

What Were They Thinking?

Some musings on car names.

For many years, Cadillac cars have had well recognized model names. For example a Caddy could be either a Sedan de Ville, Coupe de Ville or de Ville Convertible. The larger model was typically a 60 Special Sedan, or a Fleetwood Brougham and the sporty coupe or convertible line was designated Eldorado or Eldorado Seville. Most people who liked or owned Cadillacs could figure this out.

Cadillac then, came out with a car called the "Cimarron." "Cimarron"? A Google internet search indicated that there is a *Cimarron* New Mexico, population 918, and a *Cimarron*, Kansas, population 1,626. New Mexico seems the more interesting venue. Located along the Santa Fe Trail, it has, (according to its official web site) four motels, a bed and breakfast, cabins, and an RV park with sanitary dump station. The town also boasts full service and self service fuel, 24 hour pay at the pump, and local mechanic and tire service. On the other hand, Cimarron, Kansas is *also* located along the Santa Fe trail, and according to its official web page, Clark's pharmacy still has a soda fountain, and the Cimarron Hotel serves meals on weekends. Whoopee.

Then there was the novel called *Cimarron* by Edna Ferber (who also wrote the novel, *Showboat* adapted into the famous 1927 Jerome Kern musical of the same name, featuring the show-stopper "Ol' Man River"). *Cimarron* (the novel) was a story about settlers in the Oklahoma land rush of 1893 - that took place in unsettled regions between the midwest and the west, known as the "Cimarron territories" (also known as no man's land) - which brings me back to the question, what was Cadillac thinking when it named a small four-cylinder car with a manual transmission, that bore a strong resemblance to the Chevrolet Cavalier, the "Cimarron"? It sure beats the heck out of me. Were they going into uncharted territory with this

car? Were they thinking, like the Cherokee Indians that their turf was being invaded by foreigners from the east such as BMW, Audi and Mercedes? In any event, the novel, *Cimarron* was made into a successful movie in 1931, starring Irene Dunne. *Cimarron* was also made into a 1960



movie starring Glen Ford and Anne Baxter. Maybe Cadillac's marketing people were hoping that their car would be as successful as the movies were. Maybe they were hoping to strike it rich like the settlers who struck Oklahoma crude.

I am even more baffled by recent Cadillac model designations. For example, the main-line sedan that used to be called the de Ville is now the "DTS" which I am assuming is pronounced "Dits" or "Ditz" perhaps a shortened version of the name "Ditzler" a well known brand of OEM automotive paint products used on GM cars and Cadillacs of past years. Rhyming with DTS is another Cadillac model, the STS or "Sits." Then, there is the CTS, which could be pronounced "Kits." Because to pronounce it with a soft "c" sound, would be indistinguishable from STS or "Sits," so by logical deduction, it must be "Kits." Was this a tongue-in-cheek reference to "KITT" (*Knight Industries Two Thousand*) that half-humanoid, half-robotic Firebird that accompanied David Hasselhoff on his crime fighting endeavors in the TV show, "The Knight Rider"? Our discourse would not be complete, however without

including the now defunct ETC, probably pronounced, "Ets." But "ETC" followed with a period punctuation mark, "ETC.," may also be read as the abbreviated form of the word "etcetera," which means, "and so on, or "and so forth." Did the Cadillac marketing people and public both grow bored with the ETC? Isn't ETC. really the same as "yada, yada, yada? Its putting me to sleep already.

'Yeah, so, this Ditz driving the DTS was racing with the guy in the CTS when they splashed mud all over my STS. So I took it to the car wash (for a STS bath?) and then put it in my garage next to my ETC, ETC., ETC., yada, yada, yada.



And, how about that Catera? The Catera came with a Ziggy. Ziggy was a little bird that was so disgusted with this Opel Omega they were trying to palm off as a Cadillac that he walked right off the Cadillac crest! And then, five other little birds followed him and now there are none left. Will they ever learn to leave well enough alone?



The birds are on strike. Would you like a little Cimarron on your French toast?

Please send your questions and comments to Jeff Kinzler, Newsletter Columnist, The Insider e-mail Jazmanesq@aol.com

(Picture credits: Wikipedia.com and the Cadillac Database)