

THE POWERS THAT BE



PRESENTING OUR SECOND EXCLUSIVE LISTING OF THE 25 MOST INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE IN THE COLLECTOR CAR WORLD.

BY PETER FREY

**H**ow do you judge the ebb and flow of power, especially in so short a span of time as a year? Power is usually a mere quantitative thing, but then again, the past few years have been an experiment in what happens when too many fingers on the fast-forward button.

After being driven sky-high by speculators a few years ago, prices have since returned to their levels. Enthusiasts are now keeping the market alive, and because of the ensuing world-wide economic crisis, they have their pick of incredible deals. Overall, the trend is toward smaller deals involving cars that people can drive—both street cars and vintage racing automobiles. Of course, big deals still happen, but they are fewer and farther between.

Like the industry, one of the most influential people is changing. Some auctioneers, bankers, and collectors remain, but some are rising—and dropping off the earth or cast from the following of cars, but simply changing and the time "round to gather their strength and let

some new names see the light. Such is the ebb and flow of power in this year of discovery.

In such an uncertain time, choosing a list such as this is a delicate matter. Lacking consensus, we judge in human terms—the action, or the lack of it, by the magnitude of a project begun or accomplished, and, at times, by small or things an incremental movement up or down, judged by a jury of peers, worth exchanging



TOP LEFT: Steve Friedman is work behind the scenes to make his 1967 Mustang coupe a centerpiece of his collection. BOTTOM: Bob Miller (left) and Chip Miller (right) spent significant time and money on the 1937 Buick Wildcat in recent years.

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**1993**

above a thousand miles of telephone lines, locking someone's fate.

The goal is a list of 25 of the most powerful people currently operating in the field of old cars. The criteria: Money is not enough, nor is a warm house full of the finest examples of the art. Rather, we have judged power as the combination of activity, knowledge, connections, passion, and the ability to make things happen. Looking back last year, we have chosen "people who—through, through, work, and think—their titles and careers of power."

You'll notice some changes in the presentation of this year's list. For example, there are more auctions, collectors, made up of several individuals—that we've decided to cover as one, having particular cases it is not a single individual but the sum of various individuals' efforts that yields power. We've also added the Executive Director of the show having been held by several people on last year's list that there is just as much of the world and action that there is one additional change: Last year we let the alphabet decide who were there. Our information-gathering mechanism was still too new to trust with the task of ranking the 25 most powerful—and it still is, though you'll notice that this year around the names are no longer ordered by the alphabet. We're not nearly ready to stand up in front of the world and declare that this is the order in which power proceeds. Instead, we do this. We submit among ourselves and several names around. We submit to experts around the world and moved the names around some more. And when the talking was done and the deadline upon us, this is the order the names were in.

Two buyers and a seller a piece for you? Write a letter, and maybe next year, when the time comes to compile this list, we'll call you and ask your advice. Until then, here's how we see it.



Don Williams is an auctioneer and collector of classic cars. He is also the Executive Director of the Monterey Historic Races.



Tom Barrett is the Executive Director of the Monterey Historic Races.

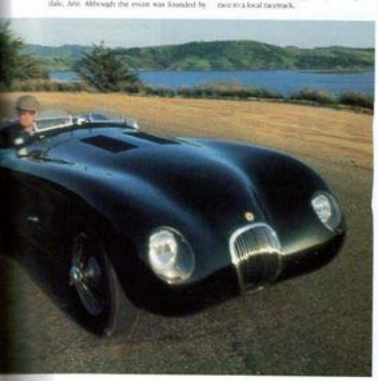
**DON WILLIAMS**  
North Hollywood, California  
By virtue of his constant innovation, "crazy" travel, worldwide deal-making, and involvement at the most respected heights of the world of megabuck cars, Don Williams has earned a spot at the head of the parade. In 1992, Williams (and his Blackhawk Collection team) bought and sold tens of millions of dollars worth of classic cars. In addition, he staged four major "value" events, in which he gathered together some of the world's greatest classic and truck shows on the road, elegantly displaying them to enthusiasts and potential buyers in various locales around the world. This year he's planning four to six such events. He's also recently opened a multi-million-dollar showroom for the classic of the Blackhawk group, bought (with Rich Cole's) a Bugatti Royale for an estimated \$10 million, and put together a complete deal that resulted in the sale of the famed 1939 Bentley "Blue Train" for around \$3 million.

**BOB COLE**  
MARTY YAKOVLEV SR. AND JIL  
North Hollywood, California  
The ultimate confidence, brains, money, experience, and nerve you want to impress and manage car auction company are the best. Cole is the high-profile auctioneer, promoter, or whose annual Gold and Platinum lists both short and create trends in classic-collecting vehicle sales. The Volvo 460 and J. do their deals behind the scenes on the backstage side.

of the business. Their auctions (in 1992, with plans for eight for 1993) help set the value and sign of the market. In his spare time Cole, Bob and Jil are organizing a world-class professional race car to be held in Reno, Nevada. What's more, Cole and the Volvo team are working on a plan to merge their firm with another group operating in the classic car field, which would create a sort of classic-collectible car superpower. When do these guys last time to sleep?

