Henk explains: "In the winters, salt causes a lot of damage if you don't maintain cars. I restored that car twice." Salt helps defeat snow

covered roads but turns sound metal rusty.

Their kids were growing up and something more spacious was needed, so the family progressed through a series of 99 and 900 models, including some special edition versions.

Rarest of these was a Red Arrow 900 Turbo, a handful of which were sold in Australia as the Enduro featuring big blister wheel-arches, a whale-tail and wide wheels.

Not long before leaving for Australia, Henk found a very early model – a '55 92B which had been restored some years before and spent time as a museum piece. This was a model he'd longed to own, being the original Saab, and the car in its purest form.

The B differed from the 92 in a few minor, but practical ways. It had a larger rear window, a little more power, bigger tail-lights and a bootlid – previously access to the boot was via the inside of the car only.



However, the beautiful shape and exquisite detailing remained unsullied on the B model. The very rounded front, enclosed front wheels (necessitating a narrow front track), raked windscreen and sweeping roofline really made this car stand out at a time when few car makers gave any credit to the benefits of aerodynamics.

It's not just sleek, but in some areas, quite beautiful – the side windows for example echo the curvaceous shapes of some of the wonderful exclusive coachbuilt coupes of the late 1930s, especially with the canted-forward B-pillar ensuring the front and rear windows are of equally balanced area.

Henk tells that the deep burgundy colour was the first colour available other than the green that all 92s were painted. It certainly suits the car well, and is complemented

**Two Unique Saabs continues on page 14.**

## Two Unique Saabs Cont'd

by the grey interior. A close look shows that this car was very well restored.

Open the rear-hinged door and you're greeted by an interior as quirky, but practical as the exterior. There's a plaited rope grab-handle each side. The headlight switch has a beautiful diagram showing an aerial view of the car's front with the light beam shining forward.



The interior is finished in several grey tones, with some of the lustrous burgundy exterior colour showing too. It's clear this wasn't a cheap car of its era, with comprehensive instruments and a high quality finish.

Sit in the car, pull the solid door shut and things feel more normal again – open suicide doors always give an uneasy feeling...

After turning the ignition on, you pull a curved T-handle under the dash to activate the starter. The old 92 starts easily and the 764cc, water-cooled two-stroke twin quickly settles into a thrummy beat. It's got a richer, deeper note than most two-strokes.



The seat is hard and the pedals noticeably offset to the

center. Release the handbrake which sits way down on the flat floor, switch on the semaphore indicators and you're away. The three-speed column gearchange is light and creamy, quite a pleasure.

Remembering to keep the revs up, when you might be trying to be cautious with a rare car is the only real challenge. The brakes require a solid push and the steering weight builds up on turning, but the car lopes along with a comfy ride and stable feel.

The car has freewheeling, which allows it to coast on the downhill and re-engage the clutch automatically (and smoothly) when the accelerator is reapplied. This is both an economy measure and to benefit engine longevity.

Even with the enlarged rear window, vision to the rear corners is very limited, though the front and side pillars are very slim for a 1950s car.

You feel some of the engine vibration through your derriere and there's not really a great deal of performance, but it is nonetheless an enjoyable drive – remembering that many 50-plus year-old cars aren't really that much fun to drive.

A look under the front-hinged bonnet (pretty unusual for the era) shows how unorthodox the Saab is. The transverse engine sits to one side, dwarfed by the gearbox alongside it. The radiator sits up high behind.

After a look around and a drive, it's not hard to see how Henk became besotted by this car and sold his 900 Convertible for it.

A few years before, Henk came across a rare Saab sports car languishing in the back of a workshop. It was one of the Sonett III coupes Saab built between 1970 and 1974. In need of revitalization, Henk bought the fiberglass coupe, brought it back to life and presented it to his wife for her birthday.

"Driving it was a lot of pleasure for six or seven years before we left. It's a lot of fun to drive and quite quick."



## Two Unique Saabs Cont'd

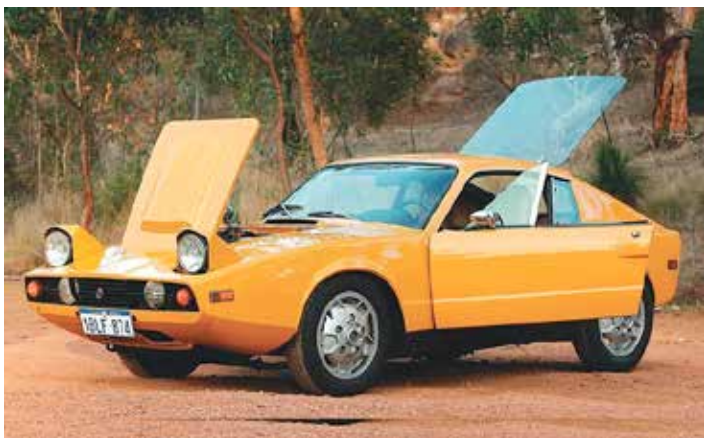
The engine has been rebuilt, a stainless steel exhaust system fitted and the front section repainted "otherwise it's completely original," Henk enthuses.



The Sonett attracts attention wherever it goes. "People drive up next to it, brake to see the back, and speed up to look for a badge on the car to see what it is. It is a very rare car, with only 21 known in the Dutch club before we took this one away."

This car interestingly, was sold new in the US, the main target market for the Sonett. Like many cars made by non-mainstream European makers for the lucrative American market, it failed to excite the US buyer.

The first Sonett was a mere blip on the screen, but the Sonett II was a serious attempt at a sports model. The pretty two-seater body sat on a 96 floorpan and used the same two-stroke engine and running gear. The American dealers demanded a restyle, which Italian stylist Sergio Coggiola performed – not altogether successfully.



There are a few incongruous lumps and bumps in the styling but this car was spared the ugly impact absorbing bumpers of the later examples.

Henk's car looks very '70s, especially in egg yellow

with the matte-black tail panel. It wears the same attractive Saab alloy wheels of locally-sold EMS and GLE 99s.

Along with the restyle came an engine upgrade. The elongated nose housed a short Ford V4 engine, similar to the one we saw in the Transit van here.



At 1700cc, it produces power enough to propel the little car to 170km/h. A weight of just 820kg helps.

The engine is accessed by a very small bonnet, which reveals an interesting feature of a hollow transverse strut brace also acting as a radiator fluid reservoir.

Inside, the car is relatively straight-forward – other than being left-hand drive, as all Sonetts were. Like the 92, the pedals are offset towards the center as is the steering column. The bucket seats are aligned straight but provide a good driving position allowing the controls to fall easily to hand as you sit low to the ground.



Unlike the Sonett II, this later car has a floor shift gearchange – and it's quite pleasant to use. It's a doddle to drive and feels quite spritely. The Sonett is also fitted with

**Two Unique Saabs continues on page 30.**

# The Doctor is In

By Kelly R. Conaty

## Easy Armrest for OG9-3



I like to keep busy with little projects. I also like to see the fruits of my labor very quickly; I am not a patient man. Here is a little project that is easy to do and cheap. Once the appropriate items are collected, it takes less than 30 minutes to do. I have these armrests in both of my Viggens, and I wouldn't do without them.

I need an armrest when I am driving. Driving just doesn't feel natural to me unless I have somewhere to rest my elbow. Most modern cars have some sort of console or arm rest, and even later model Saabs have something to rest your elbow on. Unfortunately, NG900's and OG9-3's don't have any such place to rest your elbow. Can't have that! Aftermarket armrests are available, of course, but are quite pricey and the ones that I have seen are much too short. In this article I will take you step by step in making a functional arm rest that does not look out of place and has the added benefit of having integrated cup holders.



First off, you have to collect the parts to make this armrest. Local pick-and-pull junkyards usually have good availability of what you will need. You will need to find a console cover from a Volvo (oh the horror) S70, V70, XC70, or C70 model years '98 - '00. If you are lucky enough to find one in good shape, you can use it as is. These are usually available on eBay too if you can't find one. Be sure to make sure that the cup holders are intact if you want to use this as a cup holder as well. Many times after years of use and abuse, they will break. Replacement cup holder inserts are available on eBay too! If the leather covering is a little rough, new covers are available on eBay as well for around 20 bucks. Next, you will need your stock console cover. It just prises off your console. All that's left is a 2-inch piece of 2 x 2 wood or something similar, and a couple of deck screws.



If you decide to replace the leather cover, unscrew the base of the Volvo console cover and tear off the old leather. Use contact cement to attach the new one and re-attach the base. Next step is to align the Saab OEM console cover towards the rear underside of the armrest and mark on the OEM cover where the 2 screw holes at the rear of the Volvo cover lines up.



Once marked, hold the OEM cover at about 30° and drill two holes where you marked. Attach the OEM cover to the underside of the Volvo cover with a couple of deck screws using the existing holes in the Volvo cover making sure to hold the OEM cover at about a 30° angle.

Now, to ensure that the angle of the armrest is correct and parallel to your elbow and forearm, wedge the piece of 2 x 2 between the Volvo cover and the OEM cover. I cover mine with felt to give it a professional look. This wedged-in piece will maintain the proper angle and will make the armrest much more stable. You can also drive a screw through the cup depression in the OEM cover into the wedged piece of wood to ensure that it doesn't slip out over time.

