

CREATING THE AURORA - L. Jemmett

Some Recollections from Aurora Production Team Member
(with a salutary interlude about DeLorean)

Aurora Cars Limited - 1981

In 1981 a small group of investors decided to revive the 289 style Cobra as a production automobile as opposed to a kit car. Borrowing an original 289 (ser.# CSX0013) from a local car dealer the first body mold was cast. The concept was to build these replicas as close to the original as possible. As a production model all parts had to be new as compared to used or rebuilt. The Ford Motor Company agreed to supply the parts necessary & assist in providing the appropriate licencing for EPA & Crash standards. The engineering & design of a dual plane tubular chassis was the biggest obstacle to overcome. Finally in late 1982 the first prototype rolled off the assembly line & was named GSX MK1. With a 289 engine no longer available from Ford the vehicles were built using 5.0 liter Mustang engines. The front suspension & steering components were also adapted from the Mustang. The balance of the drivetrain included a 4spd Tranny & a Jaguar Differential with the power to the rear wheels provided with modified Corvette half shafts & uprights. Weighing in @ just over 2100 lbs. it achieved 0 to 60 mph. in 4.83 seconds & a top speed of 175 mph. After a change in ownership & a fresh infusion of operating capital the company name changed to Aurora Cars Limited. The bodies were then contracted to C&C Yachts & after an Order In Council by the Federal Government Aurora Cars became the only solely owned Canadian car company to become part of the then existing Auto Pact Agreement. It was also rated as the fastest production car manufactured in North America which did not sit well with General Motors.

Over the course of the next few years technology added to the cars performance & design. The new 5.0 liter HO engines were used as well as the Borg Warner 5 speed transmission further increasing performance. In 1986 the Ford Motor Company agreed to provide their entire dealership network with the Aurora Mark II as a show room model financed through Ford like any other vehicle sold through Ford Dealerships. NASCAR driver Bill Elliot who was at the peak of his career was hired as a corporate spokesman & personally endorsed the vehicle. Based on that Aurora Cars Limited became The Aurora Corporation trading on the Toronto & Vancouver stock exchanges. When the news of Ford's plans leaked out General Motors decided it was time to flex it's muscles & limit any competition to it's overpriced, poorly designed & overrated Corvette. In a very short period of time a group allegedly financed by GM began buying up small blocks of stock in Aurora Corporation until they had majority control. Once that occurred the new owners withdrew all financial support & Aurora Corporation was forced into Bankruptcy. Within a year General Motors released a new model of Oldsmobile called "The Aurora". Strange but true. Were they complicit in the demise of the Aurora? No conclusive evidence is available. With a little common sense you can draw your conclusions.

Subject: Cobra II

You don't have to be crazy to build handmade automobiles but it sure helps. There are so many inconsistencies to

deal with, let alone the sourcing of parts from all over the world in order to make them a close duplicate of the original. Lighting & instrumentation from the U.K., imported leather from Italy for the interiors & wire wheels are just a few of the headaches faced in the process. Add to that the modifications required to bring everything up to date with the current vehicle standards for the North America & the funny part is only steps away from the front door. One of the major factors to deal with is the body & sub assemblies manufactured in fiberglass. It is virtually impossible to produce identical pieces from each mold. No two are the same. Endless hours are consumed in fitting each piece in place. Mounting the body to the chassis is the easy part. It's the sub assemblies that cause the problems. Making sure the doors, trunk lid & hood fit with uniform gaps & having them function smoothly is the biggest challenge.

When it comes to challenges, the wiring harness that operates all the electrical components in the vehicle would make a Saint swear. Each wire has to be colour coded & made of sufficient length to connect to each & every component of the car from front to back. Change one thing & every wire harness has to be changed. Ford made us crazy every year with the changes to the engine compartment harness. You'd think a company of that size could keep the same colour codes for the computer systems year after year. Dream on little dreamer. There was always a surprise or ten without fail & without warning.

