

RAY KNOTT – BHA AWARD PRESENTATION

Almost two decades have passed since February 2004, when the Buick Heritage Alliance (BHA) was formed a nonprofit organization that would collaborate with others to protect and preserve the history and heritage of Buick.

Many shared the BHA's interest and donated money, literature, artifacts and cars over 18 years of devotion to preserving and making historically significant Buick literature, technical manuals, and documents available to all.

Today, the BHA archive is one of the world's largest and most significant repositories of original Buick documents and rare artifacts which is housed at the new state-of-the-art AACA Library & Research Center in Hershey, Pennsylvania, and is curated under the careful supervision of professional librarians

In 2011, the BHA created the Buick Heritage Award to recognize those who have made substantial contributions to the preservation of Buick's heritage to only one person each year.

To commemorate the Award, the BHA created the Buick Heritage Alliance Trophy. This spectacular 5-foot tall 100-year trophy is designed to display 100 names, and now bears the names of its first ten recipients. The trophy design was inspired the Indy Borg-Warner and Daytona 500 Harley Earl trophies.

The BHA Trophy incorporates elements of Buick's past, including northern white ash at its base, a tribute to the wood body structures of early Buicks, flowing dual arches at the top exemplify Buick styling excellence and hold an exact replica of the 1920's Buick "script" logo bronze casting that adorned the Manufacturer's Trophy awarded by Buick Motor Division management at the 1971 through 1974 BCA National Meets.

In addition to having their name and accomplishment permanently inscribed on the BHA Trophy, each winner also receives a shadow box award incorporating a bronze casting identical to that which tops the trophy.

Ray Knott – BHA Award Nominee 2020

When Buick launched its Riviera model in 1963 it was identified as an instant classic.

Ray Knott saw a new 1965 Riviera in a New Jersey Buick dealer's showroom and was enthralled with the styling. He bought his first '65 in 1972 as a daily driver. His career as a law enforcement officer resulted in a transfer to Colorado in 1975. He had to leave his first Riviera behind, but after an exhaustive search he found another '65 and joined the BCA.

With only limited information in the Buick Bugle, he decided to do something about it. In October 1984, he launched a search for other 1963-65 Riviera owners, which led to sharing information through a bi-monthly newsletter that he wrote, published, and mailed under the banner of the Riviera Owners Association (ROA). The idea of a group just for Buick Rivieras quickly caught on due to Ray's publicizing and contagious enthusiasm.

In March 1985, the ROA was incorporated in the state of Colorado as a non-profit organization with Ray as its Director. It expanded as the years progressed.

All Rivieras from 1963 to the current year were included

The original simple newsletter evolved to become a bi-monthly, award-winning, 36-page full color magazine named *The Rivview* with Ray as the primary writer, editor, and manager of publishing and distribution.

He organized Annual Meets – 4-day events – that rotated in locations across the country to gather ROA members for fellowship, information sharing, and showing of Rivieras of all years.

He created Regions within the ROA to further fellowship among Riviera enthusiasts.

He established a group of Technical Advisers, organized by years, to provide a source of expert information to help members interested in maintaining and restoring their Rivieras.

He established the extensive ROA library that collected and preserved all types of Riviera relevant publications and Buick-published literature.

Even though Buick stopped producing Rivieras in 1999, the ROA continued with a stable organization of 3,200 Riviera aficionados. Ray retired from law enforcement and moved to Costa Rica in June 2003. The demanding work of the ROA and its assets were passed on to another member.

Unfortunately, the person who continued the ROA, encountered personal difficulties and purloined the ROA's assets and revenue for his own needs.

A few other long time ROA members prevailed upon Ray to return. Together they took legal action and by December 2006 had regained control of the ROA and its assets. Most of the assets including the library and memorabilia were recovered, but there were debts and no money.

The ROA's standing as a non-profit corporation was restored with the State of Colorado. The Board of Trustees was re-established, and the Bylaws amended to establish term limits for the five-member Board and to authorize the Board the power to appoint a Director to guide the ROA.

The capabilities of the Internet enabled Ray to return as Director, Editor and Meet Planner while still living in Costa Rica. With proper operation restored, membership and finances recovered.

The ROA owes its creation, development and preservation to the efforts of Ray Knott. A sustained commitment as a labor of love for over 35 years.

Therefore, the BHA has decided to grant Ray Knott the BHA Award in 2020 for “significant contributions to the preservation of 1963 to 1999 Buick Rivieras and their history”.