



The Legend Still Lives...



Dues
Due
\$7

BIG APPLE TAXI & CHECKER CLUB

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME II
ISSUE III

SUMMER 1996

- *KALAMAZOO --- The trip, the event, the story.....
Photos Too!
- *MORE ON MILLSPAUGH & IRISH --The fog is clearing !
- *FALL MEET IN JERSEY CITY----
- *PLUS--- A Pontiac Taxi, A Checker "T" you can see, and A
Drink with Checker and more

FALL MEET- JERSEY CITY

Yes Fans its time for our Fall Meet in Liberty State Park in Jersey City.
WHEN: Sunday September 22, 1996 11 AM 'Till Whenever. RAIN OR SHINE

WHERE: Liberty State Park ; Jersey City NJ

COST: Free- The park is free

HOW TO GET THERE: Exit 14 B off the NJ Turnpike- Right off the Holland Tunnel from NYC

This is an informal meet, last year over 20 cars came. If we keep it cool we can keep doing it. Remember no alcohol, no blatent parts sales or vending. Any Questions about the Parks Facilities call them @ (201) 915-3400.

CLUB TEE SHIRTS WILL BE AVAILABLE THERE \$13.95 Ea. 2/\$25. XL only

The "E" out for a spin at Gilmore in Kalamazoo



KALAMAZOO

For over 6 years I wanted to go to Kalamazoo. Being something like 900 miles from the Big Apple, it only happening every 2 years, driving all that distance in a car that has almost 300,000 miles on it, taking a week off from work etc. made for all the excuses I told myself for not going. Well, this year I went and it was all worth it.

I decided on the slow and scenic route thru upstate NY into northern Ohio. And when one is in Ohio and gets the chance what does a die hard core Checker fan do? Visit Ben Merkel's Checker Emporium in Middlefield. Seeing cars like A-8's, '69 Perkins Diesel powered, UPS trucks, an A-11 with 50 miles on it, and best of all riding in his A-4, yes riding in it (how many of you have even seen one close up?) was like going to Checker heaven. Joe Pollard, the California parts Wiz was also there. It was a pleasure to meet him and an education in parts. After some sightseeing in Cleveland, my wife Gail and I teamed up with Fr. John Henry, Ken Smith, Ken Rock, Ben and Joe Pollard for a convoy into Kalamazoo.

A long hot trip was all worth it when we toured the factory saw the showroom, the test track and some of the gems still sitting on the floor (a mint wagon and an A-12E Limo, Plus--). After it was off to the hotel where almost everyone stayed. Car talk went on until the wee hours of the morning. It was interesting meeting people that I had known for years, but had only spoken to on the phone or had written to.

The next day we went to the Gilmore Museum. Over 40 Checkers were there along with the small engine and farm tractor people that shared the event with us. The weather was beautiful and the setting at Gilmore is magnificent. Steve Wilson and his crew did a splendid job organizing the event. At the event, all the big guns in Checker world were there Ben Merkel, Erich Lachmann, Don McHenry, Gary Spaulding, Steve Wilson, Roy Dickinson, Rod Walton and many more. A seminar on parts availability and maintenance also took place. A special treat besides the '82 Chicago cab, Parmalee "Y" already on display was when they cranked up their "E" model and drove it around. All this was followed by a great dinner.

The national club elected a board of directors of ten people. I am proud to say that five of them; Bob Hinkley, Erich Lachmann, Don McHenry, Ben Merkel and Myself are all members of the Big Apple Chapter---

Also from our Chapter driving the farthest, Gary Spaulding ; Bruce Urich, John Herbert Doug Klauck, Don & Rita Maxwell and Terry Vaught----Way to go BIG APPLE!

MEMBERSHIP: To Join the BIG APPLE TAXI & CHECKER CLUB

DUES: USA \$7 OUTSIDE USA \$10 US FUNDS ONLY!

CHECKS: PAYABLE TO MICHAEL ANGELICH ----ONLY

NEWSLETTERS: 4X Year MEETS 2X Year When we can

OFFICERS; Michael Angelich Pres. Molly Malone Edit.

Volunteers always welcome! Articles and news always welcome

MAIL ADDRESS: Michael Angelich, 77 North St. Huntington Station, NY 11746

PHONE: (516) 673-0496- Sorry, Due to volume most calls cannot be returned.

TO JOIN THE CHECKER CAR CLUB OF AMERICA

Contact Them @ 15536 Sky Hawk Dr.

