



The 2018 Los Angeles Lit Meet Weekend

By Prescott Kelly

Early March saw the 35th installation of “The Lit Meet” come off at the Hilton Hotel on Century Boulevard by the Los Angeles airport. Home of the swap meet for the last 25 years, the LAX Hilton has been a superb partner. With family ownership, long-term staff and excellent facilities, notably the two huge ballrooms adjacent to each other, the hotel is almost ideal.

2018 saw organizer Bruce Schwartz aka Stoddard NLA line up even more “week before” activities. The bus tours expanded in 2018 with selections for Thursday, Friday and Saturday. They were VERY popular.

Aside from the shops and dealers, Bruce added tours to the Peterson Museum for the “Porsche Effect” exhibition. The ticket included a guided tour to the “vault” aka basement – tough to get and has to be scheduled in advance – where 20 of the 50 Porsches are displayed.

Thursday had tours to the Peterson in the morning and to the Sierra Madre Collection in the afternoon. A second tour covered TRE Motorsports, followed by John Esposito’s, and then also ended up at Sierra Madre. On Friday the Peterson tour paired with an afternoon visit to the dealer showroom of the Beverly Hills Car Club. The second tour on Friday was a virtual marathon through Tony Callas’s race and repair shop, Klasse 356 with artist Nicolas Hunziker, then Steve Hogue Fabrications, followed by John Willhoit Restorations, and lastly Pelican Parts. The Saturday tour was scheduled for the afternoon, after the Lit Meet wound up and headed to Costa Mesa to visit Porsche South Bay, then Paul Kramer’s Auto Kennel dealership, Henk Baar’s CarparcUSA dealership and restoration shop, Jim Liberty’s shop, and finally European Collectibles for their open house. One sure thing is that no one went hungry – the food spreads were reported to be excellent.

The Lit Meet itself stayed right on course. The 315 tables were all sold. The “early bird” crush of shoppers got even bigger this year, while the cheap tickets for 9 a.m. entry held even. Versus just six years ago, the numbers have reversed with the early birds now making up the majority of the total gate. Be early or be left out seems to be the new norm.

Vendors reported that business was excellent. One trend moving up is that more people are shopping for material and parts to go with their cars, while the number of outright collectors of Porsche literature, toys, and Factory gift items is declining. Shoppers certainly had a lot to choose from. Some of the biggest buyers were Europeans, both collectors and dealers, who were there to use the newly strong Euro to their advantage. Based on our visits to those dealers at their stands at Essen Techno Classica and Stuttgart Retro Classic, prices in Europe are so much higher than here that the cost of a buying trip to LA is a rounding error.

The Lit Meet is back on for 2019 at the same weekend and the same place. Mark down March 2, 2019 and come prepared to spend the week.

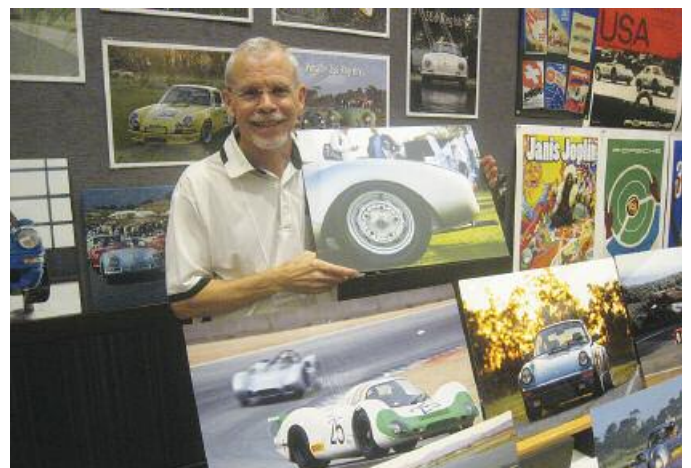
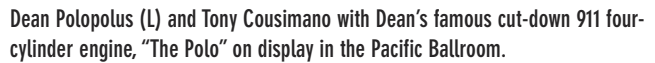


These winsome young ladies were hired by the Netherlands’ Mark Wegh to pass out lit about a huge open house and swap meet at his Porsche dealership back home. American attendance should be up.

Above right: Sean Cridland and his delightful wife, Sandra One-Feather attended to introduce (and sell out the local supplies of) Hurley’s and Sean’s brand new book, *Hurley From the Beginning*.

Right: “Da new boss”, Bruce Schwartz still smiling on Sunday – all went so well that he could relax.



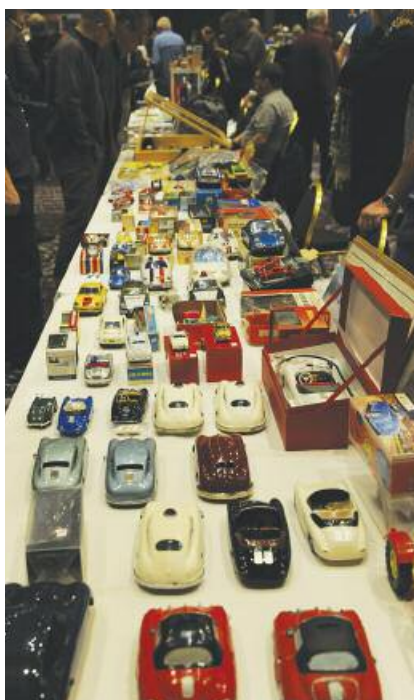




John Hearn photos



From top left: Mike DeJong and his crew had a big display of 356 and 911 sheetmetal. Dick Douglass was our 356 Registry ambassador, welcoming members and promoting the club at the Lit Meet and Sunday Swap. Hurley Haywood signed his new book, which was delivered from the printer just before the show opened.