Reattach the OEM cover with the piggybacked Volvo cover onto your console and enjoy your new arm rest!




## The Doctor is In Cont'd



***All photographs provided by the author.***

As always I can be reached if you have questions at: [kconatymd@gmail.com](mailto:kconatymd@gmail.com), or on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/kconatymd>. I am also on YouTube as Saab Magic Man. Saab On!

Kelly is a pediatric anesthesiologist, new to the Saab game, having purchased his first Saab six years ago. He now owns six Saabs. 

# On the Column



By Bob Miller

## Saab Rescue In The Time of COVID

The Saab that I am trying to rescue is one of my own. I am referring to the 1966 2-stroke wagon in which I learned to drive over 50 years ago. I have kept it on the road, more or less, during moves, schools, and career changes, but I have bogged down recently. My other Saab project is my 1968 Sonett. I picked this one up in the mid-70s shortly before my move to Tucson. The move was achieved by my driving the U-Haul truck towing my then-girlfriend's Toyota Corona (remember those?) while she drove the wagon. Why not drive the Corona and tow the Saab? Because the Saab had a bigger cargo area which could haul her entire snake collection (don't ask) in a climate-controlled environment. No snakes were injured in the making of this saga, although one boa constrictor got out of its bag and startled onlookers by peering out the back window. A friend later drove the Sonett to visit us and then flew back to Delaware.

The Sonett was purchased in Connecticut with spiffy fiberglass rocker panel covers disguising rusted out structurally necessary rocker panels. They say that rust never sleeps, but I thought that a move to Arizona might offer a reprieve. It may have slowed it down, but the tin worm finally won when the left trailing arm broke loose, taking the seat belt anchor with it and nearly choking me with the suddenly-tightened shoulder harness. The Sonett, amazingly, was still (barely) drivable after this, down to a storage unit where it sat for decades. When I finally bought a house, it was towed to my driveway where it lives under a car cover. It is a restoration project that will have to wait until I have finished building my airplane (now likely to be finished within a year). One of life's lessons is that what I paid for storage for all those years could have paid for a fully restored Sonett!

But I digress.

The 1966 stroker, once my primary mode of transportation, became a hobby car, but still was driven regularly until last year. That's when a perfect storm of issues struck and took it off the road. I was losing brake fluid, of the expensive DOT 5 silicone type. I love DOT 5 because it is not hygroscopic (doesn't absorb water), so it never goes bad. Rubber seals love it, and its boiling temperature is higher than that of conventional brake fluids. I have it in several motorcycles too, and they have



never needed brake fluid replacement. It is not the right viscosity for anti-lock brakes, but that is not an issue with vintage vehicles. Its only flaw is its limited availability and increased cost. However, it leaks out just like the cheap stuff when there is a hole somewhere in the brake system. I replaced the rear wheel cylinders and rebuilt the front V-4 calipers retrofitted to the car, but that didn't cure the leak. I still drove the car, topping off the master cylinder from time to time and wondering where all the brake fluid was going, as I could never find a puddle.

I just wasn't willing to tear the car apart to find a tiny leak. I did have the master cylinder re-sleeved at White Post Restorations, just because it was really old. But, the leak would not have been there, because a bad seal in the master cylinder just lets the fluid move from one side of the piston to the other without leaking out. So, the car was wounded but still drivable, until I started to lose coolant. Now, the heater core in that Saab is the original and was still kind-of working after 50-some years; kind of a shame to replace it (not to mention a major pain to get at it) after all those years of faithful service.

But if the leak were there, I would be wearing coolant on my shoes, and I am not. The radiator is not the original; when I moved to Tucson, I had the barely-adequate tiny core replaced with one twice as thick. It was so effective that the electric fan I installed hardly ever came on. A mere 40 years later, the car began to run hot and the radiator started to leak, so I had it rodded out and the leak soldered shut.

There is still a leak somewhere, though, and I have been adding just water to keep the car running because antifreeze is toxic to animals when it leaks onto the ground. But, winter is coming, and I will have to either just leave all the coolant out, which means the car will not be driven, or find and fix the leak. I want to take the radiator to have it

## On the Column Cont'd

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recorded again, but am not sure that the shop is open during this plague. I then still have to deal with probably replacing all the brake lines. By now, the gas has gone bad, but the HazMat place has closed down due to COVID-19 so I have no place to dump the old gas responsibly.

OK, enough with the whine-fest. As of this writing, COVID-19 has killed more than a quarter-million Americans and here I am complaining because a few services have become unavailable. Shame on me. When I was working in management, we had a rule: don't complain about a problem unless you offer up a possible solution. So, here is mine:

Find out for sure whether that radiator shop is closed instead of just assuming that it is. If it is, find another. They should be able to re-make the heater core as well.

There is absolutely nothing stopping me from replacing the brake lines except for fear of the unknown, as I have never done this. What could possibly go wrong?

I found a couple of 5-gallon jerry-cans for \$10 at a garage sale. I can drain the bad gas and run the car again on fresh pre-mix.

So, here's my pledge: the next time you read my column, that Saab will be back on the road, eliciting thumbs-up and killing mosquitos wherever I go!



**Photographs by the author.**

Bob Miller learned to drive in his father's 1966 Saab 2-stroke wagon, and he has been driving it ever since; he loves sharing his enthusiasm for Saabs.



# Professional Perspective

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By **Chuck Andrews**

## **Cause or Symptom**

In the last issue of *NINES* (#362), I wrote about the consistency of inspections and general maintenance of your Saab's preservation. Whether we are talking about DIY or professional inspections, maintenance, or repair we have the same goals. It is common in the professional auto repair industry to not just diagnose problems but as they are found to decide if whether the problem is a cause or a symptom. A diagnostic scan tool, even a Tech II, might show many faults or symptoms and the technicians have to determine which is the fault and which are the rabbit trails. Repairing symptoms can be very expensive and ineffectual for a DIY or a professional shop. I think we would all say we have seen social media posts by some owner who has replaced x,y,z and everything else that has been suggested by armchair folks to fix his ailing Saab. As the age and miles of our Saabs increase, I think what is becoming more apparent all the time is that a good, experienced technician, using a Tech II to diagnose and find the cause of the symptoms, is extremely important. That tech's time can be much cheaper than the frustration of chasing an elusive cause. A cause may be difficult to locate but relatively cheap to repair as opposed to wholesale replacement of parts to repair symptoms.

In this column I want to write about the professional inspections. First, let me suggest that before you purchase a used car you inspect it yourself but then get a professional inspection to verify the condition of the vehicle you are looking at. Our shop offered two options to customers who wanted an opinion on a used car that they were looking to buy from some other source. The first option was free. By appointment we would do a 5-mile test drive and offer a professional opinion of the car's condition based on this test drive. If more information was desired, we charged a one-hour flat fee for a systematic, written inspection done by one of our ASE certified technicians. The goal for us was to verify the car's positive condition and to identify any or all deferred maintenance, safety, mechanical and driveability faults. Armed with this information, a consumer could make an informed decision on the value of their potential purchase. At the same time, with customer permission, we saved and filed the report digitally by the car's VIN # so that if anyone else needed this info it would be available, and if someone purchased the car and brought it to us for any reason, we would have some history available.

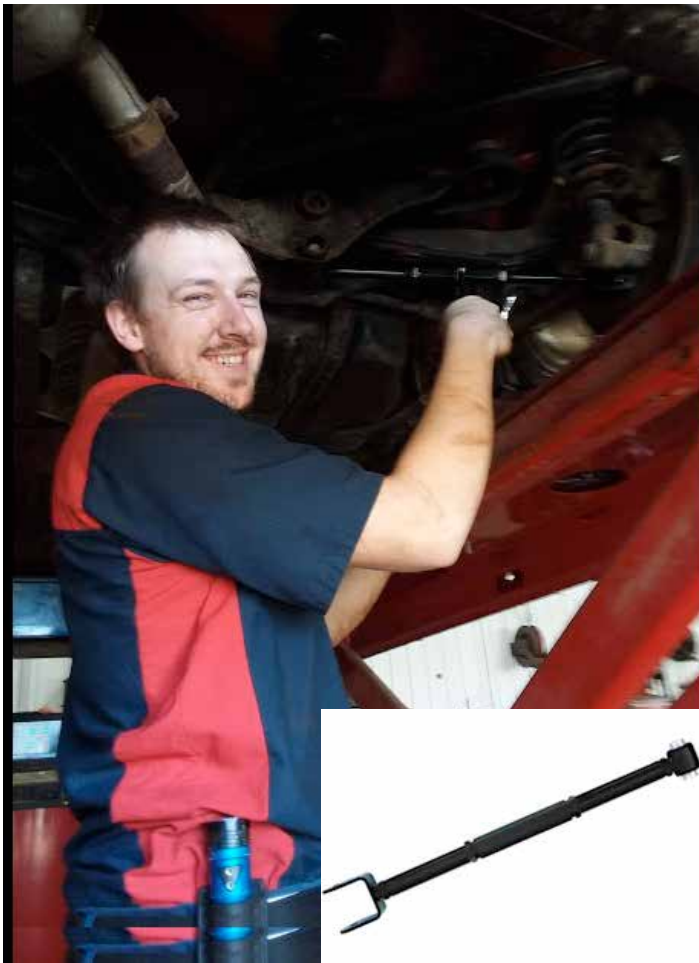
Moving on with a professional inspection, I want to explain the importance and value of a shop that does complimentary FREE inspections for their customers. I will use my 2001 9-5 and Saints Automotive in Princeton, MN, as my example. Saints uses an inspection form that their technician fills out upon completion of a scheduled service appointment. This form is quite complete with about 60 line items plus other additions. The inspection ranges from a test drive to a very thorough inspection including under the car. The customer, or in this case, I, would have the option of allowing them to repair whatever they found or take it home and do it myself. Still, no charge. The inspection is filed with my car records so that if I had a problem they could look at my car's history for more info which might be related to a current problem I could be experiencing. I believe that most all reliable professional shops offer a similar type of service. You just need to ask. Keeping a written history of your car's needs, service and repair is one of the keys for reliable transportation!

