# The Hood Release

## WINTER 2012

*"From the mountains to the prairies, to the oceans white with foam…"*

***1937 Cord 812***
***Owner: Mona Marsh***

**OREGON REGION**
**CLASSIC CAR CLUB OF AMERICA**
Oregon Region
Board of Managers - 2013

| | |
|---|---|
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| Club Librarian | Mona Marsh |
| Sunshine Report | Evelyn Freedman |

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**Moving?**
Be sure and advise the membership chairman of the new address.

**Sunshine Information**
Evelyn Freedman
503-246-5667

**The Classic Car Club of America** is a non-profit organization chartered in the State of New York for the development, publication and interchange of technical, historical and other information for and among members and other persons who own or are interested in fine or unusual motor cars built between and including the years 1925 through 1948, but including cars built before 1925 that are virtually identical to 1925 Full Classics® and distinguished for their respective fine design, high engineering standards and superior workmanship, and to promote social intercourse and fellowship among its members; and to maintain references upon and encourage the maintenance, restoration and preservation of all such Classic Cars.

The purposes for which a Region is chartered by the National Club are: The furthering of the ideas and ideals reflected by the By-Laws of the National Club in a specific regional area and to provide regional activities for the members in that area.

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# Oregon Region CCCA 2013
# Calendar of Events

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **January** | **3** | Member Dinner Meeting at O'Connor's | 6:30pm* |
| | **20** | Grand Hotel at the Lakewood Theater | 1:30pm* |
| **February** | **7** | Member Dinner Meeting at O'Connor's | 6:30pm* |
| | **10** | Annual Valentine Brunch and Tour* | |
| **March** | **7** | Member Dinner Meeting at O'Connor's | 6:30pm* |
| | **23** | Milwaukie Aquarium Day Tour and Lunch* | |
| **April** | **4** | Member Dinner Meeting at O'Connor's | 6:30pm* |
| | **5-7** | Portland Swap Meet | |
| | **20-21** | Overnight Tour TBD* | |
| **May** | **2** | Member Dinner Meeting at O'Connor's | 6:30pm* |
| **June** | **6** | Member Dinner Meeting at O'Connor's | 6:30pm* |
| | **16** | Strawberry Social and Tour* | |
| **July** | **11** | Member Dinner Meeting at O'Connor's | 6:30pm* |
| | **12** | Collector Car Appreciation Day | |
| | **21** | Forest Grove Concours d' Elegance | |
| **August** | **1** | Member Dinner Meeting at O'Connor's | 6:30pm* |
| | **4** | Columbia River Concours d' Elegance | |
| | **TBA** | Carlton Art in the Park | |
| | **18** | Lake Oswego Car Show | |
| **September** | **5** | Member Dinner Meeting at O'Connor's | 6:30pm* |
| | **14-21** | Oregon Region Annual Tour (Contact Howard Freedman)***** | |
| **October** | **3** | Member Dinner Meeting at O'Connor's | 6:30pm* |
| | **27** | Halloween Potluck at the Freedman's Garage* | |
| **November** | **3** | Annual All Member Banquet and Membership Meeting* | |
| | **7** | Board Meeting to Plan 2014 Calendar* | |
| **December** | **8** | Annual Holiday Potluck at the Lake Oswego Heritage House* | |

* Denotes a CCCA or Oregon Region CCCA sanctioned event.

# Director's Message

I've always disliked the joking but disparaging comments in some clubs about a new officer being "roped in" or "nobody else would" or "he was absent so got elected." It not only belittles the individual who is serving, but marginalizes the club itself.

So it is with pride that I will serve another year as your director, and point out the officers and board of directors who are listed in each issue of the *Hood Release*. We have some new folks, and some repeats. Together, we lead what is a vital and closely knit club that has engendered lasting and loving friendships. The club spirit has offered compassion and service to those who have faced adversity and loss. New members and visitors are always warmly welcomed and made to feel at home and at ease. Personally, I am very proud to be a member of such a group, and this is before considering the joy of being around the fine automobiles!

The highlight for 2012 was the Oregon CARavan which allowed us to meet more fine folks from around the country as we showed off our wonderful Oregon and how well we can host an event that received so much acclamation from attendees. Howard and Evelyn Freedman and George and Sylvia Potter were the ringleaders, and as usual, passed on the credit to all of the helpers, notably to Robert and Frankie Douglas who also were the organizers of our other great tours of the year. It was astounding to see the strong turnouts of members for our several meetings to plan the CARavan, many of them coming many miles from the coast and valley.

With all of this good feeling behind us for 2012, the coming year holds much promise. The more you participate, the more enrichment you will find. Yes…I'm very proud to serve another year.

*Rodger Eddy*
Director, Oregon Region, Classic Car Club of America

# Editor's Notes

In this issue you can read about Mona Marsh's 1937 Cord 812, and the history of the Cord automobile in general. Also, on these pages you'll find the history of the car radio, the evolution of the automatic transmission, and coverage of the various club social and charitable events that occurred in the final quarter of 2012.

This is the first issue of the *Hood Release* for 2013. As such, you will notice a new calendar, and an updated Board of Managers list on the preceding pages. Please review both and let us know if you have any additions or corrections.

*Jeremy Wilson*
Publications Editor

# AN INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD CAR HOBBY

*By Robert Douglas*

On the 27th of December 2012 the Oregon Region of the Classic Car Club of America hosted an open house and introduction to the world of Classic Cars for young and old alike. The event started out at Evelyn and Howard Freedman's Gideon Street Garage and car collection starting at ten-thirty in the morning.

There were about twenty young people, both girls and boys ranging in age from six to eighteen, and then about ten adults, some club members and others not. As people arrived they spent time looking at and sitting in the cars in the Freedman's collection. Then there

was an introductory talk given by your reporter about the cars that they had been enjoying.

Next, the group was taken over to the shop side of the building to see cars that were in the process of being worked on. In the shop Bob Earls explained the details of what they were looking at and what was being done to the cars.

After that there was a video about the workings of the cars and then a lunch was provided of sandwiches, potato chips, cookies and juice.

After a last look at the collection and answering a few questions it was off to Eagle Creek, Oregon to visit the Bill Jabs car collection. Bill, like Howard was the consummate host, answering questions about his cars and the car hobby and letting people look at his extensive collection. He also talked to the young people about the importance of doing well in school so that later in life they would be able to do the things that they liked, for instance working with collector cars!

The club would like to thank both Howard Freedman and Bill Jabs for making their collections available and sharing them with future generations of Classic Car enthusiasts. After all, if this hobby is to survive we need to generate enthusiasm in the upcoming generations and this was a great start!

## In Memoriam

John and Madlyn Fossette participated in a couple of our regional tours, always in a neat 1927 Stutz, Model AA S-15 Touring Brougham. John will be missed by those who had the pleasure to know him. The following is from the Sacramento Bee:

*John Frederick Fossette, born on May 28, 1939 growing up in Santa Monica, CA, suddenly but peacefully passed away at home on Friday, October 5. He is survived by his wife, Madlyn and sister, Janis Butler and husband of Scottsdale, AZ and niece, Emily Ransone of Phoenix. John graduated from Cate in Carpinteria, Stanford and USC, passing the Bar in 1964. He was the legal officer while in the Navy at Portsmouth, NH. He worked 25 years at Legislative Counsel for the State until he retired early because of a major hearing loss. John was a truly remarkable person with a wide range of talents, abilities, and interests with his wit and exquisite writing abilities. A memorial will be held at a later date. Remembrances can be sent to PBS or Happy Tails at 6001 Folsom Blvd, Sacramento, California 95819.*

# 1937 Cord 812

*By Jeremy Wilson*

*"American Heritage Magazine proclaimed the Cord to be 'The Single Most Beautiful American Car'.*

The Cord Corporation, founded in 1929 by Errett Lobban Cord, originally served as a holding entity for the transportation-related companies he already controlled: Auburn Automobile Company, Lycoming Engines, Duesenberg Inc., New York Shipbuilding, Checker Cab, Stinson Aircraft Company, American Airways and nearly 150 other companies.

In the late 1920s Cord began conceiving a low-slung, front wheel drive passenger car bearing his name. The 1929 Cord L-29 was the first American front wheel drive production car. However, the Great Depression crushed its sales, and by 1931 Cord halted production of the car at 5,000 vehicles.

By 1935 Cord automobiles made a comeback with the Cord 810, with an art-deco coach by Gordon Buehrig. Originally proposed as a "baby" Duesenberg, the Cord 810 was proclaimed the "Single Most Beautiful American Car" by American Heritage Magazine.

Low-slung and high-powered, the 810's big 125 HP V-8 was made by Cord's own Lycoming Engines. Running boards, door hinges and hood ornaments were gone, and headlights and gas cap concealed to further streamline the body. Its transmission featured the Bendix "Electric Hand" gear preselector.

The car became an instant sensation with plenty of orders. But it quickly earned a reputation for unreliability, with overheating problems, gear slippage, and vapor lock. After producing a thousand or so 810s, Cord released the 812 in 1937. New additions included the optional $415 supercharger, but it was not enough to recover Cord's lost momentum. Fewer than two thousand were built when Cord lost control of his empire, bringing the Cord automobile production to a halt. *(More Cord history in the next article.)*

Fast forward 47 years to 1984, with an Oregon couple wondering what it would be like to own one of these classic beauties.

CCCA member Mona Marsh recalls: "It began with my late husband Bill and I talking about his retirement, and what hobby he would like pursuing. He thought he'd enjoy restoring a car; on our vacation, passing through a Sandpoint, Idaho museum we saw a Cord Beverly. It was for sale and we went back a couple of times to look, but finally decided it wasn't the car for us. The seller wanted too much money for a car with a frozen engine and a hole in the block big enough to put your fist through. But she thought it was a fully restored, ready-to-go car.