Anything you needed, or didn't even know you needed, from a vintage toy car or a Porsche tie to a tiny 356 engine or refurbished gauges for your car - it was all available at the Lit Meet and Anaheim Swap Meet.



Open Houses - Thursday, Friday, Saturday

The vendor displays and open houses have expanded into pop-up car shows, new product intros, technical demos and of course, food extravaganzas! The number of open shops has increased to the point where you

have to carefully plan your schedule to see them all. At least fourteen race shops, restoration facilities, parts vendors, specialty manufacturers, museums and car dealers opened their doors to Porsche enthusiasts. Many out-of town visitors made special arrangements for visits to other shops as well. It was a busy week for L.A. Porsche folks. **GM**



Above and right: Steve Hogue's shop is the place to see what's under the skin of Porsches and other exotics.

Far right: At Sierra Madre Collection, the streets were filled with Porsches on display. **Top right:** Tony Callas (right) offered several informative seminars at his shop, in addition to the usual stellar display of race and exotic Porsches on display.



Private parties and special tours were scattered over the week leading up to the Lit Meet. Larry Markham hosted a group for dinner at his shop including the Registry trustees. At left, treasurer Fred Nielsen and president Curt Dansby chat with Jim Brezeale, who holds one of Larry's signature oil filter beer steins.



Open Houses - Thursday, Friday, Saturday

Jackets and sweaters were in order but the weather didn't prevent anyone from making the rounds - and Stoddard made it easy. For the second year they offered bus service to various open houses, along with a special route that included a visit to the Petersen Museum for The Porsche Effect show. The buses were booked solid, giving visitors a chance to get around without having to deal with rental cars and Los Angeles traffic.

At left, the van makes a stop at John Willhoit's where the traditional brat lunch was ready. There were also some great finished cars on display, plus engines and a few "in the process" projects.



John Willhoit took a break from chatting to have a Brat. His open house was as busy as ever, despite the damp weather.



On Saturday just after the Lit Meet wound down, the Registry trustees hosted members at an open meeting at the LAX Hilton. New trustees Gerald McCormick and Jim Johnston greeted members all weekend long.



European Collectibles is traditionally the "wind up" to the open house circuit on Saturday evening in Newport Beach. Nick Clemence and his crew had food trucks on duty. Nobody goes away hungry unless they're on a strict Kale and Tofu diet.

Below: Projects in their shop.



Anaheim Swap

The Phoenix Club rocks with Porsches, parts and people on Sunday morning.



The 356 Club of Southern California has this gig down. Held at the Phoenix Club in Anaheim for the tenth year, the crowds and the cars were as good as ever and the sun even shined! The usual vendors anchored the Festhalle tent and surrounding areas, and a casual glance around the parking lot would indicate that much of the same old stuff was on offer. However, you never know - and some rare and unusual bits and pieces changed hands.

For those who only troll eBay or buy their Porsche parts from a screen image, getting up close and personal with this stuff can be a revelation. And then there are the people. The Porsche world is filled with characters and this is a great place to meet some of them over a Bitburger and some German potato salad, in between your trips up and down the vendor aisles. And there are a hundred or more "conversation starters" parked all around the area.

Congratulations to Trevor Gates and all the 356 Club members who worked so hard to make this happen. Plan to attend in March, 2019!



Patrick Long, Porsche Factory driver was up early Sunday to check out the action. Jeff Trask, who passed away last winter, was remembered as a spark plug of the club for many years. Ron Thomas of Aase Sales and Bruce Schwartz of Stoddard compare notes.



Walking shoes were a good idea in order to take in all the vendors spread out around the Phoenix Club grounds. From small trinkets and accessories to mechanical parts and whole (or almost whole) cars, there was a lot to see.



Far right: From an old Carrera to a newly built (and interestingly painted) Singer, the car show was fun.

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*Phoenix Club,
continued.
John Hearn photos*

"I went to a swap meet and a car show broke out."



"I went to a swap meet and a car show broke out." It's been building over the years, and with encouragement from the organizers, who offer \$20 Porsche parking on the grounds (bring your friends, they don't have to hide in the trunk like at the drive-in), the place is full of P-cars of all types. And as the first big event on the SoCal spring calendar, there are some just-finished or just-unearthed-over-the-winter vehicles that get to make their debut.

It's definitely not a concours, so owners of less-than-pristine cars don't feel too threatened and you'll see some "charmingly patinaed" old dogs. There are always some outstanding, pristine rides, too. It's the whole gamut of condition and all Porsche models.

Selling a car? Bring it in! There's no restriction about a for sale sign on your windshield, benefitting both buyers and sellers.

Among the acres of Porsches every once in a while you'll see a "what were they thinking?" car, but there are even more that stop you in your tracks to take a second, admiring look. This is especially true among the growing rank of Outlaws. It's not strictly a 356 thing anymore, but the majority of those one-offs do seem to be from the pre-1965 era. For anyone who scoffs at the practice, consider that most of these bad boys are built from well-worn tubs that once teetered on the edge of being salvageable. That they survive and thrive is a testament those who had a vision and made it happen. From mild to wild to outrageous, the Outlaws are here, they're in your face and they're strutting their stuff. There seem to be so many, it makes you wonder; is anybody *not* building an Outlaw? **GM** 🚗



A special mention: John Sarkisyan built not only a 356 but a 912 Outlaw, in seven months, no less. His approach to trim is unlike anyone else's: quilted leather in the engine bay? Tooled copper trim? Outrageous!