Other problems that drive a fella nuts are shipping schedules from Europe. For example, Jaguar only ships parts to North America via cargo container every six months. Nothing is worse than having parts sitting on the dock in Halifax for two weeks waiting for Canada Customs to clear the container because of a paperwork glitch. Dealing with them is like tickling a ducks ass with a feather. I've often wondered why it's referred to as Logistics because there is no logic to it. Production schedules have to be changed as well as delivery dates. We pulled a lot of all nighters in order to get vehicles delivered on time. Somehow we managed & seldom missed delivery commitments.

The following is a true story of an incident that took place the night before a vehicle was to be picked up by it's new owner. The gentleman who had purchased the car lived in Ottawa Ontario. I received a fax from him at 2:30 p.m. the day before telling me he was taking a train from there & would be arriving at Union Station in Toronto @ 8:15 the following morning. The plan was to meet him there with his new car because he just couldn't wait to drive it. I did the final test drive shortly after 5:00 p.m. satisfied everything was perfect & ready for delivery. Instead of putting it back in the shop right away I decided to first do a quick clean up of the service bay. One of the mechanics who had stayed late asked if he could drive it around back for me to save a bit of time. I heard it fire up, (they had a sound all their own) the tires squeal & then a sickening crash. He'd lost control of the damn thing & took the right rear 1/4 panel & bumper off it & damaged the trunk lid against the side of the building. Fiberglass shatters it doesn't bend. After banging my head on my desk for what seemed like an eternity we kicked emergency plan A into gear.

Fortunately we had another vehicle sitting on the floor painted the same colour (British racing green, go figure) but at that stage it was simply a chassis with the body mounted on it. Nothing more. With a few desperate phone calls I managed to

get some of the staff to come back in & by nine o'clock we were ready to swap everything from the wrecked car to the new body & chassis. We busted our butts all night long basically running on adrenalin. By 6:30 a.m. it was ready for the final detailing & test drive. I decided to test drive it first while the crew was taking a much needed break. Hwy 404 was the closest main highway to turn it loose on & the north bound lanes are never busy at that time of day. People with normal jobs are still in bed! It was a darn good thing because while still accelerating at 135mph it developed a wild vibration. Someone had forgotten to tighten the the knock offs on the wire wheels & the left front wheel had worked itself loose. Woke me up in a huge hurry!! Despite the insanity & a change of underwear the customer got his pride & joy on time. Over the course of the next two months he faxed me on more than one occasion praising the workmanship & performance of his new toy. If he only knew!!!

When it comes to performance automobiles you meet people from all walks of life. The rich & famous looking to add a new toy to the collection. The white collar dude & of course the wanna be's. Most well versed in the heritage of the Cobra & the legend it became. For those fortunate to have the funds to own one there was always a thirst for more power. With all the EPA restrictions as a manufacturer we could not modify the engines to satisfy the Need for Speed. Some where delivered to performance shops immediately after the new owner took delivery. What happen then was out of our control & we were off the hook with The EPA & of course all warranties on the drivetrain were void. One of those deserves special mention. We were contacted by a potential customer from New Jersey who wanted us to build him a special edition model using a Chevy engine for road racing. The cars were sold under Ford's licencing so we were in borderline territory. After a few brief negotiations & a signed waiver releasing the company for all liabilities the car went into production. Part of the agreement also stipulated that no Aurora Badges or logos would appear on the car.