Sun City West, AZ 85375-6512

NOTE: If you do not live in a close proximity to NYC or your interest in Taxicabs is not that strong, your interest would be better served by joining only the National Club.

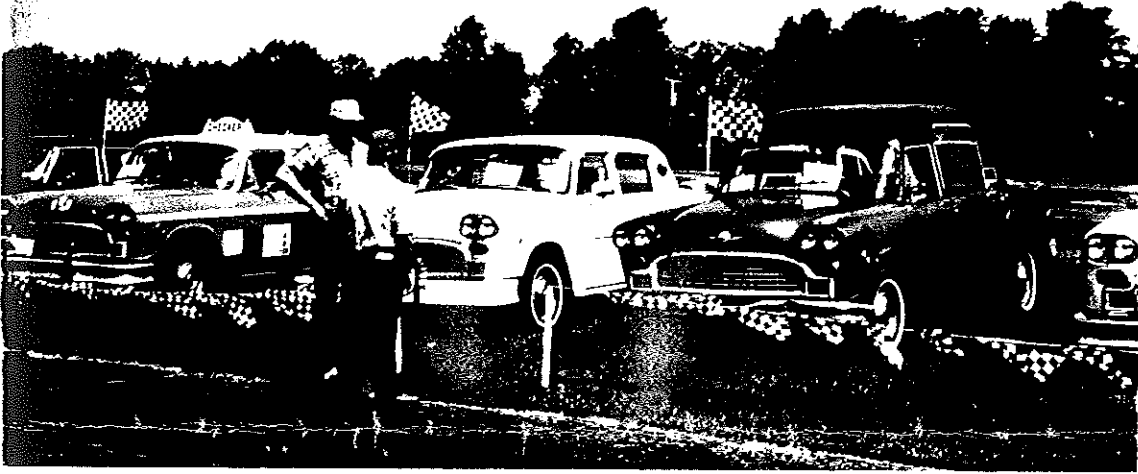


Taking the A-4 for a drive at Ben Merkel's Taxi World



The 4 Horsemen, Myself, (Old NYC), Ben Merkel (Island Express), Kens' Smith & Rock (The Norfolk Duo) Marshalling up in Cleveland for the ride to Kalamazoo. A few heads turned on the Ohio Tpke. seeing 4 vintage Checkers in a row blasting to Kalamazoo.





The Field at Gilmore in Kalamazoo



Myself, and fellow Big Apple Member Bruce Urich. Bruce was showing me his newly completed scale model of his Aerobus.



CHECKERS MISSOURI STYLE:

Andy Taylor, A long time Checker Fan, Mechanic, Parts Vendor, Car Collector And Some has started a Mid-America Chapter.

If you are interested in joining contact him:

