



BIG APPLE TAXI & CHECKER CLUB

Volume 1

NEWSLETTER

Issue III

Spring 1997



IN THIS ISSUE.....

- * THE TRUE REASONS BEHIND CHECKER'S DEMISE
By Bobby Lowich
- * THE MILLSPAUGH & IRISH ENIGMA , THE FINAL WORD?
- * THE NEW CHECKER ???
- * THE LAST OF THE NYC CHECKERS
- * THE SUMMER EVENT and MORE!!!!

Leontas Houston Smith, III

2773 Brook Grove Lane
Atlanta, Georgia 30339

(404) 351-8856

July 1, 1996

ERICH LACHMANN, JR
c/o Turnpike Super Service
495 North Street
Middletown, NY 10940

MICHAEL ANGELICH
77 North Street
Huntington Station, NY 11746


Dear Erich & Michael,

Last November, as you know, my totally restored 1979 Checker Marathon was totaled out. My sister was driving the car when a speeding vehicle ran the red light and t-boned her on the front passenger side. The car was turned around and pushed 35 feet down the road. No one was hurt, but the frame was badly bent on the front end.

The other drivers insurance company offered me \$8,000.00 for the damage (totaled out) to my Checker. This could not begin to pay for another detailed restoration. I then appealed to the two of you for assistance. Your knowledge of Checkers, my car, and your letters of value helped me reach a just settlement, out of court, with the insurance company. I was issued a check for \$21,000.00 and retained possession of my totaled 1979 Checker Marathon.

I own a 1977 Checker Marathon E that, thanks to you, I will now be able to restore in the same detail that I had on my previous Checker. Thank-you again for proving that "A Checker Owner Is Never Alone."

Sincerely,


Leon Smith



BIG APPLE TAXI & CHECKER CLUB

MICHAEL ANGELICH
77 North Street
Huntington Sta., NY 11746

NEW MEMBERS

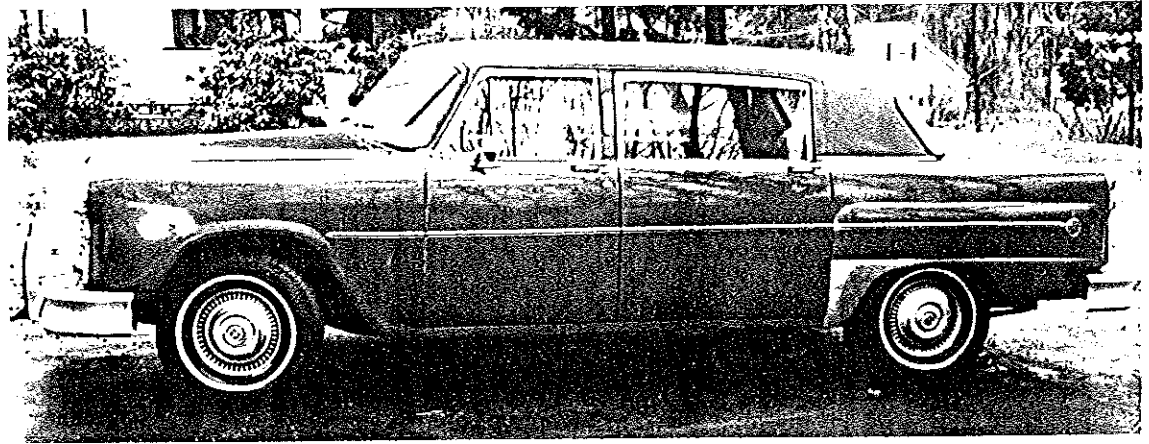
MIGUEL MELENDEZ - BRONXVILLE, NY
MONTE CONNOR - NYC

HAL DENMAN - WHITE PLAINS, NY
ROY DICKENSON - SUN CITY, AZ

MEMBERSHIP: THE BIG APPLE TAXI & CHECKER CLUB.....ALWAYS WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS!
All you need to join is an interest in Taxis, their history or any interest in the Checker Automobile!
DUES \$7 YR USA OUTSIDE USA \$ 10 US FUNDS ONLY! ISSUES 4X YR ALL CHECKS PAYABLE TO
MICHAEL ANGELICH-----MOLLY MALONE Editor MICHAEL ANGELICH President
ADS-----Are FREE to members-----THEY MUST BE RENEWED ONCE/ YR. or will be cancelled. All CAR
FOR SALE ADS will only be carried 1 Issue ONLY.
Due to high postal rates WARNINGS for LATE DUES can only be sent ONE TIME! NO DUES NO NEWS !
KEEP track of your subscription or pay for 2 years. You can call me at (516) 673-0496 EVES. Due to volume
I cannot return most calls.

