



VOLUME 2, ISSUE 4

FOURTH QUARTER 2013

Published by the Henney Chapter, Professional Car Society, and dedicated to the history and products of the Henney Buggy Company and the Henney Motor Company

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# HENNEY PROGRAM OF PROGRESS

## Henney Chapter dinner successful

We tried something at the recently concluded International Meet in Milwaukee that had not been tried before: a special night designated for a Henney Chapter dinner. A partial view follows; these good folks all seem to be enjoy-

ing themselves, so we will try the idea again in the future. No doubt another Chapter will seize on the idea one fine evening, too. Topics were plentiful and it was a nice activity, we think. Good to see you all!



## On the cover: Henneys in ACTION!

Another shot from the boundless archives of Stan Ruff, these U.S. Navy ambulances assigned to the Naval Hospital in Seattle.

Unlike last time, where a Henney was picking up those wounded in a train wreck, we are afraid that the train is just fine, but the Henneys are there to take casualties off a troop train, or maybe just an ordinary train's baggage car. As to the nature of the casualties, we regret to say, that is a casket you can see being offloaded. The formation saluting pretty well

confirms this analysis.

The three ambulances suggest three deceased service members returning from overseas (presuming that others have not already departed). One deceased service member coming home is sad enough, but three at once is, of course, tragic for any community.

Military ambulances are different from their civilian counterparts, and some of those differences are evident in this photo. We'll discuss this further in an upcoming issue.

## THE HENNEY PROGRAM OF PROGRESS

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intervals by the Henney Chap-  
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## Are you on the list, brother?

It occurred to us recently, while recording some Henney numbers, that there may be some vehicles in this Chapter that have not been rostrified. Rostracized, if you prefer.

We all benefit from having a central data base on these cars; for one thing, it can reveal things previously unsuspected., like ownership chains that the current owner has been puzzling over for years. The roster data base also revealed that Henney ran off its flower cars in batches, which makes sense from a manufacturing-efficiency standpoint, once we start to think about it.

To get your Henney(s) on the roster, take a

moment and carefully transcribe the numbers off the Henney data plate (not the chassis maker's VIN plate. That plate is found on the passenger side, either under the bonnet, on the divider, on the mound, or for early cars, tacked to the floor under the mat (where of course, if the floor goes away, it goes away too). The plate information typically comprises engine, serial, body, model, and factory order numbers, plus for a hearse, mound and Leveldraulic numbers. Email the numbers you found to Dale Cole <dacole@wowway.com> or mail to him at 784 Wilwood, Rochester Hills MI 48309-2429.

## Postcard of the quarter



If this wasn't the dumbest...we've been planning to put this in the publication for some time. Someone at the postcard printer didn't have any idea what he/she was doing, just guessed at the spelling of Henney—and they issued this thing as you see it. We have two of these cards, both of them postmarked in the middle of 1913, so we're guessing that the card was current around May-June.



## On the tactical use of rubber tubing in your Henney

Okay, most of this advice applies to other cars too. But let's start with a Henney-specific part: on the 22nd-23rd Series cars, there is a long stud standing next to the front of the battery, on which you slide the clamp. Why it has to be so long we cannot say; perhaps they thought the owner would be using batteries from a war-surplus submarine or something. Point is, it's perilously close to the wiring for the hydraulic pump relay. You can give yourself lots of peace of mind by slipping a rubber vacuum hose down over that long screw.

Keeping electrical current going where's intended to go can be accomplished by judicious use of rubber hoses in other places, too. Sometimes you want vacuum hose, sometimes bigger (heater) hose. Such places include:

- The row of top terminals on voltage regulators
- A cable lying across a sharp metal edge (more common on prewar cars)

But electricity is just the beginning. Try these:

- Heater hose that crosses something sharp, like a generator or alternator bracket
- Gasoline filters that are too close to the exhaust manifold or exhaust pipe
- Gasoline lines that are too close to heat or which pass over sharp edges
- Even things like Bowden cables that rattle against a fender apron and irritate you

Except for the stud sleeve we covered first, these applications involve finding the right diameter hose, cutting it to length, slitting lengthwise, and slipping it over the appropriate part. And some of these applications are sacrificial, by which we mean, when the protective piece gets singed or worn, pull it and put a new one on. All these little hoses can be yanked off in a second if you care about approaching judges.

## More stories they tell around the campfire in Freeport

We guess this one is safe now. It involves Nuell Steinmetz, and how he came to head up Sales at our favorite coachbuilder.

The time was late 1936, and a customer had arrived to take delivery of his new 1936 Henney coach—we don't know what chassis make. As a part of making the fellow at home on his visit, they routinely offered a plant tour, and this fellow was on it.

In the course of the tour, they came upon this workman, hammering out a large panel on the press. The customer casually inquired what the fellow was doing.

Steinmetz hesitated. The panel the employee was making was the roof section for the 1937 "articulated roof" Henney was going to have. This type of roof superseded the fabric insert that had been common up to that time;

Henney did not have a press large enough to make an entire professional-car roof in one whack. Shoot, even the passenger-car makers were struggling to catch up with GM's "turret top," the one-piece roof that was eventually to overtake the car business. This new "articulated roof" was a half measure, a steel panel set in rubber, - but it was still a step ahead of the fabric Meritas insert used through 1936.