The day that it rolled off the assembly line it was trailered to a local performance shop. Two weeks later it came back off the dyno at 475 HP & a dual stage 250HP Nitrous kit. Amazing what can be done to a 350cid Chevy engine & the punishment they'll take. Two days after the customer took delivery he called to say the speedometer had stopped working. We of course sent him a replacement. Not long afterwards he experienced some clutch problems & decided he'd send it back to have a heavier clutch installed. When it arrived the car had New Jersey plates on it, registered in his wife's name as a 1976 Mustang homemade kit car. So much for off road use. Not long afterwards we discovered that the 200 MPH speedometer had failed because the gears had been stripped out of it. A second one did the same & it too had the gears stripped out of it. We finally had to have Smith's Instruments in England build a 250 MPH speedo when we realized that this rocketship was now capable of speeds far exceeding 200 MPH. I only drove that car a few times & it scared the crap outta me every time. You basically steered it with your right foot. Probably the fastest automobile I've driven & I've owned & driven some real hot rods. Bad fast doesn't come close to describing it. During the first road test I fired the nitrous @ just over 150 MPH in forth gear, smoked the tires & almost lost it. From that point on the road tests were done with the nitrous bottle shut off & a change of underwear in the glove box. Even then it would get your attention in the blink of an eye & this dude is driving it on the streets

of New Jersey! Boy's and Their Toys???
You betcha baby. It doesn't get any better...

Despite the setbacks, the headaches, the insane hours & customers like the one above we thought we'd seen everything. Wrong!! With convertibles coming back into fashion in the mid 80's safety laws changed in that the windshield pillars had to be able to support the weight of the vehicle in event of a roll over regardless if it came with a factory installed chrome roll bar as standard equipment. We were faced with having to redesign the chassis. The brain power on the board of directors decided if we were going that far why not do a complete redesign to the chassis & turn it in to a roadster like the Corvette where the convertible top would fold down into the rear deck rather than the removable one that was taken off & stored in the trunk. While you're at it instead of the removable plexiglass side curtains (windows) that also stored in the trunk why not add power windows. A whole new era of insanity was about to begin.

COBRA/DeLOREAN

Any thoughts we had that redesigning the Mark II was going to be a relatively easy task quickly disappeared two weeks into the project. To add to our misery was also a change from carbureted engines to fuel injected. You would think that would be an easy transition. Wrong again because it caused a lot of changes. The biggest challenge would be the on board computer electronics required to operate the engines in order to pass EPA standards & testing. The dominoes were starting to fall & the redesign of the body & chassis was just beginning to cause major headaches. The major changes to the body & chassis weren't the issue. It was the smaller issues that became the major problems. Power window motors & regulators compact enough to fit in the small doors of a Cobra along with exterior door handles & mechanisms which the car never had before. Side glass & a weather stripping molding were another major issue to solve. All of those things had to fit in a small door that also included a side crash bar that couldn't be removed or changed in order to comply with crash & safety standards. Still to be addressed was a convertible top frame & the windshield modifications. First we started with an E-Type Jaguar top frame assembly which was closest to the size & configuration we were looking for. After many modifications that plan was scrapped. There were not many production convertibles available in the mid eighties to choose from. The only true Roadster manufactured in North America was of course the Corvette & with time becoming a factor we managed to find a wrecked Corvette Roadster which quickly became topless also. I lost track of the alterations & modifications that top frame assembly went through before a working prototype was successful. One problem solved but many more to overcome in a very short period of time. Time was as much a factor as was budget overruns.

When building a prototype to be used as a model for production there are very few parts that are available that don't have to be radically modified to fit the purpose. My job included purchasing & inventory control. Therefore I had to source the parts required. I spent endless hours going over parts manuals both OEM & aftermarket, touring car dealerships after they were closed searching for a combination of parts that would suit our needs. Every vehicle I passed was scanned for possible parts adaptability regardless of age. I got a lot of strange

looks from passing motorists. More on that escapade later. Back then the internet was in it's infancy & the ability to find suppliers & parts was certainly not like it is now. Then of course are the budget restraints to deal with. With the MK II temporarily out of production while all efforts were concentrated on the prototype we desperately needed another source of income to stay afloat. Aurora also had a sister company operating out of the same building that specialized in restorations & classic cars. There were some real Hot Rods that went through that shop. Everything from Split Window Vettes to Shelby 350 GT'S. However most of those automobiles were projects that didn't provide a guaranteed monthly income as operating capital. I also managed to score some Prototype work from Magna International through a contact I had in their engineering department. Then out of the wild blue yonder came a phone call that would change everything.