"We started looking for a Cord but decided they were out of our ballpark. We considered Chevrolet, LaSalle and Buick. Then, on a 1985 trip to Auburn, Indiana we learned that a Cord convertible was for sale in Portland! We headed home and bought the Cord 812 the next year. Unrestored, painted black with white Naugahyde upholstery, it actually had shag bathroom carpeting!

"Not long after purchasing the 812, Bill got a lead on a Cord Custom Beverly in Azusa, California available for $5000. He and his brother-in-law drove it home. Everyone said this was nothing but a parts car, but Bill wasn't really thrilled with the convertible, because at six-foot four, his head was over the windshield. He liked the supercharged Custom Beverly and thought he would try to find the parts necessary to restore it. And over the years he managed to find many.

"At that time we also found an 18-foot vintage house trailer from the 1940's. We imagined the fun of restoring the trailer and the Cord and touring with them.

"Well, it never happened. While I was out of town, Bill redid the brakes on the convertible; one thing led to another and he just kept on until it was completely torn apart. He wanted it to be a 100-point car and wasn't happy with anything unless it was one hundred percent correct.


"Kim Schultz worked on it and with Wayne Weihermiller rebuilt the transmission. But during the engine rebuild process, Bill passed away."

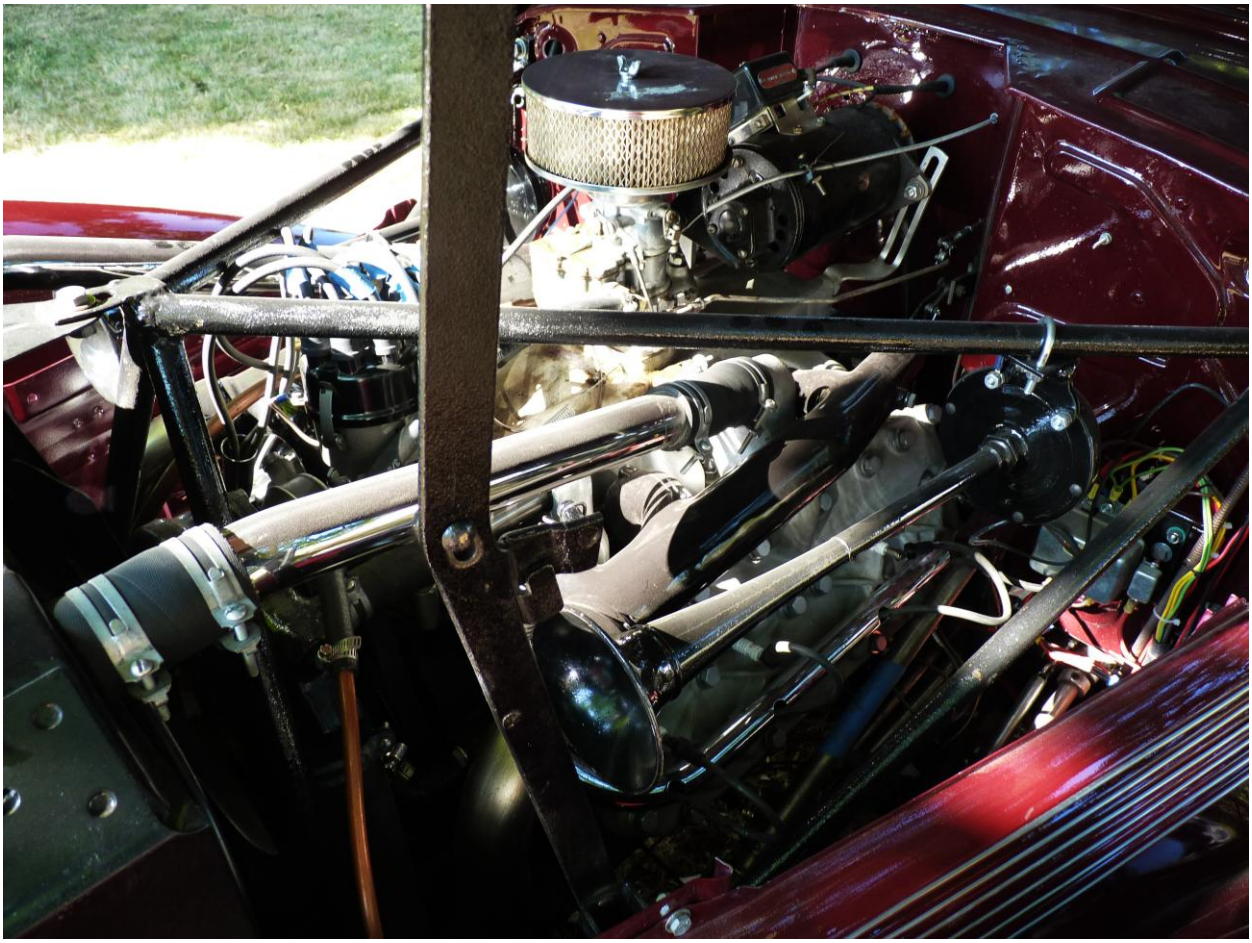
It's difficult enough to reassemble a car that has been disassembled by someone else, but in 2003 Mona found herself in possession of three partially dismantled Classic cars. It took a full year just to sort out the parts.

"In 2001, Bill acquired a 1941 Cadillac V8 62 Coupe. But he never drove it. Right after purchase he began redoing the brakes; by the time he died the car's entire rear end was disassembled. My stepson agreed to put the Cadillac back together for me—he knows GM cars and is a good mechanic. So he got busy putting it back together for me so I would have a driver to tour with and enjoy. A friend named Jim and his son Bob helped me sort out the parts and get the Cord back together, Jim passing away during the process. Bob then finished the restoration."

The Cord 812 is now fully restored, save a few finishing touches.

"We tried to restore it as closely as possible to original condition. The rich maroon is an original color; the leather upholstery was an original option so I chose to go with that for the restoration. Atomic Auto Body painted it, West Coast Auto Upholstery did the upholstery, and Bruce Murray at Major Murray did the brakes. I have all the parts needed to finish it, including the wiring harnesses, so a knowledgeable mechanic could finish it off without a lot of expense. And they would have a 100-point car. I've decided the best thing for me is to sell it to someone who really appreciates it, wants to use and maybe show it. I don't want to sell to a collector, where it will just sit and deteriorate."

Mona has driven her '37 Cord 812 to the Oregon coast many times. She was instrumental in the ACD Northwest meets in Rainbow Falls, Washington for a number of years.



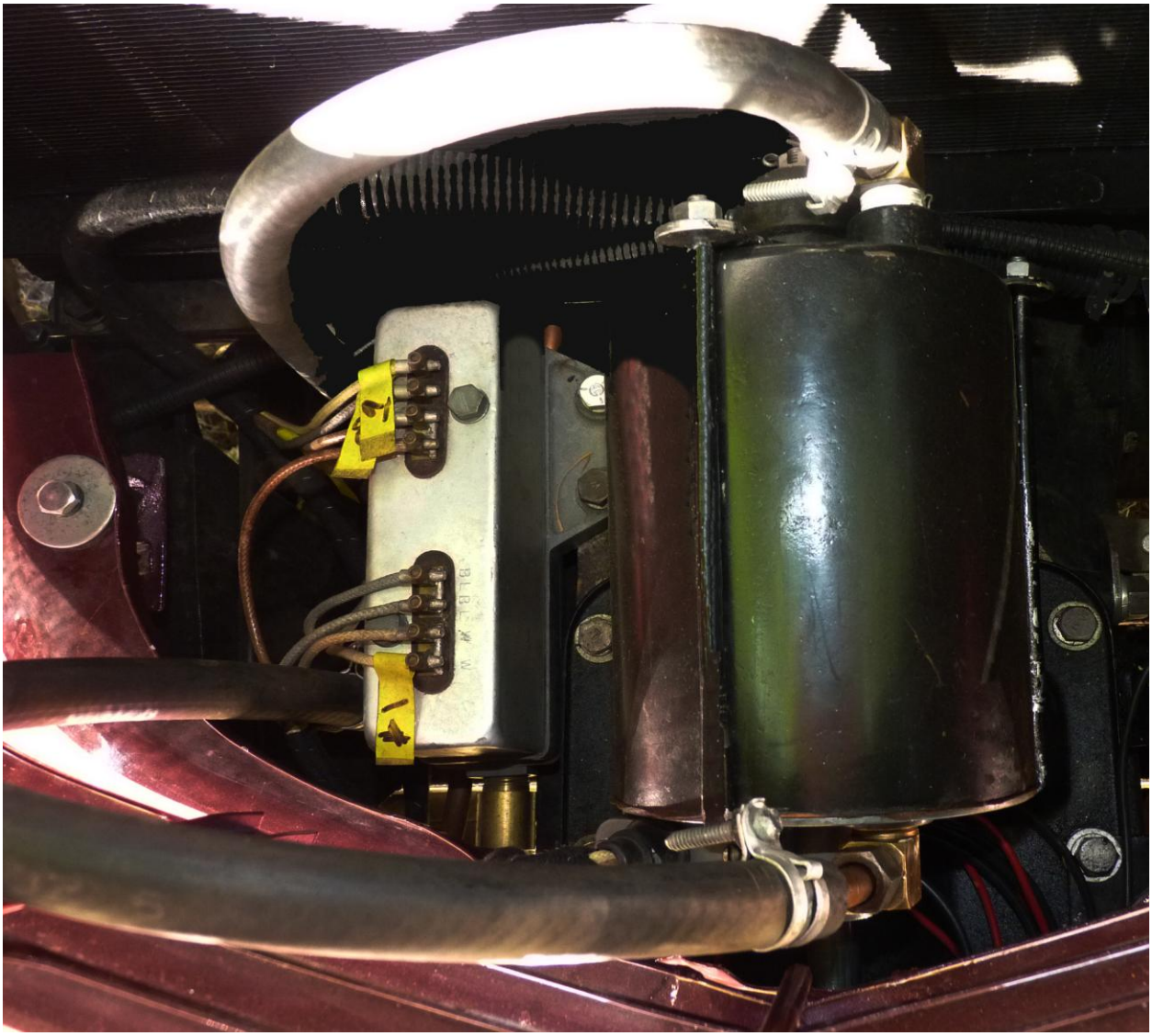
“The ACD (Auburn, Cord and Duesenberg) club is in Auburn, Indiana. They don’t have regional meets, only the four day national meet during Labor Day weekend each year. I’ve driven the Cord to Rainbow Falls near Chehalis, Washington several times. Bill and I, when we first began looking at Cords in 1985, noted in the Sunday paper that persons interested in ACD cars would be meeting at Rainbow Falls Park on Sunday afternoon following the Chehalis Swap Meet. Unfortunately, due to the park being flooded in 1996, the meet has not been resumed. This had been going on for several years, so we went together and I became involved as an organizer. A Chehalis restaurant barbecued for us, and it grew to a good sized function.