CHECKER MID-AMERICA CHAPTER

c/o Andy Taylor- Editor

Rt. 1, Box 59 C

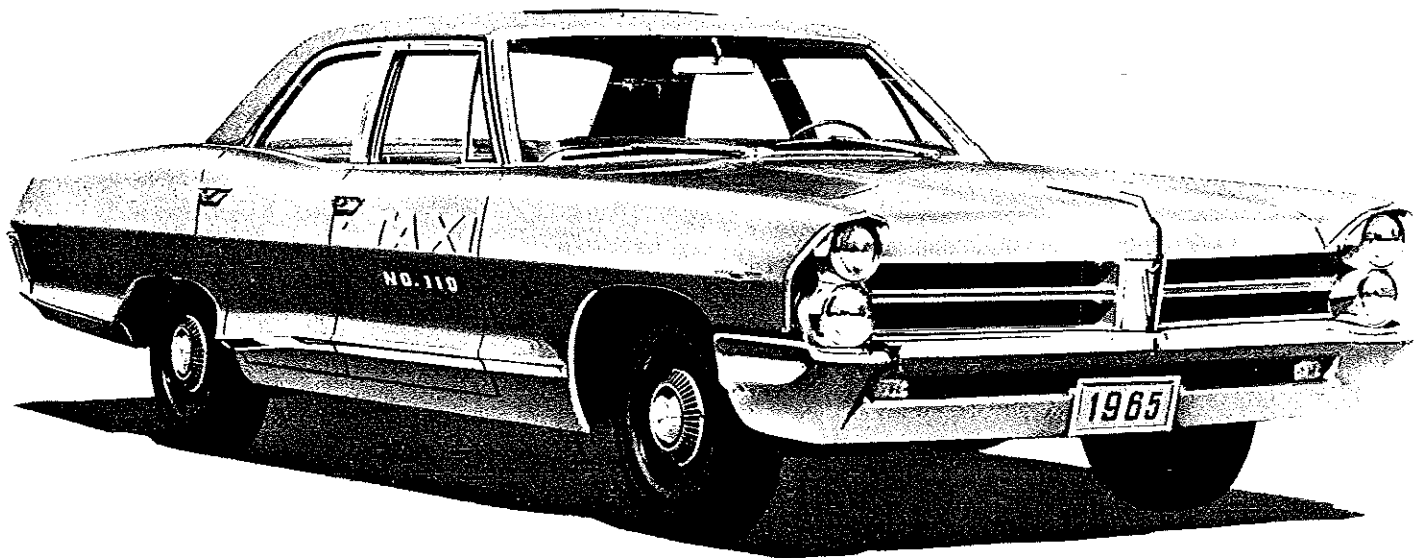
Matthews, MO 63867

Or phone him at (573) 472-9711

THE '65 PONTIAC TAXI

With a 265 HP engine, the gas mileage must have been atrocious, no wonder these babies never made it!

...converts Pontiac prestige into daily dollars-and-cents



If your taxi operation thrives on public esteem as well as year-in, year-out reliability, get acquainted with our style-leading '65 Catalina Wide-Track. For one thing, it has extra width between the wheels for a smoother, fare-pleasing ride (yet it's no wider on the outside than an ordinary car).

Our '65 engineering advances make a lot of taxi sense, too. These include a flatter floor for easier entry and exit, more hip and shoulder room, more powerful brakes, livelier regular-fuel engine, economical 2.73:1 axle ratio available with Turbo Hydra-Matic, more rugged manual transmission now synchronized in all forward gears, new cross-flow radiator for more effective engine cooling—to name a few.

So to make your future fares happier and operating costs lower, just start with this Catalina Wide-Track—and add the Pontiac heavy-duty taxi options of your choice.

PONTIAC TAXI PACKAGE

CODE GROUP 098 CATALINA 4-DOOR SEDAN ONLY

- 91 Silver vinyl trim is furnished unless standard trim is specified. HD vinyl floor mats, front and rear.
- 618 Taxi provisions—roof sign wiring harness and HD 14" wheels.
- 654 HD front and rear seat cushion and seat-back springs, including custom foam pads.
- 611 Rear door jamb switches controlling dome light.
- 432 HD radiator and fan shroud.
- 632 HD five-bladed radiator fan (available only with full group).
- 661 HD frame.
- 781 Heavy load springs and shocks.
- HD clutch, synchromesh cars.

STANDARD TAXI ENGINES

- WBA 256 HP regular fuel, HD clutch, 3.23 axle ratio.
- YAM 256 HP regular fuel (Hydra-Matic), 2.73 axle ratio.

ADDITIONAL EXTRA-COST HD OPTIONS

- 692 HD brakes, aluminum front drums and heavy rear drums, HD 15" wheels, 8.15 x 15 tires.
- 438 Super cooling radiator and fan shroud.

HD ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

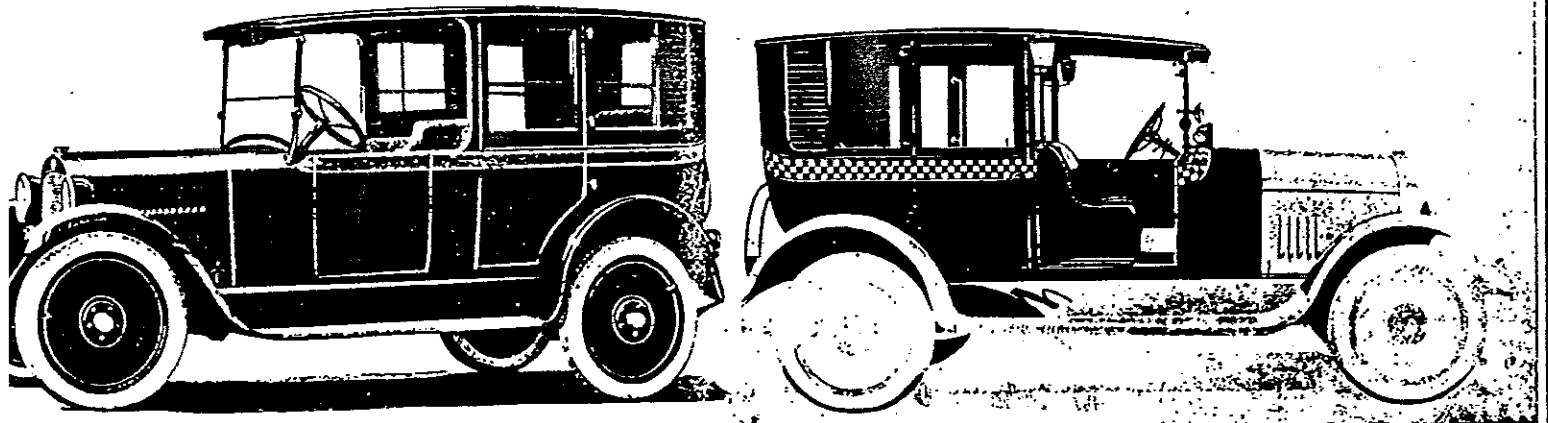
- 674 Delcotron generator, 55 amps. and HD battery (Std. on air-conditioned cars, but order 651 HD battery).
- 672 HD Delcotron generator, 62 amps. and HD battery (not available with air conditioning), dual belt drive, transistorized voltage regulator.
- 651 HD battery, 70 amp. hours.