HELP-----

After doing the Newsletter for 2 years it is slowly getting better (or so you members tell me). Due to high postal rates and printing costs this newsletter has been a money loser from day one. So be it. But, to improve it to the level it should be at; e.g. better printing, color graphics etc. money and help is required. Rather than raising the dues I feel it is better to ask for DONATIONS and /or corporate sponsorship in ADS and/or help with the printing. The color front page is brought to you by the sponsorship of George Wilcox and friends. That page alone cost over \$100 to do. So , the next step is up to you, and you will be hearing from me. Michael



A TRUE CHECKER LIMOUSINE

In 1980 there were only 2 both auto manufacturers and limo builders left in the United States Cadillac and Checker. This is a fact often overlooked in auto history. Other companies were producing limousines but they were just coachbuilders; basically sophisticated auto body shops capable of stretching anything the customer wanted stretched from a Mercury Marquis to a Volvo to a Pontiac Catalina.

The car shown below is a rare example of a true limousine done by Checker itself, not some outside source. Many so called Checker Limousines were just basically reworked A-11's done up to be semi-limo's by the Winkoff (Southeast Checker) group. Basically, most of these cars were just fancy cars sold to senior citizens in Florida. Many to people with some form of disability. These are the A-11-A12 E type cars that one mostly sees around. To see a true limousine, that is the type actually used by a Limo service, or a very rich person is rare.

The car, currently owned by Don & Rita Maxwell of NYC, was originally purchased by the US State Department for the Western Samoan Mission to the UN in NY in 1980. It was kept by them until 1992 when having aquired 94,000 miles was sold. The Maxwell's purchased it shortly afterward . The original silver paint and vinyl were changed by them to maroon.

Notice the fancy reversed jump seats done up as you would see today in a 1997 Lincoln Stretch. The console(missing) was between the jump seats and held the bar and the color TV.



A TRUE CHECKER LIMOUSINE

1157 West Monroe Street Chicago, Illinois 60607 (312) 421-1121



CHECKER MOTORS SALES CORPORATION

CUSTOM LIMOUSINE - SERIAL NUMBER ALLE-4835-00417A

BASE PRICE \$ 8,321.00

Air Conditioning, Dual	\$ 1,007.00	
Alternator, 105 Amp	217.00	
Arm Rests, Front Door (Pair)	16.50	
Axle, Trac Lik, Rear	86.00	
Defogger, Rear Window	53.50	
Fender Shields, Chrome	53.50	
Frame, Rail Angle	8.50	
Glass, tinted, All Around	68.50	
Heater, Aux. Floor Mounted	97.50	
Locks, Four Doors, Electric	171.00	
Mirror, O/S, RH	11.00	
Paint, Special Color, Metallic	230.00	
Shocks Absorbers, Firm Ride	14.50	
Skid Bar	12.00	
Tires, Firestone "721" Steel Radial MSW	155.00	
Transmission Oil Cooler, Auxiliary	97.00	
Quarter Window Elimination	309.50	
Reinforcement, Rear Floor	24.50	\$ 2,634.50
Executive II Customizing (Velour)	4,149.38	
Hand Rubbed Black Walnut Rear Console	648.05	
Vinyl Upholstered Instrument Panel	370.18	
Refinished Color Coordinated Dash Board	84.50	
Refinished Four Arm Rests	52.00	
Wide Body Side Mouldings	121.55	
Exterior Coach Lights	100.04	
Color Television 9" AC-DC	611.65	
Rear Stereo System	649.94	
Front Stereo System	519.94	
Custom Bumper Splash Panels	150.80	\$ 7,458.03
Buffed & Brushed Aluminum Bumpers	339.00	
Chrome Grille, Chrome H/L Doors		
Chrome T/L Doors, Chrome Parking Lite Doors	85.00	\$ 424.00
Bumper Guards		\$ 18,837.53
Destination Charges	\$ 81.29 + \$ 35.00	116.29
New Car Service		85.00
		\$ 19,038.32

COLOR: Silver Metallic

Notice on the sales sheet that virtually every option was ordered. When mostly we see an A-11-12E 129" car it is so rare to see all these options. If you look at the prices it is evident why. The basic price of \$8321 was more than doubled to \$19038 by options alone! Only someone with a need for a true Limo would want to pay this much money. It is rare to see a car like this because most "E" Checkers are not true Limos but just Marathons that are 9" longer. This car is a daily driver it can be seen plying the streets of the City on many a nice day with Don proudly behind the wheel.

COMMON STOCK

INCORPORATED UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY

COMMON STOCK

OF THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY

CHECKER MOTORS CORPORATION

This certifies that

FULL PAID AND NON-ASSESSABLE SHARES OF THE PAR VALUE OF \$1.25 THE LIMOUSINE STOCK

of Checker Motors Corporation (hereinafter called the Corporation), hereinafter in the books of the Corporation in person or by duly authorized attorney, upon surrender of this certificate properly endorsed, this certificate and the shares represented hereby are void and shall be subject to all the provisions of the Certificate of Incorporation of the Corporation, and all amendments thereto, copies of which are on file with the Transfer Agent. This certificate is not valid until countersigned by the