A Company in Columbus Ohio had just purchased a major portion of the bankruptcy of the DeLorean Motor Car Company & was looking for a Canadian distributor for the existing cars they had in stock as well as a Parts & Service depot. Part of the deal involved them sending us 90 automobiles to be kept in a Customs bonded warehouse & released as they were sold. It wasn't going to cost us a dime. Two cars were released initially as sales demos & for the service department to familiarize themselves with. To our good fortune the movie Back to the Future was to become a box office hit & combined with the scandals that were arising around the DeLorean Motor Car Company, & the man himself, advertising was free. In no time at all the cars were selling. Sales and parts were never an issue. The inherent idiosyncrasies were enough to make a saint swear & drive your Grandma to drink! With no service history or manufacturer to consult a new adventure began. Despite their rather sleek design the cars were under powered with the Volvo V6 engine. A good number of potential customers were disappointed with the lack of performance. Others were mainly interested in their eventual collectability. Interior space was very limited & the Gull Wing doors made it difficult for a person taller than average height to fit in the car comfortably. Nevertheless they were selling. Our dilemma was to find solutions to the annoying problems, which developed after the new owners, had put some mileage on them. Customers wanted answers & we had to find solutions & find them damn quick. There were overheating problems with the radiator located in the front & the engine located in the rear. They were subject to terrible vapor locks that caused the engine to overheat in city traffic. Even more aggravating was the Hydraulic Clutch issues that occurred for no particular reason & not on all the vehicles. So here we go again! Same ol' dance to a different tune & Mr. Murphy & his Law was still the dancing partner. Now we had two vehicles in the shop with issues while the trusty ol' MK II sat off in the corner under a tarp waiting for it's chance to take the spotlight again. Proving once again Crazyman's old adage "If it ain't broke, don't mess with it!"

I'm going to defer the continuing saga of the Aurora to the second half of this segment while I tell you a tale or two of the DeLorean experience. The automobile was manufactured with a stainless steel body with a texture or grain in it which caused a dilemma as to how to clean it. The biggest problem was how to remove dust & road grime. Owner's tried many methods of removal & we experimented as well. The most practical method was to completely soak the body with water, then sprinkle it

with Ajax or Comet Cleanser, clean each panel with a fluffy car wash mitt, rinse immediately & let it air dry. Trying to wipe it dry merely left streaks. We sent out a service bulletins advising of that method but still owners tried to be inventive. The worst one I saw was one that an owner cleaned the body using our recommended method but decided to wipe the car down with Armorol afterwards. It became a mobile dust & dirt magnet. After several attempts to remove it he finally returned it to us to solve the problem. The only practical solution was to wash the car down panel by panel with pure alcohol. However, because it had seeped under the molding it ran out from under them for months afterwards. His final solution was to sell the car to an unsuspecting buyer on the left coast. We were all happy to see that one head west never to return. Just when you think you've seen everything something happens to give you cause to wonder. One bright sunny afternoon outta the blue a Limousine arrived on our doorstep. A young fella obviously flush with cash & plenty of "bling" arrived in my office shortly there after wanting to by one of John Z's creations for his Lady. There were two conditions to the sale. The car had to have an automatic transmission & be delivered in 3 days for her birthday. Only a few were equipped with automatic transmissions & we just happened to have one that we thought would be difficult to sell. After completing the sales agreement & leaving a size able cash deposit he was on his way. Three days later he returned in the limo. with his scantily clad Lady friend, walked into my office, handed me a shoe box full of cash & told me to count out whatever I needed to complete the sale while he took her for a test drive. Like that was going to happen! After a little coaxing & realizing he couldn't count higher than ten once he ran out of fingers his Lady friend finally counted out \$27,000 in cash a placed it on my desk. What a pretty picture! Not the Lady you perverts. The cash! Several weeks passed before we heard of him again, when Metro Toronto detectives arrived to enquire about the strange sales transaction & looking for information as to his whereabouts. It seems he had sneaked back into Canada after being deported & they had seized the car after he had supposedly fled back to Jamaica to avoid drug & pimping charges. Believe it or not 4 days after the visit from Metro's finest he called wanting to purchase another car claiming his brother had written the first one off. Knowing he was "wanted" I stalled him by telling him I'd have to find another with an automatic transmission & immediately called the two detectives. They set up an elaborate sting operation & when he arrived again in a Limo. with another scantily clad Lady to place a deposit on another vehicle it was off to the Crowbar Hotel. The original car sat for over a year in a Police Pound before it was finally auctioned off.