In February of 2019, Saints replaced the starter, alternator and coolant hoses on our 9-5 just before we went on a Florida vacation. Saints did the complimentary inspection which assured me that my DIY inspections had been on target and the car was safe for the coming trip. What the inspection did find was minor, but things that would need my attention in the future. That means I was able to forecast the cost and safety of the car for some time to come. The faults found by the inspection are listed as follows:

- 1) front struts were a little bouncy (at 255,000 miles easily expected).
- 2) right front sway bar link loose (made a rattle noise once in a while which was irritating but not close to failure).
- 3) rear tires show a little inside wear (important because I do 5k mile rotation).
- 4) AC compressor leaking (a seep, no drips or runs and AC works okay).
- 5) Both front lower control arms bushings are split and worn (safe but will need attention in the future).

By May of 2019, we had put 8,000 miles on the Saab so I decided that the listed items needed to be addressed before a busy summer. We expected to tow our camper to Sturgis, SD, at least once and maybe twice, as well as make a trip to the SOC in Loveland, CO. By September we had actually driven the Saab another 5,000 miles.

I realized that the repairs needed on the front suspension were going to be an easy DIY situation. The front control arm bushings are very difficult to replace which I would not be able to do at home but after doing some research found that new lower control arms with front and back bushings, including ball joints, were available for \$59 per side. With only a couple of hours' installation time and replacement of the sway bar links, the front end was ready



**Saints tech Paul Salin is able to easily adjust the camber on the adjustable suspension arm while watching the progress on the computerized alignment screen. His hands are near the bar. Each component in the pictures were replaced as a pair. Inset: Threaded camber adjustment bar. Photographs provided by the author.**

for alignment.

The slight tire wear on the rear tires is a different story. The slight wear had grown to considerable and one of the rear tires had a ply separation so it was replaced. Saab 9-5s gradually lose ride height from sagging springs and consequently too much negative camber (top of the wheel is tipped toward the center of the car = negative camber). Pulling a trailer adds to this situation. The more tongue weight of the trailer on the car the lower the car rides and the more negative camber on the rear wheels wearing the inner edge of the tire. My rear shocks, while unbelievably the originals, still passed my bounce test. I decided that I would ignore the ride height and re-adjust the camber. Youtube - "How to measure ride height/ Steeda tech tip" is good if you want to measure your ride height and what the general tolerances are in that measurement. There is more than one way to adjust the camber on the rear suspension of a 9-5. There are shims that can be used to adjust the camber on 9-5s but I prefer and did install



**Lower front control arms. Bushings wear out and are hard for DIY to replace but these new control arms have the bushings and a new ball joint and most anyone could install them. Remember, these were done in pairs!**

threaded adjustable suspension control arms. (esaabparts.com stocks them). This addition makes setting the camber easy for any alignment shop and gives more flexibility in the adjustment.

With Saints' proper four-wheel alignment we were ready for the summer's driving and towing. When we arrived at the Saab Museum with our camper in June, Matt Nicklay, owner of Saab eparts.com, had recently finished collision repairs on his red 9-5 wagon that many of us were familiar with. Our wagons are the same color (laser red) and make a nice pair, but as Matt and I talked and compared cars he pointed out that my ride height was less than his. He teased me about test driving his car until I finally took it out for a drive down I-90. As he had been telling me all along, I would know the difference between the ride and drive of my car versus his, even though mine is an Aero and his is not. Matt had installed hydraulic, load-levelling shock absorbers along with new springs on his car.

Unbelievable difference in the drive!! The new springs and self-levelling hydraulic shocks make a world of difference whether towing the trailer or not. Even with the trailer, the shocks actually restore the ride height as soon they get warmed up; usually just a couple of miles. So, by the time we left Sturgis, Matt had built and we installed a set on our Aero. When we arrived home at 268,000 miles, we got an appointment and had a four-wheel alignment done again on the car to be certain we still had the desired camber, toe-in and thrust angle for the rear wheels.

**Professional continues on page 31.**

# Through a Windscreen Darkly



By Linnea Krajewski

## Home is Where the Barn is

On my way to work every day, I would pass a construction company called Guaranteed Builders, Inc, or GBI for short. They are purveyors of pre-fabricated houses and garages. On their property, they would always have a few houses and garages on display. For the past 10 or so years, a sign has appeared on one of their garages as a way to spur people to buy their wares:

Everyone Needs a Garage

To that, I offer the following corollary:

Except for those of us who have outgrown the garage and really need a barn or an aircraft hangar.

Having 11 Saabs is a blessing as well as a burden at times...when you finally decide to pull up stakes and move to a new location, you not only have to consider where to put yourself and your stuff, but also where to put the hardware that resides in the driveway.

It just so happens that I was recently presented with that dilemma. I have a confession to make...I and the Saabs have been living for longer than I care to admit in the questionable state of Rhode Island, the second smallest state and a place where bad driving is considered a sport. I swear that awards are given out each year for the most outrageous examples of malfeasance behind the wheel. Traffic signals are year round Christmas decorations. People who are native to the place do not know the meaning of the term "indoor voice"; even the most innocuous conversation sounds like an argument about to erupt into a brawl. The Right Turn on Red rule completely confounds them...if there is a sign at an intersection prohibiting a right turn on red, invariably, 8 out of 10 Rhode Island drivers will turn right on red...even if it means cutting off a gasoline tanker coming through the intersection at full steam. But, if there is no sign prohibiting the turn, most Rhode Island drivers will sit at the intersection waiting for a sign from above (or a green light or someone leaning on their horn behind them) to move forward.

Growing up and living half of my life in the Seacoast region of New Hampshire, it is not an understatement to say that I have been homesick almost every day that I lived in the Ninth Circle of Automotive Heck. The nadir came in 2018, when Pelle, Roxie and I spent a week with my brother Phil and Svenn the yellow Labrador in the Lakes

Region of the state. When it came time to head back south, my mood grew darker with every mile.

But, this past spring, with my second Masters in hand, I suddenly realized that I no longer needed to be in Rhode Island. I didn't need to be near Boston and, where I was now working from home thanks to COVID 19, I didn't really need to be near Webster, either. So, I decided to make the big leap and ditch apartment living to look for a house back home in New Hampshire. [Would be nice to indicate who or what Webster is. Probably not the dictionary]

Now, there were some parameters built into my search. The house had to be at least 100 years old. I love old houses...they have personality and have no tendency to be cookie cutter, the way so much new construction tends to be. Some of them have no right angles, either, but that's part of the charm.

The house also had to have some land. Looking out of one's dining room window and being able to see what one's next door neighbour is watching on the box gets old fast... especially if they trend towards certain movies that are usually pay per view and best seen with the drapes drawn and no children in sight.

Finally, the house had to have either a barn on the property or a garage large enough to house all of the Saabs coming North with me.

I had done some internet searching...first in Rockingham County, where I grew up. I quickly found that, to buy even the most decrepit property in Rockingham, one had to have the yearly income of a Rockefeller, or had to be dual-income. Having no interest in becoming a dual-income household, I started looking in the western part of the state.

Fortunately, a friend at work who sold real estate part time put me in touch with one of her colleagues. Denise Whitney turned out to be a champion of the first-time buyer. She was patient, calm, and always ready to pull me down off the ceiling when I got stressed out over some odd thing or another. Denise put me in touch with Laura Chapman, a mortgage specialist who is truly a miracle worker. I would have thought that I was the last person to whom a bank would loan a substantial amount of money, but Laura got me pre-qualified for not just one, but two mortgages. She truly walks on water.

So, with the promise of a mortgage and knowing where I wanted to go, Denise and I hit the road. The first place I saw, virtually, due to COVID, was a huge 1800 Greek revival in Fitzwilliam in Cheshire County. It had a barn, five acres of land, six bedrooms, three bathrooms, and an owner who refused to sell the house, even for the asking price.