Witness the firmness and of the

of its duly authorized officers

Don Speer

is the number of

TRANSFER AGENT
CHECKER TRUST COMPANY
INCORPORATED IN NEW JERSEY

Morris B. Speer

The New Checker



NATIONAL MOBILITY CORPS (NMC) is a manufacturer of paratransit and transit minivans and buses. During the course of new product development, we discovered that there was a tremendous demand for a simple, rugged, paratransit hauler that embodied the virtues of the old Checker cab: economy, simplicity and durability with the key parameters:

While we were in the throes of developing this product, we received an inquiry from John Moberg, president, Checker Taxi Association of Chicago, as to what type of vehicles were available for paratransit service. With John's help we developed a new vehicle that we believe meets all of the operational requirements that the taxi industry demands. The next step was obvious. Since it functions like a Checker, lasts like a Checker, and is as simple as a Checker to operate and maintain, we know what to call this new vehicle. Since John owned the rights to the original vehicle name, we were ready to re-introduce the legendary Checker.

It's a Tough World Out There

From the narrow, congested streets of Boston to the deserts of California, the taxi-transit industry is a tough business. Lots of scheduling, lots of planning, lots of confusing laws and regulations, but lots of opportunity. And within the industry, paratransit service is the fastest growing segment. Aging population, mandated services for the physically challenged, and a tremendous increase in demand for medical and health-care transit makes paratransit the field to be in for a long, long time to come. And if you are in this "new" taxi industry, you can trust an "old" industry name, Checker. That's right, Checker.

74 Taxi Magazine . . . JANUARY 1997

The "old" Checker has evolved into the "new" Checker for a new industry, paratransit.

Checker Economy

Checker starts with a lower initial cost compared to most other lowered floor minivans. It continues with Chrysler's 3 year/36,000 mile bumper to bumper warranty on the base van and Checkers warrants on the modifications. Available with either a 2.4L, 3.0L or 3.3L engine, the Checker will produce fuel economy numbers that are nothing less than remarkable in the for-hire industry. Quick, easy servicing with equipment you already own and rugged, standardized construction with Chrysler parts when possible means less downtime in an industry that makes its living off the words "vehicle in service."

Checker Durability

The Checker Paratransit utilizes a Dodge Caravan chassis. All chassis are specially equipped with oversize tires and larger heavy duty brakes to meet the grueling demands of for-hire service. Checker then goes to work in its 50,000 square foot manufacturing facility. Each van is completely stripped and prepared for modification. The floor is lowered 10" and the original Chrysler sheet metal floor is replaced with a floor of Cer-Ten steel and a box steel frame. This modification actually produces a vehicle stronger than the original minivan. The vehicle is then fitted with a special Checker suspension system that can handle the rigors of day-in - day-out service. The doors and sliding door opening are modified with Checker's exclusive DURA-TRAK design which allows full ADA compliance, ease of operation, and long life. Interiors are designed with commercial use in mind. A variety of extra heavy duty vinyl and rubber flooring is available as is vinyl seating.

For more information contact NMC at 1800-528-3769.

THE LAST NYC CHECKERS

As of February, 1997 there are only four known Checkers still running in NYC

CAJUSTE, FRITZGERALD	Medallion # 7A70	1981 Checker
STRUNA, JOHANN	Medallion # 3F89	1981 Checker
JOHNSON, EARL	Medallion # 1N11	1978 Checker
RUSSELL, NEVILLE	Medallion # 6C31	1975 Checker

As of Jan. 1, 1997 Rule 3-02 will have taken place. The Taxi & Limousine Commission has in effect mandated a vehicle retirement rule on Taxicabs in NYC. All Vehicles in service before March 1, 1996 are mandated. Any vehicle older than 1989 must be retired by April 1, 1997. This of course, includes all of the Checkers. It also includes 2 1981 Peugeot Diesels and several Mid-Eighties Dodge Diplomats still running around (for you hard core taxi fans).

One can apply for historical status. Without getting completely into it it involves not only the driver has driven the car continually and not double shifted etc. and so on and so on and whether or not the car is fleet owned or owned privately and what kind of fuel powers the car etc. The cars MUST pass a stringent safety inspection.

Here is the real deal. I wrote a letter to the Commissioner of the TLC, Diane Mc Grath-McKechmie, on the behalf of club member and friend, Fritz Cajuste. She responded to my letter and I found her to be quite a Checker fan which was quite enlightening. However, she is also quite the realist and is extremely safety conscious. The TLC in New York is tired of being embarrassed by shoddy, unsafe cars driven by God knows whom. They are trying to clean up the act, and rightfully so. They want individually owned cars to be replaced every 5 years and fleet cars every 3 years. As of March 1st only 2 Checkers have passed the muster. April 1st will tell the tale. It is unknown whether any of the Peugeots or Dodges have either applied, or passed. Earl Johnson's car is a minifleet car owned by Security Cab Corp whether or not a corporation can get historical recognition is unknown.

