



The Antique Expression

Gulf Coast Region, Houston, Texas

MAY 2005 COVER CAR: Covering It Again.....



There are “cover cars” and cars that should be “covered with a tarp or something.” It is amazing how a car can deteriorate with improper storage and disuse. A friend told me what I really have is a cocktail party car. Don’t know what that is? Well, I had to ask too. It is essentially a car that will be restored some day, but today it is primarily the topic of conversations and dreams.

I am not complaining that the car was not appropriately stored, because if it had been well maintained, I could not have bought it. Up to this point I have avoided the big dream conversations, but I have talked with several folks who have restored a twin-six or are currently working on one. There are at least 3 currently under restoration.

There is more than a bit of luck involved in any restoration. Packard published good parts and instruction manuals for the twin-six. The second bit of luck is that two current twin-six owners are extremely helpful and pointed me in the right direction on several issues. They already saved me from a major goof. The oil pump is bolted to the pan so the pan can’t be dropped without first unbolting the oil pump from the pan. I wondered why an oil pan would have an inspection plate on the side. You can, of course, try to drop the pan with the oil pan attached, but something would break. One guy even mailed me the special tool it takes to remove the oil pump. Old car folks are special people. The biggest discussion up to this point is how to repair the cracks in the water jacket on the block. It would be easier if there were only one way to repair a cracked block; that way I would not have to make a decision.

Continued on pg. 2

NOTE:

Our 1920 Twin Six Packard was the cover in May of that year when I took over the AE publishing from June Crane. Tom was hesitant about working on “big” cars and thus did not restore this one right away. After he did, it became our favorite car to take on tours. Of course this is a picture “after.”

Evelyn Timmins

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(Cover car- Continued from pg. 1)

I guess this is the cocktail party issue; it is fun contemplating how you might fix something without really getting your hands dirty or suffering the consequences of a bad decision.

So much for the dream; let's talk about the history of the car. The car has never really left Houston since it was purchased by Edgar Didion in 1920. I learned from his nephew that he bought a Packard roadster in 1919 and his wife liked the car so much that he bought this car for her in 1920. Chester and Doris Casey, the second owners, drove it to a Packard meet in Indianapolis in 1958, 55 or 60 mph all the way, according to Doris. I can tell from the slop in the pistons that somebody drove the "heck" out of it. I don't know about the roads in Texas in the late 50's, but 60 mph would have been pretty fast in a big car with mechanical brakes on the roads I traveled near "Naptown."

Deep down I keep hoping that I did not bite off more than I can chew. My experience has mostly been with simple, small cars that could be handled with very little effort. Up to this point nothing looks like a one-person job. This may require more planning than I am known to do. If anyone ever feels the need to volunteer for garage duty, please let me know.

Putting Your Best Foot Forward

When bowing to nobility, a gentleman would literally put his best foot forward, extending his leg to take the bow.



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*Pending member approval.



★HAPPY★ BIRTHDAY!



NEW MEMBERS

February

Christopher Sokol 2/3
 Robert Smits 2/6
 Robert McLellan 2/7
 Barney Calvert 2/8
 Theresa Bartlett 2/10
 Mary Lou Boggus 2/16
 Caroline Calistrat 2/16
 Albert Ramos 2/16
 Cheryl McGee 2/17
 Sergio Fernandez 2/17
 Irene Kizer 2/22
 Dena Doerfler 2/23
 Rollin Hargrove 2/26
 Stan Ericksen 2/27

March

Karen Sokol 3/6
 Ashley Griffin 3/9
 Patti Dresser 3/10
 Carol Kidd 3/13
 Sabrina Pledger 3/15
 Herb Wahlberg 3/15
 Lonnie Dressser 3/16
 Terry Williams 3/17
 Robert Bullard 3/20
 Ollin Willis 3/21
 Ben Beerbower 3/23
 Leon Ahlers 3/27
 Jerry Bellot 3/29
 Verniece Brady 3/30

I had these listed in the MiniAE last month, but this will include their contact information for you.

