

# November 2017 Newsletter



Visit: [pittbirds.org](http://pittbirds.org)

## OFFICERS:

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Treasurer:	Jerry Longstreth	412-466-9091	<a href="mailto:gll1231@msn.com">gll1231@msn.com</a>

## RECENT EVENTS:

### John Kufleitner's Car Collection in Salem, OH Saturday, October 14<sup>th</sup>

Twenty two members met at Denny's Restaurant in Cranberry. We headed west on the back roads to Salem, OH. We thought this would be a leisurely one and a half hour drive but we encountered a lot of traffic congestion once we crossed into Ohio. We were unaware that this was the weekend for the "Christmas in the Woods" festival in nearby Columbiana. Once past Columbiana, it was clear sailing to our destination. John Kufleitner had a magnificent collection of classic and antique cars. We browsed through the showroom which included three Thunderbirds, two very low mileage 2002 models, and a 1957 'E' bird. We were given a tour of their restoration shop which included a completed 1968 Hemi Charger, a work in progress Hupmobile, and a 1969 Camaro Convertible. We could see that this facility does very high quality work. Our next stop was the Dutch Haus Restaurant where we enjoyed a nice homestyle lunch. The Pitt Birds thank Jon and Joann Strebeck for planning and leading this tour. Congratulations to Jon and Joann's who celebrated their 45<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary with the Pitt Birds on October 14<sup>th</sup>.



## **RECENT EVENTS:**

### **Garage Tour in Salem, OH - Continued**



Lunch at the Dutch Haus Restaurant



## **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

### **Autumn Meeting**

**Saturday, November 18th**

The Pitt Birds will meet at **2:00 PM on Saturday, November 18th** at Eat'n Park at the Homestead Waterfront.

**GPS:** 245 E Waterfront Dr. Homestead, PA 15120

#### **Agenda items are:**

- Nomination of Officers
- Suggested Activities and Tours for 2018. Please bring your suggestions.
- Holiday Dinner Plans, Saturday, January 13, 2018
- Club Logo Shirts will be available for sale at the meeting.

#### **Directions:**

**From the North**, travel south on I-279 and use the right two lanes to exit 2A for I-579 toward the Veterans Bridge. Continue on the Veterans Bridge and take the I-376E exit toward Monroeville. Enter I-376E. Just before the Squirrel Tunnels take Exit 74. Merge onto Beechwood Blvd. Continue straight onto Browns Hill Road. Stay in the right lane as you cross the bridge. Just before the end of the bridge, turn right onto W 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Continue past the tall stacks. Turn right onto W Waterfront Drive. Continue for 0.8 Miles and Eat'n Park will be on your left.

**From the West**, travel east on I-376 through the Fort Pitt Tunnels in the right lane. Continue on I-376 E toward Monroeville. Just before the Squirrel Tunnels take Exit 74. Merge onto Beechwood Blvd. Continue straight onto Browns Hill Road. Stay in the right lane as you cross the bridge. Just before the end of the bridge, turn right onto W 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Continue past the tall stacks. Turn right onto W Waterfront Drive. Continue for 0.8 Miles and Eat'n Park will be on your left.

**From the East**, travel west on I-376 through the Squirrel Hill Tunnels in the right lane. Just as you exit the tunnels, take Exit 74. Merge onto Beechwood Blvd. Continue straight onto Browns Hill Road. Stay in the right lane as you cross the bridge. Just before the end of the bridge, turn right onto W 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Continue past the tall stacks. Turn right onto W Waterfront Drive. Continue for 0.8 Miles and Eat'n Park will be on your left.

## **MEMBERSHIP:**

Current Membership: **70 Members**

**Welcome New Members:** *Ron and Lynda Broze  
and Jim Christy*

*Wishing a rapid recovery to Ann Augustine*

### **Interested in Joining an International Thunderbird Club?**

The Pitt Birds Thunderbird Club is a chapter club with the Classic Thunderbird Club International (CTCI) and the International Thunderbird Club (ITC). Both CTCI and ITC have regional and international events, provide excellent technical advice, publish bi-monthly magazines, offer vendor sourcing, and articles about other local clubs. Membership information to CTCI or ITC can be found by visiting the following web sites.

Classic Thunderbird Club International: [www.ctci.org](http://www.ctci.org)

Then click on "Become a Member" on the Home page.