If these two remain, they must remain pristine or they will be removed the Commissioner has assured me. I believe she is right. Neither the City, us Taxi fans nor the general public should be embarrassed by some junk Checker allowed to remain way past it's due as a tattered remnant of what the great car it once was. They would be better left as a memory, belonging to a museum or us car club people.

SAVE THE CABS.....

As a result of 3-02 there will be a glut of pre 1989 stuff on the market come April 1. If you favor any of this stuff check out the Taxi people in Long Island City. I purchased an '81 Impala; one of the oldest Chevies still running in NYC. It is in excellent shape being it was individually owned even though it is approaching 1 million miles.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

DECEMBER 15, 1996

Only 4 Left: Countdown For Checkers



It is 900,000 miles and counting for Earl Johnson's Checker cab,

"Some 10 to 12 hours a day, 5 to 6 days a week, for 18 years, the front seat of Earl Johnson's Checker cab has reflected his life. He keeps his lunch and a telephone on the front floorboard, his briefcase by his side, his mail wedged beside the meter. Dozens of business cards collected from passengers are held by rubber bands to the visors.

Mr. Johnson's Checker cab is one of the last four in operation in New York City, a remnant of a Checker fleet that 20 years ago numbered as high as 5,000, or half of the city's yellow cabs. Within four months, however, the 56-year-old cabdriver from Rosedale, Queens, expects the Taxi and Limousine Commission to retire his anachronistic car — and him along with it. "If they take the Checker," Mr. Johnson said, slumping down in the front seat at the thought, "I'm gone, too."

Last month the commission approved a new regulation requiring individually owned cabs to be replaced every five years and fleet-

owned taxis every three years. The four remaining Checkers still in operation must request an exemption from the commission by March.

"We will look at the Checkers on a case-by-case basis," said David Hind, chief of staff at the Taxi and Limousine Commission. "All vehicles exempted will have to meet

minimum qualifications for safety and public health." But even if those exemptions are approved, the cost and scarcity of parts for aging vehicles will soon force the Checker's into retirement anyway.

Mr. Johnson began driving Checkers 25 years ago, a few years after moving to Queens from Jamaica. He

didn't have enough money to start his own restaurant, so he bought a Checker and a taxi medallion. In 1978 he bought a brand-new Checker Marathon, the car he drives today.

"A Checker is a hard car to drive," he said, although during a ride last week he seemed to have little trouble maneuvering the tanklike vehicle between the sleeker, more modern Ford Crown Victorias that now dominate the taxi fleets. His whole body moved with each turn of the wheel as he weaved in and out of traffic, eliciting more smiles and waves than honks and fists.

"Even the police are nicer to you in a Checker," Mr. Johnson said. "They will run you down and ask about the car. Everybody wants to know how old it is and how many miles are on it. Checkers make people happy."

And happy passengers give big tips, which is one reason Mr. Johnson said he would never drive anything else. But there's more to it than money. After 900,000 miles, he is attentive to the cab's aches and pains of age as a devoted spouse. A mirror calendar stuck to the dashboard marks the days he is scheduled to take her to the mechanic.

Mr. Johnson said he would file an exemption to the mandatory vehicle retirement rule by the Mar deadline, but even so he was not sure how his cab could continue to hold to the demands of 50,000 miles a year on rough city streets. When it finally gives out — or if the Taxi and Limousine Commission denies his application in March — he will lease a medallion and retire, he said.

"I'll paint it another color to keep it in my garage," he said. To he shook his head at his own id. "No, it has to stay the same," said. "After 18 years, it is a part of me. That's why I keep on fixing. That's why I will keep on driving. Even when it's no longer a taxi."

SUZANNE FREEMAN

THE TRUE REASONS FOR THE DEMISE OF THE CHECKER CAB
AN EDITORIAL by Bobby Lowich
(Bobby Lowich is a Club member, NYC taxi driver and noted taxi historian. He has driven a cab for over 30 years and is THE source of information on the life of Morris Markin.)

THE TRUE REASONS FOR THE DEMISE OF THE CHECKER CAB

On July 12, 1982, and after sixty years of being the builders of the quintessential cab of America, Checker Motors decided to halt production of this truly remarkable product. David Markin, Checker Motors owner, who after a decade of experiencing declining sales of the greatest taxicab ever built simply reached for the towel and tossed it in. It wasn't too difficult a decision for him to make. It was simply the only solution needed to reverse the fortunes of his company. Building a cab had become a money losing proposition. So to hell with tradition! It was tossed in along with the towel! To hell with all the sacrifices made by the grand old man of the company his father Morris in order to keep the company afloat during the trying times of the twenties and thirties! With the snap of a finger the end came to the Checker cab. It also brought down the curtain on a truly remarkable chapter in American transportation history.

David Markin might've been the son of Morris but he lacked the instinct for survival quality that ran through his fathers tough body. Afterall, David never had to scratch and claw like his pop did to not only survive in the dog eat dog world of automobile manufacturing but to come out on top of the heap. If he did possess those elements that made the Checker Americas' definitive cab he would've stood in the chase and they'd still be being built in Kalamazoo.