First brought out in 1932 . The car shows the influence of Markins tie with Errett Lobban Cord. It used Cord's Lycoming GU engine. Cord's version was a copy of this car the Auburn Saf-T-Cab. Later in the 30's cord and Markin would become partners for awhile. Markin would later take full control. This version an apparent NYC model can be seen at the Auburn, Cord, Dusenberg Museum in Indiana.



THE MILLSPAUGH & IRISH ENIGMA?

To the best of our knowledge when Morris Markin, founder of the Checker Motor Co. entered into the car business he did so after a loan of 15,000 dollars could not be repaid by a friend. The friend made Taxi cab bodies for Commonwealth cars. When Markin took over he named it the Markin Body Corp. headquartered in Joliet, IL. He continued to make bodies for Commonwealth Cars. In October 1921 the two companies merged and moved to Chicago. In 1923 with production of over 100 cars per day the company moved to Kalamazoo, MI where it would stay. Here is the question. If you look at the Ad below from The Taxi World August 1923, M & I claims credit for manufacturing Checker Bodies. To complicate matters more another Ad from Taxi Journal, Sept. 1924 Showing a Dodge Bros. Taxi with a M&I body that seems to be identical to that on the Model E Checker. Why would a manufacturer who was primarily and firstly a body builder have someone else build bodies for them? Why would the same body appear on a Dodge? We Have also viewed old photos of Willys-Knight Green Diamond Taxis from that era that seem to show the same body. Did M&I have a patent on the body and let Checker make it under licence, or vice versa? Was Checker so overwhelmed with orders that it farmed out the work to M&I? Until We ran accross these Ads we had never heard of Millspaugh & Irish, yet as you can see from the Ads they claim to be the biggest Taxi body builder of the era. We have asked around and knowone seems to know. If anyone out there has the answer let us know. We will print the answer in the next newsletter.



(Checker Cabs Use Millspaugh & Irish Bodies)

Dodge Brothers Taxicabs with Millspaugh & Irish Bodies

not only save you hundreds of dollars per cab, but they enable you also to compete with any taxicab for business. They are high-quality taxicabs in every particular. Economy of operation and upkeep is another of their big features, and these taxicabs solve another of your troublesome problems by having already at your disposal a fully-organized service system.

Every Dodge Brothers dealer can supply complete information about the Dodge Brothers-Millspaugh & Irish Taxicab. Illustrated literature sent free on request.

THE MILLSPAUGH & IRISH
CORPORATION
INDIANAPOLIS
MOTOR COACH BUILDERS
*America's Largest Independent Builders
of Taxicab Bodies*

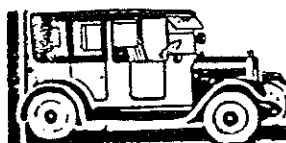
BODIES THAT STAND THE GAFF!

Taxicab manufacturers use Millspaugh & Irish Bodies because of their extraordinary sturdiness, stamina and "staying power."

To gain the rugged strength and elasticity that taxicab service demands, we air-dry the lumber for Millspaugh & Irish Bodies three to five months, and then kiln-dry it to a 5% moisture content. This preserves intact the tensile strength that otherwise would be lost in quick drying.

Every manufacturing process is handled with an equal care. We take every precaution to insure a continuation of the splendid record that Millspaugh & Irish Bodies have made in actual service. The success of this policy is proved by the fact that most of the leading taxicab manufacturers now use Millspaugh & Irish Bodies.

