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AND AND A A ward Winning Newsletter



Bringing an Auburn Back to Life

By James Bartlett

After being down a couple years in need of engine repairs, my '35 Auburn Super-Charged Convertible Sedan is back on the road. Also, it now has another 300 miles on the odometer thanks to Eileen and my taking the car to Indiana for the Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg Club's Hoosier Tour and Annual Reunion during the last week in August.

During our 20-year ownership of the car, the engine had never been right, due primarily to a worn-out camshaft and the lack of a rebuilder in southeast Texas with the experience and technical capability to correctly rebuild a straight-8 engine with poured babbitt bearings. After nursing the car along for years, we bit the bullet after a knock developed and took the engine to a specialist in Detroit. Some of the best in the business are in the Detroit area, logical given its historic status as the capital of the U.S. automobile industry.

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For technically minded readers, key repairs included new pistons and rings; valves, guides and springs; insert bearings on the rods; and re-poured bearings on the crankshaft. And crucially, I found another camshaft that, though also worn, vielded one cam profile good enough to serve as a pattern. The worn individual cam lobes were then welded and reground to match the good pattern. The result is a smooth-running engine with 19+ inches of vacuum at idle (ideal), compared to the 15 inches before (sub-standard), with valve timing that now matches factory specifications, compared to timing that was not only late before, but also varied from (Continued on page 2)



Gulf Coast Region, Houston, Texas

(*Continued from page 1*)

cylinder to cylinder. The engine was in Detroit for six months.

After leaving the completed engine sitting for a year, waiting to find adequate work time, we got after it this summer, finishing just days before leaving for Indiana. The car ran well and was fun to drive given its easy steering, synchromesh transmission and ease at speed – it cruises at 70 miles per hour at only 2,400 RPM thanks to a two-speed Columbia rear end.

I've since replaced a supercharger seal and accumulated enough parts to rebuild the brakes. When we restored the car in the early 1990s, we completely redid the brake system and used silicone fluid. During the years since and thousands of miles of touring, the brakes have never caused any problems. But rather than tempt fate, a brake job is next. We also plan to address a few cosmetic issues, like installing repro running board rubber that's become available in recent years and replacing the splash aprons, which we had rebuilt out of fiberglass and Bondo.

Since I bought the car in 1994 and finished the initial restoration in 1996, the Auburn has attended dozens of car events statewide, along with three trips to Indiana for the annual Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg reunion. The car has also been popular at local shows; the hot-rod crowd loves the external exhaust, polished aluminum engine parts and snazzy dashboard.

Auburns were upper-mediumpriced cars that competed with Buicks and the cheaper Packards. Lacking the market presence and financial muscle of the larger integrated manufacturers, Auburn countered with cars that were jazzy, fast and bargains for the money. Our super-charged convertible sedan features a 150horsepower engine, external polished stainless steel exhaust pipes, leather interior and a surprising amount of chrome for the art-deco era.

Only a few hundred of this model were made at just \$1,750 each. Late club member Carl Koch told me that when he was in high school, "The '35 super-charged Auburns were every kid's dream," largely thanks to the swoopy twopassenger Speedster model.

Our car was sold new in Baltimore, and remained with the original owner until its discovery by a collector in 1963. But there was a big problem. The car was stored for decades in a temporary metal building that eventually collapsed on top of the car, then funneled rainwater onto it. That collector said, "When I pulled it out of the garage, the back half of the body fell off. I carried the car home in two pieces." He performed a restoration that required building a new steel subframe for the body and welding patch panels into the doors and rear fenders. He farmed out the engine work. When finished, he took the car out to "see what she could do," which was 85 miles per hour rather than the 100+ of which these cars were known to be capable. Disappointed, he sold the car, which went through two other owners before I bought it.

