

## **It's Worth the Drive"** **The Jim Gesswein MOPAR Collection Auction**

For a MOPAR man, you wouldn't expect that his first car would be a 1926 Ford Model T. But for Jim Gesswein, that 1926 Ford Model T would lead to one of the Midwest's most successful dealerships and an amazing collection of MOPAR collector cars.

Jim Gesswein grew up in Milbank, SD and learned the car trade from his father. Jim's Dad had the Oldsmobile, GMC, Harley Davidson and New Idea Farm Equipment franchises. Jim learned for the best. His father was a great car salesman and knew how to "Make the Deal". Jim watched his Dad make all kinds of deals and he once traded for an airplane, which he jumped in and flew home, with only a few lessons. Jim learned that the art of the deal was "Making the Customer Happy" with a good trading experience. Jim's Dad could always get the "deal done" and even during WWII was able to get what the customer wanted. Like any salesman, there was always a "draw" to get the customers in to make the deal, and in Jim's Dad's dealership, it was JoJo the Bear! That's right – a Black Bear named JoJo would be at the dealership greeting customers and entertaining them by drinking a bottle of pop or beer, whichever was handy at the time, and then throwing the bottles away when he was done! It became Jim's job to take JoJo on his daily walk. Motivated to move with candy, JoJo would always follow along. Jim's Dad had a big heart and that motivated him to make the deal and make sure the customer was happy! But as fate would have it, Jim's father passed away at a young age in 1961.

The Ford dealer in town came to pay his respects to the family, and invited Jim to come sell Fords for him at the dealership in town. Jim was a natural. He had learned from the best. Selling Fords left and right, he soon saw that he wanted more for himself. With a loan from his Uncle, Jim started Gesswein Motors in 1967, a used car lot that also sold Kubota farm equipment in Milbank, South Dakota.

Shortly after, Jim also became the Rupp franchised snowmobile dealer. That tied into Jim's "Born and Bred" South Dakota upbringing. Jim and his brothers, Art and John enjoyed snowmobiling and decided to try their hand at racing their Rups. In a short amount of time they were racing Stock and Modified snowmobiles with success. In the 1970-1971 season Jim was named Rupp Rider of the Year! Jim was also on the Factory Rupp Racing Team in 1974! An unfortunate racing accident shortened Jim's career on the circuit.

Chrysler came to Milbank looking for someone to sell their vehicles, and with his local reputation, Jim was the perfect fit. Jim was married in 1973 and consistently worked on growing the dealership. Later, Jim also added the GMC Truck franchise and in the Eighties, was the only franchised Shelby Dealer in South Dakota! Just like his Dad, making the deal with a happy customer was most important! Jim has sold cars all over the US and the world and his share of wild deals. Jim said that he even took 30 dozen eggs as part of a trade on a car. He even had a farmer that bought a new car at another dealership and drove it straight to Gesswein's to make a deal with Jim. Jim learned that making the customer have that "good feeling" about their purchase and making relationships was crucial to his success.

Jim also believed that surrounding yourself with a good team and staff that everyone together could make more deals and keep customer's happy. Jim worked to build a Service department that was top notch and this also kept customers coming back not only for

service, but a chance to make more deals. This has led to Gesswein Motors, Inc. receiving multiple awards for sales and service. In fact, receiving the Chrysler Pentastar Club Award 15 times, multiple awards of Excellence, many sales awards, and more. Jim has served on multiple factory advisory committees including the Minneapolis Advertising Board and the National Chrysler Dealer Council, among others.

Jim is always appreciative of his community for their support. Jim has served on the Hospital Board for 18 years, Grant County Economic Development Board, and many other in the community. Jim served on the volunteer fire department for many years as well. Jim appreciates everyone that helped him and is always looking to give back to the community that has served him and he has served through the years.

Classics often got traded in on new cars and Jim would sell them and soon saw that there was a market for these old cars. Jim himself has said, "I have never met a quality car that I didn't like". He sold one of the classics and that led to pursuing them and building the classic car sales as another avenue to make money and also build his private classic car collection. Jim has sold classics all over the world and made many relationships through deals. Sweden and Norway have been big markets for many of the MOPAR classics. Jim has also sold more than 100 classics to a Prime Minister in the Middle East!

Jim always knew how to get people the cars that they wanted and helped make their deal. This led to many referrals and leading to many classic car purchases. Over the years, Jim has had hundreds of Classic MOPARs in his collection, including at one time 14 Superbirds, 6 Vipers, Cudas, Chargers, and more. Imperials have been a favorite for their luxury and design. Jim has grown a reputation for his MOPAR collection, but has never really shown it to the public. Jim's name is well known through the classic car community for his collection and now has decided to offer his collection for sale. Many of the collection have never been offered for sale before. The collection not only hosts an amazing assortment of MOPAR collector vehicles, but hold back cars that were set aside as an investment and still on MSO.

It is with a heavy heart that Jim has decided to offer the collection for sale, but his head has won out over his heart and on July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at the Gesswein dealership, he will host an auction of his classic car collection. VanDerBrink Auctions will offer approx. 54 vehicles at a public auction at 10AM.

There will be a preview on July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and the auction will be hosted live and also with online bidding for the world to bid on these fabulous cars. The collection has high quality, investment grade vehicles that have been meticulously cared for through the years. There are an amazing 23 Chrysler Imperials including rare models and many convertibles from 1955-1974. A rare 1963 Chrysler 300 Indy 500 Pacesetter Convertible with a 413 V8 is absolutely stunning and would be a great addition to any collection. Some of the stand outs are a Pink 1960 Chrysler Imperial Convertible, 1964 Chrysler 300 Silver Edition 2dr HT, 1968 Chrysler Imperial Crown Convertible, and more. The collection boasts some Muscle with 2 - 1970 Plymouth Superbirds, one from the Tim Wellborn collection. A 1970 Plymouth GTX with less than 37,000 miles in sublime green that is a 1 owner car. A 1987 Franchised Shelby GLHS Omni with less than 7,000 miles and is #6 of 500 built. Jim also held back some new cars that will be sold on an MSO, which will be an investment well spent - a 1987 Dodge Shelby Charger, 1989 Dodge Daytona Shelby, 2018 Dodge Charger SRT 392 Scat Pack and even a 2018 Dodge Challenger SRT Hellcat Widebody, will be some of the offerings. This is an amazing

collection and any one of them would be an investment for you to drive and have in your portfolio.

Jim's sure that he will be making deals for years to come, but it's time for someone else to enjoy his collection. He wants all his cars to go to people that appreciate quality and will enjoy them as much as he has. So, plan now to come to the preview and stay for the auction at Gesswein Motors, Inc. in Milbank, South Dakota on July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 10AM. For more information on the auction along with catalog, online bidding, and more.

[www.vanderbrinkauctions.com](http://www.vanderbrinkauctions.com) and make sure to make your next deal at Gesswein Motors, Inc. in Milbank, **South Dakota**.