Meanwhile back in the shop we were still pulling our hair out trying to solve the Aurora 302SC problems. Have you ever stood dominoes on there ends & given the first one a little push. Then welcome to our world. In order to facilitate power windows in the doors the doors had to be made larger & by doing so the body had to be changed drastically. Of course the engineers & mechanics didn't tell the body shop & the body shop was busy making modifications to the rear deck to accommodate the convertible top. Oops! Meanwhile I was still trying to source parts & pieces to keep them all happy. Not possible! My biggest priority at the moment was to find a power window set up that would meet our needs. There just happened to be a Ferrari Dino in the shop for restoration after a fire & there lo & behold was the answer to the problem. Ferrari used a cable

drive system that was compact & practical. Ferrari Canada didn't have any in stock but I just happened to know where to find 2 close at hand. Knowing we were going to have the Dino for at least another 5 or 6 weeks out popped the the first one. Strictly for prototype reasons of course & if it worked I'd order them through a local Ferrari dealer. Finally a bit of a breather. One major problem solved. Not so! An hour after the power window drive was handed to the mechanics it landed on my desk still smouldering. The silly buggers had burned the motor out. I quickly got on the phone & ordered a replacement plus 4 more. No problem I was told they'll be here in the next shipment from Italy in 6 months. What!!! Holy crapola (that's Italian) here we go again!!! Ferrari only ships parts to Canada every six months via cargo ship. Any wonder I ended up here on Crazyman. How the hell was I gonna get us out of this one.

To solve problems you occasionally have to be creative, although just as often the solutions are right under your nose. We had a young mechanic on staff by the name of Carlo. A fine Italian lad with relatives in Italy! Now if we could arrange to have one of his relatives pick up the window motors from Ferrari & forward them to us via air freight we'd have the motors in a week to ten days. Of course Carlo thought a better plan would be to send him to Italy to visit his relatives & bring the motors back with him would be the better plan. Not about to happen! He was a key to solving the electrical issues with the on board computer systems now required for the new engines. However, after a few calls to Uncle Guido in Italy a plan was formulated, the required funds forwarded & we received confirmation that our parts were on their way. During this process we became involved with Nascar driver Bill Elliot who was tearing up the tracks in the #9 Coors Thunderbird in the mid eighties. He was interested in purchasing an Aurora Mark II. After several telephone conversations he made arrangements to pay us a visit during the week he'd be in Michigan for a race there. He arrived at Buttonville Airport in a private jet two weeks later. When you think of a high profile Nascar driver @ the peak of his career you expect to greet someone very outgoing. On the contrary. Bill Elliot was the most unassuming laid back person I've ever met, almost shy in nature with a slow Georgia drawl. An incredibly nice man who seemed oblivious to his fame & fortune. When he arrived at the shop he was dressed more like a typical country boy than a Nascar star. Both he & his brother Ernie collect vintage Mustangs & rescue them from junk yards all over the southern U.S. & restore them. We spent an hour or so with him, gave him a tour of the facilities & then it was time for a test drive. If you ever want a thrill go for a ride in an automobile that is in the hands of a professional race car driver who knows how to handle an automobile. It's one of those unforgettable moments in life that bring back goose bumps every so often. He was very generous with his time & hooked us up with the Bilstein Shock company who agreed to supply us with their racing shocks that at the time were only exclusively available to Nascar race teams. A week following his visit he called to order a Mark II. Since we could no longer obtain carbureted engines from Ford we were informed that Ford would supply an engine to his specifications from their experimental division. All we had to do was pick it up in Detroit Michigan. Since we made occasional visits to Ford there should be no problem. So for the first time in two months we were going to build a Mark II. The boys in the shop were like little piggies in poop when the word got out. Not all of them were going to be involved with the build but it was enough to