I restored the car in the mid-1990s with the help of my brother, Wayne Bartlett, who did at least half the work. We found that the super-charger was worn out and the aluminum cylinder head was porous and had leaked water into the engine, rusting out the valve seats. There was no compression, so the car wouldn't run. Plus cosmetically, the '60s restoration didn't meet modern standards. So we took the car all the way down to the frame and restored everything mechanical - engine, brakes, suspension, steering, two-speed shift mechanism, etc. We dipped and sandblasted the body, salvaged as much of the chrome as possible, and over a two-year span did a total ground-up restoration - excepting some of the engine specialty work mentioned earlier.

Luckily, there has always been sufficient interest in Auburns that suppliers of rubber bushings and custom castings still exist. Some years back I had a brand-new cylinder head cast for only \$800 from the original factory molds, which are owned by a foundry operator who's a member of the ACD Club. I more recently bought a long list of new rubber parts that have become available in recent years.

Given when we did the restoration, we used the paint we were familiar with at the time – acrylic lacquer, which is nearly idiot proof, and which unfortunately was already expensive at \$700 per gallon in red even then. But our hard work paid off, as the car still looks really good for a 20 -year-old restoration that has covered thousands of road *(Continued on page 3)*

(Continued from page 2)

miles. It also remains the best-driving of all my older cars, given its relative light weight (3,800 pounds) which eases steering, good power and a smooth-riding suspension.

During the countless weekend and night-time hours devoted to restoring the Auburn originally, and maintaining it since, I came up with some tips for enthusiasts:

1) It really is cheaper to buy a restored car than to restore one yourself, due to the everrising cost of materials and labor, and the drying up of old parts sources. 2) That said, you can't know what you really have, and you can't have it exactly the way you want, unless you do in fact restore it yourself. So it's a tough choice between the two. 3) If you don't like chasing parts or begging machinists to do custom work, restore a more common make. 4) Be prepared to become your own expert. Not many old-time mechanics are left, and in some cases there's little factory literature around to help. 5) Cultivate sources of information in the affiliated car club. I would have been better off delaying the original restoration for a couple years to do research and find 6) Don't underparts. estimate the time, money and working space required in a full restoration. 7) Last, and not least, don't cut a single corner. The quick and easy way inevitably requires a re-do sooner or later.

From The President

Another "car quy" has been recalled by his maker. His name was Charles Bootz. I doubt that any of you knew him, because he lived and worked in the Phoenix, Arizona, area, and rarely traveled outside of his realm. Charlie grew up poor, fought his way across Europe in Patton's Army during World War two, built a small, local sign business into a major player in Arizona, and had a lovely wife and two children. Charlie's two major passions in his offtime were old cars and golf. He was a founding member of the Outhouse Open golf tournament in Prescott, AZ., and his love of automobiles stretched for almost eighty of his ninety years.

I first became acquainted with Mr. Bootz about forty years ago on a trip to Phoenix. We made introductions, spoke for a few minutes, and found that we had quite a bit in common; we were both veterans of the U.S. Army, volunteer firefighters, loved Mexican food, and had a lifelong passion for just about anything with four wheels and an engine. What really sealed the deal, though, was that I had recently married his favorite niece, so we were also family. The high point of any of my trips to Phoenix was to kick tires with Charlie for however long we could get away with it before the ladies would call us to supper. He always had pictures of his many projects, as did I, and on the occasion that we were headed West in an antique car, I would make it a priority to stop and let him admire my ride! Charlie was not really a collector, but

more of an aficionado of old cars. He would buy one, work on it, bring it up to his standards, drive it for a while, then sell it and buy something else which suited his fancy. I don't think that he had two of the same kind or make of anything. A "60 squarebird, a Model A, a Jaguar XK150, a Mercedez 450SL, and so on. His last project was a 1974 Ranchero GT. "Easy to get the clubs into and out of". Though his passing was a sad event, he can now throw away his medications, leave his walker in the trunk, and play golf to his heart's content without ever having to wait for a tee time. We'll miss you Uncle Charlie.