“My Cord is the original Gordon Buehrig design. He never liked the superchargers on the 812s, with the exhaust tubes coming out of the hood. I like the simple, straightforward lines. Buehrig’s book Rolling Sculpture was autographed and given to me by Buehrig as a thank-you for my help over the years with the Rainbow Falls meets. One year, I photographed all the cars attending the ACD meet, no matter the condition, and sent the photos to Gordon, who autographed them. Then I sent the photos on to their owners.”

Ownership of Mona's Cord has been traced back to its second owner, a car dealer during World War II.

"The dealer said that in 1942 or '43 two young men on their way to San Diego needed a vehicle with more luggage space, trading the Cord for a station wagon. I traced it one person at a time all the way back, beginning with the North Portland owner we purchased it from."

Years ago Mona sold the Cord Beverly and now the '41 Cadillac is her first choice when driving her classics. The Cord 812 is a high-spirited beauty, but needs an owner who doesn't mind doing a bit of tinkering.



*The Cord 812 transmission sits in front of the engine*

"I love the Cord but that transmission is very tricky. It's a vacuum shift—you put the lever in to whatever gear you want, then depress the clutch, activating the shifting. Today it runs

beautifully. No matter what gear I want it will shift, slick as a whistle. But last week while driving in town, I ended up going five miles to and fro in second gear because that day it would not shift. Bill would have the transmission cover off, so if it wouldn't shift he could easily adjust it. But I don't know how to do that. I love the car and have spent a fortune getting it all back together."

And the hard work, love, and expense certainly shows!

*Take a look at the elegant instrument panel. All instruments and switch controls are on a damascened rectangular panel and the gauges are either round or fan shaped, reflecting their needle action. The toggle switches reside in the center, and the large knobs at the upper corners open the headlight covers*.

# Cord Automobile History

*Text reprinted with permission from the Auburn Cord Duesenberg Automobile Museum*


*1936 Cord 810 ©Don O'Brien/Wikimedia Commons*

The Cord automobile, in its two forms, was one of the most innovative and wildly different motorcars of its time, a suitable namesake for equally innovative transportation industrialist E.L. Cord. It was Cord's leadership that brought the Auburn Automobile Company to its most inventive peak.

Cord came to Auburn, Indiana in 1924 at age 30 to rescue the floundering Auburn Automobile Company, then owned by a group of Chicago investors which included chewing gum mogul William K. Wrigley, Jr. Cord had captured their attention as a dynamic salesman for the Moon Motorcar Company in Chicago, where his sales had accounted for 60 percent of all Moons sold.

Instead of a salary, Cord struck a deal with the investors that included 20 percent of the profits, options to buy all common stock, and total decision-making control. In the next five years, Cord would turn the Auburn Automobile Company around. As Auburn sales soared, Cord realized he could not compete with the giants of automaking: Ford; General Motors; and Chrysler; so he looked for the right niche for his company. He was quoted as saying, "If you can't be the biggest, it pays to be different." Such a philosophy helped to spawn two renowned classics, the Cord L-29 and the Cord 810/812.


*1925 Miller 122 ©Writegeist/Wikimedia Commons*

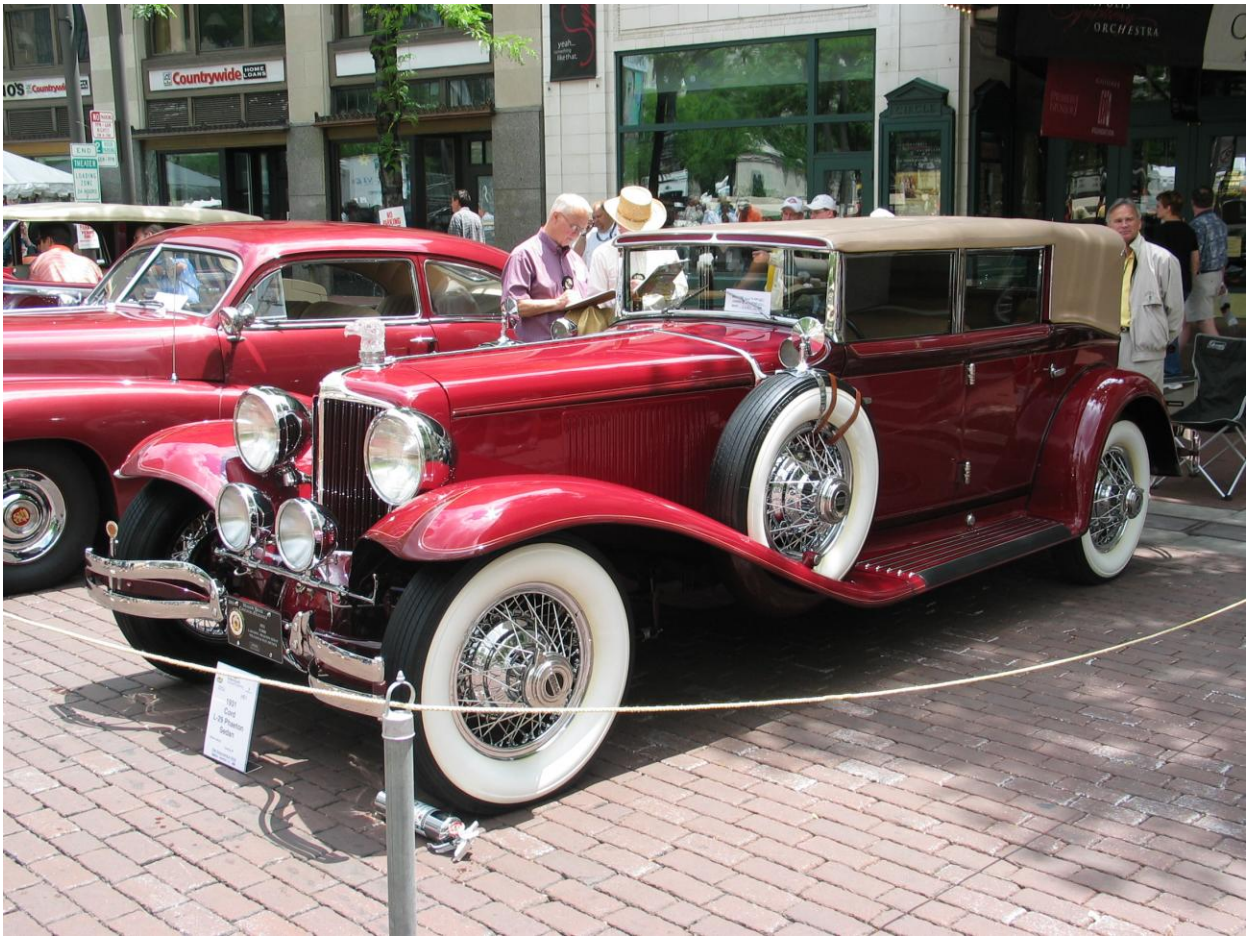
Cord was profoundly influenced by the 1925 Indianapolis 500 race, where a front-wheel-drive car, produced by Harry Miller, came in second to a powerful Duesenberg. Thoughts of a revolutionary new passenger car, utilizing front-wheel drive, danced in Cord's head. The advantages were obvious – a lower height in the absence of a drive shaft, less wind resistance in the frontal area, and better handling - especially on the corners, with a lower center of gravity. Besides the technological advantages, the car's low-slung appearance was fabulous – spectacular styling could be achieved.

Auburn's success made Cord look to expand the company's product line and he was soon looking at Duesenberg Motors in Indianapolis. He obtained the financially struggling company by an exchange of stock and got the engineering genius of Fred Duesenberg in the bargain.

Cord bought the passenger car patent and manufacturing rights to the front-wheel-drive designs of Harry Miller in the fall of 1926. Auburn Automobile Company paid Miller $1,000 per month for five years, plus a royalty on every front-wheel-drive car sold. Miller was to build the prototype and provide consulting services.

Miller had the foresight to bring in Cornelius W. VanRanst on the project. VanRanst was a gifted engineer and former Indianapolis 500 driver, and he solved many of the problems associated with the new front-wheel-drive car. The prototype was finished in November 1927 in California, and Cord flew there to test-drive the car. The prototype, powered by a Lycoming straight-eight engine and styled with a modified Auburn sedan body, had several problems during the testing. Cord and VanRanst took the prototype to the Duesenberg building in Indianapolis where Duesenberg's personnel, along with Auburn chief engineer Herb Snow, worked out the kinks.

