

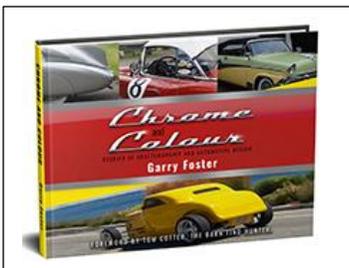
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Old Autos

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 FOR THE ENTHUSIAST

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Chrome and Colour
 Written by Garry Foster
 Published by Enlightened
 Communications
 Hardcover - 10-1/2 X 8-1/2 - 197 pages -
 approx. 300 colour photos, plus some
 period black & white
 ISBN: 978-1-7775618-0-2
 \$59.00 CAN

Book Review by Norm Mort

Like most of us who subscribe to Old Autos, Garry Foster has been a car enthusiast all his life, and has enjoyed, rebuilt, owned, and driven the vehicles we love on a daily basis over the decades. Vintage cars and trucks often lead keen enthusiasts into businesses or writing to further embrace the hobby and such was the case for Garry Foster.

In the new millennium Victoria, British Columbia resident Garry Foster found his passion for old vehicles was further heightened by writing and photographing them which led to these stories being published in magazines in Canada, and some in the US, Europe and Australia.

It's always great to hear about fellow Canadians who has published a book and here's one that covers nearly all the bases imaginable for car and truck enthusiasts. The vast majority of the book is about Canadians and their automotive or truck loves. And Garry's stories are as much about the people as they are the vehicles they collect. As Garry Foster points out, Jay Leno was so correct in his truism, "Sometimes the story is as good as the car itself."

The lively Introduction to Garry Foster's book "Chrome and Colour" was written by vintage vehicle seller and buyer Tom Cotter, who has also authored the, "In the Barn" book series, which I have reviewed here in the past, as well as being the host of, "The Barn Find Hunter" television show.

Whether you are a Dodge, Plymouth, Chevy, Oldsmobile or Ford fan, a car or truck enthusiast—or a foreign car buff like me—you'll find a great story between the hardcovers of this impressive volume. Garry Foster's first car was a British-built, 1953 Ford Consul which is included in the book as part of his own story. Other foreign cars consist of a rare 1950 Austin A40 two-door Dorset painted a bright orange and now powered by a Chevy, 327ci V8. This dragstrip "Gasser" comes with a straight axle and extended rear shackles, among other beefed-up performance-oriented items. Another is a 1000-plus horsepower new style Mini Cooper drag car powered by twin electric motors.

As well, for those who prefer their off-shore cars in purely stock form, there's a great chapter on a seldom ever seen air-cooled, rear-mounted, V8 Czechoslovakian Tatra. Truck fans will enjoy the why and how behind a 1957 GMC pickup that was purchased in February 2003 which also relates the specs and history of these popular trucks.

Americana car enthusiasts will revel in the detailed histories, personal stories, and background information on mainly fifties and sixties Corvettes, numerous muscle cars, and a selection of drag machines and street rods accompanied by great colour shots.

One of my favourite stories is about a daughter who inherited a Ford Mustang Shelby 428ci Cobra Jet. She was obviously a huge and appreciative fan, as she also has a sixties Mustang convertible in her garage today. Interestingly enough, another inheritance story that I thoroughly enjoyed was a chapter on what happens when an 8-year-old boy inherits a highly-modified collector car in the form of a 1926 Essex Coach. We read it was his Grandma who comes to the rescue and completes the half-finished project into an eye-catching, low-riding, orange street machine. Another personal favourite from strictly a car point-of-view, focuses on a 1969 Barracuda two-door hardtop modified-up to very modern specs motoring. A very different tale surrounds the Saanich Police Dragster Program and police staff sergeant Doug Oakley's who loves flashing lights -especially at the dragstrip. His racing drive is a 1995 Chevrolet Caprice powered by a bored out 454ci V8 to an even larger 489 cubic inches.

While twenty of the stories focus on individual vehicles the last four centre on a variety of spectacular collector vehicles, events, a Corvette tour, a major rod show and an enthusiast's vast and varied collection.

Along the way, Garry Foster spoke with many of the icons of the custom car and hot rod world including the late George Barris, Chip Foose, Gene Windfield and others.

"Chrome And Colour," is a lavish hardcover volume published by Garry Fosters' own company Enlightened Communications.

It is printed on high quality paper and thus the colour reproduction is first rate. Not inexpensive, this highly enjoyable, Canadian printed book is coffee table in appearance and quality yet chalk full of great memories and vintage vehicles.

Enjoy the Canadian ride! NM