January Birthdays

•	•
Sophie Adcock	1/3
Sam Romeo	1/5
Nancy Smith	1/12
Bill Cockrell	1/16
Randy Borcherding	1/16
Floy Haddox	1/16
Patricia Logan	1/16
Ted Hiesser	1/17
Jo Katherine D'Ambrosio	1/20
LaNelle Wagner	1/21
Duane Medley	1/23
Dean Forbes	1/23
Lynnette Boudreaux	1/26
Peter Reinthaler	1/26
Paul Byrd	1/28
Micky Bohne	1/29

December Anniversaries None to celebrate!

On The Road Again*

"The Turn-around Artist"

By Albert Ramos

It started with the sound of thunder and a loud voice calling my name. But it wasn't Judgment Day; it was just the day after Christmas. The thunder was someone knocking on my back door at an hour best left to early birds getting worms and predawn splendor. The loud voice calling my name was a neighbor with a problem.

Neighbors don't typically call on me at an early hour to invite me to breakfast. If they call me at all, it's usually for problems - not because I *cause* them, but because I *fix* them.

Today's event started when the neighbor decided it would be easier to drive her car headfirst out the driveway instead of backing it out; but since she had driven head-first into the garage, the car was facing the wrong direction. To fix this, she decided to do a multi-point turnaround at the widest point between her house and garage. Unfortunately, she didn't actually start the turnaround until she was well past the widest point. To further complicate matters, she drives a large SUV with a turning radius only slightly better than that of a stout barge on the Houston Ship Channel.

After a few back-and-forths and turning the wheels left and right,

she found herself wedged between the corner of her house and a neighbor's raised garden bed. There wasn't an inch left between the SUV and the house, and the SUV's back passenger-side tire was pressed firmly into the stout railroad tie that lined the raised garden. She was practically apoplectic. What would she tell her husband? He wasn't here, but if he drove up...

Driving out of this tight spot was not possible without damaging both the house and the vehicle. The only way to extricate the SUV from this tight spot seemed to be to lift it and shift it from the back while taking care to not let the front bumper touch the house. I asked if she was in a hurry to go somewhere because it might take a half hour or so for me to get the tools and shift the car. "No," she responded. She didn't actually need to go anywhere today, but she was planning ahead for tomorrow when she knew it would rain and be more difficult to back up!

I went home to my garage to look for my rolling floor jack, wheel stops to keep the SUV from shifting forward when lifted, and two wheel dollies. I found the jack and wheel stops, but the wheel dollies were nowhere to be found; so I called my friend John, who lives nearby, and asked him to bring an extra rolling floor jack. I figured we could use two jacks to raise the back of the car by the rear jacking points and somehow roll the jacks to move the car.

John drove up a short time later with a floor jack that was identical to mine: a single, wide wheel at the lift side of the jack and two swiveling casters at the lever side. We positioned the jacks sideways under the high-standing SUV from the clear side, aligned them to face the same direction, and raised the back of the vehicle until the wheels were just an inch off the ground. Then we used a crowbar to pry between the cement driveway and the wide single wheel of the jack closest to the "stuck" edge of the SUV.

Quarter inch by quarter inch, I levered the jack with the crowbar; and the SUV moved with it. In less than a minute, the back wheel was no longer pressed into the railroad tie.

And then a caster of one the jacks got stuck on a crack - and it started to rain.

So we lowered the jacks, repositioned them to avoid the crack, and lifted the SUV again. Employing the crowbar technique, we were able to edge the SUV over about 8 inches without hitting the house.

(Continued on page 5)

*On The Road Again is a series that welcomes stories from Gulf Coast Region AACA chapter members about how a shared interest in cars and helping others can pave the way to friendship and adventure. Volume 57, Issue 1

Hershey—My Story By Don Barlup, Exec. VP of AACA

In honor of this year's annual trek to Mecca (Hershey, PA), I feel the urge to reminisce.My first experience was in 1958, as a lad of eleven.