Robert & Sabrina Pledger

3508 Del Sur St.
 Baytown, TX 77521
 832-444-2590
 regdelp62@yahoo.com
 1969 Chev.Truck CST
 1970 Corvette
 1982 Chev. Blazer

Roy & Mary Boyd

39 Lassman
 Goliad, TX 77963
 361-550-1713
 twolabbranch@yahoo.com
 64 Fairlane
 64Falcon

Tom Pruett

P.O. Box 293
 Lake Jackson, TX 77566
 979-236-4329
 twpruett@comcast.net
 1931 Hupmobile Coupe

Leslie Broyles

3314 Greenwood Glen Dr.
 Kingwood, TX 77345
 281-433-4615
 Les.broyles@ekbr.com
 1931 Model A
 1963 Lincoln Town Car
 1965 Ford LTD

Happy Anniversary!

February

Bill & Barbara J. Wahlberg 2/10 (69!!!!)
 Jim & Cheryl McGee 2/14 (32!!!!)
 Jerry & Earlene Bellot 2/17 (52!!!!)

March

Robert & Sabrina Pledger 3/9 (36!!!!)
 Duane & Jenny Medley 3/10



May you have
 the happiest of holidays



Where did this come from?

At the drop of a hat.....

Instead of a gunshot to indicate that a race had started, in the 1800's it was customary to drop a hat to signal the start.



A.A.C.A. Gulf Coast Region

PATE 2020



TEXAS
MOTOR SPEEDWAY.
Fort Worth
Texas



PATE
SWAP
MEET

****Free Admission****
Like us on Facebook!



For More Info
Call Don Moore
713-649-0922

April 30 – May 2, 2020
Largest Swap Meet in Texas!

- ATMS AT EVERY GATE
- FREE PARTS HAULING
- CAR SHOW SATURDAY
- DESIGNATED PRE-WAR AREA



www.pateswapmeet.com

We need volunteers for the upcoming Pate Swap Meet, April 30- May 2. Our past assignment has been gate duty from 7 to 10 AM and 4-7 PM, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Some years we had 3 gates and last year 4 gates. Vendor sales determine how many workers will be required.

There will be a sign-up sheet at the February Valentine Lunch with the times posted for gate duty, and at the March and April regular meetings. Lunch will be served at the club spaces during the swap meet.

Contact me, Wayne Bartlett, or Robert Wheelless for more information or if you have questions.



A HANGAR FULL OF CARS

By Robert McLellan

With the USA joining into World War I, the Army Air Corp established Ellington Air Base, on the outskirts of Houston, for training pilots. Used by the National Guard between the wars, it served as a flight navigational training base during WW II. With the end of the war, it became less active and like many airbases in the country, thanks to sport car enthusiast General Le May, the Sports Car Club of America used Ellington's runways for sports car racing during the 1950s and 1960s. In 1972, the base became no longer available to the SCCA and Ellington Field was officially inactivated by the Air Force in 1976. Unknown to most everyone, since 1972, the hangars were leased out for storage for private aircraft and other personal items. One of the hangars was used for storage of SCCA race cars along with their owners personal collection of antique cars. In 1977, all owners were notified to remove their passions. A friend who owned one of those cars contacted me and pointed out that there was an Aston Martin racer there just like mine and the owner had nowhere to store it. Did I want it? On my arrival, I saw about two dozen cars, some really, really desirable ones. A mouth watering sight and I wish I had taken along a camera. On a limited budget, I passed on a Jaguar XK 120 and a Lotus that I certainly would have loved to have owned. No Ferraris or Duesenbergs present. I bought the 1952 Aston Martin DB 2, in racing trim for \$1400. Chassis number LML 50/72. It even had an interesting but not spectacular racing history.

