

Kicking Tires

Photos by Shirley Sponholtz

In this issue we are featuring trucks that appeared at the 2009 ATHS truck show in Huntsville, AL. Send your old

truck photo(s), to Old Time Trucks, Attn: Kicking Tires, PO Box 1116, Richmond, IN 47375-1116.



Michael Ploch of Oxford, CT, said, "This truck is so ugly, it's cool." His 1957 Mack H-67 is definitely not the kind of truck you see every day. Michael restored it more than ten years ago and has been having fun with it ever since. The Mack is powered by a 711 non-turbo diesel engine with a Duplex 5 X 2 transmission. It is equipped with spring ride suspension and an integral sleeper.



Michael Ploch also owns this 1966 GMC cracker box. It was originally owned by Birkmire Trucking of Erie, PA, and Michael bought it from Gary Little. The GMC is powered by a 671 Detroit Diesel engine with a 10-speed transmission, Reyco suspension, tandem drive, and spoke wheels. It pulls a 1960 30-ft Kalyn flat bed trailer that Michael purchased in Pennsylvania.



This 1919 Atlas 3/4-ton stake bed truck is owned by Michael Knaub of Wrightsville, PA. The truck was built in York, PA, by the Martin-Perry Company, who sold 740 trucks in 1919 and built bodies for the Ford Model T. In 1922 the company merged with Selden, and the Selden name supplanted Atlas.

Restoring his Atlas truck was not an easy task. Starting with the frame, Michael restored and rebuilt the woodwork himself, but had the metal work and paint done by others. He based the truck's paint scheme on old Atlas sales literature. Fully functional, the truck is powered by a Lycoming engine.

The little boy on the far right of the photo seems to think that David Denney's 1975 Dodge Bighorn is a pretty impressive truck—worth a second look, anyway. The Bighorn came from Colorado to Augusta, GA, before going home with David to Lebanon, TN. Except for the air-ride suspension that David installed, the truck is stock. It is powered by a 290 Cummins engine with a 13-speed transmission and 38,000-lb rears. Still licensed and insured, the truck pulls a dump or flat bed trailer "on pretty days" all around Tennessee.



As you might guess just by looking at it, this 1951 Chevrolet COE is mostly original. Owned by Terry Steagall of Murfreesboro, TN, the truck has been used very extensively on a regular basis. It started out as a farm truck and many years later was converted to a steel flat bed dump truck with a winch. When Terry first saw it, the name "Big Ugly" seemed to fit the Chevrolet, and that's been its name ever since. He had originally planned to make a car hauler out of the truck, but he uses it too much to take it apart. Big Ugly hauls cars, trucks, machinery, rocks, junk, and building material on a regular basis. Terry likes COEs and has 15 more of them.

Auctions can get a guy in trouble, even when he goes to one without much money. This innocent looking 1974 Kenworth K-100 was almost the cause for a divorce after Donnie King of Crossville, TN, bought it at an estate auction. Even though Donnie didn't have much money with him, his friend did—what are friends for, if not to help you buy an old truck? Things settled down after a bit, though, and Donnie's wife ended up helping him get the truck cleaned up. Donnie is the second owner of the Kenworth, which had been left to sit for many years before it was auctioned in Cookeville, TN. After doing some weeding, cleaning, buffing, and frame painting, Donnie and his wife had the Kenworth ready for some truck shows. Except for cleaning it up and replacing the mufflers with straight pipes, Donnie has kept the Kenworth in original condition.

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Tony Martin of Elmore, AL, has put about 150,000 miles on his 1973 Kenworth K-125 since restoring it in the mid-1990s. His father Archie bought the truck new to haul livestock from the Southeast to the West, replacing his 1966 Mack F-model. In 1980 his father decided to get out of trucking and sold the Kenworth to a friend. The truck passed to several other owners in the area until 1994, when Tony saw it parked by the road with a "For Sale" sign in the window. It looked very neglected, so Tony bought it and brought it home. He replaced or rebuilt almost everything on the truck, which now has an NTC 350 Cummins engine, RTO-12513, and SQHD 3.70 ratio on Reyco suspension. Tony also added an air cleaner and extended the wheelbase 45 inches. After Tony restored it, the Kenworth became the spare truck in the livestock hauling business.



Also owned by Tony Martin is this 1978 Peterbilt 359, which runs almost 100,000 miles per year. He bought it in the mid-1980s with a bad engine. He repaired it and put it to work hauling produce and general freight at first, but later removed the sleeper and installed a dump bed and lift axle. When business slowed down, he removed the dump, put the sleeper back on, and used the Peterbilt to haul livestock. Tony decided to repower the truck with a 1995 60-series Detroit engine. The original aluminum frame broke in 2003, so Tony parked the Peterbilt until 2005, when he began rebuilding it from a bare steel frame. The front axle, cab, sleeper, fuel tanks, steps, and radiator are from the original truck. The frame and hood came from a 1979 model, and other parts came from many sources. By Spring 2006 the Pete was hauling sand, rock, and fertilizer throughout the Southeast. Two years later Tony built a new 14-liter, 575-hp Detroit engine for it from a bare block. It is equipped with a 15-speed overdrive transmission and 3.55 ratio SQ100 on Peterbilt air leaf suspension. The truck still runs daily, and Tony hopes to use it for a long time to come.



Purchased new by Balstat Trucking in Kinierm, IA, this 1964 International DCOF 405 Emeryville truck ran cattle to Chicago and steel back to the Midwest. Then for several years it worked on a farm until Bill Glawe of Dana, IA, bought it. He restored it in 1999 and has taken the International to many truck shows. Bill said, "It's not fancy, but it's functional." Completing the handsome rig is a 1973 Timpte 40-ft outside rail flat bed trailer.

Stars fell on Alabama last night

Photos on this page are nighttime shots taken at the 2009 AHS truck show in Huntsville, AL. Thanks to members of the AHS Mason-Dixon Chapter who helped me by lighting up their trucks for my photos.—Shirley Sponholtz

