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Museum To Showcase Rare Indy Car

By Catherine Sword

My busband and I have been sporadic volunteers for the Whitchurch Stouttville Museum's annual Antique & Classic Car Show over the years

I'm looking forward to this year's event on Sunday. Aug. 8 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. weather permitting. After all, who wants to park their collectible of conservation equipment for this new out on the lawn in a downpour. In case of rain, everybody holds off until the following week, which means that for visitors it's always a lovely way to spend an afternoon, regardless of who's the car enthusiast in the family

In addition to the cars, all the museum buildings are open. Check out the old tashioned air conditioning in the log cabin. Hey, wait. I still use that technique in my own home, but I doubt anyone is baking in a wood stove these days so don't miss the treats from the oven in the Brown House

Other old tashioned fun includes a scavenger hunt and children's

games at the barn, musicians at the centre stage and a magician. This year visitors will see the progress on the construction of the new visitor community centre, a behind the scenes look that won't be available again. In fact, the money raised at this year's show will help to purchase programming and

Then there are the cars. About 400 make the trip to this annual show and as a volunteer it can be a challenge. I'm often posted at one of the gates which is a perfect place to start the day. Some cars are obviously antique to me, but others trick me. I get distracted by the beauty and almost forget that there are categories to sort out.

The north gate admits the truly antique while the south gate is reserved for classic cars at least 25 years old. This year I'll be watching for the special

as vintage MGs. Triumphs

and the Trillium Miata Club

Anything more recent than 1985 gets to park in the visitor parking lot across the street with the rest of us driving the less spectacular vehicles. Museum staff know how to take care of helpers; they even make sure we're well fed and watered for the day. Somewhere between my assigned duties there's always time to chat with some of the other 60 volunteers, but we're usually busy checking out the cars and meeting their owners who are happy to talk about the real stars of the show.

In fact, you can help create these stars, as trophies are given out for a few favourite categories. All it takes is for you to take a stroll through the grounds and vote for your favourite.

Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum is located at 14732 Woodbine Ave. north of Vandorf Sideroad. For more information call 1-888-290-0337 or feature a 1959 Indy car, as well visit www.townofws.com/museum.



This 1959 Kurtis 500J McKay Special Indy car, which will be on display at the Museum Car Show Aug. 8, is an auto enthusiast's dream, being one of only two manufactured by Kurtis-Kraft in 1958.

History of the Kurtis 500J McKay Special

One of only two 5001's built in 1958 by Kurtis-Kraft

Powered by a 4 cylinder Offenhouser

Ran in the FIA world championship series, including the Indy 500 in 1959 and 1960

Driven by Chuck Wyant and Gene Force, and on occasion by A.J. Fovt

Other Kurtis-Kraft cars won the Indy 500 on in 1950, '51, '53, '54 and '55

Kurtis-Kraft Car Company:

Founder Frank Kurtis was fascinated by cars from an early age. His father owned a blacksmith shop located in Pueblo,

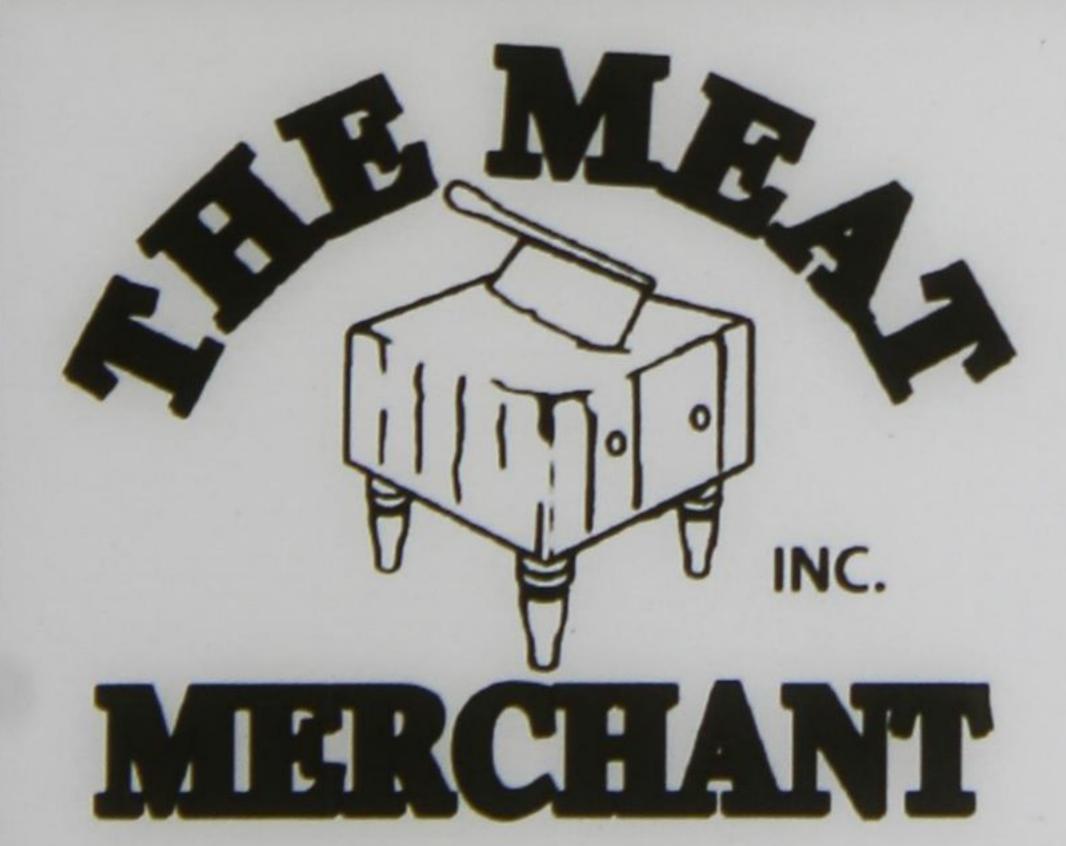
Colorado that repaired automobiles and horse buggies. When the family moved to California. Frank got a job at a Cadillac dealer after lying about his age

By the 1930's, he was designing, building, and repairing racing cars in the garage behind his home, and in 1941 he created a car that was entered in the Indianapolis race. One of the cars he was driving took ninth place at the 1948 Indy and the same car, driven by another driver, finished first in 1949.

By 1952, the majority of cars entered in the Indianapolis race were designed and built by Kurtis Kraft and one of the company's cars set an Indianapolis lap record time of 140 mph in 1952.

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