

# Michaud's "Little Spike" Dedicated at Museum Ceremony

Article and photos by Bob Beard



The Annual Meeting of the Museum of Bus Transportation in Hershey, Pennsylvania takes place on the last Saturday of every October. In addition to a day of activities, museum business and the installation of officers, the day ends with a dinner and guest speaker. A special activity at this event was the dedication of the Michaud "Little Spike" bus. *Left to right: Spike Michaud, Amanda Michaud, Tom Collins and Jim Michaud.*

In 1948, J. Alex Michaud retired from the U. S. Navy as a full Commander to take the helm of Michaud Bus Lines, Inc. At that time, the company owned six buses and had minimal operating authority. However, realizing the importance of such authority, Alex worked diligently on obtaining more rights through the purchase of other bus companies, and by pioneering the first ever "round trip special" tour authority. His hard work paid off as Michaud Bus Lines became one of America's most respected charter and tour operators. With the help of his sons, Jay, Spike, Biff, and Gig, Alex built his company to 40 motor-

coaches, 55 transits, and 440 school buses operating regular route service, thousands of charters, and more than 1,500 escorted tours per year. They operated throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico.

Recently, the Michaud family donated funds to restore a 3703 into Michaud Bus Lines' original colors to honor Alex. In fact, it was the exact bus that his son, Spike, restored back in 1979, # 157 aka "Little Spike." This bus had become the mascot for the IBC (International Bus Collector) and, with the help of friend Bob Redden, this

bus became a symbol for antique buses throughout the country. It was the most photographed antique bus and appeared at every Bus Bash until it was sold in 1984. The dedication on Saturday, October 27, was preceded by a blessing of the bus by Museum Chaplain and Vice President Pastor Dan Lehman. Then there was a ribbon cutting ceremony performed by fifth generation Amanda Michaud. She was assisted by her dad, Jim, who held her outside the entrance door of the bus so she could reach the red ribbon. Granddad Spike proudly looked on.



**MOBT's evening dinner event takes place on the museum floor adjacent to the historical buses. This year's speaker was Dave Millhouser from ABC Companies.**



**Attendees included Spike's son, Jim Michaud and Jim's daughter, Amanda, who represents the fifth generation of Michauds since getting involved with buses.**

Following the museum dinner and dedication, Spike addressed the guests speaking of his pride at seeing "their" bus being displayed so elegantly in the Museum of Transportation, taking its place in history amidst all the other exhibits. He thanked ABC Companies who did the restoration in their Camden, New Jersey facilities. Actually, this is the third restoration by ABC and the Cornells for the museum. Later, Jim Michaud expressed his gratitude to the museum for its very existence and marveled at the volunteer spirit of its officers, board members, and docents. He noted that the whole bus industry needs to become knowledgeable about their industry's only museum of school, transit, and intercity buses and offer much more support and involvement than it does now.

The Museum of Bus Transportation, Hershey, Pennsylvania, a 501(c)(3) non profit, offers two public events during the year to which both members and non-members are invited. This Annual Meeting on the last Saturday of every October presents the yearly financial report, an update on museum activities and its past year, and offers it plans for the year ahead. Board members are reinstalled (or installed) according to the results of the nominations and vote taken earlier in the year. It is an all day affair which starts when the museum opens at 9 a.m., followed by the annual meeting at 10:30, a "quickie lunch" at 11:30, an afternoon bus tour of local transportation facilities on a coach donated by Wolfe Bus Lines of York Springs, Pennsylvania, with a return to the Museum by 5 p.m. while the large gift shop remains open for their exclusive use. At 6 p.m., there is an "open" bar for

drinks and snacks, a catered dinner on the display floor, then remarks by the president, Tom Collins, presentation of awards, and an after-dinner speaker. This year they were pleased to have ABC Companies' Dave Millhouser.

The first public event of the year is the annual Spring Fling, Bus Show and Flea Market at the Museum's Memorial Annex nearby. Its established date is the first Saturday of every June. Since the museum owns or has on loan more than 30 buses, all those not on display in the museum are moved outside the annex and placed positioned for photographers. The inside is turned over to bus memorabilia and collectible vendors. The 2007 Fling brought out 17 vendors, many having more than one table. It definitely was the largest flea market of its kind in years and will prove to be the only game in town for those who wish to buy and sell bus toys, models, badges, books, fare boxes, photos, uniforms, etc. (See the October, 2007, issue of the NATIONAL BUS TRADER). All parking of guests' cars, buses, and RVs is at the museum and a free shuttle runs all day between the two facilities. There is no fee charged for the Fling at the annex and a discounted admission is offered to the museum itself and even a discount in the gift shop there. Hot food and cold drinks are served at the annex, all for donations for the museum.

**Spike Michaud poses with the bus named after him. The PD3703 was restored in 1979 and became the mascot for the International Bus Collector's Club as well as a regular attendee at early Bus Bash events. The Michaud family donated the funds to restore the bus for the museum collection.**



The Museum of Bus Transportation, Hershey, Pennsylvania, is a display of school, transit, and intercity coaches. It is located in the Antique Automobile Club of America's new, \$7 million, three-floor museum and offers both antique autos and vintage buses to visitors to this popular tourist city. Open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., seven days a week at 161 Museum Drive, Hershey, Pennsylvania 17033, (717) 566-7100 – ext 119. Web site: [www.busmuseum.org](http://www.busmuseum.org) and e-mail: [thebusmuseum@yahoo.com](mailto:thebusmuseum@yahoo.com). It is a 501(c)(3) non-profit operated entirely by volunteers as officers, board members, and docents. It is worthy of your membership, donations and involvement. □

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