## Through a Windscreen Darkly Cont'd

Moving on, we next located a house in Newport, a little further north in Sullivan County. It had a barn, four bedrooms, and two bathrooms and was a near hoarding situation. It was impossible to determine what would fit into a closet, because the closet was bursting with clothes, soccer balls, old Christmas decorations, china, bric-a-brac and other stuff that came tumbling out when the door was opened. Bedrooms were stacked with furniture to the point where entry was impossible. The house reeked of stale cigarettes...the owner and one of his boarders were chain smokers. The house was in near-foreclosure, so we attempted to do a short sale. About three weeks into the process, the owner changed his mind and decided that he wanted to make some cash off the sale...Denise advised that we should move on from that house and let someone else take the owner and the house with its various issues.

I was beginning to worry that I would never find what I was looking for, when Phil emailed me an MLS listing. It was for a farmhouse in the tiny town of Bennington, New Hampshire, tucked away in the southwestern corner of Hillsborough County at the central-western part of the state. The minute I opened the listing, I knew it was home. I rang Denise, who found that someone in her office was handling the sale. I made arrangements to see the house as quickly as possible.

Fiona and I made the trip to Bennington, a two-and-a-half hour ride from Heck. Driving through Sharon, Peterborough and Hancock was balm for the soul...quiet, tree-lined highways with farms, feed stores and small Mom and Pop eateries dotting the landscape. Pulling into the driveway, I felt like Fiona and I were home. She looked like she belonged in the driveway. Taking a tour of the house and barn sealed the deal...I told Denise to tell the owner that I would take the house at the owner's price. The seller has done a studs-out renovation of the house, which was built in stages. The first part of the house (porch and kitchen) was built in 1890. Between 1890 and 1895, the dining room, the room that became my office, the living room and the second story were added. Finally, in 1900, the barn was built and the house considered complete.

The seller had restored the house to what it would have been like circa 1930-1955, with a high-low cast iron sink and fixtures in the kitchen, Brazilian rosewood countertops, hardwood floors, cork floor tiles in the kitchen and a bathtub in the upstairs bathroom that had been in the house since the 1930s. A completely rebuilt General Electric stove from 1953 completed the kitchen. The former owner also added a free-standing garage to house his '65 Grand Prix and his '72 Grand Prix. There wasn't a centimeter of granite in the house, except for the rubblestone foundation, which was undoubtedly sourced from the land upon which the house was built. Best of all, the house sits within a circle of mountains. Crotched Mountain is almost in the back yard, being only 3 miles

down the road. Temple Mountain and Pack Monadnock are 10 miles away in Temple and Peterborough, respectively, and Grand Monadnock sits about 18 miles away in Jaffrey.

45 days later, I was signing my name to a ream of paperwork and taking on a mortgage that, monthly, was only slightly more than the rent on my apartment. Phil had been down just about every weekend for a month helping me pack; truly, you never realize just how much STUFF you accumulate until you are faced with packing it up and moving it far, far away. I made arrangements with a local towing company to move the Saabs; that tale is best told later.

So, three months later, we are almost completely moved in; I have to get Rosie and Cocoa re-positioned in the under-barn so that Edwina and Shelby will fit. Once that's done, we can retrieve Saabrina and bring her home. Roxie and Fiona are living happily in the main barn. Rosie, Ruby and Emmy are tucked into the garage. I have two thirds of the stuff that was in my apartment up in the loft of the barn; watch this space for the barn sale notice in the spring.

After living in suburbia for more time than I care to admit, hearing sirens, car alarms, arguments and air conditioners running full blast non-stop, it is nirvana to be living in the woods, up in the mountains. Bennington has approximately 1500 citizens living within its borders. It is home to the Monadnock Paper Mill....I hear the mill whistle blow at 7AM, noon and 5PM. About a week after I moved in, I was drifting off to sleep being serenaded by two owls.

I am home.....



**Photograph provided by the author.**

Now that she is at home, Linnea lives in the wilds of New Hampshire with her ever-expanding brood of Saabs.

# Nix's Saab Shots

By Karis Nix

## Swedish Fall



*We stand by the statement of "Old Saabs Never Die". James Hutchings' 850 Monte Carlo is one of those prime examples! All photographs by the author.*



*Attention to detail is crucial when you have a concourse judged Saab. This 850 MC has all original equipment down to the swedish inscribed dials and radio.*



*The 850 Monte Carlo looks fantastic at any angle. We love taking shots of this survivor.*



*Kyle and I are simple folk. We see a black Saab, we take a picture of it (we own 4!). Owned by Connor Murray.*



*While at our COVID safe Saab meet months ago, a passerby showed up in his one owner 2006 9-3 Aero 6 speed in chili red. Kyle had a blast talking to Jim Carney (Owner) about it as he owned this exact combination earlier this year.*



*Jonathan Moore showing off his 3 spoke elitism with his Gary Fisher wheels on the BSR Arc.*





**Ryan Engler of Sports Car Service has the absolute unicorn, a Glacier Blue 9-5 Aero wagon on 18 inch Turbine wheels!**



**Our newest Maryland Saab Group member Frank Marsh caught Kyle by surprise when he showed up in his immaculate NG900 Turbo 3 door. This car has all the old school tuning goodies including Abbott Racing and Jak Stoll parts!**



**Cory Godwin (Red SS) and Jonathan Moore (BSR Arc) holding it down at the h2oi meet earlier this year.**



**Frank has been keeping his beauty nice and clean with all the appropriate addons. His 900 makes close to 400 horsepower!**



**Hunter Mulzoff showing how low you can go with his Chili Red Dame Edna Wagon with Corvette Sawblade wheels.**



**Fall is our personal favorite season. Always brings out the right colors and lines for our Saab cars. Kyle's 2005 9-5 Aero at Valley Forge Park in Pennsylvania in September.**

Karis Nix is founder and owner of NixMix Media, specializing in auto photography.



# Saab Services and Discounts

The businesses listed below honor a generous courtesy discount to all SCNA members on most Saab parts, service and accessories. This discount is off the regular everyday prices. Here's reason enough to be a member! Please present your membership card before service. Remember to say "thanks!" for their continued support of the Saab Club of North America.

<p>California</p> <p>BoJonsson's Foreign Car Svc – 10% Discount on Parts and Service 111 E 20th Avenue, San Mateo CA 94596 P: 650.349.3606 F: 650.349.3615</p> <p>Svensson Automotive – 10% Discount on Parts and Service 3297 Mt. Diablo Boulevard, Lafayette CA 94549 P: 925.299.0720 F: 925.299.1578</p> <p>Colorado</p> <p>Mile Hi Automotive - 10% Discount on Parts and Service 519 Lipan St Denver, CO 80204 P: 303-595-4646 F: 303-595-0124</p> <p>Connecticut</p> <p>Mitchell Saab – 10% Discount on Parts and Service 384 Hopmeadow Street PO Box 127, Simsbury CT 06070 P: 860.408.6035 F: 860.408.6070</p> <p>Saab Service of Milford – 10% Discount on Parts and Service 908 Bridgeport Avenue, Milford CT 06460 P: 203.876.8958 F: 203.882.4556</p> <p>Florida</p> <p>Dimmitt Saab – 10% Discount on Parts and Service 25191 US Highway 19 N, Clearwater FL 33763 P: 727.797.7070 F: 727.791.4308</p> <p>Strictly Saab Inc. – 10% Discount on Parts and Service Justin Duthie 2965 Ranch Road, Melbourne FL 32904 P: 321.432.2034 Email justinduthie@hotmail.com</p> <p>Viggen Auto Performance LLC – 10% Discount on Parts and Service Official Saab Service Center Gary Hilberer, Saab &amp; ASE Master Tech 895 34th Court SW, Vero Beach FL 32968 P: 772.778.9990 F: 772.778.1113 Email kingofsaabies@yahoo.com</p> <p>Georgia</p> <p>Jim Ellis Saab of Atlanta – 10% Discount on Parts and Service 5862 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, Atlanta</p>	<p>GA 30341 P: 770.454.3333 F: 770.454.6205</p> <p>Illinois</p> <p>Lombard Body &amp; Fender Shop – 10% Discount on Parts and Service Erin Jurecic, VP 27 E Willow Street, Lombard IL 60148 P: 630.627.8688 F: 630.627.8690</p> <p>Indiana</p> <p>Road Tested Saabs – 10% Discount on Service Steve Bush, Owner 7830 New Augusta Road, Indianapolis IN 46268 P: 317.299.9177</p> <p>Iowa</p> <p>Meyer Garage – 10% Discount on Parts and Service 2687 480th Street, McIntire IA 50455 P: 641.737.2239 F: 641.737.2601</p> <p>Maryland</p> <p>Fitzgerald Saab – 10% Discount on Parts and Service 114 Baughmans Lane, Frederick MD 21702 P: 301.696.9200 F: 301.662.2756</p> <p>Brewer's Saab – 10% Discount on Parts and Service 13815 Maugansville Road, Maugansville MD 21767 P: 301.739.0420 F: 301.739.8711</p> <p>Massachusetts</p> <p>Automotion (SQR Distributor) – 10% Discount on Parts and Service 846 Boston Road, Billerica MA 01821 P: 978.667.5373 F: 928.662.0052</p> <p>Michigan</p> <p>Trio Motors, Inc. – 10% Discount on Parts and Service 2501 South Center Road, Burton MI 48519 Sales: 888.903.2167 Service: 866.978.3505</p> <p>Minnesota</p> <p>Morrie's Saab – 10% Discount on Parts 7400 Wayzata Boulevard, Golden Valley MN 55305 P: 763.248.7860 F: 763.449.4273</p>	<p>Dana Motors – 15% Discount on Parts and Service 2046 Grand Avenue, Billings MT 59102 P: 406.656.7654 F: 406.656.7725</p> <p>New Jersey</p> <p>Cherry Hill Classic Cars – 10% Discount on Parts and Service 2000 Route 70 E, Cherry Hill NJ 08003 P: 856.424.5300 F: 856.424.5852</p> <p>Perrine GMC – 10% Discount on Parts and Service 2730 Route 130, Cranberry NJ 08512 P: 609.395.5599 F: 609.395.7757</p> <p>New York</p> <p>Albany Saab Shop – 10% Discount on Labor 129 School Road, Voorheesville NY 12816 P: 518.765.7700</p> <p>Beck Saab – 10% Discount on Parts and Service 561 Central Park Avenue, Yonkers NY 10704 Sales: 914.963.5446 Service: 914.963.5458</p> <p>Geneva Foreign &amp; Sports, Inc. – 10% Discount on Parts and Service Dan Fitzgerald, Owner 2787 Lyons Road, Geneva NY 14456 P: 315.789.4575 F: 315.781.2065</p> <p>Ohio</p> <p>Armandos Inc. – 10% Discount on Parts and Service 4340 Boardman-Canfield Road, Canfield OH 44406 P: 330.533.1944 F: 330.533.0091</p> <p>Dave Towell Cadillac Saab – 10% Discount on Parts and Service Timothy Towell, President 111 W Market Street, Akron OH 44303 P: 330.376.9600 F: 330.376.8724</p> <p>Just Saab – 10% Discount on Parts and Service 15% Discount on Mail Order Parts 6950 Loop Road, Centerville OH 45459 P: 937.435.7222 F: 937.432.9267 6323 Madison Road, Cincinnati OH 45227 P: 513.527.4300 F: 513.527.4170</p> <p>The Collection Auto Group – 12% Discount on Parts and Service 28595 Lorain Road, North Olmsted OH 44070</p>
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F: 440.348.2006  
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Atomic Auto Repair – 10% Discount on Parts and Service  
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### Pennsylvania

