

HAROLD WELLENBRINK

Pioneer - Collector and Restoration - Inducted 2009



Harold in the Meteor Convertible (Keith Warren collection)

By Dave Pearson and Keith Warren

Harold was born and raised and worked on the family farm in the Comox Valley. Like so many young men of the era, Harold was car crazy. At the age of 17, Harold bought his first car, a 1947 Monarch, previously driven by the Lieutenant Governor's wife; Harold promptly blew the engine and traded it for a 1950 Plymouth which he customized. Following the 1950 Plymouth, he owned a customized 1955 Plymouth.

Harold came to Vancouver and started a job with BC Telephone Company that developed into a 35 year career. Along with the new job came a new car, a pink and black 1956 Plymouth and some club memberships. Harold joined the Westrods, the Counts and was among the first members of the British Columbia Hot Rod Association (BCHRA).

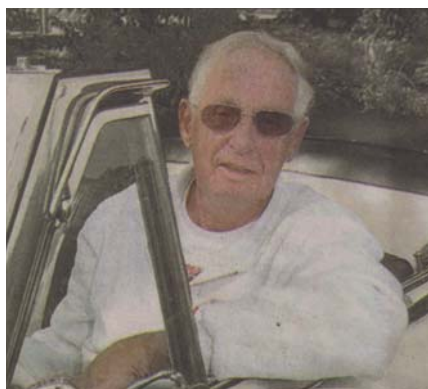
As well as joining car clubs and becoming increasingly involved in the car hobby, Harold was working away on customizing his pink and black '56 Plymouth which went on to win "Lady's Choice" at the 1957 BCCCA Pacific International Motorama.

Harold met and married his wife Myrna and took a little time away from cars to raise two children but by 1985, the bug bit again. Harold purchased a 1963 Olds convertible

which he owned for 18 years. Then it was on to a 1930 Chev coupe that he restored. The '30 Chev won many awards in both Canada and the US and is now displayed in the Calgary Heritage Museum. He followed the Chev with a Merc four-door sedan with 24,000 original miles.

Perhaps the best known of Harold's cars is his 1952 blue Meteor convertible, *Cool blue*. *Cool Blue* had a customized paint job, a souped-up flat head and, along with appearing in many magazines and newspapers, was featured in the 2003 ICBC calendar as the December car of the month.

In the past years, Harold has served on many boards and committees, and worked tirelessly with car clubs towards both the enjoyment and improvement of the car



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hobby. To list a few of Harold's affiliations: Totem A & T, treasurer and director for five years of a twenty year membership. Early Ford V8, president for four years, and for the past four years, before resigning to become president of the Speciality Vehicle Association of British Columbia (SVABC), President of the current BCHRA.

Harold also has quite a talent for restoring gas pumps, air meters, oil containers and other auto memorabilia. A number of these items are housed in a replica service station located in the rear yard of his home. This collection has been featured on Red Robinson's Classic Theatre and CBC's "Weird Homes". Harold and Myrna are known throughout the lower mainland car community for their hospitality in sharing their wonderful collection with other hobbyists.

At this writing, Harold is as busy as ever. He is the current president of the SVABC and continues to work towards broadening and preserving the use and enjoyment of vintage and collector plated vehicles.