My late father finally gave in to my pleas and off we went.

I remember that the car show and small flea market were held inside the original stadium, which fortunately still exists. The cars were on one side and the vendors were across from them on the opposite end. We covered the event in approximately one hour. I still have the photos that I took on my Kodak Brownie camera.

Life went on, but the urge to someday own my own antique car never really went away. Graduations, marriage, and my first real job. Fast forward to 1968. I found myself as Food and Beverage Manager of the Hershey Motor Lodge and once

(Continued from page 4)

Needless to say, the neighbor was grateful. To show her appreciation, she gave us a lot of homemade holiday food to take home. As we left, her husband drove up. I doubt she told him why we were there, and I hope he didn't notice the sizable scrape we left in the cement with the crowbar lever.

I've often said that my favorite application of physics is leverage, and this incident demonstrates its value.

Added by Evelyn: And the value of having good neighbors! again October, old cars, and a rare afternoon off.

In ten years, what a change. The original blue field that is now part of the park complex was half full of vendors and the car show must have had 200 cars. It took me at least 4 hours to take it all in, which was all the time my afternoon off would allow.

In the early years of my annual trek, I would carry approximately \$50.00 with me. It was half a week's paycheck and I scrimped and saved to have that stash. I spent it wisely and still have some of those early treasures on display.

I walked in the rain, I walked in the hot sun, and I walked in the mud, and even walked with a sprained ankle.

In the mid 70's the blue and white field (the old airport) mud was so bad I remember a particular lake with parts afloat and a sign that simply read "Gone Fishing".

The mud was legendary. From the red field, yellow field, and chocolate field, time marched on. Grass and mud became macadam and the legs just no longer could stand the constant four day pounding.

I still look forward to Hershey (having officially joined AACA in 1971), but the travels through the legendary and huge flea market are less with each passing year.

The excitement hasn't diminished, I do carry more than \$50.00 and I still can manage to find a treasure or two. I can't wait.

Bring on Hershey!

From the AACA Rummage Box Fall 2014 This article was reprinted, with permission.

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(At the persistent urging of the club secretary, the Checker has written again....)

Dear Ones,

My part time chauffeur told me his beloved late mother-in-law used that term whenever she wrote to the folks. And it's been some time since I've written, so I thought I'd plagiarize.....

It was a long summer for me hibernating in my garage and going almost nowhere. 100 miles on the speedometer since part time's son changed my oil in March. What a lousy way to treat a classic car like me !

Then the club's Christmas party came up. I was told if the weather was moderate, we were going. Since my heater is limited in output, part time wanted the passengers to be comfortable. (NO consideration for my feelings) Well, the weatherman cooperated and we were off to the Monument Inn for lunch. SO NICE to be on the road again !!!

The folks' son, youngest daughter and future son-in-law met at Gulfgate Mall and motored on to the Inn. I heard some grumbling about these folk not being "paying passengers" and therefore being "still fareless", but considering the source, I ignored him.

The report on the lunch was excellent. (The "Entertainment Committee" had another "WINNER!) The family was very pleased and my driver was HAPPY because he won the \$100 drawing which made up for the "payless" riders and then some.

Now, during the summer I heard some stories about mistakes that were made in past auto purchases. Let me share one this time around, and save some of the others for the future.

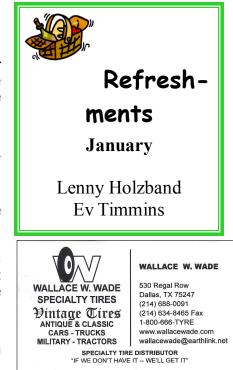
It was 1984 and a new vehicle was needed for the traveling salesman. After much debate, part time purchased a 1984 Olds diesel powered station wagon. (OH ! How he regretted not getting a gasoline engine.)