boost morale after the frustrations of the redesign project. In the mean time more good news arrived on our doorstep. Alex Lifeson from the rock band Rush had commissioned us to restore an E Type Jaguar for him. All of a sudden we were surrounded by celebrities & more work than we could handle. The DeLorean project was still in full swing as well. I'm sure each & everyone of us has dealt with an arrogant car salesman. So here's a little story that will tickle all who have. We sold a DeLorean to an exclusive dealership in downtown Toronto who had it presold to a prestigious customer sight unseen. A collector who wanted to add one to his collection. On the day of delivery their know it all salesperson arrived to pick it up. After several attempts to show some of the features his customer would need to know & trying to explain the warranty program to him Mr. Know it All took off with the car. An hour later we got a phone call from York Regional Police to inform us that Mr. Salesman & the DeLorean he had just picked up were scattered all over the on ramp @ Major MacKenzie Drive and the 404 Highway. It was a total write off with only 34 klm's. on the speedometer. He should have listened when he was warned about how light the front end of the DeLorean was with the engine in the rear. The entire back end of the car was literally torn from the car. Mr. Salesman was not only charged with wreckless driving but they also nailed him with impaired. As a result, no insurance. & The dealership fired him & then sued him in a civil suit & won. Meanwhile back at the shop things seemed to be on a roll for a change. The automobile manufacturing business is full of little twists & big turns. Within a few days there was another kick in the head that would add more drama to the ongoing saga. A Canada Customs Supervisor called my house at 2:00 a.m. in the morning to say they had just arrested our parts pick up driver & seized our truck at the Windsor border crossing for illegally smuggling radar detectors into Ontario. Also onboard the the truck was Bill Elliot's experimental engine from Ford plus our prototype engine that we desperately needed to continue the redesign project. All we had to do to get the truck back was to post a \$75,000 bond. Another day in paradise was about to begin. It seems I'd left the insanity of the disc jockey business to join the circus.

Being Easter weekend the boys in the shop had the weekend off. Since they get tense if I talk behind their backs I'm going to give you some back ground & trivia on the DeLorean. If there are any other vehicles you'd like some history & background on leave a message here or notify the Webmaster & it will appear as in a vision.

De Lorean DMC-12 is a Northern Irish sports car which was manufactured by the De Lorean Motor Company from 1981 to 1983. It is most commonly known as the De Lorean, as it was the only model ever produced by the company. The DMC-12 featured gull-wing doors with a brushed stainless steel body. It was famously featured in the Back to the Future trilogy. The first prototype appeared in March 1977, and production officially began in 1981 (with the first DMC-12 rolling off the production line on January 21) at the DMC factory in Dunmurry, Northern Ireland. During its production, several aspects of the car were changed, such as the hood (bonnet) style, wheels and interior. About 9,000 DMC-12s were made before production stopped in late 1982. Today, about six thousand DeLorean Motor Cars are believed to still exist.

Despite being produced in Northern Ireland, DMC-12s were primarily intended for the American market. Therefore, all of the production models were left-hand drive (designed to be

driven on the right side of the road), limiting its popularity in the British Isles, where traffic travels on the left. Only 23 right-hand drive De Loreans were ever produced, these cars were converted from left-hand drive models by a specialized company in the UK.

The De Lorean is considered a great work of art and it endures as a pop culture icon, with a dedicated worldwide fan base.

Special DMC-12s==

Several special-edition DMC-12 cars have been produced over the years, including several that were used in the films of the [[Back to the Future trilogy|“Back to the Future” trilogy]]. Seven DeLoreans were used and modified with props after purchase to make them look like [[time travel]] machines throughout the trilogy.

