

Milton • Means Business

Limo company wants you to arrive in style

By **STEPHANIE THIESSEN**

The Champion

Miltonian Brian Jones has a farmer's wife with traditional values to thank for the success of his limo company, Memory Lane Limousine.

It all started with a 1983 poker game in which a card-savvy Norwood farmer became the owner of a dilapidated 1959 Cadillac Fleetwood series limousine.

His wife wasn't impressed that the car was connected to gambling, and told the farmer to get it out of her sight.

One evening in 1986, Mr. Jones — who happened to love old cars and himself was the owner of a 1957 Chevy BelAir — was driving past the field when his eyes caught site of the vehicle.

He returned the next day, knocked on the farmer's door and inquired about the limo. The farmer said he didn't want money for it, he wanted instead to trade it for a car that ran. "Someone I knew was selling an Impala so I bought it and made an even trade," Mr. Jones said.

He brought the car home and began the lengthy, painstaking restoration process. It wasn't an easy task. The car was painted seven different colours, and that was the least of its problems.

Just 23 years old at the time, Mr. Jones said he thought about giving up the restoration after he poured \$9,000 into it and it still wasn't finished.

"I had thoughts of selling it, but my girlfriend's dad (at the time) convinced me to keep going, saying, 'You don't want to give up on your dream.'"

At the time, Mr. Jones drove limos for a living, and decided he wanted to start his own company, starting with the '59 Cadillac. Two years and \$24,000 later, the car was ready for its debut, transporting its first wedding party in 1988.

That was just the beginning. Memory Lane Limousine now has a fleet of four classic and four traditional limos, plus a newly-acquired 18-passenger luxury limo bus. "That was the only thing we felt was missing," Mr. Jones said.

His collection of traditional limos includes a 1975 Rolls Royce Silver



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Memory Lane Limousine's Brian Jones proudly displays his vintage 1962 Austin Princess limousine and 10-passenger mega stretch Lincoln.

Shadow, a 1962 Princess and a 1967 Lincoln Continental famed to have been owned by Dean Martin.

There's something for everyone, he said, adding not everyone wants an over-the-top look for their special day. "It's an overkill of styling," Mr. Jones said of his '59 Cadillac. "People either love it or hate it."

Mr. Jones' first acquisition isn't the only vehicle with an interesting history. Brides and grooms alike are often thrilled when they discover they can ride in the same limo the Beatles did in their 1964 world tour. "They came in at the last minute wanting a British-style limo," Mr. Jones said of the '62 Austin Princess, the same model used for years by the British Royal family.

He added the car has also seen the likes of Sophia Lauren and the Queen Mother.

Mr. Jones' eight-year-old son, David, is already into limos, said the proud dad.

"He has a great passion for the business. He helps clean the cars and packs the cool-

er."

David has just eight more years to wait until his dad hands over the keys to the '59 Cadillac on his 16th birthday.

Memory Lane's showroom is located on the Jones' own property, making it easy for all members of the family to chip in and lend a hand.

It also means he can spend more time with his family. When Mr. Jones has to show a car on a Sunday or a day he's not working, the showroom is just a step away from his home. He can do his job, and then quickly return to being dad for the day.

Mr. Jones said he urges his fellow entrepreneurs to find something they love to do.

"It's as important to do something you absolutely love as much as it is to make money."

To find out more about Memory Lane Limousine, call (905) 332-1677 or visit www.memorylanelimo.com.

Stephanie Thiessen can be reached at sthiessen@miltoncanadianchampion.com.

Showcase booths selling off quickly

The Milton Chamber of Commerce has announced booths for its 2004 Showcase Milton are already three-quarters sold out.

This year's show will be held at the Milton Sports Centre May 28 to 30. The event will showcase products for home and garden, travel, entertainment, fitness, automotive, real estate, insurance and much more.

Chamber executive director Sandy Martin said with the thousands of new residents who have moved to Milton since the last show in 2002, it's necessary to welcome them to the community and draw them into activities, businesses and stores.

"We want them all to feel they belong in Milton as quickly as possible and to realize how much Milton has to offer."

Sponsors of Showcase include The Champion, Travel Choice American Express, Bill's Auto Body, Terry Rowley Mechanical Inc. and Goodlife Fitness Centre.

For more information and booth prices, call Allison Mang at (905) 878-0581.

Memory Lane Limousine www.memorylanelimo.com

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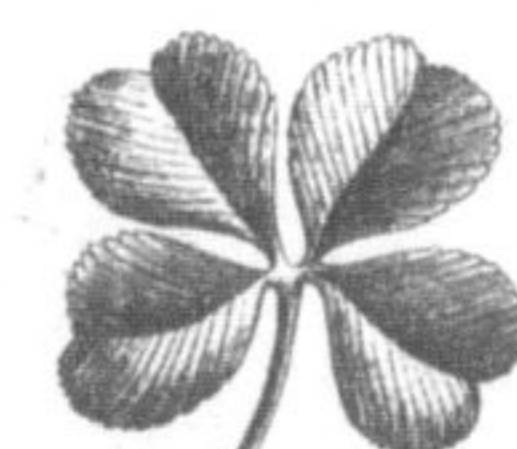


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