Cord also knew that his namesake creation must have stunning good looks to match the mechanical innovations. He turned to Alan H. Leamy to create the body for the new car. Leamy, described as a brilliant artist by both his peers and automotive historians, wanted to create the car as a single unit with the exterior, interior and mechanics all working together as a harmonious entity. Leamy was given an environment conducive to fresh thinking and experimentation and the result was a masterpiece of automotive grace and proportion.




*1929 Cord L-29 Phaeton ©Chris J. Moffett/Wikimedia Commons*

An advertising firm created the Cord family crest as a logo to crown the finished car, available as a sedan, cabriolet, phaeton and brougham. The line was introduced in June 1929, making the Cord L-29 the first American front-wheel-drive production car available to the public. The price ranged from $3,095 to $3,295, putting the L-29 in the same class as Cadillac, Packard and the Chrysler Imperial. Sales were brisk as summer faded into fall.

Things would change practically overnight. The stock market crashed on Oct. 29, 1929, and overnight most of the potential buyers of the sensational Cord L-29 were financially obliterated. Anyone left with wealth was leery of buying an expensive car, let alone one that was unproven, unusual and sensational in appearance. Despite price cuts of as much as $700, sales never took off, and L-29 production in Auburn, Indiana, came to a halt in December 1931. A manufacturing span of 31 months produced a total run of barely more than 5,000 cars.

The year 1931 proved to be a pivotal year for the Auburn Automobile Company. After a banner sales year, the company lost almost $1 million in 1932. Company executives were desperate to stem the tide of red ink and considered the introduction of a "baby Duesenberg" to appeal to a wider audience. Body designer Gordon Buehrig, formerly of Duesenberg, was enticed from General Motors to work on a prototype.

*1936 Cord 810 ©Jagva/Wikimedia Commons*


The prototype was to be a conventional rear-wheel-drive car with a straight-eight engine, but in the work process, it evolved into a technically advanced car with a V-8 engine, front-wheel drive and independent front suspension. Buehrig created a unique and timeless body shape to envelope the avant-garde mechanics, and the Cord Model 810 was born. Customers could choose from three body styles: four-door sedan, phaeton or convertible coupe, each with a 125-inch wheelbase.

The Cord 810 might not have ever touched the road without a bit of luck. The nearly bankrupt Auburn Automobile Company hit financial paydirt when it landed a contract with Montgomery Ward to build kitchen cabinets in its Connersville, Indiana plant. Such luck provided the half-million dollars needed to develop the Cord 810.

The company was desperate to introduce the new car at the New York Auto Show in November 1935. Every employee in engineering and design worked long hours to meet the deadline, even as the Auburn car was facing extinction.

The breathtaking Cord 810 was a colossal hit at the New York show, with its unique styling and advanced technology. Crowds of people stood on the running boards of other show entries just to get a look at the Cord. Orders poured in, and the company promised delivery by Christmas 1935. The cars would be built at the Connersville, Indiana factory.

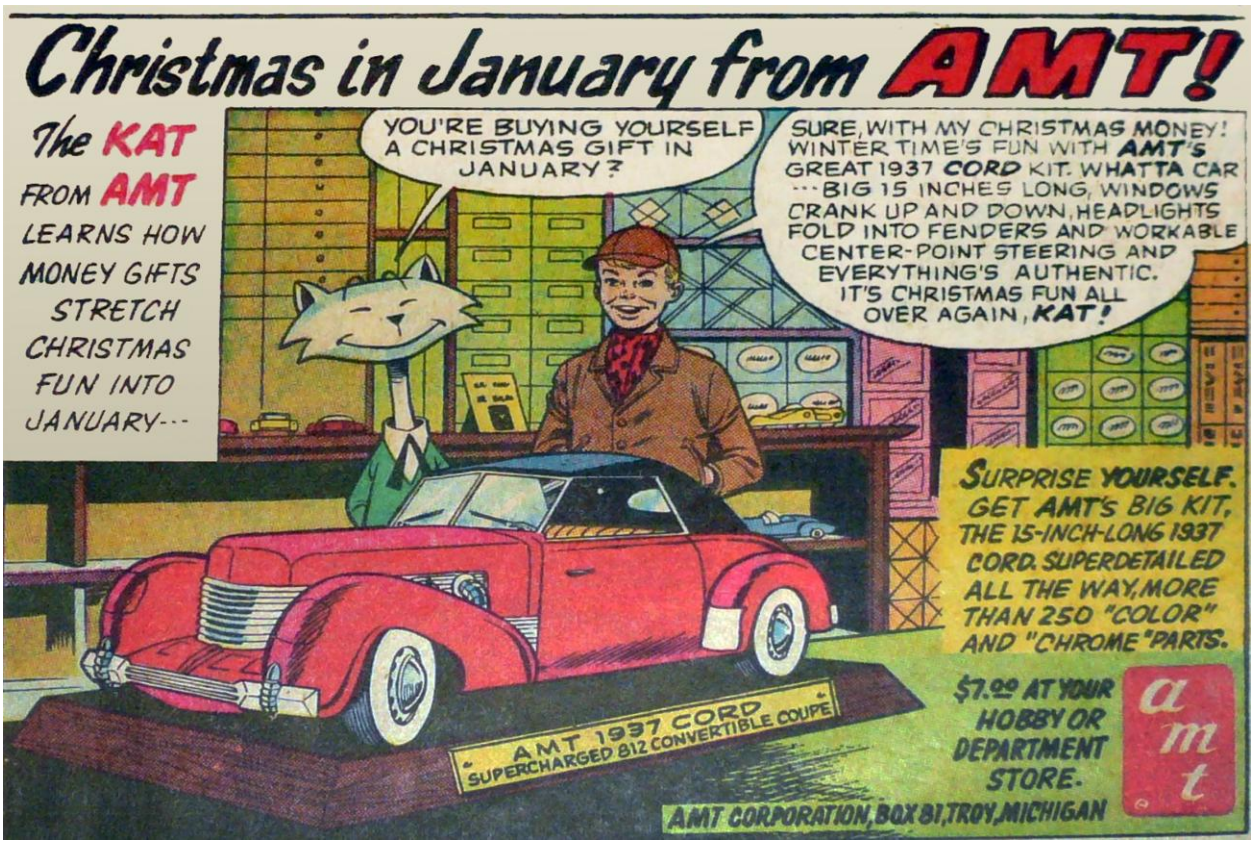
However, the car and its assembly had numerous problems, delaying production until the middle of February 1936. Many impatient customers withdrew their orders, and the ones who waited received a car with problems. In the rush to meet production schedules, Cord engineers

didn't have the time to correct the car's flaws, such as engine overheating, noisy U-joints and a recalcitrant transmission shifting mechanism. The Cord 810 quickly achieved a reputation as a troublesome car.

Fewer than 1,600 Cord 810s were built in the 1936 model year, and only 1,100 of them sold. Leftover 810s would be rebadged as 812s and sold as 1937 models.

Customers were offered a supercharged engine and a long wheelbase Custom series in 1937. The Switzer-Cummins Company of Indianapolis provided the optional supercharger, which greatly enhanced the Cord's Lycoming V-8 in acceleration and top speed capabilities. The supercharged Cords could be identified by the external exhaust pipes protruding from the sides of the hood and running through the fenders. The Custom series was an attempt to address customer demands for more head room and rear seat room in the sedan models, with the wheelbase lengthened to 132 inches.

However, the end was near for Cord Corporation. Sales plummeted despite new models, additional options and continued improvements. The last car manufactured by Cord Corporation rolled off the assembly line in August 1937. Production of the Cord 810/812 reached a total of about 3,000 cars.



# Halloween Potluck

*By Jeremy Wilson*

On October 27 club members got together at Evelyn and Howard Freedman's garage for a potluck dinner and an auction fund raiser. Although costumes were optional, a surprisingly large share of the group went all out, masquerading as a wide assortment of iconic characters.


The highlight of the afternoon was the fund raiser, with Rodger Eddy presiding as auctioneer. The silent auction was anything but quiet as Rodger announced the winners, whose whoops drowned out the occasional whines and grumbles by those lamenting they hadn't bid higher.

Sincere thanks to the Freedmans for hosting the event, to all who helped organize and decorate, as well as to those donating goods to the auction. Because of your help it was huge success!