Kelly Cadillac Saab – 15% Discount on Parts  
1986 State Road, Lancaster PA 17601  
P: 717.898.4000  
F: 717.898.3805

Kunkle Motors – 10% Discount on Parts  
RR1 PO Box 386, Dallas PA 18612  
P: 570.675.1546  
F: 570.675.7914

Scott Saab – 10% Discount on Parts and Service  
3333 Lehigh Street, Emmaus PA 18049  
P: 800.829.1877  
F: 610.965.6905

### South Carolina

Car Covers Direct – 10% Discount on Parts and Accessories  
2020 Highway 11 W, Chesnee SC 29323  
P: 866.818.9901

### Tennessee

Saab of Memphis – 20% Discount on Parts and Accessories  
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P: 901.373.7373  
F: 901.202.6666

Kelly Cars – 15% Discount on Parts and Service  
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P: 423.267.1104  
F: 423.265.6938

### Vermont

PJ's Auto Village – 10% Discount on Parts and Service  
2073 Williston Road, PO Box 2031, South Burlington VT 05403  
P: 802.862.0875  
F: 802.658.0025

### Other:

Covers Direct 10% Discount on Parts  
2030 Highway 11 West, Chesnee, SC 29323  
Phone: 866-818-9091  
Web site: [www.carcoversdirect.com](http://www.carcoversdirect.com)

Errors? Omissions? Please alert the editor!  
[sethbengelsdorf@mac.com](mailto:sethbengelsdorf@mac.com)

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*NINES* depends on the kindness of its contributors to keep going. We are always on the lookout for interesting articles about Saabs and their owners.

You don't have to be a great writer - just get it down on paper or your computer and send it in. Photographs are also welcome. Story ideas include interesting information about your car, upgrades and modifications, historical highlights and human interest, among others.

Deadlines for submissions to *NINES* are:

Jan-Mar issue: December 1

Apr-June issue: March 1

July-Sept issue: June 1

Oct-Dec issue: September 1

E-mail submissions to [sethbengelsdorf@mac.com](mailto:sethbengelsdorf@mac.com).

Mail hard copy and photographs (make sure to note if you want the photographs returned) to

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1729 Lynnville Trail  
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# The Saab Road Less Traveled

*(Which Made all the Difference)*

**By John Kuhn Bleimaier**

The Endless Mountain region of Pennsylvania is a picturesque area along the western escarpment of the Appalachian chain north of the Poconos and south of the Catskills. From the ridgeline at the north knob of Elk Mountain, the jagged Alleghenies continue in all directions to the horizon. Endless mountains, indeed. This is Saab country. Here are the roads that try motorcars' mettle. The summer minivan and the sunshine roadster will, in this environment, shrink from the efficient service of their drivers. But a conveyance which stands up on these byways, deserves the love and appreciation of every true enthusiast. Not surprisingly this is where the aficionados of vintage Swedish engineering gather to celebrate the early creations from Trollhättan.

The Snedeker Farm is nestled in a poetic, pocket valley in Clifford Township far off the Erie track. You pass by a poor old schoolhouse with its shingles broken and black. We've come here five times before, but we always stop for a minute; and survey the field, the lush green field, the field with classic Saabs in it. From all over they assemble types 93, 95, 96, 99 and Sonetts, legendary front wheel drivers with rallye creds aplenty behind them. The sweet whiff of two-stroke exhaust and the rasp of a three-cylinder engine revving at the limit; these are the sensations we have traveled far to indulge. But we must not forget the perky V4s which were shoehorned into the art deco aerodynamic teardrop classic car which hailed from the land of the midnight sun.



All Saabs have been quirky, but the earlier the quirrier. Engines mounted in front of radiators. Free-wheeling transmissions and gear selectors on the column; these are but a few of the oddball endearments of the Saabs of the '50s and '60s. But in the hands of a master like Eric Carlsson these stouthearted lightweight chargers could show their heels to Ferraris, Jaguars, and Porsches in the Monte Carlo Rallye. Saab always made the most eloquent case for the egalitarian proposition. Brilliant engineering coupled with sensible specifications resulted in motorsports triumphs against competitors with three times the engine displacement and ten times the retail price tag.



**Photographs by Marina Bleimaier.**

I attend classic car events where other grand marques are featured. These often take place at exclusive country clubs and the owners discuss the merits of various high dollar restoration ateliers and the projected appreciation of their investments as gauged by international collector car auctions. Refreshingly, at the Endless Mountain Saab gathering, owners exchange stories about hands-on repairs. Their refurbishment projects are motivated by affection for a mechanical tour de force, not anticipated returns on rentier investment.

Egalitarianism is the watchword on the Snedeker farm field in Clifford, Pennsylvania. All the Saab enthusiasts present were treated like family for this no-charge/no-host event. I have personally never seen so many vintage Saabs in one place. Furthermore, I got to see a Saab type 92, in the flesh, for the first time. What a hoot! There was a people's choice car show and a swap meet. Everyone maintained sensible social distancing, but the spirit of friendship and camaraderie was as warm - up-close and personal, as could be under the circumstances dictated by Covid-caution.

Three score and fifteen years ago our Saab progenitors brought forth on this planet, a new car company, conceived in egalitarianism, and dedicated to the proposition that all men and women should be able to afford an enthusiast car.

Since 2011 Saab has been embroiled in a great financial crisis, testing whether that enterprise, or any motorcar so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. In Clifford, PA, we were met on a great car show field celebrating that marque. We were come to dedicate a portion of our time, as an homage for those cars which gave their faithful service that this motorcar concept might live. It has been altogether fitting and proper that we should have done this.

## The Saab Road Less Traveled Contd



roads, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we did at the Snedeker Farm, but it can never forget what these vehicles have achieved. It is for us the Saab enthusiasts, rather, to be dedicated to the unfinished road trips which the cars on display here have thus far so nobly advanced. It was rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored Swedish cars we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave their full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these beloved autos shall not have been driven in vain—that this grand automotive marque, under God, shall experience a new birth of enthusiasm—and that cars of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—the noble Saab. The brave machines, lively or crunched, which struggled on these

(With apologies to Thomas Paine, Joyce Kilmer, Abraham Lincoln & Robert Frost.)



# Saabs of the North Atlantic

*By James Regan*

October 3rd was a perfect fall day for the Saab's of the North Atlantic's Fall Cruise. It was however sad that it became a Memorial as well, due to the passing of a Saab community icon, Glen Guarnieri on Oct 1st after fighting a long bout with cancer.