One of several DeLorean prototypes is still in existence, and is currently undergoing a complete restoration at De Lorean Motor Company of Florida (DMCFL). There have also been major finds in the last few years of “pilot cars”. These cars, used for testing of the De Lorean, had been thought destroyed. The test car featured on the front cover of Autocar in 1981 announcing the De Lorean to the world was found in 2003 in a barn in Northern Ireland; it is currently undergoing restoration. Production of the De Lorean started at VIN 500. VINs 502 and 530 were used by Legend Industries as a proof of concept for a twin-turbo version of the standard De Lorean PRV-V6 engine. VIN 530 is undergoing a restoration at [http://www.pjgrady.com PJ Grady's] in New York. Vin 502 is owned by DMCFL and is going through a full Concours restoration at that location. Only one other twin-turbo engine is known to exist: it was purchased in the late 1990s by an individual owner. There is also another DeLorean that in its own right will soon join the ranks of becoming a Legend Car, VIN 570, which is now being converted to a full Legend(reproduction) Car by Chris Nicholson, the present owner of vin 00570.

VIN 500, notable for being the first production De Lorean to roll off the line in 1981, is on display in the Crawford Auto & Aviation Museum In Cleveland Ohio.

Only 23 right-hand drive models were made for use in the [[United Kingdom]], and as of 2002 these are valued at £25,000 each. For Christmas 1981, A De Lorean/[[American Express]] promotion planned to sell one hundred 24k gold-plated DMC-12s for \$85,000 each to its gold card members, but only two were sold. One of these was purchased by Roger Mize, president of Snyder National Bank in Snyder, Texas. VIN #4301 sat in the bank lobby for over 20 years before being loaned to the [[Petersen Automotive Museum]] of Los Angeles. It has a black interior, and an automatic transmission.

The second gold-plated American Express DMC-12 is located at the [[William F. Harrah]] Foundation/[[National Automobile Museum]] in [[Reno, Nevada]]. This car, VIN #4300, is the only one of the three existing gold-plated examples to be equipped with a manual transmission. This car has a tan interior. Like its golden siblings, it is a low-mileage vehicle with only 1,442 miles (2,307 km) on the [[odometer]].

A third gold-plated car exists with 636 miles (1,018 km) clocked up; it carries the VIN plate for the last De Lorean, #20105, though final assembly was actually completed in Columbus, Ohio in 1983. This car was assembled with spare

parts that were required by American Express in case one of the other two that were built were damaged. All necessary gold-plated parts were on hand, with the exception of one door. The car was assembled after another door was gold-plated, though the added door does not precisely match the rest of the car in color and grain. The car was first acquired by the winner of a department store raffle. Consolidated International, which owned the department store, had purchased 1,374 DMC-12s during the De Lorean Company's financial troubles, acquiring the remaining stock after the company went into receivership. Now held by a private owner in [[La Vale, Maryland]], the third and last gold-plated De Lorean is currently for sale at the price of \$250,000. This car and the example in Reno have saddle-brown leather interiors, a color scheme which was intended to become an option on later production cars. However, these two cars were the only DeLoreans to be thus equipped from factory parts.

John De Lorean had originally envisioned that the car would produce somewhere around 200 horsepower, but eventually settled on a 170 horsepower output for the engine. However, stringent US emissions regulations required that parts such as catalytic converters be added to the vehicle before it could be sold in that country. Although the new parts qualified the vehicle for sale in the US, they caused serious reductions to power output, to 130 horsepower. The 40-horsepower loss seriously impeded the DMC-12's performance, and when combined with the forced changes to the vehicle's suspension system, the US versions were regarded as disappointing. De Lorean's comparison literature noted that the DMC-12 could achieve 0–60 mph (0–96 km/h) in 8.8 s, which would have been good for the time, but Road & Track magazine clocked the car at 10.5 s. However, it's possible that the factory performance numbers were achieved using a European spec car with the 170 horsepower engine.