Much has been written on the reasons for the demise of the Checker but here in this newsletter for the first time are the true facts. We Checker lovers must never never lose sight of the fact that it was built to be a cab and it competed for top honors in a select field with perhaps fifteen other purpose built cabs entries. Contrary to public belief the category of

cab that the Checker belonged to constituted only fifteen percent of the vehicles used as cabs by the American taxi industry. For example, in 1930, of the 75,000 vehicles used in the industry the overwhelming majority were stock cars.

As the years would pass and Checkers rivals fell by the wayside its only chance of survival would lie in its dominance in major cities where big cabs were the rule and not the exception. The major auto builders not content that that ran roughshod in small cities and towns across the nation lusted for the big city marketplaces. They devised every means conceivable to bring the mighty Checker down to its knees. Here's a blow by blow description on how they did it.

Listed below in chronological order the facts that led up to the demise of the Checker cab.

1946 --- The Justice Department in response to a complaint probably made by one of Markins' many enemies hauls Checker into federal court on violation of the Sherman Anti-Trust law. The court rules in favor of Checker. Unhappy with the courts decision the Justice Department appeals it to the United States Supreme Court.

The highest court of the land upholds the federal court decision and states in its' opinion that the matter of anti-trust, specifically with an entity using and selling a product it manufactures as well as selling it to its competitors (this being taxicabs) is of no concern of the federal government but rather should be dealt with by the municipality in which it occurs. These words expose a chink in Checkers armour which will be exploited to the fullest fourteen years later.

July 12, 1954 --- Ironically, twenty-eight years prior to the day when cab building was to end in Kalamazoo, New York City, which was Checkers premier market city where there was 11,787 taxicabs, passes a law allowing stock cars to be used as taxicabs. Prior to this point of time only purpose built taxis were permitted to be used in the industry. On that date there were about 9,050 Checkers on the streets of New York.

At this time Markin decides to sell off some of his vast

taxicab holdings. He sells off 1,700 of the 2,200 taxi licenses he owns at an average price of \$17,000 each. Not a bad profit to turn on something that originally cost \$10. A decade later the number of Checker cabs found on the streets of New York dwindles down to 2,000. The premier city for taxi sales is lost forever.

1960 --- The Attorney General of New York State notifies Checker that it is violation of that states equivalent of the Sherman anti-trust law. That is undisputable when you look back to the Supreme Court decision of 1946. But what harm was there for a taxi builder to personally operate 500 taxicabs that were in the finest working order and which were driven by the cream of professional hackmen? None that I can think of! But Markin is given an ultimatum. Either operate taxis or build them but he couldn't do both. It didn't take him too much time to soul search his answer.

If Morris Markin decided to stop building Checker cabs in 1960 and maintained his taxi medallions their value on New Yorks' taxi market would be 100 million dollars today. Markin realized that their worth would rise with time but his love of the Checker was stronger than his desire to accumulate wealth. Would you have taken the same action he did? I doubt seriously if you would've! There is a simple answer to explain Markins decision. Anybody can make money ---- but how many can claim to be the builder of a great taxicab?

1960 -- The Continental Engine Company notifies Checker Motors that as of January 1, 1964 they would no longer supply them with the workhorse and economical engine that Checker had used on and off for forty years. The reason for this decision according to the story published in the Automobile Quarterly some time back was that Continental (now owned by Teledyne Industries) was losing money with the Checker account. What a load of horse manure!

The true reason for ending production of the flat head engines that powered the Checker was that Continental was getting fat on both aviation and government contracts so why bother

with a paltry order that came their way from Kalamazoo. Continental had no wrinkles in their belly, thanks to a 10 million dollar agreement to build tank engines for the Defense Department signed in that year. Their decision not to supply Checker with engines was appropole to a coup de grace.

From that point in time everything went downhill for Checker.

Chrysler reneged on a oral agreement to supply it with engines no longer coming from Continental;

a period of trial and error with GM parts to fill this void caused many of Checkers loyal customers to abandon the Kalamazoo product;

Morris Markin died in 1970;

David Markin, who succeeded his father was to make the fatal mistake of trying to compete with the big three in cab sales by cutting down on production costs to make it appealing to prospective buyers thereby sacrificing the character and physical make-up of his product in doing so.

1981 --- 300 cabs were sold and the curtain came down on the greatest taxicab building companies the world would ever see.

Did it have to happen?? An emphatic NO!

If only David had the perseverance to sit back and wait for the inevitable to take place ---- that being that the car builders whose medium size cars knocked Checker out of the marketplace would discontinue building them in favor of vans, light trucks and sport utility vehicles, thus leaving open a marketplace that would welcome with open arms a purpose built cab.

But the only thing David Markin had in common with poppa Morris was a surname! Too bad he didn't have his old mans spunk!!

MILLSPAUGH & IRISH ; THE ENIGMA- THE LAST WORD?