The group met up at Lake Welch Beach in Harriman State Park, NY. The idea for the location of the meet came up when one of the founding members, Steve Boshart, posted some pictures of a desolate Lake Welch. Seeing how previous locations in the Covid world had proved to be met resistance, this looked like it could be a new option. We'd been trying to do another get-together but nothing was falling into place, and this meet almost didn't come together either. Originally we were shooting for the Columbus Day weekend, which is the last weekend for this particular location to be open on weekends, seeing as Columbus Day is a 3 day weekend, many already had advanced plans, so it was set up on a Monday to take place the same Saturday.

After chatting for an hour or so, we headed out of the parking lot guided through the scenic back roads of Harriman Park by Steve Boshart, then over the Hudson River on the Bear Mountain Bridge and south on Route 202, a 3 mile stretch of twisty roadway that brings you down the side of a mountain along the Hudson River with spectacular views. At the bottom of the mountain it was onto a rotary where we followed our trail back up the mountain, over the bridge, through the back roads and back to the parking lot.

The cruise concluded with a tribute to our beloved friend Glen Guarnieri. We reflected on what an influence he was in the Saab community, how we all came to know him, and what a wealth of information he was. As a suggestion by Peter White, our detailing guru from across the pond, we concluded with a traditional UK tribute to mark the passing of someone to be thankful for, by standing and clapping for one minute. Our deepest sympathies go out to Glen's children, Daryle, Christian, Gary, Magnolia and of course his partner Wendy Grohol.



*Photographs provided by the author.*

You can join and follow Saabs of the North Atlantic on facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/saabsotna>





the freewheeling feature. The twin exhausts accentuates the odd beat of the V4 engine though it's not obtrusive.

A roll-over bar sits behind the seat headrests, testament to Saab's early commitment to safety.

In 1971, the Sonett sold for \$3795 in America. This compared to a Mustang at \$2385 or Porsche's mid-engine 914 at \$3769. Certainly with its lively but modest performance the little Saab was facing an uphill battle in its intended market. Nevertheless over 8300 of them found homes, though this car is thought to be the sole example in Australia.

The Sonett III was the last design from the old Saab family of small economical cars. The 99 of 1967 ushered Saab into a new era of grown-up-sized cars which has seen the company through to this day – even if today's products are reskinned Opels with Saab-like design nuances applied. What a shame that technological brilliance is no longer the driving force.



**Rare Saab collector Henk Ossendrijver.**



**Chuck watches as Matt Nicklay assembles the new springs and hydraulic load level shock absorbers. He sells this as an assembled unit so a DIY can install them. Remember, these were done in pairs!**

Now at 273,000 miles we have cleared all of our DIY and professional inspection items. The Saab runs great, drives great, has no issues or deferred maintenance. If we ever get beyond this COVID-19 stuff, we will be ready to go camping again and take a long road trip.

It has come to my attention that this issue of *NINES* will be the last for our editor, Seth Bengelsdorf. Thank you, Seth, for your years of faithful service to the Saab community. Over the years, I have been privileged to write articles for past editors: Tim Winker, Stephen Goldberger and Seth. Who knows what the future holds? Thanks, guys.

For 42 years Chuck owned and operated a sales, service, auto body and parts facility specializing in Saabs.



# Tom Sets Another Speed Record!

**By Ray Ray Kopczynski**

(and your author is no longer a virgin...)

*Ed's. note - Ray is the editor of Vintage Views.*

For several years, I've contemplated going to Bonneville Salt Flats to "help" Tom Donney when he tried to set another record with his 750cc Sonett. At the 2019 SOC in Loveland, CO, I finally asked Tom if I could. "Sure," he said. Little did he know. LOL

On Sept. 27th, 5 folks converged at Wendover, UT. Tom and Patti Donney from Sturgis, SD, Reg and Kitty Pitts from Hill City, SD, and me from Albany, OR. On Monday, the 28th, my adventure began...

Note: All my pictures and movies are here: <https://bit.ly/312aYvf>

*Day 1, Sept. 28th*

8:00am. Tom and Reg head out about 14.5 miles to "the salt." Tom is towing his "hauler" containing the car, some extra tools, tires, etc. Reg is with him and I'm following in my rental car. Patti and Kit still have some ancillary shopping to do for supplies and they follow later. We arrive at a checkpoint called "Lands End" (for obvious reasons). Monday is "Prep Day," no course running of the cars until after a "rules meeting" of all entrants on the 29th. We turn in the required medical paperwork indemnifying the organizers and they let us through. Then we drive about three miles east to the main area of pits, support folks (Registration, Fuel, Impound areas), etc. Tom finds a spot – lucky "Pit #13" and pulls in. Weather is fabulous! High 40s, clear, light breeze.

Task #1 is laying down a 50x30-foot blue tarp and getting it secured. It's "fun" getting it to lay flat in the breeze while we anchor it with 50+ 3" speed-screws & 1" flat washers at every grommet point – and multiple points throughout the interior.

Task #2 is placing the car-hauler onto the tarp, unloading the car, walking down to registration to get our wrist-bands and other necessary information, and sign paperwork. Later that morning, I also use Tom's credit card to purchase a 5-gallon can of BP gas. You have to buy their gas at registration. They give you a receipt which you then take to a U-Haul truck about 100 yards away to pick it up – they seal the can at that point. Head back to the pit and help unloading necessary items for Tom. (One very-cool aspect of his truck is the double-level slide-out "tray" that holds all his tools, extra parts, and paraphernalia to assist in whatever he needs to do.)

Task #3 is prepping the car for its first "down run" to qualify for a record run. This is when Tom starts getting into his "focused-zone." He decides which of the two different sets of triple-expansion chambers to use, which tires to use, etc. (If he changes tires, he has to change the alignment of the front end of the Sonett too.) He also checks the jetting on his "Mikuni" snowmobile carburetors, along with all the electrics, etc. inside the car. About 10:00am, he asked me to go back down to the registration area (about 200 yards) and get us on the list for the tech-inspection that has to happen before we're allowed to do the 1st down-run as we'd like to do that this day. Was told it would be "soon."



**Tom in his zone. All photographs provided by the author.**

Tom has been doing this gig for 10 years now. As such, he is incredibly well-prepared to do his "job" of prepping &



## Tom Sets Another Speed Record! Cont'd



**Tom definitely not in his zone, with Reg and Ray.**

running his car. He sets very high standards for himself – and any/all of his “helpers.” He knows what he wants done, when it needs to be done, and how it is to be done. Since time can be critical at certain points to get things done efficiently and rapidly, his focus is/can be rather intense when things don’t go as well as needed or expected. At those times, he can be rather mercurial.

He will let any of us know (and in no uncertain terms) that we’ve royally screwed up. Doesn’t take too long that I realize it’s nothing personal – it’s just business. He has every right to expect everyone to be on the same page he is. Fascinating to watch this evolve and by the end of the week, our “team” was starting to gel and was able to nominally anticipate what Tom would be looking for – and better yet, we could find the items (most of the time). By the same token, Tom will drop everything and help another racer with a problem. Lots of camaraderie on the salt! Also, a large contingent of folks recognize the car from being there and setting records and come over to kibitz....

That morning, all entrants and their crews are allowed to drive the course in whatever vehicle they have – other than their race car. So, at the appointed time, a large group of cars headed down to the Starting Line and they turn us loose. Tom stayed back at the pit area while we used his big truck that was going to help push-start him the next day. I was flabbergasted at how seriously rough the course was! I couldn’t fathom motorcycles, etc. running at high-speed with all the ridges, etc., I was seeing and really feeling in the truck – and this was at only 50-60mph!

Tom also fires up the Sonett using “VP110” gas from Iowa. Patti & Kit arrive before noon with extra supplies. We set up two canopies to shield the work area from salt, sun, and heat.

I take Tom to the fuel area to get the gas. (We drained his tank 1st back at the pit-area.) They have to closely watch him add his oil and they re-seal the can to use when

refueling the car each time... Then, just as in the movie “Casablanca, “...we wait and we wait and we wait...” for the tech-inspection folks to arrive. I head back to registration about 3:45pm and inquire when we might have the tech inspection we signed up for in the morning. 2 inspectors finally arrive about 4:15pm. There’s only two of them and there are close to 100 entries to check. They’re all over the car, from engine to electrics, etc. Asking an incredible amount of questions and poring over the rule book. Tom’s been bringing this car to the salt for 10 years now, but, rules is rules – and some of them have changed. I can tell Tom is not happy, but he plays “nice and friendly” with them and they finally sign off on the car about 30 minutes later. Tom continues to tweak the car but decides it’s too late to do his 1st down-run to qualify so we put the canopies, the car, etc. back into the hauler, secure it, and we all head back to Wendover about 7:00pm – and plan to come back a bit earlier in the morning to get a fresh start.

*Day 2, Sept. 29th.*

7:00am, Tom, Reg in the truck, and I follow. We unload the car. Tom drains the fuel-cell up front so we can head to the Fuel-area to have them unseal the 5-gal. can and watch Tom fill the fuel-cell – then they seal both the fuel-cell and the 5-gal. gas can. (If they detect any of the seals as broken – at any time or point, you’re automatically disqualified from that run you were attempting – no exceptions!) Patti and Kit have also arrived, so we then head from the Fuel-area down to the starting line about three miles west and get into queue with the other racers wanting to qualify that morning (and a smattering of folks who did qualify yesterday and were now trying to set a record for their class).