THE MILLSPAUGH & IRISH
CORPORATION
INDIANAPOLIS
MOTOR COACH BUILDERS
*America's Largest Independent Builders
of Taxicab Bodies*



MORE ON THE MILLSPAUGH & IRISH STORY

On the proceeding page is a copy of an article we ran last Newsletter on the "Millspaugh & Irish Enigma". We had no answer to the puzzle. Knowing that I would be going to the show in Kalamazoo I was sure that I would find the answer there. Sorry, no takers. After talking to the real heavies in the Checker Club such as Steve Wilson, Roy Dickinson and Ben Merkel along with several others that worked for Checker, nobody seemed to know or had ever heard of M & I. I was rather disappointed. I thought this bit of trivia was lost in the mind of some old timer that had either passed on or was in some nursing home somewhere. Especially, since the early days of Checkers history is clouded in abiguity, exaggeration and mystery I thought that this would remain a tough trail to get back on track again.

However, In July I received a letter from Terry Vaught, A Big Apple Member from Jeffersonville, IN putting the mystery a lot closer together. Terry is a major collector of automobile literature of all types. We had discussed this in Kalamazoo, But at the time he had no clue either. However, He found the article below in an automotive journal from June 7, 1923. It states that at the time Checker Moved from Chicago to Kalamazoo It was having bodies made for them in both Indianapolis (Millspaugh & Irish) and in Springfield, MA. According to this article Checker was hoping to make 15 cars per day in Kalamazoo, hardly the 100 per day that has been claimed in some articles (more ambiguity) This leaves us with more questions. Why did Markin, the Body builder for the Commonwealth Cab (Checker's predecessor) stop or need to hire two separate coachbuilders to build his bodies when he moved from Joliet to Chicago? Why was he planning to stop using them when he got to Kalamazoo? Who was the other coach builder in Springfield?

We do know that Millspaugh & Irish definitely did build the Model E until some time into 1924.

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 he in charge of production at Plant No. 2.

Moulton Assists Goodspeed

Bert Moulton, formerly of Moulton & Dalgleish, 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.

ADS-ADS ARE FREE TO MEMBERS

CARS FOR SALE- More on Following Page

'81 CHECKER MARATHON

Black, vinyl top, 229 V-6, A/C, PS, R- Defroster, opera windows, Black Velour Int., Tinted Windows \$5000. (908) 221-9054

'80 CHECKER A-12 LIMO

85,000 Miles, 267 V-8 , Turbo 400 Trans. A/C ,Opera Windows, Black on Black. Runs great! Needs Cosmetics. (717) 696- 4818, Mike

CARS WANTED- More on Following Page

✓ CHEAP '69-'81 Marathon. OK if needs work. All offers considered. Contact Michael Murphy 112 E. Delavan Buffalo, NY 14208

✓ CHECKERS WANTED: A-11's, A12's, A12E's. Must be reasonable. Will pick up. Parts cars OK. Call (305) 754-4444 Michael Rodriguez. Or write: 4759 Palm Ave #255 Hialeah, FL 33012. Please include photos, description and Price.

TAXI ITEMS WANTED: Collector seeks pre 1950 Anything & Everything related to the industry. Henry Winningham 3205 S Morgan St. Chicago, IL 60608. Or call 1-312- 847 -1672

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, Nisan, Panther, Peugeot, Pontiac, Reliant, Renault, Rolls Royce, Saab, Suzuki, Toyota, Triumph, TVR, Vauxhall, Vector, Volkswagen, Williams, Zender plus a full line of Communist era cars. And many, many extras of Checker literature. Terry Vaught 3401 Congress Ct. Jeffersonville, IN 812 -283-6134.

CHECKERS AND BEER: The Chelsea Brewing Co.

