



Annual Meeting, August 14, 2018

Remarks by Liz McMullan

Good evening. I am Liz McMullan, past President of the Seal Cove Auto Museum. On behalf of the Museum board, staff and volunteers, I am thrilled to welcome you to this evening.

We are very excited about the huge strides of the Museum under the inspired leadership of our present executive director, Raney Bench. The Museum has achieved national awards. The American Association for State and Local History gave us an award of merit for the Auto Wars: Then and Now Exhibit which closed last November 1st. Raney will be traveling to Missouri in late September to accept the award. We also won a National Association of Auto Museums first place award for interpretive exhibits for that same exhibit. We received Trip Advisor's Hall of Fame Award of Excellence for receiving five-star ratings, five years in a row. In June of this year, we won the Best in Class for our 1904 Knox Tudor Surrey in the Greenwich, CT Concours d'Elegance.

Our Annual Report more thoroughly documents our many achievements in 2017.

Earlier this year, we entertained a guest as we always do so very well. Several days later he called to give us \$10,000. When we submitted our nonprofit documentation, he upped the gift to \$20,000, the single largest donation that the Museum has ever received outside of the support that we receive from the Richard C. Paine, Jr. Charitable Trust. The Charitable Trust income barely covers the cost of keeping the lights on and doors open. Without the support of our members such as yourselves, we would not be in any kind of position to offer the kinds of programs and exhibits that we do.

In May of this year, we opened our current exhibit, Selling Lifestyle and Leisure, Art, Advertising and Automobile. We have several new guest cars displayed in this exhibit that are quite spectacular. I hope that you get a chance to review the new exhibit if you have not already done so.

Last summer, we decided to reduce our overextended activities to be more manageable for the staff and volunteers. Well, we were singularly unsuccessful in doing that. Our saving grace was hiring Jenna Beaulieu our new store and events manager. She was indoctrinated big time with the biggest day of events ever held at the Museum. With the help of some 70 volunteers, we hosted 120 or so cars plus drivers and organizing team for lunch on June 28th as a part of the Great Race which went from Buffalo, New York to Halifax, Nova Scotia. Our head mechanic, Peter Brown, participated in the race with Ford Reiche. At the final awards banquet for the race in Halifax, Jeff Stumb, the director of the event, reflecting on the entire race, singled out the Museum as the most deserving institution of the Great Race for financial support of the participants. Later on June 28th, we held a car show, followed by a Danny Harper concert. On that day, we had the heaviest rain all day long that I have ever witnessed in my life in Maine. We got 4 inches of rain, or 7.5% of our annual rainfall in one day. The Car-B-Que was sponsored by Bar Harbor Bank and Trust Company and Cool As A Moose.

Not only do we have two Tesla electric car charging stations installed last year and an electric car charging station installed several years ago sponsored by Rotary, but we also now have installed an electric bike charging station this summer.

Next summer we plan to host the second annual Car-B-Que on August 24, 2019, hoping for better weather! I highly recommend that you mark your calendars for that day. The music by Danny Harper and his band is fantastic and very danceable to. People think of him as Country-Western, but he is in fact Americana with a tremendous local following. There will be food trucks with a variety of foods to choose from.

Last summer we launched our Coachbuilders program for those who donate \$1000 or more per year. The Coachbuilder members are given special events to thank them for their participation in the program. We recently launched the Accelerator program that enables people to give monthly as an easy and convenient way to spread your membership gift throughout the year.

On Mount Desert Island, we are actively involved with the History Trust which is a collaboration between nearly all of the non-profit historical organizations. We are working on sharing resources wherever possible. A live example is Jenna Beaulieu who works for the Museum three days a week and the Mount Desert Historical Society two days a week as events manager.

The Board is currently undertaking a review of its strategic plans for the next five years, having just completed our first three-year plan. We are reaching out to all of you for ideas on how we can improve our offerings to make the Museum the in place to go to.

Recently the Board met and went through an exercise about fundraising. The first question was “What do you love most about the Auto Museum”? What surprised me most was that many responded as I did: The people! The staff, board and volunteers. Many are not even into automobiles! It is the people and interactions with them that people love the most.

I have long held that there is a place on this island for an organization to contribute to enhancing the quality of life here. I feel that we do that by educating, entertaining and enlightening the people who come through our doors, using the platform of this beautiful collection of cars, overlooking scenic Seal Cove Pond with the mountain beyond. These vehicles were produced during one of the most transformative periods of our history.

We are looking at ideas, such as building a driving track, obtaining simulators and other ideas such as perhaps a Victorian garden. We have a lot of space here and would like to begin to use it more comprehensively.

You may have noticed that the outside of the building was painted this year, at least the part that you can see. We are trying to raise money to paint the rest of the building. We also reupholstered our 1916 Abbott Detroit this winter, a wonderful gift that we received a few years ago. We are trying to raise money to finish the renovation of the car which includes the canvas top. We recently installed donated cupboards, sink and an electric range to create a workable kitchen next to the bathrooms which the Events Committee truly appreciates. This also satisfies prior criticism of having food preparation in the same area as our archive storage.

Our 2017 financial statements are still at the auditor's but will shortly be posted on our website under the tab “financial”. They are shown as Form 990, a federally required annual submission. In 2017, we had income of \$401,000 and expenses of \$430,000, for a shortfall of \$29,000. For obvious reasons, we appreciate whatever contributions you can make to help us to close the gap between income and expenses. We welcome as well any and all of your ideas.

I want to thank you all again for coming this evening and welcome any suggestions or questions or that you may have.