When Tail Fins Where King
Inspired by the Jet Age

“The first tail fins, and the ones that followed for several years, were a response to America's post-war fascination with the jet age,” said Jeff Leestma, president of the Automotive Hall of Fame. “At that point, air travel had evolved from using propellers to jet engines, and everyone was fascinated with this new jet age. And the stylists at the car companies, particularly at General Motors and Chrysler, really embraced that sensibility in terms of their designs.”

General Motors design chief Harley Earl is generally credited for the automobile tailfin, introducing small fins on the 1948 Cadillac. Harley credited the look of World War II fighter aircraft for his inspiration, particularly the twin-tailed P-38 Lightning. As jet-powered aircraft, rockets, and space flight entered into public recognition, the automotive tailfin assemblies (including tail lights) were designed to resemble more and more the tailfin and engine sections of contemporary jet fighters and space rockets.

The Cadillac 1948 fin styling proved popular and its use spread to other models in the General Motors family of brands. Soon it was adopted by other manufacturers; Chrysler’s Virgil Exner in particular took the tailfin idea on board. As confidence grew in the styling trend, the fins grew larger and bolder.

The most extreme tailfins appeared in the late 1950s. The fins on the 1959 Cadillac Eldorado were the largest and most outrageous ever fitted on a production car. Those fins were too much for many customers, however, and the tailfins shrunk after that point. Within a couple of years, tailfins had become much less prominent, and by the mid 1960s, they were gone on many models.

Credit to wikipedia for above info

1960 Cadillac Coupe DeVille 1960 Buick Le Sabre 1961 Chrysler 300G Convertible

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The tail-fin trend was clearly fueled by one-upmanship, as General Motors and Chrysler locked themselves into an “arms race” of sorts to see who could bring the biggest, most dashing, most attention-getting tail fins to market. “The heads of the design teams -- Harley Earl and Bill Mitchell at GM, and Virgil Exner at Chrysler -- clearly tried to out-do each other, year after year, to see who could wow the public with the next, biggest, sharpest tail fin,” Leestma pointed out.

Not that Ford was lacking in tail fins -- remember the original ‘56 T-Bird, after all. And some of the T-birds from ‘61-’62 also employed design elements that took their cues from jet aircraft.

“But, generally, the big tail fins wasn’t a direction Ford wanted to focus on, not like GM and Chrysler,” Leestma reported. But, other carmakers of the era also participated. One vehicle on display at Fabulous Fins, the aforementioned Packard Hawk, had a pretty good-sized set of fins on it, proportionally speaking, when you consider the smaller size of the vehicle.

The tailfin era of automobile styling encompassed the 1950s and 1960s, peaking between 1957 and 1960. It was a style that spread worldwide, as car designers picked up styling trends from the US automobile industry where it was the golden epoch of American autodesign.

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1959 Pontiac Bonneville Vista
1957 Ford Thunderbird Convertible
1960 Chrysler Imperial
Taking hold in the 1940’s, many Americans became infatuated with British sports cars imported to the USA. Typically known for their small size and finicky maintenance needs, a large section of passionate enthusiasts in the collector car world keep the British car legacy alive. Triumph, MG, Austin Healy, and Jaguar are all iconic brands known by all collectors. These cars represent some of the most beautifully styled cars ever built and are instantly recognizable by all who love them.

Over the last seven years, we have sold quite a few very nice, restored British imports to clients here in the USA and back to Europe. If you are looking for one of these cars or have one you would like to sell, please email us your information to sales@mjcclassiccars.com. We have had great success selling these cars on consignment for many clients.

**The Love for The Brits**

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- 1958 Jaguar XK150
- 1948 MG TC
- 1962 Austin Healey Mark II
- 1970 Jaguar XKE Roadster
- 1958 MG MGA Convertible
- 1974 Triumph TR6
- 1968 Aston Martin DBS
- 1974 Jensen Healey
- 1964 MG MGB
Since we began in 2007, we have always taken the business approach that our clients want their vehicle to arrive ready to drive. We want the excited client to receive their new purchase, gas it up and take it for a drive.

The classic car business is typically a very different model. Most dealers buy their cars on the weekends at classic car auctions, wash them on Monday and advertise them on Tuesday. How they bought the car is how you buy it. In most instances, your new purchase from them arrives and goes to your repair shop to be fixed so it can be driven.

At MJC, we have a dedicated person in our ten man shop that does nothing but check in cars. Whether a consignment vehicle or one of our purchases, he completes a 100 point inspection, test drives the car, and pulls the wheels to inspect the brakes. All his list of needs, typically 15-30 fixes, are listed on our inspection form. This list follows the vehicle thru the different departments in our shop and is used as the checklist of repairs completed. Whether a consignment or owned car, our cars arrive ready to drive.