Since there are a smaller number of total entries this year, the organizers opted to have a single combined short and long course. The short course is three miles to the timing tower and cars would shut down at that point. Faster cars had an 8-mile course and were timed farther down the course. When we were lined up, the cars trying to qualify were in one line, the record-trying cars in another, and cars were started alternately.

As we get closer, Tom gets dressed in his fire-suit, etc. We screw-on the large “moon” hubcaps and Tom coaches us what to do when he gets into his car: ensuring the Hans-device is properly hooked up, the side-brace for his head is same, his seat-belt-harness is same, the GoPro cameras are all affixed, etc. Patti fills up his “cooler tank” with ice. He also shows us his hand-signals from inside the car if he wants us to do anything under the hood while he’s strapped in (squirting fuel into each carburetor if it doesn’t initially fire, etc.).

**Speed Record continues on page 36.**

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<http://www.vSaab.com/>

vSaab, an unmoderated Yahoo Group  
<http://autos.groups.yahoo.com/group/vSaab/>

Send changes and corrections to:  
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## President's Letter

Dear SCNA Members,

Here we are, more than six months into the pandemic, and with the end still months into the future. Has there been any aspect of life not affected by what my father refers to as an "insidious and ghostly" virus? Regardless of your age or stage of life, we have all been forced to re-think even our most basic habits. I write this letter having just finished a Thanksgiving where the CDC and many others begged and tried to order us not to travel to see loved ones, some of whom we haven't seen yet in 2020. While it is easy to focus on all of the negativity around us right now, I try to remain optimistic about the future, and when possible, find joy in some of the more minor things that may be slightly improved.

When it comes to driving my Saabs, these empty roads have made cruising fun again. Recently, have felt like I am in one of those car commercials, cruising down a long (often newly paved) stretch of highway with nary a car in sight. In addition to finding excuses to drive around, I have been able to focus more attention on completing projects or searching on line for those small parts that, while not absolutely necessary, make my car that much more fun to own and drive. My 2011 Aero has newly refinished Hirsch



# SAAB

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wheels, and for my '82 900, I was able to find a set of Shelby wheels which I will refurbish in time for SOC 2021. One long term project that was also completed was the refinishing and installation of a factory armrest for my 1990 9000S. I appreciate the work of eSaabparts.com and other independent mechanics and web sites that help me improve and maintain my Saabs. I am looking forward to showcasing my own personal collection this July in Albany.

Just as myself and many Saab owners have been working on improving their vehicles during this unusual time, the SCNA Board has continued to meet, discuss and plan ways to improve our communication and reach beyond our annual Owners' Convention and to the greater Saab community. To this end, we have recently agreed to shift the editing and production of *NINES* magazine from long time Editor in Chief Seth Bengelsdorf to a team of SCNA Board members, along with our continuing contributions from club members and friends. On behalf of the entire SCNA Board, I would like to thank Seth for his years of service and dedication to *NINES* and to Saab owners across the country and around the world. Without his tireless efforts, we would not have so much Saab technical and historical information as well as a wealth of Saab and SOC related photographs and memorabilia.

Over the coming issues, we plan on better aligning *NINES* to our web and other publications, and continue making improvements to meet the needs and desires of Saab owners everywhere. If you have suggestions or would like to get more involved in *NINES*, please email us at [info@saabclub.com](mailto:info@saabclub.com).

Respectfully,

Sanford Bogage  
President, SCNA



## Tom Sets Another Speed Record! Cont'd

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Now we're at the Starting Line, the truck is ready to push Tom to 30mph as he rolls down the course – and then we will veer-off to head his direction albeit much more slowly.

The starter motions it's his turn and off we go! "Go Tom Go!" I'm using my camera to take movies. We hear on the walkie-talkie that he's at 127+mph at the 2-mile point of his qualifying "down-run!" (His old record was 123.763, so this is good!) Obviously we can't see him, but we hear the car and also hear there has seemingly been some trouble but that he still crossed the timing-tower at over 126 mph...

We find Tom about four miles down the course in a turn-out area and Tom says that he "...blew his engine about 1/8th mile short of the timing-tower" but still coasted across exceeding his old record – so he did qualify...

Wow! Whew? But now what? Turns out that any car that qualifies is required to go to the "Impound" area for inspection and you then have four hours to make any repairs to your car if you want to do a "record-run." That meant trying to completely rebuild the engine in four hours.

Since Tom comes prepared for almost any eventuality, that's what we (the royal "we") did. After pulling the engine, we see that piston #2 was fried and left aluminum all over the cylinder wall. Oh joy! That alone took about 90 minutes (of the allotted four hours) to literally chip-away and finely-hone the cylinder wall. With the hood, grille, radiator, etc., off the car, and at 3:56 minutes, Tom fired up the engine. We added the hood (only), left the other parts alongside the car, and backed away from the car. As with the fuels, if an inspector notes you are touching the car after four hours in Impound, you are disqualified!

However, the rules do allow that you can come back in the morning and continue to work on your car for about an hour prior to them starting racing again. We glommed onto that rule for sure! The Sonett stayed in the impound area and we headed back to Pit #13 and called it a day. We had qualified and were now in position to try and get the new record tomorrow...

### *Day 3, Sept. 30th*

We arrive early to finish putting the car back together, and drove back to the Starting Line area to get in line. Now there were more cars in both the qualifying and record-run lines. We slowly move up the queue. Weather is still perfect – mid-60s at that point in the a.m., minimal clouds and breeze. About 10 minutes before he runs, I head back to the Pit area and walk over to the small trailer where all the resulting speed announcements are made that everyone hears on their walkie-talkies. It's as close as I'm

allowed to take pictures/movies – even with my whoop-de-do Press Pass. They announce "Car #6797 at the starting line..." Off he goes (heading my direction from about three miles west). I can hear him. Start taking a movie with my old cell phone set at max telephoto (4X). I'm also looking into the sun. The walkie-talkie is crackling and says Tom is still at 125+ mph at mile-2 and running strong! I can definitely see him and look up from the phone to watch him cross the line and get another record. Yahoo Tom!!

Rest of the story... If you watch the video, you will obviously note I didn't catch him crossing the line because as I looked up, I also moved my camera up.

:-)

Since I'm at the "results" trailer where the information is tallied, I pick up his formal results (#2 slip) and rather than have him be towed there to get them, I opt to walk to the impound area and give them to him at that point. They had printed several copies. We then have to wait in another queue about 20 minutes to get a formal spot in impound to be inspected. (Lots of cars running today...) After inspection, Tom opts to take the car back to the pits and make decisions about what we do next. As he said, "I came to get a record, I've done that, and we can all go home...or...we can start working on the car more and see if we can get another record in the remaining three days..." Lunch and much discussion ensue. We vote and decide to stay for more fun on the salt. Yea! And – we have a surprise birthday party for Patti when we got back to the motel.

Besides, our "team" is now starting to gel and we were getting into it. My tasks are also changing. Many folks are coming up to the car while in the pit-area and they asked many questions from "what kind of car, engine, specifics, etc." about it. My job is to answer and deflect Tom from being constantly interrupted from his focus on working on the car. Yes, I still do some very minor stuff on the car when asked, but it turned out my kibitzing with other "lookie-loos" also has some value. I'm happy with that.

### *Day 4, Oct. 1st*

We come back in the morning and decide how we're going to tweak the car, engine, etc. to attempt another qualifying run. Tom has several options: Put on taller tires, change-out the expansion chambers, tweak the carburetor jetting, possibly try different fuel, or combinations of all options. He opts to put on the taller tires: 81" diam vs. 79" diam. (Tom has myriad charts he has developed over the years that will ostensibly tell him what changes will do what to his RPMs &/or HP when he's running.) He thinks the taller tires should do it for the qualifying run this morning. Back down to the fuel-truck. They inspect the seals, let him open the 5-gal can, add his oil, re-seal the can, let

## Tom Sets Another Speed Record! Cont'd

him fill his fuel-cell (he gets a little more than two runs with its capacity), seal that, and off we go to the starting line to qualify by beating his new record (if he can). He can't. Missed it by a smidgen! (Timing slip #3.) Didn't qualify, so there's no heading to impound – back to our Pit area and try another option: change the expansion chambers... Same result – just missed qualifying! (Timing slip #4) Bummer. We're done for the day. Pack up everything in the hauler and head back to Wendover. Tom and Patti treat the team to a fabulous dinner at one of the casinos "across the line" in West Wendover, NV. Thanks, Tom & Patti!

### Day 5, Oct. 2nd

It's our last day to try and qualify. If we qualify in the morning, we can go for the record in the afternoon – then all go home. While Tom is doing some additional tweaks to the car, I wander down to the Registration area and buy him a 5-gal. can of a new gas they have (CP 112) – supposedly formulated to help 2-stroke vehicles. He said that would be good to take back and allow him to "dyno it" to see what improvements it could make – if any. Same process as yesterday to get fuel into the car via the inspectors and the "seals." Same result – Run #5 missed qualifying. Bummer #2.