"I couldn't tell him what it was," Steinmetz told us years later. "He might have said, 'well then, never mind the 1936 I just ordered, I'll take a '37 instead to get that new metal roof.' So I said:

"He's stamping out door skins.":

The customer pondered that one for a few seconds, and was highly skeptical. "Looks awfully big for a door."

It's possible that panic was setting in by this time, but Steinmetz didn't let it show. "That will make two doors," he responded promptly. "We save money that way, stamping out two at a time." And THAT, the guy bought, at which point Steinmetz moved him on.

What he didn't know was that John Henney was standing right behind them the whole time. When the satisfied customer had paid for his new 1936 Henney and headed home, Henney summoned Steinmetz to his office. Steinmetz had no idea what to expect.

"I like a man who can think on his feet," said Henney. "I'm promoting you to sales." And shortly, to head of Sales, where he remained until the end.

## Emblems, revisited

In our first issue we ran an unusual Henney emblem, shown below, and invited speculation as to its origin. Hearing none, we guessed a little while back that it might have been used to replace the Oldsmobile emblem on a Progress.

Recently we found ourselves at the Goodguys spectacular show in Des Moines. Out of over 4000 cars attending, you might figure one of them would be a late-

thirties Oldsmobile, and there was—a 1937 six.

The emblem on the thing went a long way toward supporting the guess about the Henney emblem's being used to replace an Oldsmobile insignie. Now it obviously isn't an exact replacement, but the flavor is there, and we suspect that a little more searching, like, a year or two earlier, or a different part of a '37, or an eight-cylinder job, might produce an even better result..





## Technical: coolant recovery systems

Occasionally we see Henney owners who, in an effort to control overheating and/or coolant loss, have installed a coolant-recovery tank. This device is designed to catch whatever comes out the overflow tube, hold it, and put it back in the system when it cools.

We feel constrained to point out that there is not a single Henney which, if it is still equipped the way it left the factory, will benefit from such a device.

To begin with, these systems are designed with a special cap. An ordinary radiator cap is designed to hold pressure in one direction only, and it has a gasket only at the end of the piston. It is *not* capa-

ble of sealing against the back reaction when the coolant temperature goes down, so it will not be returning the overflow to the system through the overflow tube; air will come in instead, and the coolant that expanded and sent to the recovery bottle is just going to stay there. So you need that special cap that comes with the recovery system; it has a second sealing gasket at the top.

But then you run into the issue of neck depth. From the time the first Henney cars were fitted with a pressurized system in the early 1940s through the end in 1954, the radiator necks were all 1" deep. All the cars after that had a 3/4" neck; this means,

among other things, that the odds are pretty high that you are using a cap *right now* that does not even reach the bottom of the neck, so it isn't sealing anything (we found two more of them at the recently completed Packard Club National Meet in Pontiac). So it's a certainty that these coolant-recovery caps, all of them designed for a 3/4" neck, aren't going to function as designed on an original Henney radiator.

The only way to make use of these devices is to have your neighborhood radiator shop put a 3/4" neck on your old radiator. Sure they can; it's done all the time and we've updated a few Packard radiators that way so we don't

*There is not a single Henney which, if it is still equipped the way it left the factory, will benefit from a coolant-recovery system.*

have to look all over Christendom for 1" caps (the judges will never notice, if that's what you're thinking). Now you can use the new-design cap. That cap looks a little out of place, but then so does that bottle hanging off the inner fender, so maybe you don't care.

## You can trust us—we know what we're doing here





## Feature Car: 1953/54 Henney Ambulance



Our feature this time around is a remarkable piece that has spent time both as a 1953 and a 1954 ambulance. It was brought from the condition you see on these pages to the showstopping vehicle you see in the centerstretch by Gene Williams of Gainesville, Fla.

“I bought this car,” says Gene, “from Dr. Gus Mancy, of Springfield, Ohio, eleven years ago. He was a former PCS member. It had sat in his hay barn for twelve years; I have no history prior to Dr. Mancy. The engine was seized up,





tires were flat, and it needed a total restoration.”

This job took five years and involved removing the body, which we seldom see with a car this size. “The good thing,” he tells us, “was that it had nearly all handles, knobs, latches, catches, etc. We had to look for very few small parts.”

The car caused Gene some choices to make it’s a very early

1954 by its number plate, but it had many 1953 detail features. So do we leave it mixed, go all-1953, or go all-1954 with it? “I used 1953 outside trim,” Gene says, “because we had a 1953 when I was a child. This ambulance is now a duplicate of the one we had.” (more about this on page 11).



