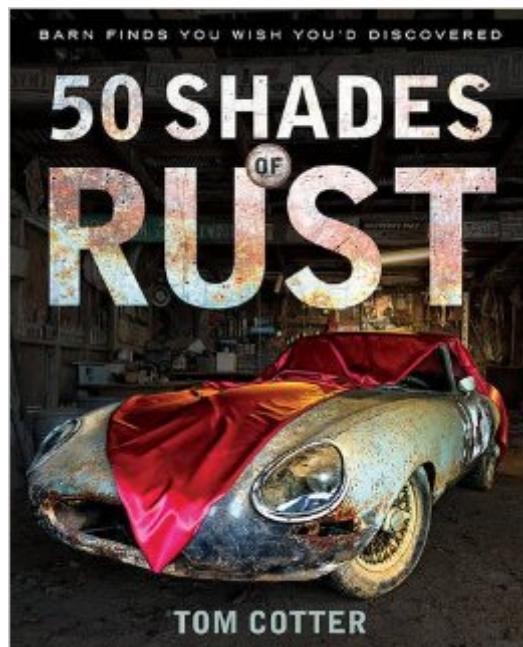


The book was found

# 50 Shades Of Rust: Barn Finds You Wish You'd Discovered



## Synopsis

101 barn-find tales sure to entice any car collector. In recent years, the quest to find and restore forgotten automotive gems has generated a cult-like following - a very large cult-like following. So large, in fact, that the subject of automotive archaeology has inspired an entire genre of television programs, including Counting Cars, Desert Car Kings, Chasing Classic Cars, One of a Kind, What's My Car Worth?, and numerous others. Author Tom Cotter is at the forefront of this movement with his In the Barn series, a line of books that inspired many of the above-mentioned television programs. 50 Shades of Rust collects 90-plus of the all-time best barn-find stories. Each story is accompanied by photographs from the scenes of the finds, creating a heavily illustrated book unlike any barn-find book yet published.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

[View larger](#) 50 Shades of Rust: Barn Finds You Wish You'd Discovered By Geoff Hacker

As Rick DÃ¢Â™Louhy and I began our quest to document low production, handcrafted fiberglass cars from the 1950s, I was intrigued by a car called the 'Chicagoan' that appeared in literature at the time. Chicago is my home town, or at least now the home town of my parents. They have reminded me over the years that I grew up in the suburbs of Chicago, while they were true 'Chicagoans.' Oh well. I thought it was a car worthy of study, and off I went on a quest to find the people who were responsible for building it. From the scant material available, a company called Triplex was involved, as well as a company called Ketcham, both located on the south side of Chicago. So I started out with the easiest way I knew how Ã¢Â™ look in the phone

book. And while there was no "Ketcham" listed, there was a "Triplex" located mere blocks away from the original location of where the car was produced. On closer inspection, the Triplex company had worked with automotive products since the 1950s, and they reproduced plastic parts for various manufacturers. "Man, this research thing is easy," I thought to myself. I called the company and arranged a conference call with the owner, the son of whom founded the organization. And while he was quite helpful and even interested, he assured me they never produced a car or body or anything like that. He was fascinated that a project such as the "Chicagoan" was produced near him, but he claimed to never have heard of it. In times like this, research begins to feel not so easy. So I took a deep breath and considered that maybe it was a "skunkworks," or secret project that the son never knew about. I contacted the Chicago Historical Association to learn more about the people who were officially tied to the company in 1953 and 1954, hoping that a lead would follow. It did not, and I was perplexed—most of the research we've done has resulted in finding the families and even individuals who produced the cars we've sought. This project seemed easy at first but quickly came to a dead end. What's a car guy to do? I took a page from Sherlock Holmes, who said, "When you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth." I called the Chicago Historical Society back and asked, "Were there any other companies in Chicago called Triplex back in the 1950s?" "Yes," they replied, and they provided the names and addresses relevant to the company from the 1950s. One or two phone calls later, I was on the phone with Steve and Sharon Hinger. Steve's father, Frank Hinger, was the owner of Triplex back then, and indeed it was an entirely separate company located just blocks away from the other Triplex company still in business. It turns out that Frank hired Robert Owens to design the car for his company, Triplex Industries. Then Triplex contracted with Ketcham's Automotive Corporation nearby to distribute completed cars and kits to build the car. The Chicagoan project was also sponsored by U.S. Gymsum, and all involved produced the car to debut at the 1954 Chicago Auto Show, which it did in grand style. Three factory cars were made, and subsequently all disappeared after the show. To date, I've found two Chicagoans and own one of them. My Chicagoan is currently in restoration, and I hope to showcase the restored car at the 2015 Chicago Auto show—61 years after its original debut in 1954.

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After much research, Geoff Hacker discovered that three Chicagoan sports car were manufactured in 1954, a cooperative project

between three Chicago-based companies. Geoff Hacker Collection. Of the three cars built, Hacker has located two and owns this one. It is currently under restoration and will debut at the 2015 Chicago Automobile Show, 61 years after it was manufactured. Geoff Hacker. Hacker had this gorgeous color rendering done to show how his Chicagoan should look when restored. Geoff Hacker.

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