As you may recall from the last two newsletters, we firstly found an Ad in a Taxi journal for the supposedly real maker of the Checker Body. It was Millspaugh & Irish from Indianapolis not Checker from Kalamazoo. We did find out that yes indeed in 1923 and into 1924 they did build bodies for Checker. But the mystery went on; there was another mystery body builder that built for Checker. It was located in Springfield, MA. Who were they and why? The questions, at first have always been why. Morris Markin, founder of Checker, firstly was a body builder for Commonwealth, Checker's predecessor. Why would a body builder need another body builder, and not one but two to help him build a complete car. This is what I have pieced together in what I believe is the last word.

First, let's address who was the second body builder in Springfield? Terry Vaught sent me this article from Automotive Industries dated April 12, 1922 naming

Automotive Industries
April 12, 1922.

TO MAKE CHECKER BODIES
SPRINGFIELD, MASS., April 11—
The Auto Metal Body Corp. has taken a contract to manufacture bodies for the Checker Cab Co., and will start producing them soon at the rate of fifteen a day. The making of Hupmobile bodies, carried on here for several years, has been discontinued by the Auto Metal Body Corp.

Auto Metal Body Corporation as one of the sub-contractors for Checker making 15 bodies per day after giving up their contract with Hupmobile.

It is a series of events and dates that figure into the whole schism of things that make it all happen. Here is what I have layed out.

1920 The Checker Cab Co. (The Taxi Association of Cab owners in Chicago) started to purchase Commonwealth (Mogul Cabs). Bodies were supplied by the Markin Body Company of Joliet, IL.

1921 Markin and Commonwealth merge after Commonwealth gets in fiscal trouble. Offices moved to Chicago.

May 1922 Company in receivership and bankruptcy. It left to fall apart. Out of the ashes arises Checker Cab Mfg. spearheaded by Markin. The Lycoming engine is now used and production is about 3 cabs/ day. Henry Weiss was brought into the organization, running the Checker-Mogul sales and service operation in NYC. This opened up Checker to the largest cab market in America, New York.

Jan. 1923 Cab production was up to 112 cabs/mo. The staff was working seven days/wk. to try and keep up. The facilities were strained and too small.

April 1923 Checker moves to Kalamazoo. However no car is produced until June 18, 1923 and was expecting to produce only 15 cabs/ day at best. Demand by 1924 would exceed 4000. Leland Goodspeed and James Stout from Roamer Automobile in Kalamazoo are hired by Markin.

Here is what I surmise.

(A) Checker improved it's cab after closing Commonwealth

(B) Weiss and the gang in New York started selling these cars in droves. Along with the boom years of the twenties production skyrocketed.

(C) Joliet was too small and they were over capacity there, They had to move to the old Handley-Knight plant in Kalamazoo. The Dort body plant was purchased later and would not be finished by July 1923.

At best all they could do to keep up production was make chassis. Bodies would have to be dealt with later when the Dort plant would be completed and production could catch up with the logistical nightmares of moving the plant.

(D) The move would take months and in no way could they both move and keep up with record production.

(E) Millspaugh & Irish WAS BOTH the standard and premier taxi body of the time as well as the most widely sold (Taxi bodies at the time were like truck bodies of today- they were bolted on afterward and bought from an outsource).

(F) Goodspeed and Stout both very key players for Checker, had previously used M&I bodies when they worked at Roamer. Roamer built the Pennant Taxicab in Kalamazoo and it used the M&I body. Familiarity and all the logistics in place at Kalamazoo would have made the M&I connection a cinch. Auto Metal was basically an add on to help both Checker and M&I with production

The M&I body was probably an engineering and marketwise superior body to that of Markin's at the time and would only be an improvement on the taxi.

(G) The M&I body though ending on Checker in 1924? would influence the car and the way it was built forever

1924 Checker introduces the E model a great success with production up to 4000 cars/yr

(H) Many manufacturers start to fall by the wayside. Cars not designed for city use desintegrate before their time. Fleet operators realize that only purpose built and super heavy duty commercial cars such as Checker can really stand up as cabs

1925 Production 75 cars/wk

1926 Checker runs Ads disclaiming any outside body builders and touts it's own engineering.

(I) By this time all growing pains from moving were gone. Its own engineering and manufacturing had been integrated to a very sophisticated point to where it had become one of the premier Taxi manufacturers in the land.

Although long gone The M&I phenomena is an interesting and poignant one goes as far as Checker's history is concerned. If anyone has any corrections or additions please contact me. I think we'll close the book on this one. MICHAEL

June 7, 1923

Checker Cab Moving to Kalamazoo Plant

Company Expects to Be in Production of Fifteen Chassis Daily by July 1

KALAMAZOO, MICH., June 5—A production of fifteen chassis a day within the next three weeks is promised by W. L. Kroneberger, sales, service and advertising manager of the Checker Cab Manufacturing Co., which is now moving its equipment from its former plant in Chicago to the local factories of Handley Motors, Inc., and the Dort Motor Car Co., which it recently purchased.