*A very early 1954 by its number plate, but has a 327 engine, a 1953 cluster, and a mix of 1953 and 1954 exterior trim.*















**HENNEY PLATE  
NUMBERS FOR THIS  
CAR:**

ENGINE M406439

SERIAL 5413-2008

BODY 20498

MODEL 5494

FACTORY ORDER NO  
59537





## ← Some observations on our feature car

The details are what interest us, and we'll discuss them if we can detain you just for a few moments more. For this is one of the most interesting cars we've seen recently:

- It has a 1954 serial.
- It has 1953 instruments.
- It has knurled 1953 knobs, not the 1954 knobs with 3-pointed stars.
- It has a 1953 heater control.
- It had a mix of 1953 and 1954 exterior trim details.
- It has bolt-on front tunnel lights; the 1954 units were frenched.
- It has the 327 engine, not the 359 engine - and the Henney plate agrees

with that, M400 series rather than M600 series..

- It has 1953 "slightly sunken" head-lamp frames, not the heavily hooded 1954 jobs.
- The body number, 20498, falls after a bunch of '53s, just before a 1954, but also before a '53 Clipper combination in our records.

The logical conclusion to be drawn from all this is that there were apparently several 1954 piece parts not yet available at the time this car was completed, so Henney used 1953 versions.

There are plenty of other little things worth pondering, too; for example,

don't miss the switches set into the radio blanking plate and the radio control under the speaker. The spotlights are the proper Unity jobs, but they have red lamps—meaning, they were useless as spotlights but very effective as auxiliary emergency lamps.

The ammeter at the far left is just where Henney put them, and its presence generally indicates a 100-amp Leece-Neville alternator.

The little clearance lamps on the back, right out of the truck-supply parts bin, are what Henney used if you did not order rear tunnel lights; and for the whole of 1953, only one customer ordered rear tunnel lights: Titusville, New Jersey.

## The mailbox

I just found Otto Steinestel's obituary online, and it's so crowded with Masonic memberships it fails to say where he worked. Fortunately I have a copy of the 1953 Polk's City Directory for Freeport, and it says he was a finisher at Henney's. I wasn't

paying attention to specifics of what friends of my parents I didn't actually see did for a living. I think he may have been the man who did the wood finishing on the hearses. Did the finisher's job include doing the

impressive woodwork in the interiors? The 1939 Henney book doesn't mention his job specifically, although he's on the group photo.

—Alice Horner



**I don't think this is  
the right way either,  
Harold**



*The*  
**NEW HENNEY**  
*De Luxe Limousine*  
*Type Hearse*  
Model 372





*HERE* is another beautiful 1927 Henney that will help leading directors to keep abreast of the times with their motorized equipment. This is a creation that fully meets the most exacting requirements of the funeral director who realizes the importance of distinctiveness in motorized funeral equipment—equipment specially designed to meet the requirements of the undertaking profession.



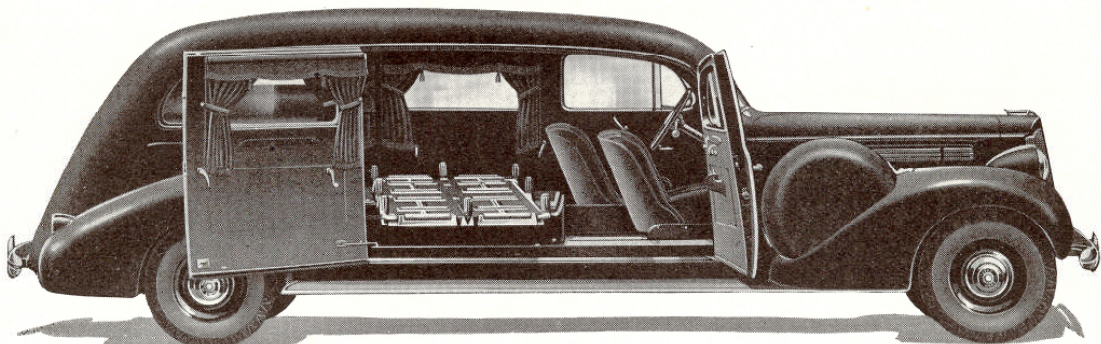
# BRANTFORD

*Henney Packard* 1939

## FUNERAL CARS

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The 1939 Brantford-Henney-Packard Funeral Car with Nu-3-way table.

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## Okay, not exactly Henney main line, but...

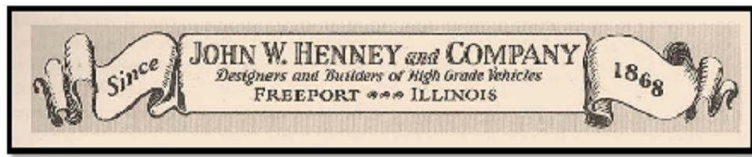


Faithful readers will recall that, in this year's No. 1 issue, we ran a photo of Henney stylist Richard Arbib with one of his many girlfriends, Bettie Page. We had sort of thought some might have heard of her.

Turns out, Mz. Page's fame was more widespread than we could have guessed. Sixty years later, she is *still a pinup girl*; these signs are for sale at car shows all over the land. We took this shot at the Goodguys extravaganza in Des Moines this past July; they're not even overly risqué in today's market. and the vendor told us he was doing a brisk business in the things.

## I think we're finally there—it took long enough





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THIRD QUARTER 2013

1941 HENNEYS ON DUTY WITH THE NAVY IN SEATTLE