What happened to my two Aston Martins? The 1954 DB 2/4 that I purchase in England in 1975 and enjoyed driving and maintaining until 1989 was sold. The DB 2 was to be restored but that did not happen and it was sold along with the other Aston Martin. Purchasing my dream car, the Bentley, and building the new garage/shop got in my way and selling the Aston Martins was a good decision. A friend and fellow car enthusiast from Germany had an interest in Aston Martins and was looking for one and I found one that he just had to have. I acquired that car and he showed up at my home to arrange the shipping of the car. Beside his Aston Martin DB 5 were my two cars and he became curious enough to examine them. He said, "What do you want for those two?". I quickly responded that they were not for sale. Naturally, he responded with, "If they were for sale, what would you take for them?" Ok, I thought that I would just give him an inflated figure and that would be the end of the conversation. I paused for a second, recognizing that with only about \$5000 in them together, why not say \$50,000? But out of my mouth came

\$100,000. Surely a safe figure. "I will take them.", he said. Had I made a mistake? Short term, no. I was not sure how to react but rejoicing seemed most appropriate. Now 31 years have passed and the cars together, in the condition that I sold them, are probably worth over \$300,000. But when, I sold them they were worth about \$30,000. I have not heard of either of my cars since. With the money from the sale, I wanted to fulfill a long time desire for an Auburn. I found the perfect Auburn here in Texas but at last minute another interested buyer bought it when the very ill seller died and his wife quickly sold it before I arrived. I then purchased a 1937 Supercharged Cord. But that is a story for the future.



1980 was a good year so I conned the wife into buying an "old car." Word was spread on the grapevine (no email or internet then) that a sucker was in Houston looking to part with some money. Got a "hit" on a 1927 Lincoln rumble seat hardtop coupe located in Muskogee, Oklahoma, for \$4500, supposedly in excellent condition.

Phoned the seller, Joe E., and yes, he had it and it was a first class car, with buffalo wire wheels and double rear spares, and low mileage, and no rust, and on, and on, and on.

We drove to Oklahoma 2 weeks after talking to the "guy" and the car was as described, actually better. It had come from Kansas, and was a short wheelbase custom body and looked fantastic. Only problem was he had sold all the instruments. He was in the process of removing them. Also said he had sold the 6 wire wheels and hubs, and possibly some sheet metal, hood and fenders. This moron was parting out a very unrestored car. I asked the new price with all this missing stuff and he said it was still \$4500!

I asked him where did he think you could find all the missing parts and his reply was a "couple of yard sales and you could recomplete this car with no trouble." Personally, I have never been to a yard sale with 6 pristine 21" buffalo wire wheels and hubs, fenders, etc., for an old car. Talk about a guy ahead of his time, this dude took the cake. By the way he had 2 huge warehouses stuffed full of old cars, mostly pre-15 era. The banker snapped her purse shut and we came home Lincolnless

*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.

REFRESHMENTS

March
Theresa Bartlett
Lisa Griffin



April
Tahl Rozycki



**And we need one more
volunteer!**

Don't forget to come to
Keels & Wheels
on May 2-3



Words from a Past President

From Jim Johnston “**Still Moving on Down the Road**”

Some of you may know, and some may not; but for those of you who haven't heard, I threw my name into the ring to serve as President for 2020.. But for now, there has been no final word yet if my offer has been accepted by the Board or the Club. So, in the meantime, Evelyn asked if I would write an article for the A.E

But to “Move on Down the Road” if I become our President, my focus will be three-fold: Membership Growth, Tour Activities, and Having Fun. So, what can be done towards these three objectives. Whether I am or aren't the President. This is what I plan to do.

Membership growth

Some of you may already be aware, The Gulf Coast Region AACA provided the identified geographic location boundaries on file with the National AACA organization. Those boundaries are the Texas counties in and around Houston, Texas. Those counties include 8 Texas counties that border Harris County, plus an additional 5 bordering counties that are also within 50 miles of Houston. So, I contacted National and asked if they could provide a list of all AACA members not currently members of a Region or Chapter Club within our GCR identified boundary area. I provided the area codes to be included, and they provided a list of 64 addresses of AACA members who are not currently in Region or Chapter AACA Clubs. Of those 64 AACA member addresses 24 of them are joint husband and wife/partner memberships. So, my plan is to send all these addresses an invitation letter to join our Region Club. That would mean we'd have a membership growth potential of 88 members, if they all join our Region Club. I know it's doubtful that all those AACA only members would end up joining our Region, but it doesn't hurt to be optimistic.

Sandra and I have signed up our young great nieces and nephews as student or junior members in our club. By doing that, they will all get the same magazine from the National AACA we all get by-monthly, The Antique Automobile. So how many of you could do the same thing with your grand kids or like us nieces and nephews. It's a great way to introduce those younger generations to the old car hobby.