Operations will start in Plant No. 1, as the former Handley factory has been designated, all chassis work to be done there. This building will also be headquarters for the production, engineering, sales, service and advertising departments.

Plant No. 2, the former Dort body plant, will house the body division and the executive and financial offices of the concern. The Checker company has contracts for bodies with makers in Springfield, Mass., and Indianapolis. As soon as these contracts are completed, the local taxicab concern will make all its own bodies.

Robert Gladfelter, who resigned as general manager of the Dort company's body plant, will hold a similar position with Checker Cab and be in charge of production at Plant No. 2.

Moulton Assists Goodspeed

Bert Moulton, formerly of Moulton & Dalgliesh, Studebaker dealers, has gone with the new company as assistant to Leo F. Goodspeed, in charge of production and engineering. He is now engaged in building up an organization. Mechanics are being hired at Plant No. 1, while body builders, painters and upholsterers are being lined up.

"Our program provides for production of completed chassis by June 15," Kroneberger says. "We should be building fifteen a day by July 1. Production will be steadily increased to thirty chassis daily in the fall. Going at full capacity, we will require 500 to 600 hands."

The Checker company was organized three years ago. It now has an authorized capitalization of 30,000 shares of class A common stock, preferred as to dividends up to \$5. It also has 75,000 shares of class B, common, no par value. Cash to the amount of \$1,250,000 has been paid into the treasury.

MOTOR AGE

June 14, 1923

CHECKER TO MAKE 15 A DAY

KALAMAZOO, Mich., June 9—A production of 15 chassis a day within the next three weeks is promised by W. L. Kroneberger, sales, service and advertising manager of the Checker Cab Manufacturing Co.

This concern, which recently purchased the local plants of the Handley Motors Corp. and the Dort Motor Car Co., is getting rapidly settled in its new quarters. The task of moving from Chicago is in full swing.

Automotive Industries
February 19, 1925

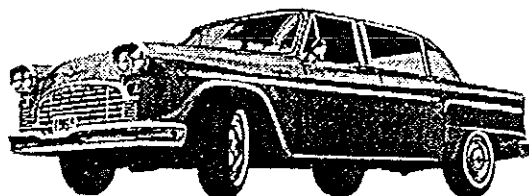
Checker Cab Plants Work at Capacity

KALAMAZOO, MICH., Feb. 17—E. D. De Weese, an automotive executive from Cleveland, has been elected vice-president and director of the Checker Cab Manufacturing Co. and will be active manager of the local plants, having full charge of purchases, engineering and sales outside of New York City, Chicago and abroad. He has arrived in Kalamazoo and assumed the duties of his position.

Another change in the local factory organization is the appointment of J. H. Tuttle to succeed Louis Goodspeed as chief engineer.

Both body and assembling plants are now working at practically normal capacity, and the outlook for business in this country and abroad is unusually good. Several large orders are now running through and deliveries are being made at the rate of about 75 cabs a week.

The payroll exceeds \$50,000 a month.



ADS ARE FREE TO MEMBERS

IF YOUR AD CHANGES, OR VEHICLE IS SOLD, LET US KNOW.
ALL ADS MUST BE REUPPED ONCE A YEAR OR WILL BE DELETED

CHECKER PARTS FOR SALE

Checker Cars/Various Models/Years:
New/Used Parts; Special Decals;
Roof/Sides/Doors. Inquire Prices; Twilight
Taxi Parts, 14503 Old State Rd.,
Middlefield, OH 44062
Tel: (216) 632-5419

Sheet Metal (New & Used) Most Years
Contact: Bob Hinckley, Box 14, Newark,
NY 14513
Tel: (315) 589-8547

Checker Parts: New & Used, Taxi Decals,
Front End Parts & New Checker Marathon
Emblems. Call or Write for your Needs.
Contact: Erich Lachmann, Jr. at Turnpike
Super Service, 495 North St., Middletown,
NY 10940-4526
Tel: (914) 457-1898 Major Credit Cards
Accepted, Overnight Shipping Available

Checker Parts: NOS and USED, Call or
Write for Availability and Prices.
Gary Spaulding; P. O. Box 196;
Levant, ME 04456
Tel: (207) 884-8330

CHECKERS WANTED

Checkers - Any Condition in Northeast
Area. Contact: Erich Lachmann, Jr.
Tel: (914) 457-1898

CHEAP '69-'81 Marathon. OK if Needs
Work. All Offers Considered. Contact:
Michael Murphy; 112 E. Delavan; Buffalo,
NY 14208

Wanted: A-11's, A-12's, A-12E's. Must be
Reasonable. Will Pick Up. Parts cars OK.
Call Michael Rodriguez - Tel: (305) 754-
4444 or Write: 4759 Palm Ave. #255;
Hialeah, FL 33012

CHECKER CAR CLUB OFFICIAL MEMORABILIA

Belt Buckles \$8, Logo Patches \$2.50,
Window Decals \$1.50. All Shipped First
Class Mail.
Don McHenry, 469 Tremain Ave.,
Kenmore, NY 14217

