

# Driven by history

By Geoff Moore

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Photographs indicate noted interior decorator Ogden Codman Jr. first drove a motor vehicle along the gravel path to his Lincoln home more than a century ago in 1904.

The make and model of that automobile has been lost to history, but the Codman Estate was once again home to antique autos last Sunday as more than 300 antique vehicles converged on the estate's freshly mowed lawn for the Historic New England Antique Auto Show.

Describing the auto show as a "weather driven event without a rain-day policy," festival manager Margaret Laforest was delighted with the cloudless sky and warm sun that greeted a record number

of visitors Sunday morning.

Laforest said that the annual show, now in its 23rd year, "is a social day to appreciate antique vehicles in a historic setting, rather than a competition."

For many owners it was simply an occasion to meet up with old friends and to swap stories or exchange information on how to maintain their vehicles, which must be at least 25 years old to qualify for the show.

To Bob Frissore of Lexington — who has proudly displayed his vehicle at each of Historic New England's 23 auto shows — it was another chance to take a ride in his 1950 Chevy Bel Air hard top coupe. Frissore said he had owned the car since 1951 and

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Courtesy photos by Geoff Moore

**Bob Frissore of Lexington and his 1950 Chevy Bel Air hard top coupe have taken part in Historic New England's annual auto show for 23 years.**

# Auto show is driven by history

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had driven it for "77,000 fun-filled miles." He fondly recalled earlier auto shows where the biggest problem for drivers was avoiding the cowpats and the algae-covered pond that one unsuspecting driver wandered into,

fooled by its lush color and inviting flatness.

While parents wandered from car to car or sipped rapidly melting frozen treats, children sat cross-legged in the carriage house, captivated by magic moments provided by magician and bal-

loon artist Ed Popiciarczyk.

The mellow Dixieland sounds of the seven-piece New Liberty Jazz Band entertained browsers and owners alike throughout the day. The band played sitting atop their 1941 Ford Fire Tender, which they had lovingly restored to its former glory.

Every vehicle had a story of service or perhaps neglect and devoted restoration.

Perhaps none more so than Nick Warchol's 1945 World War II Jeep made by Willys. More than 600,000 of these solid workhorses were made and many were sold off as surplus after the war. A farming family from Stow had been using the Jeep as a small tractor when Warchol first noticed it languishing unused in a field in 1984.

Warchol tried to persuade the family to sell it to him on and off for 17 years, and in 2001, the family finally decided that they had no further use for it. Warchol worked nights and weekends for 30 months to restore the Jeep, and paired it with a rare example of a 1942 trailer that he already owned and used for hauling household trash.

"There are pre-war vehicles and post-war vehicles. This is what they made during the war and it's only right that it's here," Warchol said.

Other cars, such as the 1930 Ford Model A, owned by collector and restorer Gene Bunce of Stow, are still in demand by filmmakers seeking authenticity. Bunce's car, one of seven that he owns, is booked for filming at Harvard Square in late July.



Courtesy photos by Geoff Moore

**Above: Gene Bunce of Stow shows off his 1930 Model A Ford at the 23rd annual Historic New England Antique Auto Show at the Codman Estate in Lincoln on July 15.**

**Below: The New Liberty Jazz Band performs while sitting atop their 1941 Ford Fire Tender.**