I'm also hoping to promote our Club in participating again with cars in the Autorama project that Ashley and Lisa Griffin chaired this past November. We had 5 of our members' vehicles on display and handed out our Club literature and membership applications. We have already gained 4 new members and maybe two more by participating. I'd also like to see if we might be able to do the same thing at Keels & Wheels this year. Cost would probably prevent that, but it would not hurt to ask.

Tour Activities

As I hope you all know, we are currently working on the 2020 Texas Tour to be held in Brenham, TX. But that doesn't mean we can't be working on other tours besides that event. I'd like to try to set up a Saturday tour to Galveston to visit the Bryan Museum, and maybe have lunch at Gaido's or Millers Restaurants. That could be a good fit for the Gulf Coast Tour that Rob and Bea McLellan began in 2019.

Having Fun

I can always find a way to have fun. But having speakers/programs at our monthly meetings would be a step in the right direction. How about a poker run on a Saturday mixed in with a tour and lunch, of course that needs to be a weather permitting event!!!!

So, in closing, to coin a phrase from JFK, with a twist. *Ask not what your Region Club can do for each of you, but ask what each of you can do for your Region Club.*

MEMBERS GOING PLACES

LUCKY'S ROD RUN

Sometimes the most fun car shows are the loosely organized get togethers without judging or trophies. A prime example of this is Lucky's Rod Run held each year the second Sunday of January in Bryan, Texas.

In 1998 William Lucky of Conroe invited a group of his Hot Rod friends to join him in a Sunday drive for lunch at Chicken Oil Company in Bryan, Texas. Chicken Oil Company is a rustic Burger and Bar destination popular for locals and A&M students since 1977. After their initial trip they decided to make it a yearly event which grew by word of mouth until today it attracts 250 to 400 cars depending on the weather.

It is totally unorganized with no registration, entry fee, rules, judging or trophies. It begins when you arrive and ends when you leave. Participants come and go all day. This year's event attracted over 400 Street Rods and Antiques and the weather was fantastic. Even if you are a purist, it isn't difficult to appreciate the engineering skill demonstrated by some of these cars. So next January if you want to start the car activity early and the sun is shining, join us at Chicken Oil.

Bob and Pam Smits



Down the Road

Underlined items are club (GCR AACA) sponsored activities.

2020

- Jan. 13 **GCR AACA** meeting. 7:30 in the Tracy Gee Center.
- Feb. 15 Valentine Lunch at Brookwood Café. RSVP needed.
- Feb 24 Deadline for contributions for April Mini AE.
- Mar. 9 **GCR AACA** meeting. 7:30 in the Tracy Gee Center.
- April 3-5 43rd Texas Packard Meet, Salado, TX
- April 13 Final club meeting before the Texas Tour! 7:30 in the Tracy Gee Center, unless otherwise noted.
- April 30-May 2 PATE SWAP MEET:** Sign up to work with Wayne Bartlett.
- May 2-3 Keels & Wheels Concours d'Elegance, Seabrook.
- May 7-9 Chickasha Annual Swapmeet, Chickasha, OK.
- May 14-17 67th Texas Tour, Brenham. Our club is host.**

Public Car Outings.....

Friday Lunch - Car (& food) enthusiasts gather for lunch on Fridays at various restaurants. Contact Bill Cockrell 281-293-0842 for information.

Friday evenings Pearland Antique & Classic Auto Show (PACA) Cruise Night at parking lot behind Freddy's Hamburgers, FM 518 & Pearland Parkway. 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.

**Gulf Coast Regional Meetings at Tracy Gee Center
3599 West Center Dr., Houston, TX 77042**

Meetings begin at 7:30 p.m. 2nd Monday of each month, Except for February, July and December, when special activities are scheduled.

The Antique Expression

Is the official bi-monthly Publication of **Gulf Coast Region, A.A.C.A., Inc.,** Houston Area, Texas, And is distributed to all members in good standing.

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Close, but no cigar!

During carnivals in the 1800s, cigars were rewarded as prizes for winning carnival games.



More fun from Lucky's Rod Run