Well, all did go well for the first 150,000 miles or so, and then things started to go down the sewer. The cast iron head bolts broke and had to be replaced. \$\$\$\$\$\$'s. Then some miles down the road they broke again. (Out of warranty, of course. MORE \$\$\$\$\$\$ Soon after that the injector pump had to be rebuilt. While 'crying" about the head bolts at the injector shop, they told me they had a permanent solution. "Aircraft quality steel studs" in a "do it yourself kit." Being younger then, the old fellow did do the job himself, only succeeding in mixing up the injector lines and having to limp over to the repair shop for help. Sometime after that the valves needed work, and a "used" set of heads were installed (by the garage).

At about 315,000 miles, it was decided enough was enough, a replacement car was necessary.

So the Olds was given to the son and daughter-in-law, as a present. He claims he loves his family, but this does make one wonder......

They, surprisingly put another 75,000 miles on that "gem." They soon learned it had NO acceleration. PERIOD ! Stomp on the fuel pedal and the engine would ROAR, black smoke would come out the tail pipe and the speedometer would slowly crawl clockwise. It had to be a long acceleration lane to get into traffic on the freeway. However, it was fun to watch a "tail-gater" when they got a windshield full of sooty diesel smoke. :-) Great for killing mosquitoes also.



2015 Texas Tour Taking Shape

By James Bartlett

With the 2015 Texas Tour fast approaching, co-chairs James and Eileen Bartlett report that arrangements are going well, with major venues confirmed and a schedule coming together rapidly. They are currently working on the budget, email and mail invitations, website notices, etc., and plan to provide a detailed report at the January meeting of the Gulf Coast Region.

Invitations will go out in mid-January, and members will be recruited shortly for specific tasks.

"We've had excellent cooperation from our key venues as well as the city of Tomball," said James. "I'm a little concerned about hotel rooms as there are only four small modern hotels in town and one of them has another event going on, but we've managed to block 102 rooms in total, and more might become available a month before the tour. Some of the usual attendees from the Houston area are likely to stay at their homes, so that could take some pressure off the hotel situation."

The tour will kick off on Thursday, April 16, with early arrivers given the option beginning at mid-day to visit local area car collections and other attractions. That evening will feature a casual getacquainted event, probably at the tour headquarters – the La Quinta Inn – or possibly at the Bartlett home, depending on completion of a planned garage.

Friday morning will begin with car judging in downtown Tomball, adjacent to antiques shops as well as the city community center, which will be utilized for a ladies event at the same time. This will be followed by lunch and a tour of a local car collection (which is pending). Next comes a driving tour to Montgomery for visits to Mitchell's Richard Old Iron Works restoration shop and fabulous classic car collection, as well as visits to Montgomery's pioneer village, nature center and interesting town center shops and museum. That evening, dinner will be held at a local church.

Saturday morning will feature a scenic back-roads driving tour west of town, then northward to Magnolia to see the massive Tony Gullo Collection. Then we'll drive farther north to Richards

to the Bill Thomas Ranch to see his car collection, vineyard and home, then have a barbecue lunch and enjoy an organ concert. Afterward we'll go to the Alton Hues Ranch nearby to see his antique car collection, then return back to Tomball. Dinner, awards and the style show will be held at the same local church used on Friday night.

"If anyone needs further information, give us a call at our home phone, 281-255-6770," said James. "Otherwise, you're going to see repeated notifications between now and tourtime."

For Sale

1974 Plymouth Satellite Custom 4-dr sedan.

Good condition. 318 V-8 Engine, A/C, PS, PB, New Tires.

Daily Driver. 2015 Collector Car Price Guide lists value at \$1,500.

Will accept reasonable offer. Contact Mike Peterson at 281-488-2185 or galaxie61@comcast.net.





Underlined items are club (AACA) sponsored activities.

