

Enid man's inheritance of vintage autos to be featured on 'Strange Inheritance'



Stuart Piontek, left, grandson of late Enid salvage yard owner Oliver Jordon, appears with host Jamie Colby on "Strange Inheritance," airing at 8 p.m. Tuesday on Fox Business Network, cable 1474. His grandfather owned more than 200 vintage cars and thousands of parts that the family inherited. Courtesy



Car doors were among the parts sold in a massive vintage vehicle auction last June in Enid. They are part of an estate featured on "Strange Inheritance," airing at 8 p.m. Tuesday on Fox Business Network cable 1474. Courtesy Vanderbrink Auction



Thousands gathered for the auction of more than 200 vintage vehicles and thousands of parts in Enid last June. The estate was part of an inheritance featured on "Strange Inheritance." The TV show airs at 8 p.m. Tuesday on Fox Business Network, cable 1474. Courtesy/Vanderbrink Auctions



Hundreds of vintage vehicles and thousands of auto parts were sold in a June 2014 auction in Enid. They were part of the estate of the late salvage yard owner Oliver Jordan, featured in Tuesday's episode of "Strange Inheritance" on Fox Business Network, cable 1474. Courtesy Vanderbrink Auction

"Strange Inheritance"

8 p.m. Tuesdays

Fox Business Network, cable 1454

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By RITA SHERROW World Scene Writer | [6 comments](#)

Correction: This story originally contained an air date of Tuesday Feb. 10. It has been changed to Monday Feb. 9 at 8:30 p.m. The story has been corrected.

Oliver Jordon loved cars. Driving the countryside looking for them, buying them and owning them.

He bought a salvage yard in 1946 that had been in business since the '20s. He stockpiled hundreds of vehicles and hundreds of thousands of auto parts that ended up overflowing his land and buildings.

His purchases included vintage vehicles from 1917 through the '50s. He had a moonshiner's truck, two rare Cords and a 1937 all-aluminum Lincoln.

And there were thousands of auto parts — stacks and stacks of grills, fenders, doors, steering wheels, everything.

It was this collection, stretching over more than one property, that grandson Stuart Piontek, his siblings and other family members wanted to save after his 95-year-old grandfather died.

And it's the inheritance featured at 8:30 p.m. Monday on a new episode of "Strange Inheritance," a new reality business show. It regularly airs at 8 p.m. Monday-Thursdays with new episodes on Mondays on Fox Business Network, cable 1474.

Piontek, who only got to know his grandfather as an adult, spent 10 years traveling back and forth from his home in the San Francisco Bay area trying to save the collection, he said.

Piontek's parents met in Enid in the early 1950s when his dad was stationed at Vance Air Force Base. Piontek was an Air Force "brat." They lived in Blair, Oklahoma, three hours south of Enid, when he was in early elementary school before his dad was transferred to California.

Jordon had shut down the business in 1953 after the city of Enid wanted to incorporate his land and make him add a public restroom. The fiercely independent and conservative child of the Depression and the Dust Bowl refused. He didn't trust anyone and didn't want anyone's help, Piontek said.

"One of my favorite stories is if you look at a map of Enid before Grandpa died, you see it was almost a perfect circle except for one finger sticking up right in the middle," his grandson said, laughing. "He knew his rights and he knew how to fight the city so they couldn't even overcome him even when he was in his 90s. ... Pretty much immediately after he died, it got incorporated by the city."

Although he didn't grow up close by, Piontek said his grandfather's "cars were always a part of our lives growing up."

"From the time I was little, we would drive up to Enid to see the cars," Piontek said. "Then I was lucky enough I could play with the cars. My relationship with my grandfather was more with the cars, so when I moved to California I would brag about my grandfather."

"I didn't know him well enough, but I loved the stories around the cars and being a part of that."

There were the stories of people trying to talk Jordon into selling them a car — like the 1926 Rolls Royce Piccadilly roadster that Jordon bought from the Miller brothers at the 101 Ranch in Ponca City. He sold it in the '70s, said Piontek, who recently saw the car restored and back in Enid.

The situation changed when Jordon's second wife, Ruby, fell off a ladder tending to a building and broke a hip. She called family members for help, worried her husband, who was ill with prostate cancer, would be put in a nursing home if she wasn't there to care for him.

So Piotek and his Aunt June came immediately. While traveling back and forth from the West Coast to Oklahoma for 10 years, he used his own money to build a fence, places to store the rarer vehicles and worked on the collection. But, over the years, theft became a problem. At one point, someone stole 250 radiators, he said.

Selling it in one lot wasn't possible and selling individually was too expensive because of traveling, so he started looking for someone to auction off the collection. In 2012, he found Yvette VanDerBrink, the auctioneer, owner and broker at VanDerBrink Auctions in Hardwick, Minnesota, aka the "salvage princess."

"I called her and said 'How do I not know about you,' and she said the same thing to me. She was really a gift to me. I realized she was the perfect solution. When you say what we had was a salvage yard, a very rare salvage yard with a lot of cars that were prewar. They were not what people fantasize about when you think of vintage cars, but Yvette knew exactly what I was talking about."

VanDerBrink worked with Piotek to set up a one-day sale to sell off the inventory

and real estate last June. About 3,000 people attended.

"This was a significant auction because this much prewar stuff was, and is, hard to find," said VanDerBrink who told producers of the TV show about the collection. "A lot of it has been crushed. Gone forever. Also, Mr. Jordon shut the doors and wouldn't sell. It's American automotive history that we saved to be parts ... hot rods ... and projects.

"I love saving the history and working with this inventory."

Now, with just one last parcel of land to sell near Enid, Piotek said a part of his family history in Oklahoma comes to an end.

"There is no one on that side of the family left in Oklahoma," he said, adding his uncle died in December 2013. "He was really the last one of the family there.

"That's another thing. Generations of my family have been in Oklahoma clear back to the Land Run and it's interesting that it all boiled down to the auction. That is the end of our line there." "... I love Oklahoma. It became a second home for me. And I love the people in Oklahoma. I built lots of friendships out there and will be back to visit but the regularity of visits we had the last 10 years certainly won't be the same."

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