We sell our cars for slightly higher prices than buying from our competition, but our goal is for you to know what your investment will be, not a purchase with open ended repairs after arrival. We also know we can make these repairs with our expert staff at a lower cost than you paying retail at your local repair shop.

Please click the pix below and see the repair facility at our new location. We believe our new repair facility is the finest of any classic car dealer not taking in outside work. We only work on our own cars…
The 1970 Dodge Charger featured a large wraparound chrome bumper. The grill was no longer divided in the middle. New electric headlight doors replaced the old vacuum style. The tail lights were similar to those used in 1969, but 500 and R/T models came with a new more attractive taillight panel.

New “High Impact” colors were given names, such as Top Banana, Panther Pink, Sublime, Burnt Orange, Go Mango and Plum Crazy. Interior changes included new high-back bucket seats.

This 1968 Dodge Charger is a custom convertible with only 7,000 miles since completion. It is a creation of one envisioned but never built. High end, professional restoration with all proper bracing added to provide stability as the top was removed. A custom removable Carson top was built with easy bolt on/off for install or removal. This car has a gorgeous dual stage repaint in Plum Crazy purple metallic. Factory bucket seats in period correct White vinyl with console were added, along with new dash, door panels, carpet and headliner.

The car is equipped the rebuilt original 1972 440 V-8 engine and rebuilt 727 automatic transmission. Originally a 383 V-8 car.

When GM’s full-size cars were redesigned for 1971, the heavier-looking Eldorado regained both a convertible model and its fender skirts. In 1973 the Eldorado was removed from the Fleetwood series and reestablished as its own series.

In 1976, when other domestic convertibles had been discontinued, GM heavily promoted the American industry’s only remaining convertible as “the last American convertible”. 14,000 would be sold, many purchased as investments. The final 200 convertibles produced were designated as “Bicentennial Edition” commemorating America’s 200th birthday. These cars were white with a dual-color red/blue pinstripe along the upper bodyside. In 1983, when GM reintroduced convertibles.

The 1976 Cadillac Eldorado Convertible you see here has 19,000 original miles. This was one of the final full sized Eldorado’s from 1976. It is a rust free, 2 owner, lifetime Florida car.

New fiberglass bumper fillers have been installed both front & back. This car has mostly original paint in the factory Firemist Red. We just had an excellent repaint completed on the driver’s side due to paint chips and paint crazing. The remaining paint is original and in excellent condition. The remainder of this car is all original.

The Eldorado is equipped with the factory 500 cubic inch V-8 engine and automatic transmission.
Vehicle Storage Information

MJC CLASSIC CARS ANNOUNCES VEHICLE STORAGE OPPORTUNITY

We are expanding our warehouse space this month, adding another 23,000 square feet of warehouse space to store our inventory. This will increase our secure warehouse space to over 75,000 square feet of indoor operating space within our company.

With this extra space, we will now be offering storage for cars and trucks for up to thirty vehicles. Monthly storage rates are competitive and additional discounts apply for six month or twelve month commitments.

Cars are stored indoors, covered under monitored security systems and periodically started to assure they stay drivable. Your collector car insurance will allow this type of storage if notified.

Once pulled out of longer term storage, we can also refresh them for pickup or coordinate delivery to your desired location. Perfect for snowbirds looking for storage, while they are home up north in the off season. Or local owners can just get their garage space back.

If interested, please call Mike at (863) 944-8615 or email him at sales@mjcclassiccars.com for more information. This will be limited to thirty cars due to our own inventory needs.

To Consign Your Car

MJC Classic Cars has been selling not only our own cars, but vehicles for consigning clients. We’ve been able to consistently sell luxury cars, muscle cars, and custom hot rods for clients from all over the USA and Canada.

We only consign very nice vehicles, no rust buckets or projects. Our rule is we need to have the vehicle present for photographs here in Lakeland, Florida and can safely store the car until sold. We do not take off-site consignments as many cars are visited pre-sale by buyers and inspectors, so we limit consignments to cars that are with us.

MJC Classic Cars is an established company selling about 300 classics this year. We have found eBay, Hemmings Online, Classiccars Online and Autotrader Classics to be the most cost effective and result oriented places to advertise your car. Our website www.mjcclassiccars.com confirms the quality of the cars we sell to potential buyers.

Fees paid after we sell your car... Most consignment companies charge you up front and then ongoing marketing fees. We charge our selling fees after we sell your car. There are no storage fees or marketing fees paid during the selling period. We get paid when we perform.