

Wheelin' around



by Charlie Moore

New notes from all over this week.

Chevrolet is now in the process of testing a revolutionary new concept in automobile manufacture. The new idea is the use of several molded fibreglas panels which are bonded together to form a body/frame structure. Between the panels, after bonding, are empty cavities into which is poured a closed-cell polyurethane compound which hardens to form a solid block. This results in an extremely rigid unit which has the extra added advantage of being light.

Suspension parts, the engine, the transmission, and the various bits and pieces of

hardware that go into a finished car, are bolted to steel plates which are molded into the fibreglas. The construction is rattle free and completely rustproof. Maybe the most important advantage in light of the new safety standards is that the structure is highly crash-resistant. In addition, damage from a crash is limited to the impact area only, minimizing the cost of repair.

The idea of an all-plastic car has been around for some time, at least since Jim Hall's Chaparral racing cars of the nineteen-sixties which had a plastic body and frame. Chevrolet now has a working prototype, and if manufacturing costs do not

prove to be prohibitive, a production version could very possibly be in the offing. I personally would not mind paying extra for a car which would not rust out from under me in two or three years.

Hurst Corp., (makers of Hurst shifters, etc.) is building a special version of American Motors' Gremlin to sell to various local police and fire departments. They call it Rescue System 1, and it is conceived as a sort of "quick to the scene of the accident first aid kit."

Modifications to the standard Gremlin include a 304 cu. in. V-8, belted wide tires on Hurst wide alloy wheels, roof mounted flashing lights and siren, built in

speaker system, front and rear push bars, and a luminescent orange-and-white-striped paint job. Special rescue equipment includes 25 gallons of water, a fire extinguisher, a resuscitator, a stretcher, two first aid kits, an aluminized blanket, jumper cables, an electric winch, and a hydraulic rescue tool developed by Hurst with two giant arms capable of prying apart crushed bodywork with a force of five tons. The idea behind all this is have these vehicles cruising on turnpikes and freeways, ready to give aid to crash victims at a moment's notice. Oh yes, the price. A cool \$11,900 F.O.B. the Hurst factory.

Porsche-Audi division of Volkswagen has announced a new small car called the Audi 80. It is to be a running mate to the larger and very successful Audi 90 and 100 series. For the North American market it will have a 1470 cc 85 hp engine capable of pushing it up to 105 mph. The new Audi has front wheel drive and is available as either a 2 or 4 door sedan with rumours of a sport coupe later on. With a price of around \$3,000 it could give Volkswagen's own fastback some stiff competition.

Mercedes-Benz has restyled their mid-size 280/300 range. The

new body is longer, lower, and wider, but retains the traditional Mercedes family resemblance. It will come with a 2800 cc six cylinder or 3500 cc and 4500 cc V-8's. Assorted transmissions are offered including 4- and 5-speed manuals, and also 4- and 5- (!) speed automatics.

The Peoples' Republic of China seems to be increasingly interested in the Japanese auto industry these days. They recently ordered 1100 two-ton trucks from Toyota plus 1000 medium size trucks from Hino Motors, an associate of Toyota. A group of Chinese auto engineers also recently visited Japan to study automaking practices there. Presumably they are looking for ways to modernize their old-fashioned automobile industry.

Finally, if you would like to see all-plastic cars become a production reality (see above), here is your chance to tell Chevrolet Division. Drop a post card to this address giving your name and address and tell them your opinion:

XP-898
P.O. Box 1757
Newport Beach
California, 92663

That's all for this week, keep wheelin'.

movie notes

by Stephen R. Mills

The only picture you must see this week is *Wedding in White* (at Scotia Square). The film is reviewed below. For those who have seen it, and still wish to take in a picture, here's a short run-down on what's available.

The Valachi Papers (Casino) Charles Bronson stars in a Mafia picture. Exciting but sterile. Bronson is excellent.

Slaughter (Paramount) A poor American International successor to *Shaft*. Jim Brown stars.

You'll Like My Mother (Oxford) "A Thriller" in the tradition of "Sweet Charlotte" and "Baby Jane" starring Patty Duke. I've always found these movies sleazy but if its your cup of tea, feel free.

Young Winston (Hyland) This treatment of Churchill's early life has its moments but not enough to make it a masterpiece or even a great movie. If the Union Jack is still flying in your back yard, you might get off on it. Otherwise, skip it.

Wedding in White is very delicate material. Like a flower. Or a work of art.

The film was written and directed by William Fruet, author of "Goin' Down the Road" and "Rip-Off". Without disputing the talents of Donald Shebib, it's obvious the success of these two Canadian films is owed to Fruet's perceptive scripts. *Wedding in White* is based on an incident from Fruet's own life. Twenty-five years ago, while walking down the main street of a small Prairie town, he passed a young girl pushing a baby carriage and accompanied by an old man. Fruet learned the girl had been raped by a young soldier and was forced to marry the old man to save the reputation of her family.

This provided the plot for *Wedding in White*. The central characters are the girl (Carol Kane), her mother (Doris Petrie), her father (Donald Pleasance) her brother (Paul Bradley) and his friend, who

commits the rape (Doug McGrath).