- Jan. 12, 2015First GCR AACA meeting of the new year in the Tracy Gee
Center. 7:30 P.M.Jan. 26Absolute deadline for Antique Expression articles for
February, 2015 issue.Jan. 30DEADLINE to RSVP for Valentine's Lunch.
- Feb, 15Annual GCR AACA Valentine's Day lunch at the Brookwood
Community Cafe in Brookshire. More info and signup in this
issue. DEADLINE: January 30.
- Feb. 23 Deadline for Antique Expression articles for February, 2015 issue.
- April 10-12 38th Annual Texas Packard Meet. Stagecoach Inn, Salado: 210-497-6836
- <u>April 16-19</u> We host the 61st Texas Tour in Tomball. See update article in this issue.
- April 30-May 3 PATE Swap Meet
- May 2-3 20th Anniversary of Keels & Wheels Concours d'Elegance, Seabrook

Friday evenings Pearland Antique & Classic Auto Show Cruise Night at Lowe's parking lot at FM 518 & Pearland Parkway, beginning at 6 PM **Saturday evenings** cruise in at Chick-Fil-A in Home Depot's parking lot, 5 PM, Hwy 146 and FM 2094 in Kemah

Last Sat. morning of the month: Coffee, Cars, and Books from 8 - 10 AM in Barnes & Noble parking lot on Bay Area Blvd.



The Antique Automobile Club of America Is a non-profit Organization dedicated to the preservation, restoration and maintenance of automobiles and automotive history. It is the country's oldest and largest automotive historical society. Meetings at **Tracy Gee Center** Located at 3599 West Center Dr., Houston, TX 77042 Meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. 2nd Monday of each month, **Except for February, July**

and December, when special activities are scheduled.

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SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2015 HEAD ON OUT TO THE COUNTRY WITH YOUR LOVED ONE AND YOUR OLD ONE!

> 12:30 "CAR SHOW" UP 12:45 LUNCH

> > 1752 FM 1489 Brookshire, TX 77423 281-375-2158

THE CAFÉ AT

Listed below are the 3 options for lunch. I must have your RSVP and food choices by January 30.

- 1. Creole Stuffed Chicken: Chicken breast stuffed with ham, spinach and provolone cheese, dredged in parmesan flour, sautéed, topped with Creole mustard sauce. Served with roasted garlic mashed potatoes and fresh broccoli.
- 2. Catch of the Day & Crab Supreme: Grilled fish fillet topped with sautéed jumbo lump crabmeat and drizzled with white wine sauce. Served with summer squash medley and carrots.
- 3. Grilled Steak Tino: Seasoned strip steak grilled to your order with garlic sautéed spinach and summer squash. Served with chimichurri on the side.

Directions: Take I-10 West to FM 1489 Exit; go left about 2 miles. It will be on your right.

Send your check (to GCR AACA!) to arrive NO LATER THAN Jan. 29 to be included, or bring it to the January meeting. For additional names and food selections, including guests. Include info on another sheet of paper.

Name:			Phone:		
	Number members attending:	X \$15 e	ach =		
	Number guests attending:	X \$20 e	each =	TOTAL:	
Name			Choice #	Drink (coffee, tea, soda, water)	
Mail fo	rm and check to Tom Timmins, 2120	Lundy La	ane, Friendsw	ood, TX 77546	

The Antique Expression

Ann S Eady Award Winning Editors

We Have A Website WWW.GCRAACA.ORG

Our Holiday Lunch, Much Celebration



Ericksen Clan together at the party.



Three beauties. Eileen Bartlett, Mary Lou Boggus, Bonnie Peterson





3 Club Founders were presented club jackets



Norma Moore checking in with Donna Romeo while Ferrell Moore is checking her!



Our Toys for Tots table. Thanks to our generous members for the tables laden with toys for the Marine Corps to distribute.

Pictures provided by Tom Timmins and Mike Peterson

More pictures of James's '35 Auburn Super-Charged Convertible Sedan