International Thunderbird Club: [www.intl-thunderbirdclub.com](http://www.intl-thunderbirdclub.com)

Then click on the "Membership" button on the Home page.

### **Nomination of Officers:**

The Pitt Birds are soliciting nomination suggestions for the following offices in this club:

**President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer**

The position for the Newsletter Editor is also available.

If you are interested or know of someone who is interested, please contact Wayne Bane at 724-594-7482 or [dbane3413@gmail.com](mailto:dbane3413@gmail.com).

### **Communications:**

The Pitt Birds would like to update its membership listing with your current information. If there has been any changes to your name, address, phones, email or Thunderbird inventory, please contact Jerry Longstreth: [gll1231@msn.com](mailto:gll1231@msn.com) or 412-466-9091.

### **2018 Dues Payment:**

If you have not paid your 2018 dues, please plan to submit your \$20.00 dues payment by December 31, 2017.

Please make the dues payment of **\$20.00** to:

**Pitt Birds  
1723 Pleasant Avenue  
West Mifflin, PA 15122 2857**

## UPCOMING INTERNATIONAL EVENTS:



## FOR SALE:



### 1964 Thunderbird Convertible

Contact: Monica Horner

412-400-3100

[babcia22@Verizon.net](mailto:babcia22@Verizon.net) or

**\$22,000 or OBO**

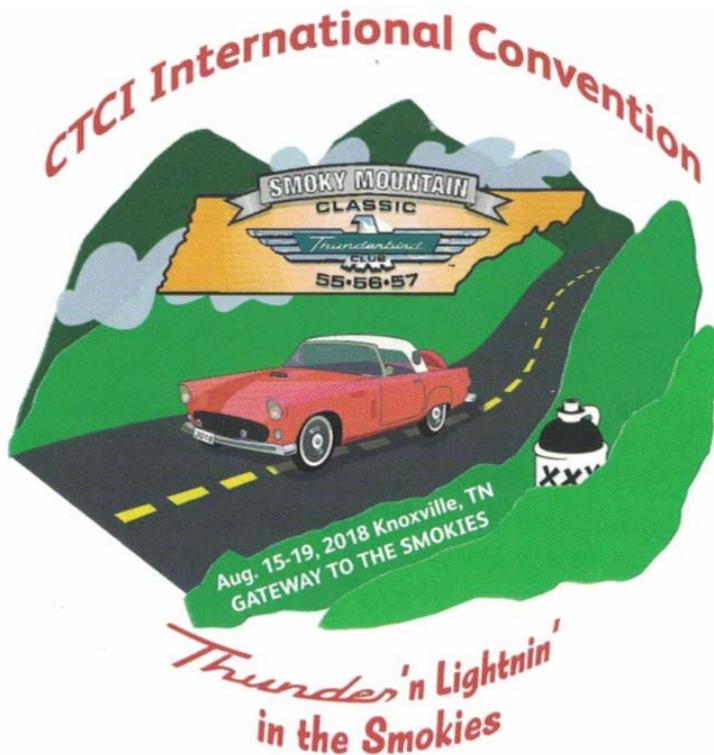
Completely restored, show ready. V8-390, PS, PB, AC. Am/Fm radio. Less than 100 miles on new transmission, seat belts installed in back seat New disc brakes all around. New convertible top. Excellent condition.

### NEW – Men's and Ladies' Golf Shirts:

Turquoise / Thunderbird blue golf shirts with the Pitt Birds logo. Contact Mary Beth Meyer at 412-818-5898. The price is \$25.00. Shipping and handling to your address is an additional \$5.00.

### Tee Shirts:

With the Pitt Birds club logo are for sale for \$15.00 each. Shipping and handling to your address is an additional \$5.00. Limited supply remaining, 2 medium size shirts are available. Contact Ann Augustine at: 724-468-3202.



# 1964-1966 Ford Thunderbird Convertible

## A perfect parade princess.

By: [Bob Merlis](#) | Photography by: [William Walker](#) - Automobilemag.com



Here it is, the season of the Rose Parade. And as you watch the dignitaries roll by in classic cars, it occurs to you that it would be more fun to be in the parade than watch it. Maybe you should drive the kind of classic that appeals to parade organizers everywhere, only scaled for mayors, prom queens, and Cub Scouts, not astronauts on Fifth Avenue. Not the 1952 Chrysler Imperial Parade Phaeton built for President Eisenhower, now a \$100,000 car owned by the Petersen Museum in Los Angeles, but something elegant yet affordable, like this 1965 Ford Thunderbird convertible.