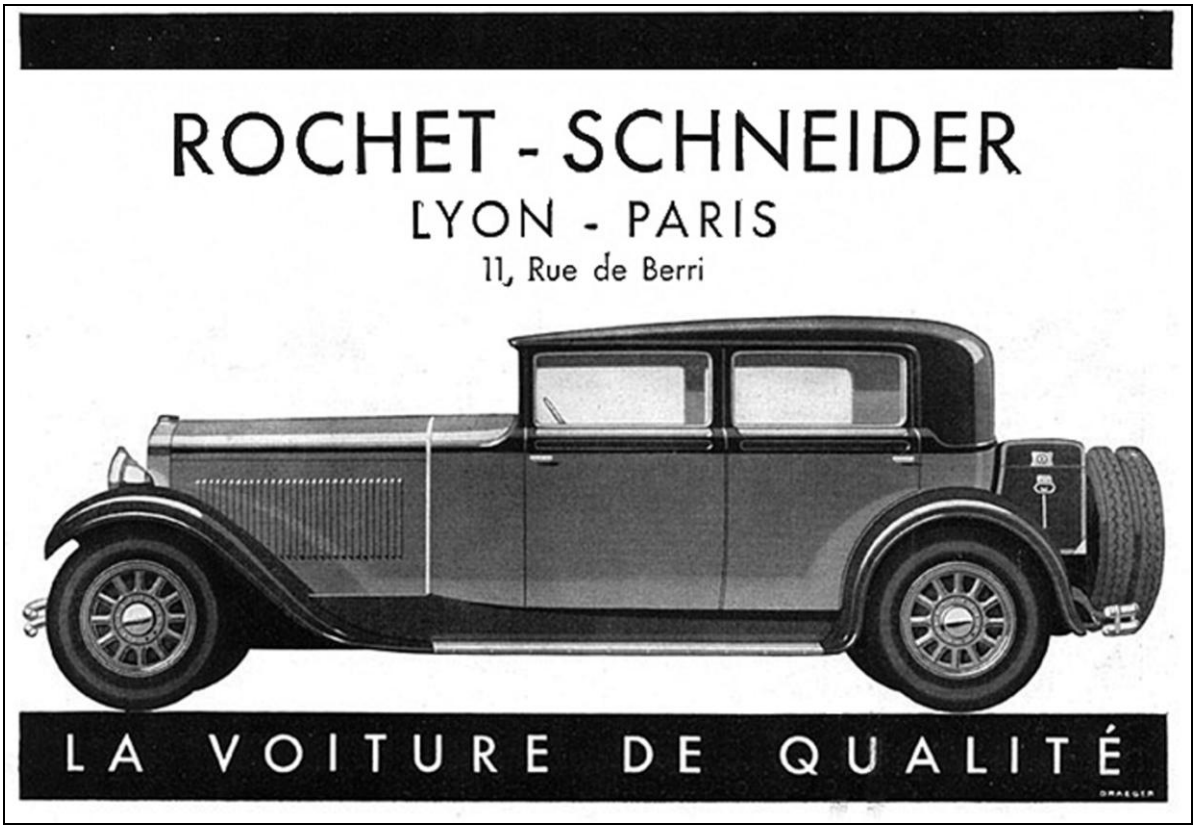
# New Member

Please join us in welcoming Steve Frisbie to the Oregon region of the CCCA. Steve's reputation precedes him, as he is the owner of Steve's Auto Restorations at 4440 SE 174 Ave, Portland.

You may find out more about Steve's by viewing his company website at www.realsteel.com. Included there is the following description of his business:

*Steve's Auto Restorations in Portland, Oregon is a multi-faceted shop specializing in transforming automotive dreams into reality. The street rods built at Steve's range from capable cruise-night machines to highly-detailed, top-echelon show stoppers. In addition to building street rods Steve's Auto Restorations owns and operates Real Steel, a division that specializes in the manufacturing of steel '33/'34 Roadster bodies and replacement sheet-metal parts. The team at Steve's is proficient in virtually every aspect of custom car construction, and also perform specialty service and repair work.*

We look forward to meeting Steve and having him as a member of our club.



# The Pumpkin Patch Tour

*By Jeremy Wilson*

This year, again, members of the CCCA Oregon Region were graciously invited to participate in Packards of Oregon's annual Pumpkin Patch Tour. Organized by Matt and Karla Hackney, 20-plus attendees met in Beaverton where a continental breakfast was served, tailgate style.

The tour took us through Beaverton, Aloha, and into Hillsboro where we stopped to see a neon collection, owned by Bob Strauss. Housed in a garage that would hold approximately 16 cars, and maxing out a 200 amp service panel, Bob's collection of automobilia is without a doubt a jaw-dropping experience.

When you first walk in to the main exhibition area, the lights and colors are overwhelming. Then, after a minute, your brain begins to make sense of the view. For those who grew up seeing neon signs on a nightly basis, Bob's collection brings back pleasant mid-twentieth-century memories and is a joy to behold.


*Bob Strauss (at right) showing the group his neon collection.*

Along with the neon signs are restored gas pumps, a complete soda fountain, display cases full of memorabilia, and multiple

collector cars, including an amusement park bumper car. Some of the favorites were the Rocket Gas sign, which is so tall it extends through the ceiling, and the various car-make signs including those for the service departments.

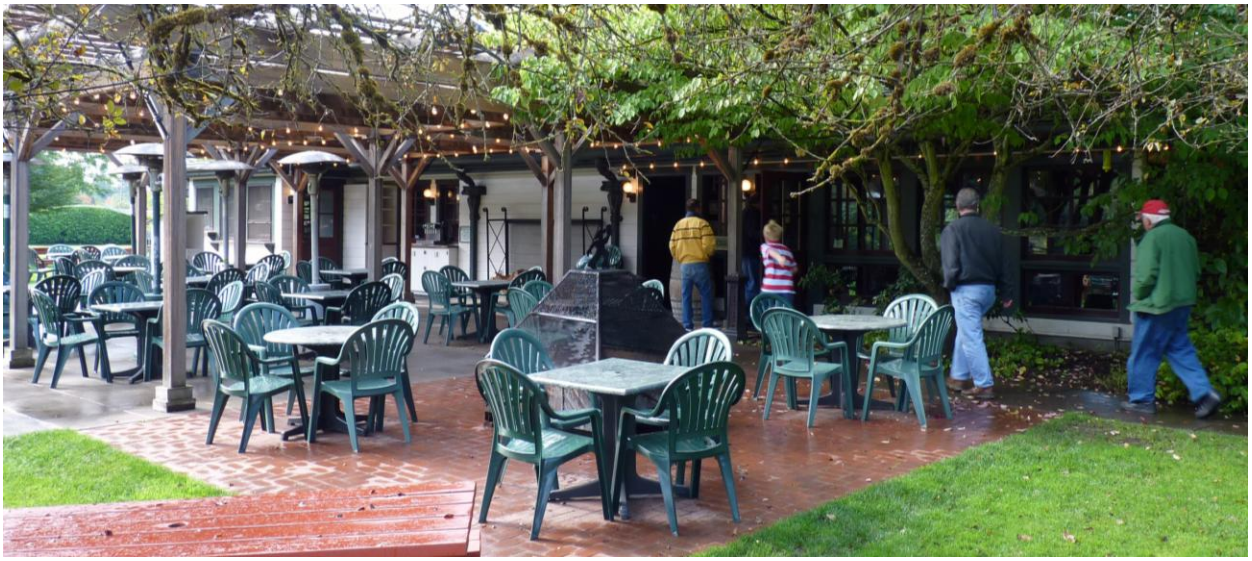






*Pictured above is Bob's parking area with a long row of Packards. Second in line, you may notice, is Dave McCready's 1941 Packard One-Eighty Touring Sedan, which happened to be the only the Full Classic® in the group.*

It was difficult to tear ourselves away, but eventually we did. Many thanks to Bob Strauss for providing the highlight of the Pumpkin Patch Tour. Next, it was off to lunch at the Grand Lodge Restaurant in Forest Grove followed by a tour of the facilities.



All in all, it was a great tour. Thanks to Matt and Karla and to Packards of Oregon for including us. We look forward to another next year!

# Holiday Potluck 2012

*By Victoria Wilson*


How do you define a successful social event? The adjectives warm, colorful, delicious, generous, comfortable, and fellowship come to mind. These words bring to mind the CCCA Oregon Region holiday potluck, held December 9th.

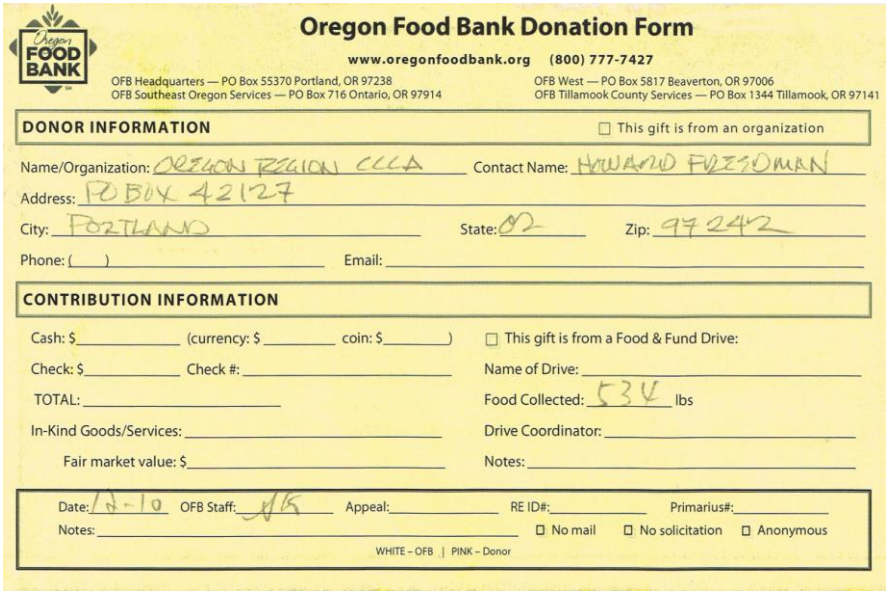
Hosted again at the Oswego Heritage House (thanks, Ron Erickson), organizer/hosts Mona Marsh, Howard Freedman, Rodger Eddy and Matt Hackney provided a relaxed and enjoyable holiday gathering, with all the trimmings.


The Oswego Heritage House is always beautifully decorated and festive, setting the mood and helping encourage the right spirit. This year was no exception, with a beautiful tree, warm lighting and ample seating at round tables that encourage conversation. Ladies and gentlemen alike gave a sartorial nod to the festive season in holiday finery. Rodger Eddy's red tartan trews and sweater were a standout—and always a particular favorite of mine!