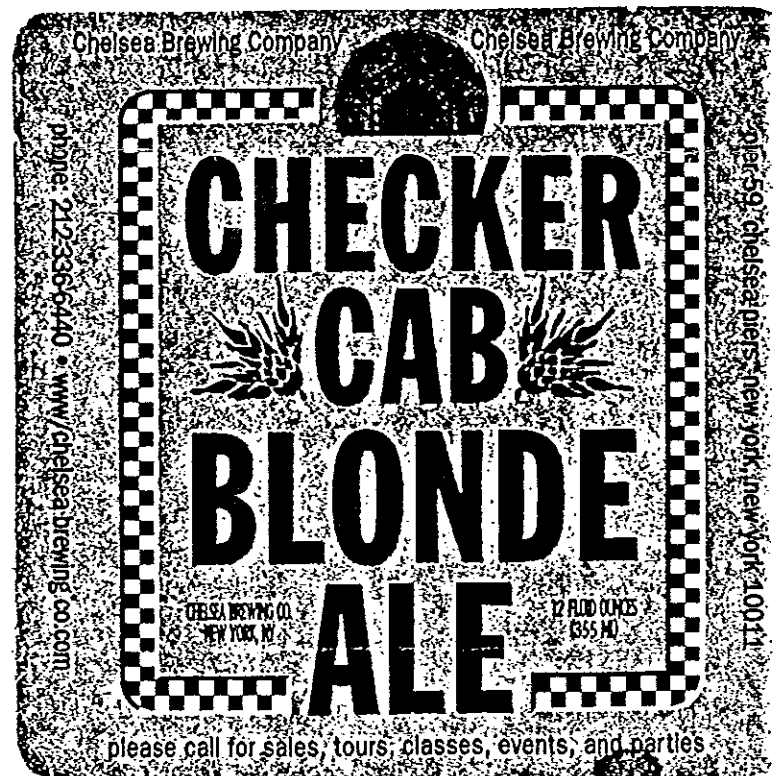
of NY is now producing Checker Cab Blonde Ale.

If you want some or want to see their factory call

them @ 212-336-6440. Tours at this point are on

Tuesday Nites only. They are located in NY on

Pier 59 (around 14th St.)



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

Antique License Plates in Matching Sets
1917-1965. Contact: William Figge
Tel: (805) 498-1013

New Radiators, NOS, Outer & Inner
Fenders, Doors, Door Skins, Rocker Panels,
Front & Middle Door Posts, Gas Tank
Sending Units, Brake
Hoses/Cables/Drums/Bearings, Axles, A-
Frames, Lens Covers, Front End Parts,
Exhaust Pipes, Drive Train Parts, Wiper
Arms & Motors,
Speedometers & Other Gauges. Also have
Used Doors, Fenders, Taxi Meters, a Dozen
Parts Cars & Lots More! Call or Write for
Parts Availability, Prices & Information.
Gary Spaulding, P. O. Box 196, Levant, ME
04456-0196
Tel: (207) 884-8330

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

CHECKERS WANTED

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

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

PARTS WANTED

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

MEMORABILIA WANTED

Checker Dealer Clock
Contact: Erich Lachmann, Jr.
Tel: (914) 457-1898
Wanted Cont.
All Small Taxi Items, Taxi Meter, Roof
Lights, Books, Model Cars, Photo's, etc.
Contact: Wilfred Krullaurds, Stortemelk 43,
2401 BT Alphen a/d Rijn, HOLLAND

LITERATURE WANTED

Checker Taxi Brochures, 77 Marathon
Owners Manual, Info on Medicar and '76
Aerobus. Original or Copies OK. Sell or
Swap Extras. Contact: Terry Vaught, 3401
Congress Ct., Jeffersonville, IN 47130
Tel: (812) 283-6134--B-4 Noon

EXPERT AUTO REPAIR

ON ALL CHECKERS

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

CHECKERS FOR SALE

1981 Marathon - Auto, V-8/AC - Excellent
Condition. Garaged. Call-Tom
Bartosiewicz
Tel: (718) 349-2807

Ben Merkel is having a clear-out of a few
Checkers from his collection of between
150-200 cars. Here's a selection of what's
on offer:

- 1982 A11 Taxi (red & yellow) 229 V6.
Runs, but slightly beat-up \$800.00
- 1981 A11 Taxi's (5) 3 yellow, 1 white (was
yellow) & 1 black (was NYC Cab). All
have Chevy 229 V6 motors-some even have
working a/c. \$2,850 each
- 1971 A11 Taxi. Has Strange water-filled
bumpers. Straight 6, Runs Well, a/c. \$1,000
- 1982 A11E. ex UPS one Passenger, Load
Carrier, Used by UPS in Canada. Very Rare
& Very Rusty. Runs, \$800
- Twilight Taxi Parts, 14503 Old State
Road, Middlefield, OH 44062
Tel: (216) 632-5419 (11:00-3:00 PM) Let it
Ring

1968 A11E, 8 Pass. Limo, 30k miles on
Rebuilt 327, New Tires & Front End, 2nd
Owner, \$5,495
Contact: Bud Perry
Tel: (505) 881-9162

OTHER

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