



# KMC

**Tim Kachel has a long family lineage of automotive passion that has inspired his perfection in craftsmanship.**

*words and photos by Russ Rocknak*

“GENETICS” is how Tim, General Manager of Kachel Motor Company (KMC), described the kindling of his passion for the automobile. In his words, “The lineage of my family had a great deal to do with it. My great grandfather owned an automotive repair shop and was a car nut. He used to drag race 1950 Fords with superchargers on them, so that’s probably where it started. My grandfather started the first Kachel Motor Company as a Studebaker dealership in 1952. He was young, and he used to work at the dealership as a mechanic. One day his wife asked him if he was crazy, wanting to be a mechanic for the rest of his life and all. Long story short, he ended up going into the Navy and

studying electronics. When his duty was over and he left the Navy he had the skills he needed to design and build semiconductors that were ultimately sold to NASA. This venture ended up being very successful and enabled him to buy some cars. He had about 50 to 55 of them on hand at any given time, and he didn’t collect anything too nice, but just old sheet metal. Things like old beat-up Fords and Chevys. Cars that you could drive around and have fun with. When I was about four or five years old my Dad was a restoration mechanic, and he was also my babysitter. So here I was dropped in the middle of this shop with a mask on watching him do body, paint and mechanical

work on fine restoration projects. So I did a lot of observing at that stage of the game. Eventually, my Dad got out of that line of work and went into the bio-tech industry. When he was doing restorations, he worked with a lot of lacquer paint and lead fill—the old school method, if you will, applied to a lot of hot rods. It was great to watch and learn, but it was hazardous to his health, so he moved on.

“This made me decide that I didn’t want to do bodywork, but I really enjoyed cars and the mechanical end of things, so I started doing things like taking my friends’ bicycles apart, removing a few things from the lawnmower, you know. Then when I was around six, my Mom gave me my first wrench set. Little did she know this was to

buryport in the BMW looking for a place to buy a part for the car. We had heard about Schneller but never had visited them, and at the time they were in the back of this field kind of hidden away without any signs or anything. Then we saw a BMW pull out of this long drive that ran through a field, and we thought, hey, let’s go down there. As we reached the end of the driveway we started to see a lot of M5s and M3s and other various BMWs in a junkyard. We introduced ourselves and said we were looking for an idle control regulator, and they immediately hooked us up with the right parts and the tools, and we installed it right there in the parking lot. So a week later I stopped by and asked if they needed any help. The gentleman I was speak-



be the beginning of a difficult time for her, as I would go around and take everything apart. Back then, it was a lot of fun just to take things apart and not have to worry about putting them back together! You can imagine my Mom’s reaction when she got home and I would show her my handiwork of taking her kitchen apart!

“By the time I had my driver’s license, I had already shuffled through five cars. My first restoration was on a 1967 Camaro when I was 15. I would just find something cool, fix it up and flip it into something else. Then when I was 16, I got a job at Schneller BMW in Newbury, Massachusetts. By this time, I already knew a lot about older domestic cars, but not too much about European cars. They were kind of new to me. However, what got me enthused about them was when my cousin bought a 1988 BMW 535is, 5-speed. It had 285,000 miles on the clock, so it needed everything done to it. After working on that car, I had the realization that the Germans do this ‘car thing’ so much better than the Americans.

“One day my cousin and I were cruising around New-

ing with asked, ‘What do you know about German cars?’ ‘Nothing,’ I said, ‘but I am willing to learn. I could start by sweeping floors and cleaning parts.’ They hired me, and that’s where my trajectory originated. After graduating from college, I worked full time and remained there for four more years. I was then given a chance to work for one of the top BMW race teams in America, Turner Motor Sports, so I jumped at the opportunity. From there, I joined KTR European Motorsports, which expanded my experience to include Italian automobiles, both vintage and modern. At KTR I realized a new passion, ‘fabrication,’ and continued to enhance this skill over the next three years.”

Today, Tim runs his own shop, KMC, in Lawrence, Massachusetts at the very site of his great grandfather’s old Studebaker dealership. Tim and his team of technicians, including lead technician David Seavey and technician Edwin Diaz, work on mostly German and Italian automobiles. KMC also buys and sells the same genre of cars, and his sales manager, Jason Tucker, also has a lifetime appreciation for Eu-



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ropean automobiles as well as collector and high performance cars. His expertise is in locating hard-to-find specialty cars, marketing specialty vehicles, automotive consulting, and service before, during, and after the sale. Tim has really organized a great crew at KMC, and they do everything from a major service on a Lamborghini Countach to a rotisserie restoration on a 1965 Mustang. “We do a lot of diversification here, which is great,” Kachel notes with a smile. “We like working on it all.”


When I was there, Tim was putting a client’s 1990 Ferrari F40 through its paces on the dyno. This car was completely rebuilt mechanically by Tim and his team. “When it arrived, it was basically blown up. Every valve, every piston was gone. It rolled off the trailer and into our shop,” Tim says. “We pulled it all apart, and it was in pretty rough shape. The car needed a total mechanical restoration. We sat down with the customer and went through the process

and associated costs. At this point the car was already modified with a MoTek fuel management system and custom electronics, but not done very well at all. Over the next couple of years we completely rebuilt the mechanicals, sourcing a local machine shop from Dover, New Hampshire, RL Engines. We designed custom valves and pistons that actually were better than the parts from Ferrari, because they were up to today’s standards. All these custom parts were at a fraction of the cost from Ferrari, actually about half. In the end we created a more powerful and efficient engine using less boost. I actually designed and fabricated custom equal length headers for the engine to breathe better.

“Considering the originals were designed for the US market in 1989, they were equivalent to a marathon runner breathing through a straw. That tied into a host of other modifications including better turbos and bigger custom intercool-

ers. We did all the engine management wiring, bringing it up to modern day spec and standards. We did a chassis restoration, too, replacing all the bushings and repainting the frame, all in house. Today, this F40 is ready to rip up the pavement dynoing in at 702 BHP at the wheels at 23 lbs of boost. For reference, the factory spec F40 engine was rated at 468 BHP at the crankshaft. It was a very interesting

project, and that’s what we like to do. This car’s owner drives this car a lot. It is a 20,000 mile F40, and it is used on both the street and track with great enjoyment. Just like it should be!”

Tim and his team clearly love what they do, and his great grandfather would be proud of what he has accomplished in Lawrence in the footprint of the old Studebaker dealership. 



Tim Kachel