

Breakfast for Dinner – An ambulance, a road rally, and a bunch of Europeans

No, it's not the set up for some sort of lame punchline. That was the scene at my job today. When not writing content for Auto Waffle or Region Rides Magazine, I masquerade as the Internet Marketing Coordinator for a collector car dealership, so we frequently get interesting visitors looking to buy, sell, or consign vehicles. This week, however, we were approached by visitors of a different kind.



Let's get one thing clear here: No; this is not the same thing as the car from Ghostbusters. Ecto 1 (and Ecto 1a) were Miller-Meteor ambulances. This is a Eureka. There are a number of different coachbuilders that build professional cars on the Cadillac commercial chassis. These days, though ambulances have moved on to truck and van based platforms, flower cars and hearses are still car based.

Eureka Manufacturing Co. can trace its roots all the way back to 1871, when it was a school furniture manufacturer, and eventually branched into many different industries, including butter churns, washing machines, farm trucks, wagons, and more. By 1900, thanks to a contract with the US Government to build mail delivery wagons and other things, Eureka was one of the largest carriage builders in the country, producing roughly 5,000 vehicles per year.

In 1917, the company began producing the professional cars for which it is most well-known today. They began to produce wood-bodied cars and motorizing older horse-drawn units as the motor vehicle market began to pick up steam. Eureka pioneered the limousine style funeral coach which is what most of us are used to seeing today.

Onto this particular car, though. What we have here is a 1959 Eureka High-Boy Cadillac Ambulance. Owned by Edwin and Irene Otten, the car now resides in Holland. Originally, it saw service as a part of the Bogota Volunteer First Aid Squad in New Jersey. According to their website, a former Eureka representative noted that they only built three 1959 High-Boy ambulances. These models, towering over seven feet tall, cost over \$14,000 in 1959 (over \$86,000 in 2013 dollars).

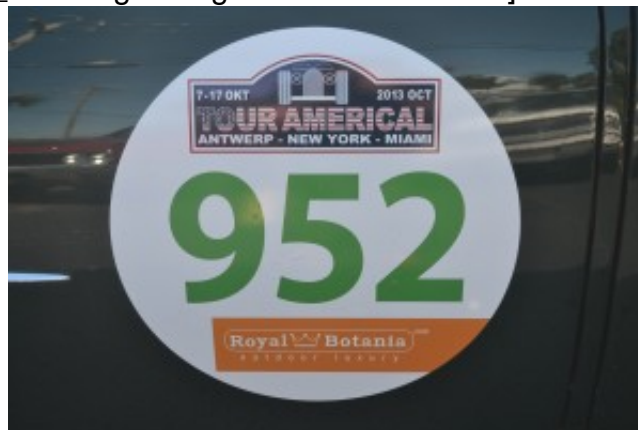
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They really don't make them like they used to. [/caption]

I spoke with Edwin briefly while taking photos of this magnificent machine. He noted that it was quite expensive to purchase and ship to Europe, but he loves it. The Ottens have brought the wonderful ambulance back home to take part in a road rally from Antwerp, Belgium. The 2013 Tour Americal rally is running from New York to Miami, and they just so happened to be spending an evening in my small coastal Florida city, Stuart. They also made a pit stop back to Bogota, NJ to have a special homecoming for the car.

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You can visit the Tour Americal website and track Edwin and Irene in their wonderful ambulance using their entry number! Awesome! [/caption]

Apparently, the cost to take part in the rally is quite reasonable and even includes lodging, airfare, and shipping for the vehicles to and from the United States. I think I know what I want to do next. For more information, visit the Tour Americal website [HERE](#). In the meantime, feel free to drool over more candid photos of the Ottens' gorgeous Eureka ambulance!

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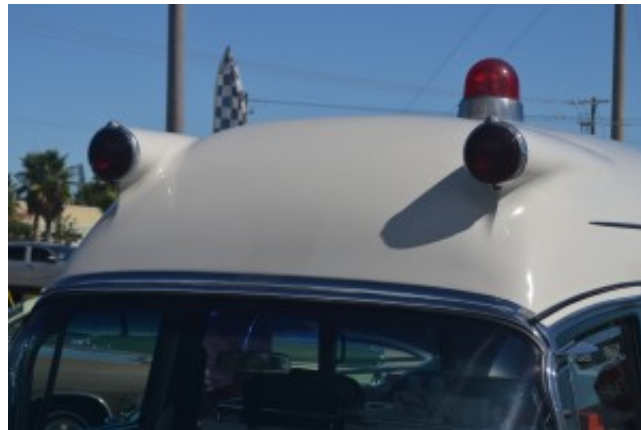
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