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Life in the Fast Lane @ Alcatraz East Crime Museum

Six must-see crime cars on display for public viewing

PIGEON FORGE, Tennessee (October 16, 2018) – Every year people visit car shows, both near their home, and even states away. The country has a fascination with both old and new models, and car shows give auto enthusiasts a way to see a variety of vehicles all at one time. It also gives them the up-close “look under the hood” experience they can’t get from flipping through a magazine or watching a television show. Car fans can also get up close to significant crime car history at Alcatraz East Crime Museum, where it’s life in the fast lane that attracts visitors as they peruse the six must-see vehicles on public display.

“So many people love cars of all types, and when they are featured in an historical event it makes them even more interesting to our visitors,” explains Rachael Penman, director of artifacts and exhibits at Alcatraz East Crime Museum. “Guests immediately start sharing their own connections to the cars’ stories and it’s special to be able to make these artifacts available to the public.

There are six crime and law enforcement related vehicles on display at the museum, two of which are located outdoors so are free to view. The other four are inside the museum in the Getaway Cars Gallery, which is part of regular admission. The vehicles on display at the museum include:

- **1933 Essex Terraplane** – Actually owned and not stolen by notorious bank robber John Dillinger, he purchased the car new in 1934. Dillinger escaped FBI

agents in the car along with his girlfriend Evelyn Frechette, and a bullet from the shootout can still be seen from inside of the car. He soon had to abandon the car after crashing in a field, and signed it over to his brother.

- **1934 Ford V8** – The hole-ridden vintage Ford was featured as the death car in classic 1967 film *Bonnie and Clyde* starring Warren Beatty and Fay Dunaway. The ambush scene set new standards for onscreen violence, and the bullet holes seen in the car were made by local police who shot up the car for filming.
- **1968 Volkswagen Beetle** – The museum’s VW Beetle was owned by serial killer Ted Bundy. The vehicle was integral to both his murders and his ultimate conviction when it yielded important DNA evidence. The car is displayed without the front passenger seat in the same way Bundy use the car.
- **1993 Ford Bronco** – Owned and driven by OJ Simpson’s friend Al Cowlings, the white Bronco is the very vehicle where Simpson sat in the back seat during the slow speed chase that so many tuned in to witness.
- **Sevier County Sheriff’s Car** – Purchased new in 2007, the Dodge Charger in front of the museum was used by three members of the Sevier County Sheriff’s Office during its 9-year career. It was retired in 2016, and found a new home on loan to the museum educating the public.
- **Government Surveillance Van** – Located outside the museum, the van was used the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and a Georgia police department. A display inside the museum gives visitors a behind-the-scenes look at the cramped quarters law enforcement spends time in during a stakeout, with barely enough room to stand and little privacy to use the toilet. The van was in active criminal investigations, including drug crimes and burglary surveillance.

“Our Getaway Cars Gallery is a highly popular area of the museum, and for good reason, as most people own cars so they connect with their stories as objects,” added Penman. “Our crime cars each represent a cautionary tale, symbolizing a warning about the consequences of crime, while our law enforcement vehicles are positive reminders of all law enforcement does every day, both in public and behind-the-scenes, to keep us safe.”

Alcatraz East Crime Museum offers a variety of permanent and temporary exhibits on all aspects of crime history, CSI, and law enforcement. Current temporary exhibits include “The Second Amendment” until September 2019, “It Happened Here: Tennessee Crimes & Justice,” until May 2019, and permanent displays featuring items such as “Old Smokey,” Tennessee’s electric chair.

The museum is always adding to its collection, and has a star-studded panel of experts who make up the Advisory Board, including those in law enforcement, collectors, a medical examiner, crime scene investigators, and others. The board includes Jim Willett, a retired prison warden, Anthony Rivera, a combat veteran and Navy SEAL chief, and Judge Belvin Perry, Jr., who is best known for the Casey Anthony trial. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit: www.alcatrazeast.com.

About Alcatraz East

Alcatraz East is the most arresting crime museum in the United States. Guests of all ages can encounter a unique journey into the history of American crime, crime solving, and our justice system. Through interactive exhibits and original artifacts, Alcatraz East is an entertaining and educational experience for all ages - so much fun it’s a crime! This family attraction is located at the entrance of The Island, located at 2757 Parkway, Pigeon Forge, TN. General admission tickets are \$14.95 for children, \$24.95 for adults. Group ticket sales are available. The museum is open daily from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., with the last ticket sold 60 minutes before closing. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit: www.alcatrazeast.com.

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