Long trestle tables laden with food were moved into an adjoining room this year to allow space for another two to three tables in the

dining room—our numbers are growing, which we are happy about. The food itself is always such a highlight—we are mightily blessed with an abundance of good cooks. Howard and Matt served up hot coffee to finish with dessert, and they (along with Karla Hackney and Gary Geddes) worked off their meals by cheerfully washing dishes—thanks!

But one more special aspect of this gathering was the evidence of an enthusiastic response from club members to Larry Cox's heartfelt appeal, given earlier in the month, for food and/or funds donated in support of this year's holiday charity: the Oregon Food Bank. More than 500 pounds of food and over $236 were given by our club; also a needy family was sponsored, receiving over $100 worth of toys and clothing.



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If that's not a reason to count our blessings and celebrate the season, I don't know what is! We wish each of you a safe, healthy and joyous New Year. Thanks for who you are and what you do to make our club and community a better place.

# The Car Radio – An Interesting True Story

*Reprinted from Uncle John's Bathroom Reader Fast-Acting Long Lasting, ©2005 by Portable Press.*

One evening in 1929, two young men named William Lear and Elmer Wavering drove their girlfriends to a lookout point high above the Mississippi River town of Quincy, Illinois, to watch the sunset. It was a romantic night to be sure, but one of the women observed that it would be even nicer if they could listen to music in the car.


Paul Galvin

Lear and Wavering liked the idea. Both men had tinkered with radios – but it wasn't as easy as it sounds. Automobiles have ignition switches, generators, spark plugs, and other electrical equipment that generate noisy static interference, making it nearly impossible to listen to the radio when the engine was running.

One by one, Lear and Wavering identified and eliminated each source of electrical interference. When they finally got their radio to work, they took it to a radio convention in Chicago. There they met Paul Galvin, owner of Galvin Manufacturing Corporation. Galvin needed a new product to manufacture. When he met Lear and Wavering at the radio convention, he found it. He believed that mass-produced, affordable car radios had the potential to become a huge business.

Lear and Wavering set up shop in Galvin's factory, and when they perfected their first radio they installed it in his Studebaker. Then Galvin went to a local banker to apply for a loan. Thinking it might sweeten the deal, he had his men install a radio in the banker's Packard. Good idea, but it didn't work – half an hour after the installation, the banker's Packard caught on fire and they didn't get the loan. But Galvin didn't give up. He drove his Studebaker nearly 800 miles to Atlantic City to show off the radio at the 1930 Radio Manufacturers Association convention. Too broke to afford a booth, he parked his car outside the convention hall and cranked up the radio so that passing conventioneers could hear it. That idea worked – he got enough orders to put the radio into production.

Motorola installation instructions (circa 1930)

That first production model was called the 5T71. Galvin decided he needed to come up with something a little catchier. In those days, many companies in the phonograph and radio businesses used the suffix "ola" for their names – Radiola, Columbiola and Victrola were three of the biggest. Galvin decided to do the same thing, and since his radio was intended for use in a motor vehicle, he decided to call it the Motorola.

Reproduction of a Motorola 5T71, included (left to right) the receiver, tuning control, speaker.

But even with the name change, the radio still had problems: When Motorola went on sale in 1930, it cost about $110 uninstalled, at a time when you could buy a brand-new car for $650, and the country was now sliding into the Great Depression. (By that measure, a radio for a new car would cost about $3,000 today.) In 1930 it took two men several days to put in a car radio – the dashboard had to be taken apart so that the receiver and a single speaker could be installed, and the ceiling had to be cut open to install the antenna. These early radios ran on their own batteries, not on the car battery, so holes had to be cut into the floorboard to accommodate them. The installation manual had eight complete diagrams and 28 pages of instructions.

Selling complicated car radios that cost 20 percent of the price of a brand-new car wouldn't have been easy in the best of times, let alone during the Great Depression. Galvin lost money in 1930 and struggled for a couple of years after that. But things picked up in 1933 when Ford began offering Motorola's pre-installed at the factory. In 1934 they got another boost when Galvin struck a deal with B.F. Goodrich Tire Company to sell and install them in its chain of tire stores. By then the price of the radio, installation included, had dropped to $55. The Motorola car radio was off and running. (The name of the company would be officially changed from Galvin Manufacturing to "Motorola" in 1947.) In the meantime, Galvin continued to develop new uses for car radios. In 1936, the same year that it introduced push-button tuning, it also introduced the Motorola Police Cruiser, a standard car radio that was factory preset to a single frequency to pick up police broadcasts. In 1940 he developed with the first handheld two-way radio – the Handie-Talkie – for the U.S. Army.

A lot of the communications technologies we take for granted today were born in Motorola labs in the years that followed World War II. In 1947 they came out with the first television to sell under $200. In 1956 the company introduced the world's first pager. In 1969 it supplied the radio and television equipment that was used to televise Neil Armstrong's first steps on the Moon. In

1973 it invented the world's first handheld cellular phone. Today, Motorola is the second largest cell phone manufacturer in the world. And it all started with the car radio.

*William Lear*

The two men who installed the first radio in Paul Galvin's car, Elmer Wavering and William Lear, ended up taking very different paths in life. Wavering stayed with Motorola. In the 1950's he helped change the automobile experience again when he developed the first automotive alternator, replacing inefficient and unreliable generators. The invention lead to such luxuries as power windows, power seats, and eventually, air-conditioning.

Lear also continued inventing. He holds more than 150 patents. Remember eight-track tape players? Lear invented that. But what he's really famous for are his many contributions to the field of aviation. He invented radio direction finders for planes, aided in the invention of the autopilot, designed the first fully automatic aircraft landing system, and in 1963 introduced his most famous invention of all, the Lear Jet, the world's first mass-produced, affordable business jet. (Not bad for a guy who dropped out of school after the eighth grade.)

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# Automatic Transmissions Didn't Happen Overnight!

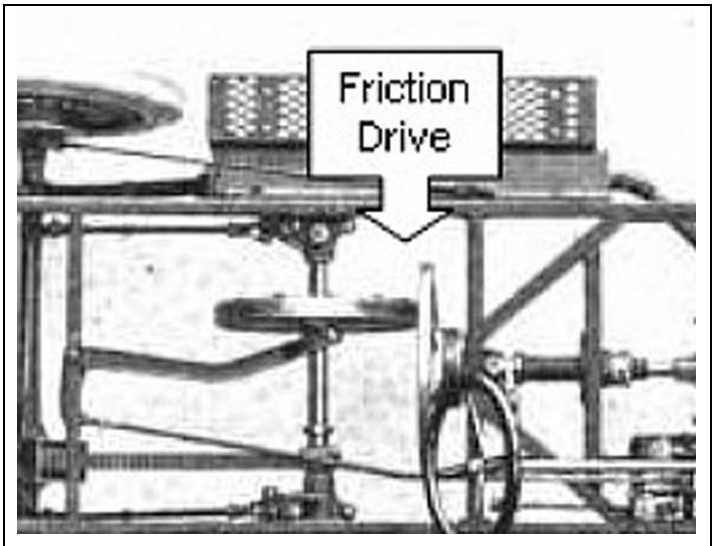
*By Doug Houston, CCCA Member, Michigan Region*

In our Classic car world, we often fail to associate automatic transmissions with classic cars. But, the concept, development, and final execution of the automatic transmission took place from early in the classic years, to its ultimate application in a classic car, just before World War II. Even today, there is only one completely automatic shifting transmission to be found in a Classic car: Hydra-Matic Drive.

The tale of this revolutionary creation had its conception in Buick Division, General Motors. Back when the automotive industry was in its glory days, each division of General Motors Corporation had its engineering staff. These were the individuals who made the individual car divisions unique, even from those of the other GM divisions. Each GM division was, in fact, in competition with all of the others. The product of this situation was the fine honing of excellence that competition could make happen so well.

In the late twenties, the idea of having a transmission shift automatically was no new idea, by any means. From the very beginning of the automobile, the driver's dream was to deliver him/her from the duty of manipulating gearshifts and operating clutch pedals. Many drivers had no difficulty with shifting gears properly, but all too many never did master the art of gear shifting. A moment's reflection, even in the twenties, brought the realization that automatically shifting gears would be no simple process, and by no simple mechanical means, either. Until the classic era, where all areas of technology were growing faster than ever before, the dream of an automatic transmission was beyond practicality.

Buick Motor Division had a staff of engineers, who had an idea of coupling their engine to the drive wheels, with a means of automatic ratio selection. This was the very seed of automatic drive. Using a mechanism that had already appeared in an automobile, they would incorporate it into an automatic device, which would change drive ratios automatically, and without transitions, from standstill to full vehicle speed. There would be no gear change. The heart of this transmission was the disk-and-roller speed change device. Shown is a chassis view of a Lambert automobile, of 1909, that used the drive principle that Buick's engineers decided to adopt.




*The Lambert Disk-and-roller speed control. This was also used on the Metz cars in the brass-gas era. The lever alongside the roller shifted it to change speed.*

The Buick concept necessarily became far more intricate in its kinematic character than that of the Lambert. The exact date is not known, when Buick began its development of the transmission that they dubbed "The Roller". It was in the late twenties, right in the infancy of the classic era. Considerable progress was reported on this transmission. It was able to bring the car from a dead stop to desired driver speed, smoothly, and without transitions. This was exactly what the original goal had been for its operation. In their fine book: Buick, A Complete History, by Lawrence Gustin and Terry Dunham, they told that the "roller" was able to burn rubber from a standstill, then progressing to highway speeds. Indeed, this was a remarkable achievement for so early an attempt at an automatic drive device. Several patents were taken out for elements of this transmission. Initially, they were able to show life mileages of 20,000 in proving ground testing before wear out. Higher mileages were either expected, or reported for as high as 50,000 miles in life testing. While those numbers were excellent in the twenties, where the entire car might have its life of 50,000 miles, better endurance was already to be expected from a passenger car.