**BRUNO JACKSON**  
CLARE JACKSON  
Sanford, Florida  
You can see the Jackson brothers in action each January at the prestigious Barrett-Jackson Auction, held just outside Scottsdale, Ariz. Although the event was founded by

Tom Barrett, the grand old man of classic cars, and father Bruno Jackson, who has been another for years, Craig and Brian have assumed much of the day-to-day operation of the annual event, and will eventually take over complete control, probably sooner than later. In the meantime, their auctions will take place simultaneously. Can will be auctioned all the days January 20 to 24, 200 vintage and racing motorcycles will be auctioned on the weekend, and an antique automotive car auction will take place on holiday weekends under way. Craig is working on a side-line show called Auto Classics that he's planning to several major cities around the world, and Brian has just been named to the board of the Antique Motors and Mechanics League, an association determined to bring a major storage car race to a local track.



Bob Cole is an auctioneer and collector of classic cars. He is also the Executive Director of the Monterey Historic Races.

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**THEORA W. BARRITT III**  
Sanford, Florida  
After 47 years in the business, Tom Barrett's suggestions are on nearly every major classic car in existence. He was the first person to auction a car for more than \$100,000, an act that transformed the classic car hobby into a hot new lifestyle overnight and earned him not just a permanent spot at the head of the parade, but his own wing in the classic car hall of fame. You'd think nearly half a century of work would have brought him a cruise through the golden years, but he's still on the phone every day and made clear to us in 1992. In addition, he realized a dream last year when he stepped to Classic and Vintage Car Center in the heart of Beverly Hills. The facility, run by Barrett's nephew, Gary O'Neil, has a showroom that holds about 15 cars, a like number that can be stored underground. In some respects, the place is indicative of Barrett's life. "I've never missed an opportunity. I just get around to some later than others."

**RICHE CLINE**  
Las Vegas, Nevada  
The Cline is head of the Antique and Classic Auto Collection at the National Palace Hotel in Las Vegas, where 70 of the best classics in the world are viewed by hundreds of thousands of people every year. New developments at the Imperial Palace include a display of historically significant vehicles belonging to former U.S. presidents, and the opening of a 100,000-square-foot showroom where cars that are suitable for the collector will be sold. Cline is also a partner with Don Williams in a series of projects, including the World Classic Expo Series, a trading show of classic cars for sale, and The Auction, a major classic car auction held each November in Las Vegas. One of Cline's most interesting, but somewhat controversial, endeavors is with the Nevada Correctional Facility in Indian Springs. Some of the facility's inmates are working cars for the Imperial Palace Collection, and learning a trade for when they get out—so that they can better than come.

**LOREN TROEN**  
JULIE HUBMAN  
Palo Alto, California  
A vintage demands absolute. In the world of classic and collector cars, there must be an individual

who is the most powerful, as well as an event that is the most powerful. We've suggested that Don Williams may be the former, and there is little doubt that the Pebble Beach Concours of Elegance is the latter. His influence has increased over the years due to the addition of the Monterey Historic Races and several other major auctions which take place in the same general area on the same specific weekend each August, but even stripped of all that, Pebble Beach is still the all-powerful, semi-benevolent patriarch of the classic car world. And of all the hundreds of people involved in staging the event, co-chairmen Loren Troen and Julie Hubman still lead the parade, as they've been doing for two decades. Despite the economy, 1992 was the biggest and most successful year that Pebble Beach has ever had. The cars are the best in the event, and these are the two men who've staged it.

**STEVEN J. EARLE**  
San Francisco, California  
It's no small achievement to create a forum in which the hardware of history can perform the task for which it was designed and there is developing that forum into bigger and better institutions every year for 20 years. Visually, the thing you see, Cole, work to improve, not, but who work under his eye see a future of which you care to be part. This August marks the 20th year of being Earl's vision—the Monterey Historic Races, where 340 historic racing cars from around the world compete for two days at Laguna Seca Raceway in Monterey, Calif. This year the race expands to Japan, where Earl's Green Racing Ltd. and Club Japan will translate the Monterey Historic Races to Japan. The inaugural event will take place May 5-8 at the Tsukuba International Raceway in Tsukuba, some 100 miles from the United States but near five hours' drive from a world-class weight—can he decide to do it next year. Tough job.

**CHIP MILLER**  
DILL MILLER  
Culver City, California  
By selling two decades ago with a show called "Prestige '74," Miller (with father and Bob Miller (see right))



Bob Miller is an auctioneer and collector of classic cars. He is also the Executive Director of the Monterey Historic Races.

LEFT: One of the most colorful people in the collector car world is Tom Barrett, Executive Director of the Monterey Historic Races. TOP: Steve Friedman is work behind the scenes to make his 1967 Mustang coupe a centerpiece of his collection. BOTTOM: Bob Miller (left) and Chip Miller (right) spent significant time and money on the 1937 Buick Wildcat in recent years.