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Star of “Tales of Wells Fargo” is Dead at 89 Years of Age

Dale Robertson, the former star of “*Tales of Wells Fargo*,” a 1957-1962 television Western series, and the original owner of the “Wells Fargo” Buick Limited, built especially for him (see attached article by Bob Stevens), died on Tuesday, February 26, 2013 at 89 years of age in La Jolla, California.

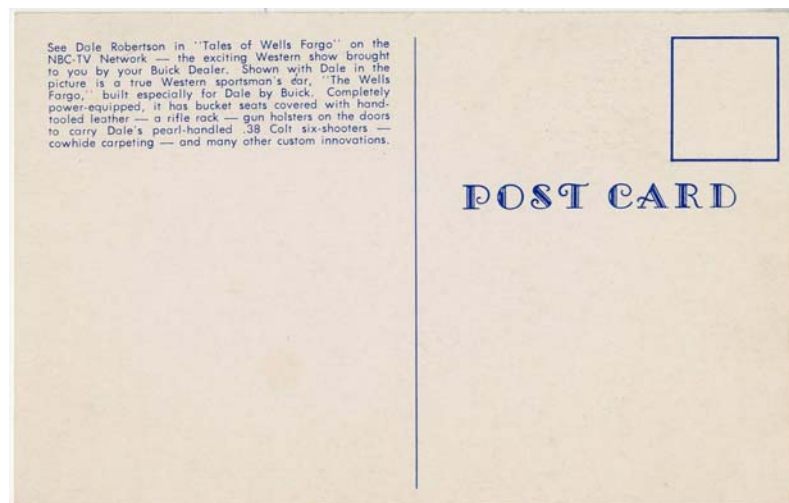
Robertson also starred in the 1966 “Iron Horse” and 1968-1970 “Death Valley Days” television Western series. In the 1980s, he had roles in the popular television series “Dallas” and “Dynasty.”

Robertson enlisted in the U.S. Army and fought in North Africa and Europe during World War II. He was wounded twice and was awarded the Bronze and Silver Stars and the Purple Heart.

In 1985, Robertson received the “Golden Boot” Award and was inducted into the Hall of Great Western Performers and the Cowboy Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City.

Robertson is survived by his wife, Susan Robbins, along with two children. The BHA is presently not aware of the whereabouts of Mr. Robertson’s 1958 Buick Limited.

High-resolution copies of the post card depicted above that featured the 1958 “Wells Fargo” Buick Limited are available from the BHA’s electronic Research Archive.





Factory custom '58 Buick Limited

— Dale Robertson's .38-caliber special

By Bob Stevens

If there was ever a car that didn't need a few extra custom touches it was the 1958 Buick Limited. Along with the 1959 Cadillac, the 1958 Buick Limited is frequently criticized for its styling excesses. The car is, admittedly, a giant of an automobile with enough chrome and bright trim to supply George Barris for a year.

Despite the car's somewhat "limited" appeal to customizers, the Buick Division of General Motors itself produced a factory custom edition which was designed exclusively for western television star Dale Robertson. The 1958 Buick Limited convertible, featuring built-in western holsters and a carbine rack, was called the Wells Fargo.

In developing the special custom number, Buick started with a good chunk of automobile. The '58 Limited convertible weighed 4,603 pounds, accommodated six passengers, carried a base price of \$5,125, rode on a 122-inch wheelbase, stretched 227.1 inches in length and rolled on 8.00x15 tires. Standard equipment included power steering and brakes, 300-hp V-8 engine, windshield washer system, power windows, anti-glare inside rear-view mirror, Flight Pitch Dynaflo automatic transmission, six-way power front seat, backup lights, padded instru-



ment panel, etc. In other words, the Buick Limited came standard with a full complement of equipment, in addition to its special trim and appointments. Also, the convertible edition came standard with genuine leather upholstery.

But a television star of Dale Robertson's stature commanded a bit more than even the '58 Limited could provide. So Buick designed the special Dale Robertson model, a one-off show car that GM paraded

around the country before presenting it to Robertson.

A main feature of the special Buick was its fancy interior with its bucket seats, natural calfskin carpeting and a console fitted with a pair of lever-action carbines.

"This is the kind of car every outdoor man dreams of owning," observed Edward T. Ragsdale, who was general manager of Buick and vice president of General Motors at the time of the car's introduction. "It is designed in a rugged western motif yet it is so exquisitely styled that any woman would be proud to have it as her own," he added.

Buick stylists completely reworked the exterior and interior of the show Limited. Authentic western glamor was added with the gun racks, leather work and solid walnut paneling, while the sleek lines of modern automotive design were retained with lucite paint, sparkling chrome and such touches as flip-up interior door handles.

Interior styling was in the western motif, with the traditional flowing floral patterns dominating the hand-tooled leather inserts on the inner door panels and seats. Upholstery was in natural Danish calf. The floor was carpeted in natural Jersey hide, which was used also on the lower areas of the doors.

A hand-worked leather holster was mounted on each door to accommodate a matched set of pearl-handled .38-caliber Colt revolvers. A rifle rack built into the Flight Pitch Dynaflo transmission tunnel was designed to hold a pair of plated Winchester rifles with intricately carved stocks.

The Limited shimmered in polar mist white lucite paint. A golden steer's head with widespread horns was superimposed on the Buick hood emblem and a solid walnut panel with WELLS FARGO in raised chrome letters replaced the three banks of louvers on the long rear fenders.

"The car was turned over to Robertson after it had been displayed at auto shows around the country," Ragsdale said.