Manufacturer De Lorean Motor Company

Production 1981–1983

Class Sports car

Body style 2-door coupe

Engine 2.8 L (2849 cc) PRV V6

Transmission 5-speed manual

3-speed automatic

Wheelbase 95 in (2413 mm)

Length 166 in (4216 mm)

Width 73.1 in (1857 mm)

Height 44.9 in (1140 mm) doors closed

77.2 in (1961 mm) doors open

Curb weight 2712 lb (1230 kg)

Similar Alpine A310

Lotus Esprit

Porsche 911

Bricklin SV-1

Designer Giorgetto Guigiaro

The truck is back with our engines & Canada Customs has our seventy five grand. Production is going well. Still working on the convertible top frame & the cosmetic trim pieces around the windshield pillars though. Most of the efforts are being concentrated on installing the engine & preparing to take the prototype for EPA certification. Ford agreed to do the initial testing in their facilities but first the car had to have twenty five hundred miles on it before the testing could be completed. In

order to do that Ford also agreed to put the 302 SC on their test track to accomplish that goal. The car was sent along with our top mechanic to gather all the information we would need in order to pass certification. While on the test track the 302 SC consistently out performed the Mustangs that were also on the track in every category. After sufficient mileage was on the car it was taken to the test laboratories where every aspect of the vehicle is programmed into the computers. Weight, frontal area, drag co-efficiencies, engine group etc. It didn't pass & we didn't expect it to but we were very close. Ford's engineers gave us all the information that was required to pass. The car was returned to our shop & the necessary changes were in progress. We managed to get the car booked into the Canadian Federal test Labs. in Ottawa but that only gave us ten days to get everything accomplished & ready for testing. Everyone in the shop put in many hours of overtime not only to get ready for the test but also to finish up a lot of minor details. Finally a day and a half before the car was due in Ottawa we were as ready as we were ever going to be. With the car loaded & in transit there were other things in the shop that needed attention. We had Alex Lifeson's E type Jaguar to complete, Bill Elliot's Mark II & several other projects to work on & finish up. Just when there was a sigh of relief in the air came a phone call that would change everything. Thirty kilometers south of Ottawa our Truck & trailer had been clipped by an impaired driver who had run a stop sign. The right front fender & bumper had been pushed back far enough that turning to the right was almost impossible but worst of all the 302 SC had broken the hold down straps & slammed into the front wall of the trailer when the rig hit the ditch. Just another day in paradise. Fortunately fate works in mysterious ways. The tow truck operator who came to pick up our rig knew of a Ford F350 pick up that had the back end destroyed in an accident & arranged for us to buy the parts we needed to fix ours in order to get it back on the road again. No time to wait for insurance adjusters. Not only did tow truck operator locate the parts for us he also gave us the use of his shop to make the repairs. It always amazed me how much attention these cars generate & how much people will do just to be around one. The 302 SC survived with some cosmetic damage but nothing that would hinder the test. Nevertheless, if we miss the appointment deadline the next available opening is two months down the road which would be disastrous for us. Every time the phone rang for the rest of the day it seemed like everything would come to a dead stop waiting for more bad news. With thirty five minutes left before our scheduled Lab. time we got a call telling us that the 302 SC along with our mangled rig had arrived. Phew!!! Pulled it off again! Then more good news. A call came in from John DeLorean's personal secretary to say he was going to be in Toronto the following week to do an interview on CTV and would like to visit our shop & would we kindly have a DeLorean ready for him to use while he was here. Despite the stress & lack of sleep there are some advantages to this crazy business. If any of you have ever watched American Hot Rod or Unique Whips on T.V. they are both a close portrayal of what the performance & custom end of the car industry is really like. Including the shop politics. OMG we could talk for hours on that subject! Every day is an adventure. Did the 302 SC pass the EPA test? Come back next week for the results plus a tale or two about the now infamous DeLorean & the man himself. Never ever a dull day around here!