Alfred Sloan and Charles Chayne, Buick's chief engineer, had been watching the progress of the roller. By the time, though it was showing potential as a good performer, it had a few strikes against it. First, it was extremely heavy. Secondly, its cost as an option on a Buick would have been an estimated $600.00. Third, it was very large for installation in the car's chassis. Even for as expensive an option today, that price was more than the traffic could ever have borne. In addition, it became apparent that a frictional device for horsepower transmission was not the way to go. Wear and the attendant heating are heavy penalties to pay for a friction power transmission. Somehow or other, gears would need to be resorted to, reasoned Messrs. Chayne and Sloan. Friction drives work just fine on phonograph turntables, but not for carrying horsepower.

Since 1909, Ford had been producing a most successful planetary transmission in their Model T. It shifted under power, with no interruption of the engine drive. If this principle of transmission could be built on, with automatic controls, this would be the route that General Motors could take, and have the transmission they wanted. Progress was discontinued on Buick's roller. It was a severe morale breaker, causing some of Buick's best guys to want to jump ship. Fortunately, they were persuaded to stay on.

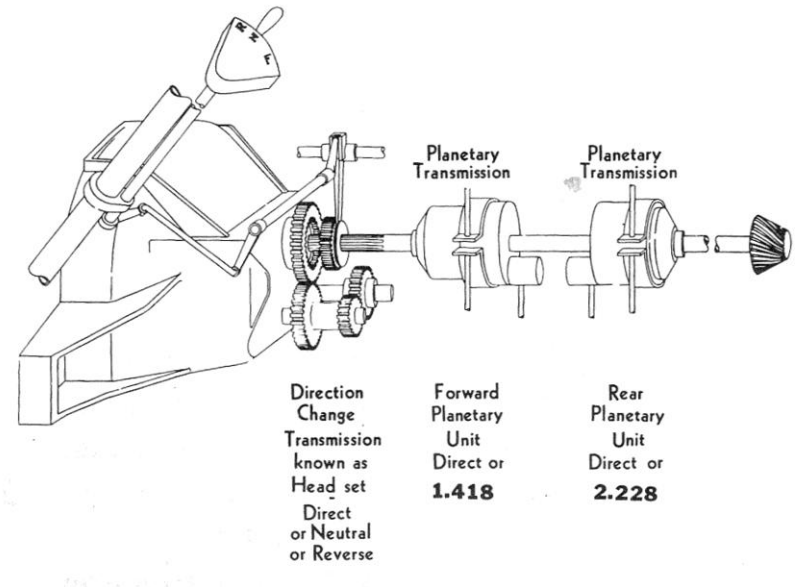
The Sloan-Chayne concept was a multiple speed, ratio changing transmission. Ford's had only two speeds, but GM was to have more; possibly four speeds for maximized driving performance. This was already into the thirties, though the exact time line is not known.

The act of "pulling the plug" on the roller may have seemed wasteful, but in the process of its genesis, a great deal had been learned in machine design, that would carry over into GM's further transmission research and development.

Development of the ratio changing transmission became the new direction, with other divisions being involved in its development. Cadillac was interested in the concept, and in 1932, Earl A. Thompson, inventor of the synchro-mesh transmission, was given the task of heading a project with a code name "Military transmission". The name would attract little or no attention, and didn't. Thompson's staff was expanded slightly, and a "concept" model was prototyped, but

because of its infantile character, was not found to be reliable. Shift to 1934, and Cadillac decided that it no longer could afford involvement in the military project, so Thompson's staff was transferred to a couple of small offices and a room in the research labs at GM Central Staff.

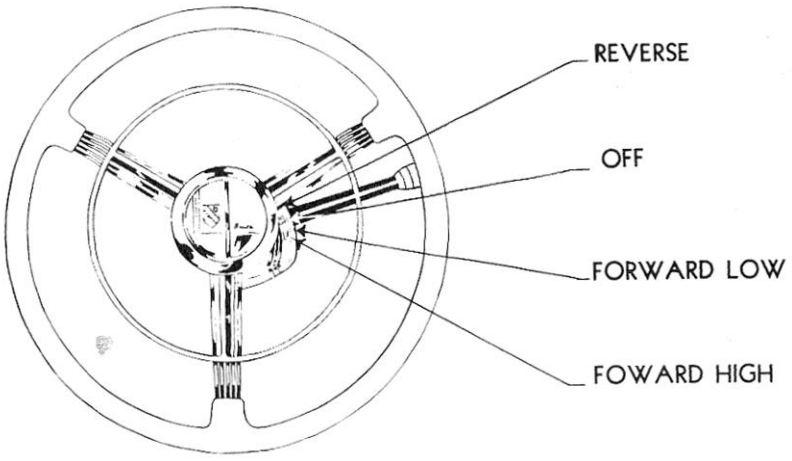
It was here, that Charles L. McCuen, general manager of Oldsmobile became aware of the military project. Oldsmobile was the corporation's most forward-looking division, thanks to McCuen. He would become VP in charge of engineering for GM in 1940, and then research chief in 1947. He quickly recognized that an automatic transmission had great potential, so he arranged to fund the project as an Oldsmobile option, and that was the final result.




*Gearing scheme of the new transmission. This would carry into the final Hydra-Matic*

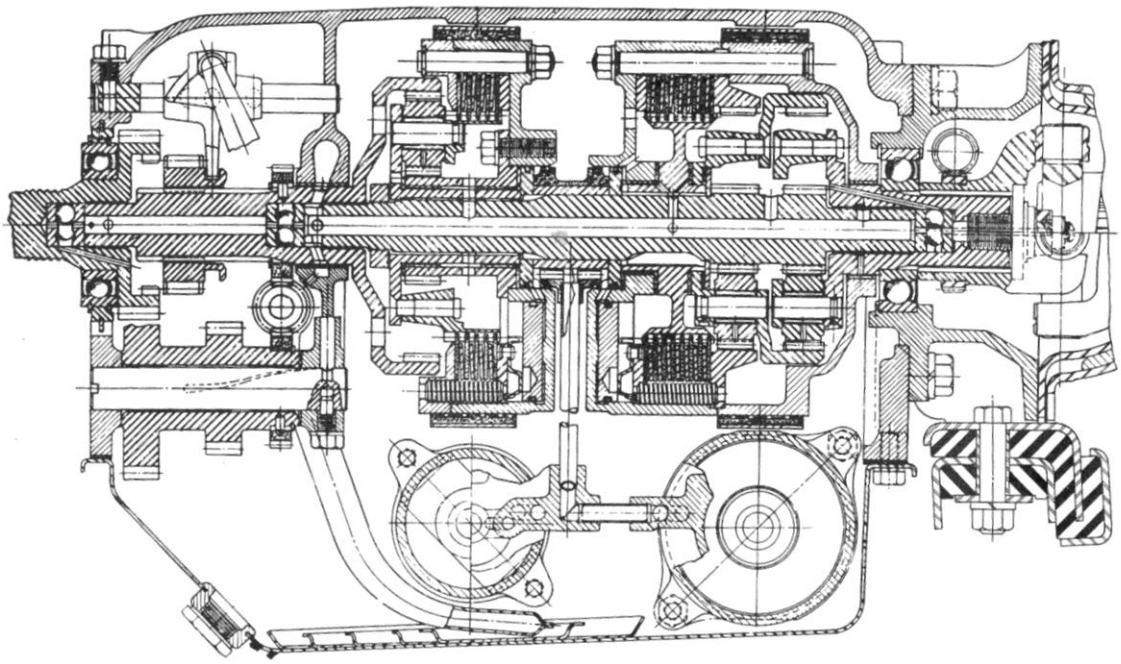
Thompson's staff then worked side by side with Oldsmobile's very capable engineer, Harold T. Youngren, who got the transmission ready for production.

Hydra-Matic's first form would resemble the final configuration, in a very elementary form. Oldsmobile's new transmission did shift automatically under power. The first offerings for Olds in 1937 had two planetary gear sets, each with a clutch for shifting them to direct drive. There had not been time for a fluid flywheel to be ready, so a conventional clutch was used. Both neutral and reverse were accomplished




*The Steering Column Selector as used on Buick. Typical of Olds.*

by a sliding gear set in the front of the gearbox. Four speeds were obtained in the same manner as in the later Hydra-Matic models. First speed had both planetary units in reduction. Second speed released the band and locked the clutch in the front unit, putting it in direct drive. The second unit remained in reduction. Third speed swapped band and clutch functions, putting the rear unit in direct drive, and the front unit in reduction, once again. For fourth speed, both units locked clutches, released bands, and both were in direct drive. The four-way exchange of bands and clutches was a very tricky function to coordinate. All of this had to occur at once, in order to keep the 2-3 upshift smooth. It was a very clever manner of manipulating gear sets and clutches.



