

Futurliner News

GM Futurliner Restoration Project
(See more on our web site: www.Futurliner.org)

Newsletter #43

October – 2013



Futurliner #10 at the 2008 AACA Meet Melbourne, Florida

We have used this photo before but I like it since it shows the crew getting the vehicle cleaned up for a show and demonstrates the size of the Futurliner. Not many of us have a 12' step ladder.

This issue of our newsletter continues the semi-annual newsletters now that the vehicle is completed and being displayed during the year. This project has been an all-volunteer effort that started in 1998 with the goal of restoring one of the twelve GM Futurliners, originally built in 1940, to its original and functional condition. The vehicle was donated to the National Automotive and Truck Museum by Joe Bortz in the early 1990's and is still owned by the museum in Auburn, Indiana. The restoration project was led by **Don Mayton** in Zeeland, Michigan with a group of nearly 40 volunteers participating from 1998 to 2007 when it was essentially completed. This devoted group continues to maintain and show this unique part of GM's history.

2013 Futurliner Shows Completed

- June 8, Plainfield Motor Mile show at KOOL Chevrolet, 3780 Plainfield NE in Grand Rapids, The auto dealers on Plainfield Ave sponsor this event with a variety of antique, hot rod and custom cars at each dealership.

- July 13, Zeeland, MI annual car show. Downtown Zeeland has many small craft type shops and small restaurants. It still resembles a town in the 1950s and is an ideal town setting for an antique car show.
- July 28 – Flint, MI, Baker College Center for Transportation Technology, S. Dort Hwy. This location was the old Superior Cadillac/Pontiac dealership that used to be home to our Futurliner #10 when it was used as a billboard for this car dealership. Our "before" restoration photos show this dealer's billboard still visible on the Futurliner sides.
- Aug 24, Grand Rapids, 28th Street Metro Cruise, Harvey
- Aug 30-Sept 2 Labor Day weekend – NATMUS, Auburn IN,
- Sept 7 – Robinette's 2nd Annual Car Show, 3142 4 Mile Rd NE, Grand Rapids, MI

2014-2016 Futurliner Shows Preliminary

Check the web site for future updates.

- Winter 2013 - 2014 – We will have the Futurliner at the Sloan Museum/Buick Gallery in Flint Michigan during the 2013/2014 winter from about Nov 1, 2013 thru March 2014. The Buick Gallery is part of the Sloan Museum. When you purchase a ticket you can go into the Sloan and the Buick Gallery. The Futurliner will be on display in the Buick Gallery with the other Buick concept cars plus other significant Buick historical cars. More details to follow on the web site.
- May 28-31, 2014 – Springfield, MO – Antique Truck Historical Society (ATHS) Show at the Fairgrounds (Chuck Snow in charge), under discussion
- TBD, 2014 Columbus OH (under consideration), D. Mayton in charge
- Aug 31, 2014 – Toledo, OH, GM Powertrain Show, (under consideration), D. Mayton in charge
- July 2016 – Buick National Meet, Allentown, PA, (under consideration), D. Mayton in charge

You can help! – If you are planning to attend any of the shows, and if you are inclined to give us a hand, let the "in-charge" person know or let Don or Dean know (addresses at the end). We'd love to have help telling visitors about the project and help selling memorabilia to support the project

What's Happening Lately and Other Futurliners

- A new DVD is complete. Through the 4 year efforts of Futurliner Volunteer **Don Bratt**, a new video will soon be available about the Futurliner - "**FROM A – Z & SEA – TO – SEA**". It describes the cross-county adventures of resurrected Futurliner No. 10 as it travels to a variety of local shows and even the big show at Pebble Beach. Come along as Futurliner #10 visits the rich, famous, and obscure car shows of America. This DVD shows you the Futurliner visiting the east to west shores, the north and the south, visiting large and small towns and their car shows. You will enjoy this Americana adventure.
The new video is 1 hour 43 minutes but has a detailed play list of the 19 distinct segments with the time on the DVD for each so you can locate specific areas or use it for club meetings as you wish,
- NATMUS has taken the first step in revising their building to move the Futurliner inside. A large door has been purchased and they hope to have it installed by the end of this year.
- The "crew" that restored the Futurliner from 1998 thru 2007 (and continues to maintain and show it), has enjoyed the camaraderie of working together 1 day each week that they have finished Don's 1929 Buick (Model 55X) and are working on a 1956 Buick (Model 56X) – a one-off GM Design Staff car with many unique features.
- **Bob Valdez** in California has his restored vehicle for sale as pictured below. This vehicle was used by Makita Tools at one time before being virtually destroyed. Bob restored it from 1984-1990 inside and out. The engine is a 366 cu in GMC gas engine with an Allison 4 speed transmission. It has two transmissions, the original dual front wheel design, has been totally rewired with new gages, etc. and has been driven 8000 mi since being

restored. The inside is an art-deco style. Bob has had it up to 80MPH and it still drives great. It would be a great vehicle for someone to restore to an original Futurliner and he believes it is the last one that is restorable. All reasonable offers considered. Bob Valdez, 8800 Eton Ave SPC #87, Canoga Park, CA 91304, 818-709-7572.



For Sale

Futurliner Memorabilia for Sale:

Items available thru NATMUS serve as both fund-raisers for the Futurliner Restoration Project and interesting memorabilia for all of you.

- **DVD** The video, titled "**Miracle at Beaverdam**", is available on either VHS or DVD and can be requested from NATMUS for \$25 (including S&H). This makes a great program for your local car club and any group interested in history and is a neat "people story" in addition to the restoration challenges.
- **Model** – The scale model is out of production but the few remaining are available only at our shows (at \$80 each).
- **Historical Book:** If you are interested in the full history of the Parade of Progress and the restoration project, pick up a copy of "**General Motors Parade of Progress & A Futurliner Returns.**"
The book is available through the Futurliner web site www.Futurliner.org with links to the NATMUS store or by calling NATMUS at (260) 925-9100. The price by mail is \$35 (which includes postage, taxes and handling) or \$29.95 at the NATMUS museum store.
- **Donations** are still required for on-going repairs and maintenance of the Futurliner. Many people have been very generous in their financial support of the project and all donations are deeply appreciated. Donations can be sent to **NATMUS, 1000 Gordon M. Buehrig Place, Auburn, IN 46706** and they are fully tax deductible. Be sure to mark your check for the Futurliner project.

Miscellaneous:

- We get numerous requests to bring the Futurliner to shows around the country. This is no small effort of course with a vehicle this size and which requires a sizable staff to accompany it. Because of the complexity of moving and showing the vehicle, the crew and NATMUS have established the guidelines that were detailed in a issue #31 – Nov 2007. If anyone is interested in requesting the Futurliner for your show in 2011 or later, contact Don Mayton (address below).
- Our project was mentioned in the July 26, 2012 issue of Old Cars Weekly with a note to contact us if anyone has info on the locations of the 3 unknown vehicles.

Don M. Mayton Project Director
4521 Majestic Vue
Zeeland, MI 49464 616-875-3058
E-Mail: "donscar@centurytel.net"

Dean G. Tryon Newsletter Editor
2516 Laurelford Ln.
Wake Forest, NC 27587 919-562-4660
E-Mail: "DGTryon2516@Gmail.com"

Futurliner News

c/o Dean G. Tryon – Editor
2516 Laurelford Lane
Wake Forest, NC 27587



Truck Show at Baker College – Flint 2007



Futurliner #10 at Baker College
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