

Hockey legend plays role in car show photo

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Joe Aragona shows off his colour photograph entitled "Hot Rod Hangout" which is currently on display in the "Halcyon Days" exhibition at the Ottawa West Arts Association gallery at the Goulbourn Recreation Complex in Stittsville.

EMC news - Joe Aragona's colour photograph "Hot Rod Hangout" now on display in the "Halcyon Days" exhibit at the Ottawa West Arts Association (owaa) gallery at the Goulbourn Recreation Complex in Stittsville has a connection with hockey legend Guy Lafleur.

No, they aren't Guy Lafleur's cars but he played a significant, if unknowing, role in setting the stage for this photograph which Joe Aragona took at a car show beside the Rideau River at Merrickville. He was at the show with camera in hand, as is his custom, on the lookout for an appealing photo shot.

When he came upon the three hot rods which he turned out capturing in the photograph "Hot Rod Hangout," the sun was in the right position. The sky and clouds also were cooperating, adding another dimension to the possible shot.

But the clincher was that the scene was devoid of any people, just the way that Joe likes it when he is doing such a car show photo. And why were there no people around at that moment?

Well, Guy Lafleur, the former National Hockey League star, happened to be passing through the adjacent Rideau Canal locks on his boat at just this particular moment. Everyone had rushed over to the locks to catch a glimpse of the legendary hockey player, leaving a deserted scene at the hot rods. Joe snapped away, capturing the scene as you can see it now on display at the owaa gallery.

And, no, Joe did not miss seeing Guy Lafleur either. After he finished with his car photo, he rushed over and was still able to snap a photo of Guy Lafleur with his boat. But it's the car photo, not the one of Guy Lafleur, that he entered in the "Halcyon Days" exhibit.

A "halcyon day," one that is peaceful and serene, may mean different things to different people and for Joe Aragona, nothing marks a "halcyon day" more than three hot rods displayed beneath a blue, cloud tinged sky.

Indeed, Joe Aragona has combined his passions for photography and his passion for cars which is why his entries in the owaa exhibitions feature cars - his current "Hot Rod Hangout" photograph for one, and his "Flaming 1949 Ford" photograph that was part of the last owaa exhibition entitled "Reflection."

Joe started out photographing people, landscapes and urban street scenes. He still takes such shots but for a few years now, he has been focusing on cars as his primary subject matter.

It is not only that he sees cars, especially classic cars, as works of art in themselves, an artistry that he tries to capture in his photography, but also he is a car buff himself. He restored his first car when he was only 15 and he worked as a car detailer during his university years. He has tinkered with several classic cars over the years and avidly reads car magazines and books.