Pleasance is the only actor of international reput and, though he's very good, he does not turn in the best performance of the film. This belongs to Carol Kane, whose very presence creates and sustains an atmosphere of sensitive and sorrowful alienation. She is referred to as "not bright" throughout. Her illiterate speech and the movie posters on the wall seem to attest to the fact but her behaviour does not. The shyness and fear does not grow out of her but from her environment — her home and the war-tense world about her. Her only real participation is as a victim, and she appropriately suffers as scapegoat not only for her family but, it seems, for the circumstances themselves.

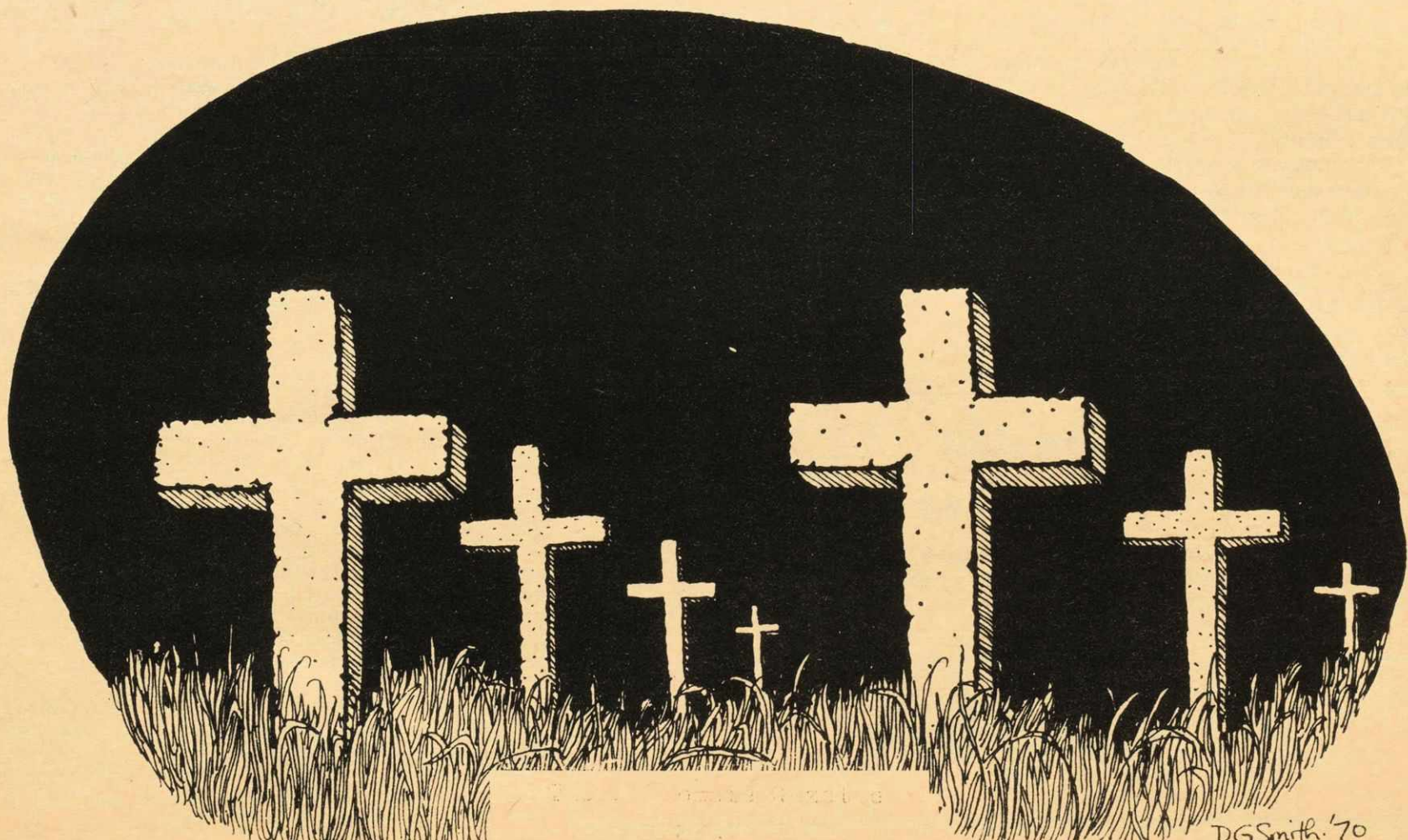
The authentic '40's atmosphere and the claustrophobic home created by skillful sets and score compliment Ms. Kane's portrayal of the lost and lonely daughter, Doris Petrie as the mother is

also excellent. (She was named Best Supporting Actress in the recent Canadian Film Awards. *Wedding in White* was best picture.) She personifies the surprise and shame the role calls for and goes beyond, her expression coupled with Fruet's dialogue hinting at the route of the problem — her relationship

with her husband before the marriage and after.

Photography was a high point of the movie and perhaps with the writing and direction, the key to its success. "Wedding in White" is a simple story, told with compassion and honesty, a picture to remember and cherish.

Gazette needs staff



D.G. Smith '70