

Happiness is a well-tuned Rolls Royce

By W.W. EDGAR

There are no gold letters on the door. There are no bright lights in the window. Neither is there an electric sign on the roof.

Motorists could drive past the brick building at 9135 General Court in the Plymouth Township industrial park and never realize that behind those darkened walls is one of the highest ranked automobile hospitals in the country.

Just as many persons go to St. Joseph Hospital in Ann Arbor or the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., for specialized treatment, the Enthusiasts Garage Inc. takes care of the ills of automobiles and specializes in Rolls-Royces.

FOR THE PAST 2½ years, Wally

Donoghue, a mechanical engineer who studied at Carnegie Tech in Pittsburgh, has been the "head doctor" in one of the most interesting activities in the Plymouth community.

At the moment, there are 12 members of the famous Rolls-Royce family undergoing treatment for all sorts of ills. They range from a simple check-up to a complete restoration job. The Enthusiast group, which has been doing business without much fanfare and bluster, now has customers from all sections of the country.

In fact, the automobile hospital is much like the similar institutions for humans in that it is crowded. Aside from eight receiving immediate treatment, there are at least a half dozen Rolls Royces in a side building.

Checking the "patients," Donoghue

found that two were from Los Angeles, two from Columbus, Ohio, one from Minnesota, another from Des Moines, Iowa, and still another from Allentown, Pa.

How did the hospital get to be known nationally? "I belong to a lot of special auto clubs and the fact that I have been at it ever since I have been in high school helps to get me acquainted with the owners of the big classical cars. The word gets around."

SITTING IN HIS office while phones were ringing and mechanics coming in to ask advice, Donoghue said he became enthusiastic about work on

Donoghue was quick to point out that while his company specializes in the Rolls-Royce, it also works with such top-rated cars as Cadillacs and the

automobiles in 1952 while a high school student.

He started with a 1929 Model T Ford touring car. From there, he gradually took on greater jobs after earning his engineering degree at Carnegie Tech.

Twenty years ago, he became interested in the Rolls-Royce and made a trip to the plant in England to learn more about the Rolls. In that year he obtained a 1936 model of the famed English car that is rated the most prestigious in the auto industry.

With his knowledge, he worked for General Motors for 11 years and finally opened his own business in Dikboro. He and his staff remained there until 2½ years ago when they moved to their present location.

Packard of recent vintage.

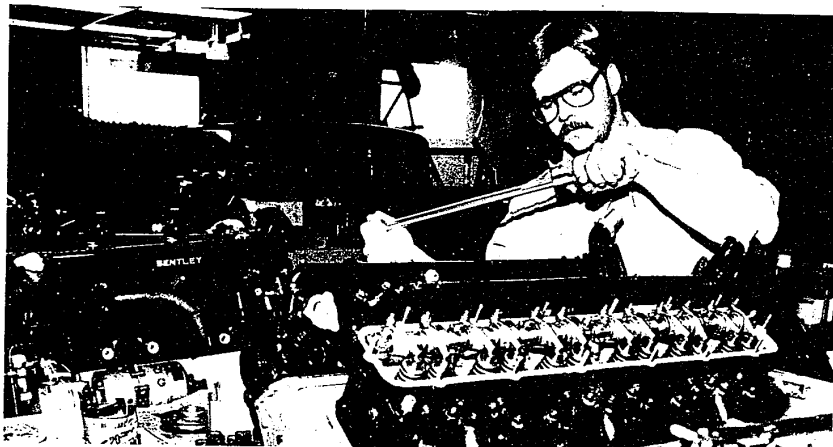
While the majority of "patients" in the automobile hospital are the pride and joy of their owners, there are others ready to be sold.

The price?

Some of them will bring \$50,000.

\$100,000, Donoghue said. But the majority can be had in the \$10,000-\$20,000 range.

Meanwhile, new patients arrive, and there is a steady stream of parts, all designed as "medicine" to bring back the most famous models of another era.



Mike Sikorski uses a torque wrench on a V-12 Rolls engine. (Photo by Robert Cameron)



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