

# What Antique Cars Tell Us About the History of Canada

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*Some of North America's Most Iconic Cars Originated in Canada*

GUELPH,, ONTARIO, CANADA, August 11, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Canada has a storied history of building classic cars (and trucks). Some of North America's favourite and most iconic cars originated not in Detroit, but in Canada.

Consider the Volvo 122, produced in Halifax. This product of Volvo Canada was the first car in the world to feature seatbelts, in 1959.

Or look back on the Pontiac Grande Parisienne Sport Coupe, a vehicle that was truly grande. A car-sized more like a boat, the Pontiac Grande Parisienne Sport Coupe was the top of the line product of GM Canada. Accoutred in the most sumptuous fabrics available in the 1960s, it became the model for the somewhat less fabulous Chevy Impala.

According to an advertisement printed in the 1920s, the Windsor-made Fargo was used for 98 percent of all residential hauling and delivery in Canada. The Fargo Corporation was absorbed by the Chrysler Corporation in 1928, and production of Fargos was taken over by Dodge.

What car sounds more Canadian than a Frontenac? This one-year wonder had a front grille in two sections that had a disc with a maple leaf in its centre. The chrome lock and handle on the trunk were also decorated with a red maple leaf, as were the wheel disc covers.

About 8,400 Ford Frontenacs were sold in 1960. They were replaced by the Mercury Comet in 1961.

No car has more of a 1970s feel than the GT Manic. The two-door sports car was produced in Quebec by called Les Automobiles Manic, named after the Manicouagan River, not after the mental state of drivers of larger cars in rush hour.

Carmakers in Oshawa, Ontario produced the Beaumont Cheetah, based on the GTO and the Chevelle SS. The Canadian-made Dodge Regent was considered a classic car even in its own day, in the 1950s, The Mercury (Ford) M-100 began production in 1946 and ran until 1968. It was the Ford F-150 of Canada.

In 2021, Canadian classic cars are in demand around the world. Savvy offshore dealers know that buying Canadian collector vehicles, even after paying provincial luxury taxes, is a good deal. Because of the exchange rate, it's cheap to buy in Canadian dollars. One by one, our finest collectibles are being put into containers and shipped overseas even faster than the shipping companies can load them.

Thousands of Canadians are losing their opportunities to drive a piece of Canadian history, anthropologist Dr. Edward Hedican says.

Dr. [Edward Hedican has spent his career at the forefront](#) of a contemporary anthropology that has changed drastically since 2000. Anthropology has realized that it must confront the critical political, social, and economic challenges of the day.

Dr. Hedican has spent his teaching career challenging his students to take public positions on charged issues such as health and wellbeing, food security, social justice and reconciliation, terrorism and militarism, race and tolerance, and conflicts in a digital society. But all learning doesn't take place in the colloquium. Every Canadian can understand a bit of the Canadian experience by driving a classic Canadian car.

Cars tell us that the Canadian culture of the 1920s appreciated the utilitarian. That Canadians in the 1950s, at least in their cars, led the world in concern for safety. That 100 years after the first Dominion Day Canadian families had the means to spend on luxury.

[Edward Hedican points out that](#) cars don't teach us about Canada just in words. Cars show us how Canadians families pooled their resources for utilitarian transportation and later found funds for luxuries. Part of the story of Canada is the history of the family fleeing famine that just few generations later owned its own car. Or car.

Saving these relics of modern society gives Canadians insight into today and informs critical questions for tomorrow.

Professor of Anthropology at the University of Guelph, [Edward Hedican is the author of eight books](#) on Canadian anthropology and modern approaches to anthropology.

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