In 1958 Ford designer Bill Boyer and his team transformed the original, two-passenger 1955-1957 T-bird into a four-passenger “personal luxury car.” The heavily styled 1958-’60 “Square Bird” was a modest sales success, as was the 1961-1963 “Bullet Bird” that followed, but Ford executives believed the car still wasn’t reaching its full sales potential. So the 1964-1966 “Flair Bird” introduced Ford’s new, more formal design vocabulary. It was a huge success. The Flair Bird’s minimal ground clearance and rear fender skirts convey the illusion that it’s floating just a bit off the ground, along the lines of Luke Skywalker’s X-34 landspeeder as seen in “Star Wars: Episode IV—A New Hope.”



As a parade car, the Flair Bird convertible is so wide and substantial that it won’t get lost among the marching bands. It’s also optimal to have the rear-seat honoree at eye level with the crowd, and this car, at just 53 inches from the road to the top of the windshield, does the trick. Meanwhile, it’s only 22 inches from the rear deck—where the posterior of a notable might plausibly be resting—to the cushion of the rear seat below, so feet can be planted quite firmly during a parade’s stop-and-go pace.

Our quest for the ultimate parade car led us to Palm Springs, California, where we found A.J. Wilson’s ’65 Thunderbird convertible, a nicely preserved car in Rose Beige. Wilson is the third owner of this car, which his brother Ron found not far from the Ford dealership in Auburn, California, where it was first sold a half century ago.

*Continued on the next page:*

# 1964-1966 Ford Thunderbird Convertible

## A perfect parade princess - *Continued*

The 1965 version is the first T-bird with front disc brakes, and we really love the '65's sequential rear taillights. When you indicate a turn, six bulbs per side blink in succession from innermost to outermost. This display of directional incandescence is joined by rear-facing "gun sight" indicators on the front fenders, parking lights tucked away on the front bumper, and, of course, indicators on the dash. The proto-psychedelic light show draws quite a bit of electrical current, as confirmed by the pulsations of the ammeter needle. It's amazing that with just over 70,000 miles on the clock, the Thunderbird's convertible fabric top is the same one it wore in the showroom, and it's even more amazing that the top's crystal-clear plastic rear window is also still intact.

Thanks to much the same mechanism as used on the Lincoln Continental that was employed as the Kennedy presidential parade car, the T-bird's power-operated top stows in the trunk. The rear-hinged trunklid first raises, the fabric top folds as it retracts, and then it collapses into place before the lid snaps shut. Top down, the car's profile is totally smooth; there's no bulge of folded canvas under a tonneau cover to compromise the design's horizontality. It also leaves a nice, broad, flat seat upon which a parade princess can spread her full skirt and wave to the crowd.

The interior is, in a word, fantabulous. Ford designer John Najjar gave something of a NASA vibe to the overall interior package, and why not, since the advertising slogan for the Flair Bird initially went "Flight plan cleared—Proceed to Thunderbird." The ribbon-type speedometer threads along a path under backlit plastic numbers that recall the buttons of a 1960s jukebox. The Swing-Away steering wheel with its column-located gear selector swings about 10 inches to the right, making it easy for the driver to get out from under while leaving the car. The Thunderbird also has a kind of slow-motion ejector seat for the driver, and it tilts the bottom cushion to the left, helping milady to gracefully exit by gently spilling her out of the seat.

Aside from a repaint of the hood and trunklid, this '65 T-bird has been brought up to date by Wilson only in ways that don't meet the eye. Unless you open the hood, you wouldn't know that aftermarket air-conditioning has been installed, and the V-8 has been rebuilt with hardened valve seats. Wilson is happy with the car's performance and notes that it "flies like a bird." True enough, but this is one heavy fowl (a full 1,000 pounds more than the bulky Galaxie 500 LTD), and our drive time revealed that some wing flapping is needed to gather momentum for takeoff. But once at speed the car has a wonderful, assured feel.

We're convinced the T-bird of the mid-1960s is parade perfection, but even without accompaniment by a brass band, a car with this kind of presence is certain to draw a crowd.