OK – As a last gasp (we're having fun now!) Tom opts to try the new gas I purchased. He says it will give him a "baseline" result to compare when he does dyno runs back

home. Sounds good. I rip off the seals and Tom drains the tank of residual gas. We then tow the car to the Fuel area and they open the new can, allow Tom to add his oil, re-seal it – Tom fills his tank and they seal that again. It's about 10:50 a.m. and someone mentions they are closing the course to qualifying at 11:00am! What?! Off we go! Patti calls me and says Tom wants me to <ahem> speed ahead of him towing his car, get to the Starting Line just a couple of minutes before 11:00, and beg to be allowed to try and qualify. (Tom was still about ¼-mile back...) Since they knew Tom and the car – it was OK. We were the next-to-last to do a qualifying run. Whew! However, Run #6 was same result. It was a tad faster with the new gas, but still not enough to qualify.... No more qualifying runs allowed, so we all head back and start to pack up everything and leave the salt as we found it. We get done and leave the salt about 1:00pm.

Tom, Patti, Reg, and Kit have already packed up their vehicles prior to coming out this morning, so they head home from the salt. Moi? I have already planned to stay overnight and head out Saturday morning, getting back Sunday around noon. What can I say? It was a fantastic experience for me – and all well worth it! To say the least, I'm hooked! :-)

So – Tom... If you're reading this, and you can use me - in any way – I'm definitely game to try it again! And thank you for the wonderful time I had.



# Classified Ads

NINES CLASSIFIED AD RATES:

Ads offering Saabs or parts for sale, or wanted, are available to members and non-members. Ad rates are for 25 words EXCLUDING your name, telephone number, address, etc. Extra words are charged at \$1.00 per five extra words. Classified ads MUST be prepaid. Ad rates are as follows:

TYPE OF SALE	Members	Non-members
CAR	\$ 1	\$ 15
PARTS	\$ 5	\$ 7.50
WANTED	\$ 2	\$ 3
COMMERCIAL	\$ 15	\$ 15

**DEADLINE:** 25<sup>th</sup> of two months preceding publication for inclusion in the next issue.

Mail ads with full payment to:

**SethB Productions**  
**Saab Classified Ads**  
1729 Lynnville Trail  
Austin, TX 78727

NINES can also place your ad on The Saab Network (Internet classified ad) for you. Your NINES classified fee covers listing in both locations: \$30 for cars, \$20 for parts, \$15 for wanted, for up to 150 words (on the internet.)

## Autos for Sale

### 2008 9-3 Lynx Edition Convertible.

Color: Lynx/saffron Yellow - Trans: Manual - Mileage: 80,000 - Price: \$14,500.

2008 Special Edition Lynx Yellow 6 speed manual. One of only 18 ever imported into the United States (documentation provided). 2.0-liter turbocharged engine. Premium audio was upgraded to a new head unit (Pioneer double din with Nav, Rear Camera, GPS, SD card slot, CD/DVD capable, MP3, etc. Also added was a high power Sony amplifier to enhance the Saab amps for the factory subwoofer). The car has 80,000 miles and is mechanically stock, except for Hirsch dual exhaust system which has a nice mellow growl. They did it right, replacing the original rear valance with the OEM dual exhaust valance for a factory look. The tires are Michelin Pilot Sport A/S 3+, 235/45ZR17XL, only a couple thousand miles on them. Body, paint, top, etc. are perfect, and there is no rust anywhere on or under the car. The top is perfect and treated with factory recommended Topp Coat twice a year. The top mechanism works exactly as its supposed to and top is completely watertight! Side/rear windows professionally tinted to legal allowable level. When its too blistering hot for top down travel, put the top up, and the tinted windows and climate control keep you cool as a cucumber! Also will include fitted windshield heat shield to help keep interior cooler while parked. It doesn't get driven in inclement weather. Also included is Saab OEM air deflector. On pure synthetic oil since new, serviced religiously, always garaged. No accidents, perfect Carfax (included). Only bothersome

thing is that recently the side mirrors have been sporadic at times. I replaced the mirror control switch, but that didn't help, so I suppose eventually I'll (or new owner) will need to get it to a Saab shop to be checked with the Tech II scanner. Much printed material about the Lynx Special Edition included, and original owner's manual, documents, and even the window sticker (\$43,380.00 in 2008 dollars- \$55,335.00 today!) Title is clear and in-hand. A stunning car, draws people everywhere I go! Feel free to contact me with questions. Carfax can be emailed upon request. Photo(s) available at The Saab Network Classifieds: <https://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/9-3convertibles.html#20092833381dhess> Contact: Don Hess, Quincy, IL. Email: <https://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/classmail2.php3?tag=20092833381dhess> Phone: (217) 440-6666.

### 1985 Saab 900

Color: Brown - Trans: Manual - Mileage: 211,600 - Price: \$3000 OBO.

Rebuilt 16-valve engine, new windshield, new tires, new steering rack, 25-30 mpg. A few holes in ceiling liner, but no sag. Car is ready for paint with only two areas of rust. Colorado Saab, great in the snow. No AC. Photo(s) available at The Saab Network Classifieds: <https://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/900-93.html#20090737281rhail> Contact: Ricky Hailpern, Denver, CO. Email: <https://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/classmail2.php3?tag=20090737281rhail> Phone: 303-901-9466.

## For Sale

### 2 Sets Graphite Sheepskin Covers for 2006-11 9-3 Sedan.

From State of Nine - 2 sets of Graphite Sheepskin Seat covers. Fits 2006-2011 9-3 Sport Sedan and wagon! We had finally found our "dream car, a 2010 wagon... MINT... so I got these seat covers, driver and passenger thinking they would last the life of the car!! Was hit in an accident and totalled the car.. SOOO upset.. were in the car for four months.. they are in GREAT condition. Asking \$400 for the pair... and you pay postage... or pick up. I have installation instruction. Photo available at The Saab Network Classifieds: <http://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/parts.html#201201barba> Contact: Barbara Reynolds, Deep River, CT. Email: <http://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/classmail2.php3?tag=201201barba> Phone: 860-526-1055.

### Saab Model 96-97 New Old Stock Factory Dash Pads.

SAAB 96-97 new old stock factory dash pads, non ribbed. \$500 Or Best Offer. Photo available at The Saab Network Classifieds: <http://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/parts.html#200629paulp> Contact: Paul Perry, San Jose, CA. Email: <http://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/classmail2.php3?tag=200629paulp> Phone: 408-202-4858.

Parts and Miscellaneous

DVDs for Sale!

1) This how-to "Saab Brakes" video was created during a New Jersey Saab Owner's meeting at the Saab Technical Training Facility and is led by John Moss, Saab's Technical Training Master Mechanic. Nearly FOUR HOURS of NTSC video on two DVDs leads you through many of the questions and answers as every brake system Saab ever manufactured is discussed - hands on - from the start to 2000! Just \$55.00 (includes USA shipping) for the "Saab Brakes" DVD!

2) Nearly TWO HOURS of NTSC video leads you through many of the ins and outs of the 5-speed transmission used in the Saab 900. Just \$30.00 (includes USA shipping) for the "900 5-speed Tear Down" DVD!

3) This one-hour DVD deals mostly with Saab's electrical systems, up to the 9-5. Just \$30.00 (includes USA shipping) for the "Final Tech Session" DVD!

4) The history of the car that came before the Saab Sonett, recorded at the 2000 Saab Owners' Convention. This 45-minute video had been unavailable due to the massive amount of background bass hum that was present in the audio. My Mac seems to have removed most of it, so now the audio commentary is

intelligible. Hosted by Dave Hosmer, the video also features Ralph Millet (Saab's first president in the U.S.) and Bud Clark. Just \$30.00!

Send check or money order, made out to "SB Productions LLC" to: Seth D. Bengelsdorf 1729 Lynnville Trail Austin, TX 78727

Books and Service Manuals.

More than 200 different titles of factory original Saab manuals available for sale. 9-3 shop manual, \$35. 9-5 shop manual, \$35. 9000 shop manual, \$35. 900 (1979-1998, please specify year) service manuals, \$15 - \$48. Earlier models also available. See www.books4cars.com or call 206-721-3077 or toll free 888-380-9277. Alex Voss, 4850 37th Ave So, Seattle, WA, 98118.

Wanted

Saab 9000 Aero Emblem.

Wanted: New or near perfect Saab 9000 "Aero" emblem for hatch. Part No.4435715 for later year 9000 Aero. (1994-1998) Photo available at The Saab Network Classifieds: http://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/wanted.html#201006marks Contact: Mark Skinner, Brooklyn, NY. Email: http://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/classmail2.php3?tag=201006marks Phone: 917-972-4185.

1967-69 Saab Model 96 V4 Parts.

Hello, 67-69 needs some bits. Last driven Oklahoma 1982. Would certainly consider parts car, prefer Northeast, but try me, I travel! Door hardware, all suspension and brake parts, muffler, tail lights, fuel pump rebuild kit and, and. I plan to drive this car a lot so you get the picture. Driving lights and performance goodies too. Contact: John Cesari, Wells River, VT. Email: http://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/classmail2.php3?tag=201001johnc Phone: 207-812-0417.



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