TAXI - Flip Telephone now Available
Phone is a Checker Cab; \$29.95 + \$8.00
S&H - US Only.
Joe Pollard; 9331 Johnell Rd.; Chatsworth,
CA (6-8 Weeks Delivery)

PARTS WANTED

Cage for Aerobus Luggage Compartment
(Sides & Divider) Contact: Bruce Uhrich,
Glenside, PA 10938
Tel: (215) 887-3770

MEMORABILIA WANTED

Checker Brochures - For Sale or Trade
WANTED: Checker Taxi Brochures and
Factory Photos: Contact Terry Vaught;
3401 Congress Ct.; Jeffersonville, IN 43130
Tel: (812) 283-6134 (B-4 Noon)

EXPERT AUTO REPAIR

ON ALL CHECKERS
Contact: Bill Hossfield, Ringwood, NJ
Tel: (201) 839-9053

OTHER

Anyone Interested in a Checker Meet in the
Buffalo, NY area, Please Contact Michael
Murphy at (716) 883-8128

CHECKER ARMY TRAILER FOR SALE
\$250 (216) 632-5419

*Rec'd
HAPWA7*

CHECKERS FOR SALE

1979 Checker - Very Little Rust: \$2,500
Tel: (315) 626-6623

1967 Checker Marathon - 250 6 cyl. Engine, Auto Trans.; 200,000 mi., Strong Engine - Good Tires; 3rd Owner; Never a Taxi - Can be Driven Anywhere; Asking \$2,950 - Will Deliver for Additional \$150-\$200.
B. J.; Dysart; 1607 Valwood; Kannapolis, NC 28083; Tel: (704)932-5008

1982 Marathon - A-12E Limo
Brown; A/C; PS; PB; Vinyl Top; Opera Windows; Very little Rust; \$7,000 Ken Fisher
Tel: (718) 243-2667

1980 Checker - A-12 Limo; 267 V-8; Turbo-400 Trans; A/C; Opera Windows; Black on Black; Runs Great! Needs Cosmetics
Call Mike: Tel: (717) 696-4818

CHECKERS: All Conditions, Years, Styles and Prices. Twilight Taxi Parts; 14503 Old State Rd.; Middlefield, OH 44062
Tel: (216) 632-5419 (11:00-3:00 let it ring)

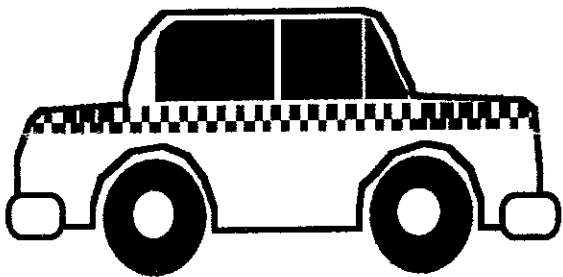
1967 Marathon A12 327 V8, Auto, PS PB 89 K NC car. New tires and Battery. Factory AC. Immac, original car \$8500 OBO. (215) 887- 3770 Bruce Urich.

1965 Marathon A12 250 Engine. Auto Needs work. Has been sitting \$500 (908) 223-1150 John
New Brunswick N.J.

1965 Checker 99K Never a Cab, 283 V8, 3 speed on floor, Red with Taxi decal kit, little rust, needs cosmetics (717) 457 0665 EVES Bill

AUTOMOTIVE LITERATURE FOR SALE

Collector wishes to concentrate on Checker Literature Only. Wishes to sell collection. Alfa Romeo, AMC, Audi, BMW, Bristol, Buick, Cadillac, Chevrolet, Chrysler, Citroen, Delorean, Ferrari, Ginetta, Honda, Hummer, Jaguar, Land Rover, Lotus, Marcus, Mazda, Mercedes, MG, Austin, Rover, Morgan, Nissan, Panther, Peugeot, Pontiac, Reliant, Renault, Rolls Royce, Saab, Suzuki, Toyota, Triumph, TVR, Vauxhall, Vector, VW, Williams, Zender, plus a full line of Communist era cars, and Many, Many Extras of Checker Literature. Terry Vaught; 3401 Congress Ct.; Jeffersonville, IN
Tel: (812) 283) 6134



*****SPRING****SPRING*****SPRING*****

SPRING EVENT MAY 18 LIBERTY STATE PARK 10 AM rain or shine
Parking Area. Exit 14 a NJ TPKE . Admission FREE. REMEMBER this is not a permitted event,so no blatent parts selling . This is just an informal gathering of us Checkerheads . SEE YOU THERE ON SUNDAY MAY 18

OTHER EVENTS. A Prominent Taxi trade paper wants to invite our club to a trade show that they are having in June in the Big Apple. At this stage not all the details have been worked out. However it will probably be by individual invitation and involve only those with taxis due to the nature of the show and size constraints. STAY TUNED for further details.

MACUNGIE Usually the first week in August WILL INFORM!