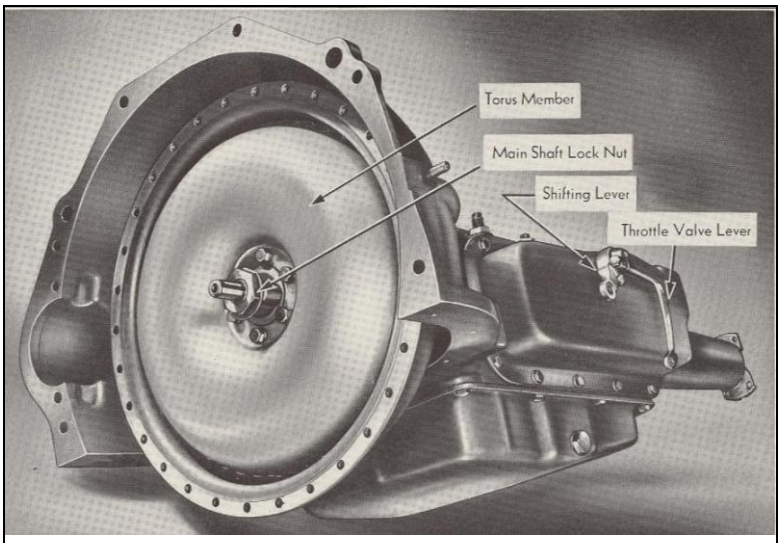
*Cross section drawing of the 1937-39 transmission. The sliding gear set in the front of it enables neutral and reverse.*

Manufacture of this "automatic safety transmission", as dubbed by Oldsmobile, would be done in an available bay in Buick's Flint transmission plant. Even with the passing of the years since the roller was halted, deep bitterness existed with Buick's engineers. Their plant was to be building someone else's automatic transmission.

For the 1938 model year, Buick offered the self-shifting transmission on their series 40 (Special NC) series only. A book was published by Buick, showing principles of operation, and provided a good explanation of the transmission. It recommended that, at the time of shifting, the driver would back off of the throttle to help the transmission shift. Translation: Buick's brutal torque, even on their small engine, was too much for the transmission. In 1939, only Oldsmobile offered it.

Finally, in 1940, the transmission had a fluid flywheel and reversal by hydraulic controls within the transmission. There was no longer a clutch for the driver to operate. It became the beginning of Hydra-Matic, and was manufactured by GM's Detroit Transmission Division. While there were still many manual shift Oldsmobiles sold, to many of us, the absence of the Hydra-Matic badge on an Oldsmobile seemed that something was missing!

The next two model years saw product improvements, and some campaigning of units in the field. Cadillac was working toward readying Hydra-Matic for their engines. Installation in their chassis was one thing, but the ability for the transmission function with Cadillac's higher horsepower was another significant issue. Cadillac made the transmission available starting around December, 1940




*The Hydra-Matic transmission in its final form. This shows the Cadillac version of it.*

Hydra-Matic saw extensive and severe service on Cadillac engines in medium tanks, M5 and M24 during WWII, as well as on some landing crafts. The result was that the majority of any shortcomings in the transmission in 1942 were gone by 1946. The 1946 Oldsmobiles and Cadillacs had all the advantages of a highly refined Hydra-Matic transmission. Wisely, the postwar transmission was designed with the identical mounts and bolt patterns that the 1940-42 models had.

In my own collection, there are three 1941 Cadillacs with Hydra-Matic, and one 1941 Oldsmobile 98, also H-M equipped. All have postwar transmissions in them. While "upgrading" drive components in a vintage car is not a preference of mine, the improvements that appeared in the 1946 and later transmissions are a strong incentive to enhance reliability of operation, and the availability of service parts. Virtually every part in the transmission was changed from the prewar models. While some parts may be found for early transmissions, there are far more sources for maintenance of the postwar units.

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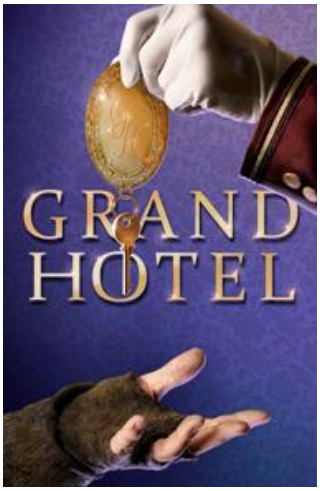
- *1938 Self-Shifting Transmission*. Buick Motor Div. 1938.

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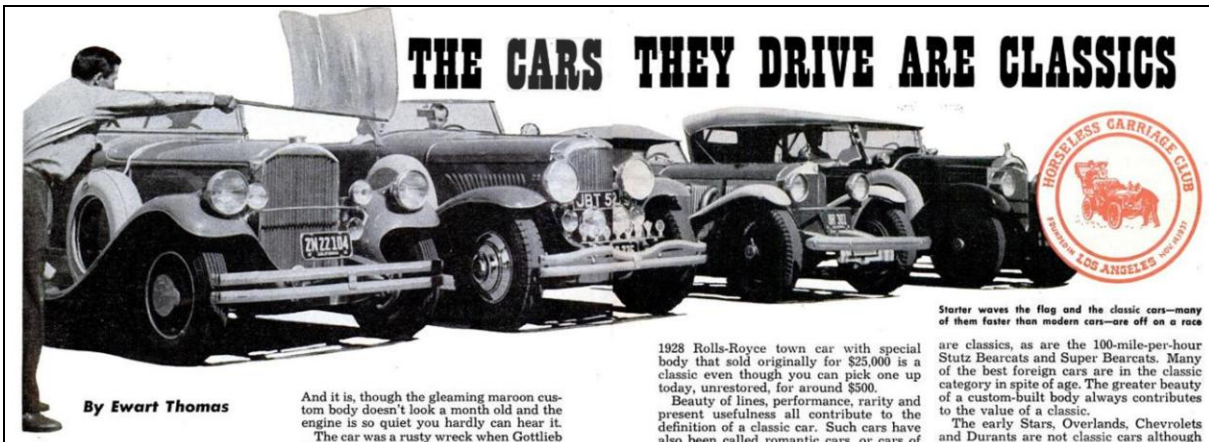
# THE CARS THEY DRIVE ARE CLASSICS




Starter waves the flag and the classic cars—many of them faster than modern cars—are off on a race

By Ewart Thomas

ABOUT EVERY five miles in traffic someone pulls alongside Bob Gottlieb with the question, "What's that you're driving, one of the new foreign cars?"

Gottlieb leans over the side of his long, low, sporty automobile and grins. "Nope," he replies, "It's a 20-year-old Chrysler."

In this lineup, the old-time Packard, Pierce-Arrow and Rolls-Royce are classics, restored in every detail and now used daily by their owners

And it is, though the gleaming maroon custom body doesn't look a month old and the engine is so quiet you hardly can hear it.

The car was a rusty wreck when Gottlieb paid a couple of hundred dollars for it several years ago. The water jacket had rusted out, cam followers were broken, three springs had snapped, the brakes were shot, universal joints ruined and many parts missing. The new owner spent six months of spare time restoring the car to original condition and today he drives it to work.

Last year he put 22,000 miles on it. The whole car is strictly original except for a 1950 carburetor that was installed for better mileage.

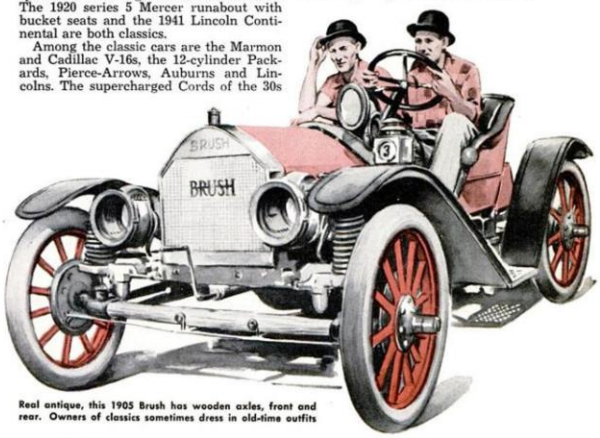
Gottlieb can afford a new car but there probably isn't a 1952 model on the market he'd accept as an even trade. He's one of the "classic car" fans, one of the growing number of enthusiasts who delight in restoring and driving some of the great cars that were built in the past.

The classics include most of the expensive, limited-production automobiles that were built for looks, performance and durability. Many of them cost fabulous amounts when new. A 1928 Rolls-Royce town car with special body that sold originally for $25,000 is a classic even though you can pick one up today, unrestored, for around $500.

Beauty of lines, performance, rarity and present usefulness all contribute to the definition of a classic car. Such cars have also been called romantic cars, or cars of special interest. Age makes no difference. The 1920 series 5 Mercer runabout with bucket seats and the 1941 Lincoln Continental are both classics.

Among the classic cars are the Marmon and Cadillac V-16s, the 12-cylinder Packards, Pierce-Arrows, Auburns and Lincolns. The supercharged Cords of the 30s are classics, as are the 100-mile-per-hour Stutz Bearcats and Super Bearcats. Many of the best foreign cars are in the classic category in spite of age. The greater beauty of a custom-built body always contributes to the value of a classic.

The early Stars, Overlands, Chevrolets and Durants are not classic cars although some may be prized for other reasons.




Real antique, this 1905 Brush has wooden axles, front and rear. Owners of classics sometimes dress in old-time outfits



*Popular Mechanics* - June 1952

***Letter to the Editor:***

Just picked up the June issue of *Popular Mechanics* and saw beginning on page 136 "The Cars They Drive Are Classics."

Do you know the Classic Car Club of America was organized a few months ago for owners of cars made between 1925 and 1942, as well as those who are interested in them?

As executive director and founder of the Classic Car Club of America, I should like to report that we do not permit on the exhibition line any cars that have been hopped up or whose bodies have been altered beyond the original design. All cars must be in prime condition and fully restored before they can be placed on the line. Also, we do not discriminate against any of the smaller cars such as the Model-A Ford, Plymouth, Chevrolet, Erskine, or Rockne.

Edward A. Moran,
3629 Oxford Ave.,
Riverdale, N. Y.

*Popular Mechanics* - August 1952

**Is this the earliest mention of the Classic Car Club of America in a national publication?**