



The Anriquette Expression

Gulf Coast Region, Houston, Texas

Just Truckin' Along



By John Doerfler

Happy Holidays! This time of year, I am especially thankful for all that we have and for the good friends we have made through the GCR AACA.

I have just completed a restoration on a 1954 Chevrolet truck. What made the restoration enjoyable is that you can buy almost any part you need; plus the cost for parts is very reasonable.

The paint colors I selected are unusual, but I have received numerous compliments on them. What do you think? I was able to complete this restoration in two years. Now on to the next one.....



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Do not forget to come to our meeting at Tracy Gee on Jan. 10, 2022



Merry Christmas

from Rob, Bea and RobBea the Bentley
Christmas Story by RobBea Bentley

In my youth, I met a horse along the side of the road who had a very negative view of automobiles. I had assumed that spending time in retirement would be most enjoyable. "On the contrary," he stated, "You are out enjoying sights in the country while I just hang around here eating oats." He was right. My life has been one of travel and adventure. You have heard the point of view of car owners but let me tell you what it is like from a car's prospective. After all, who knows my life better than me? I am no Hemmingway but at 97 years old, I will document my life the best that I can. Listen up.

My life began in Cricklewood, England, in November of 1924 and I was assembled by my family of auto mechanics at The Works. There I was, a stark naked chassis being pushed out of the door and across the lane. My Dad, W.O. Bentley, had sent me next door to the Vanden Plaz Coachbuilders to deck me out in a fine suit of clothes. From wheel to wheel, I was dressed in a sporty outfit and I sure felt really proud of myself. As a 3 Litre Speed Model tourer, I wore a clear lacquered "scratched aluminum" body with black wings and black upholstery. The polished aluminum instrument board added to my masculine appearance. A Bentley in a tuxedo ready to do the town. Dad pressed my starter button. Fuel flowed to my twin carburetors, my magnetos sent the spark of life to me and I roared with the familiar inherited "Bentley burble". Dad said, "Chassis 869, you are off to start a career of seeing the country, traveling roads to places few cars ever see and experiencing a life that you cannot imagine. Make me proud of you and show everyone what you are made of. You are not an ordinary car. You are special and I am sending you to live in a castle and you will be surrounded by royalty." Neither he nor I had any idea of what was in store for me and I certainly exceeded my own expectations and I know he would be delighted if he was still alive.

After a brief stay with Mr. Johnson at a Bentley dealership, Major Dick Bruce drove me to Colliston Castle where I met his wife, Mary, just in time for **Christmas**. I had a fine time and had my own room next to the castle. For company, I had two Alsations dog buddies, Prince and Viscount, who enjoyed rides in my backseat on the country roads. Poor in health, Viscount left the family but Tinker, a young "mutt", joined the family. I loved to give them a thrill in the twisty corners and fast straights. Also, in the family was Julius C. Neville who worked for Dad at the Bentley factory. Julius made sure that I was always running "spot-on" as he would say. Although, Dick enjoyed driving me, by 1928, Mary spent more time with me than Dick, who died in 1929. Mary and I had my first mishap in 1928 with another automobile damaging my driver's side wing (fender to you "yanks") and bent my front axle.

(Continued on p. 6)

2022 Club Officers

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Sunshine Representative

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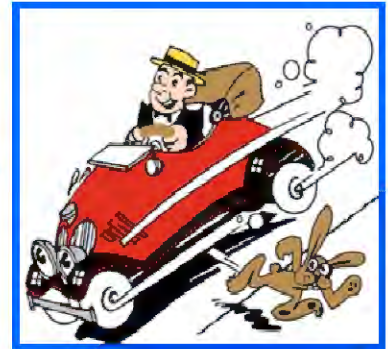
PATE Officer

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HAPPY NEW YEAR Y'ALL

★HAPPY★ BIRTHDAY!

Let's Hit the Road!!



Don't forget our next trip—Feb. 12

Should be to the Valentine's Lunch at Brookwood Community!

DECEMBER

Jim McGee	12/1
John D. Alkire	12/4
Clay Kolby	12/5
Tahl Rozycki	12/6
Gene Wall	12/6
Mary Ann Dalton	12/8
Pat Fant	12/10
Tom D'Ambrosio	12/13
Jose Gonzalez-Jauregui	12/15
Julie Palmer Wagner	12/17
Michael Cawley	12/22
Javis Boudreaux	12/24
Larry Huber	12/29
Billy Ray Duncan	12/31

JANUARY 2022

Malinda Juel	1/2
John Matejka	1/7
Scott Guisemann	1/7
Roy Boyd	1/9
Tina Fernandez	1/10
Nancy Smith	1/12
Bill Cockrell	1/16
Patricia Logan	1/16
Lynda Wall	1/16
Ted Hiesser	1/17
Jo Kat D'Ambrosio	1/20
Hugh Gregan	1/22
Duane Medley	1/23
Dean Forbes	1/23
Lynn Cawley	1/23
Paul Byrd	1/28
Micky Bohne	1/29



Wanted!
A club historian: person willing to look into the rearview mirror.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

DECEMBER

Michael & Lynn Cawley	12/1 (43 years!!!!)
Tommy & Carol Baccaro	12/19 (51 years!!!!)
Federico & Paula Chin Pohls	12/20 (8 years)
Christopher & Karen Sokol	12/27
Paul & Barbara Byrd	12/28 (64 years!!!!)
Rollin & Joyce Hargrove	12/28 (56 years!!!!)

JANUARY, 2022

Guess this is just not a popular month for loving! No weddings!

If I do not have your celebration date, or have it incorrectly given, please let me know.



One for Our Veterans.....

From In the Eye of the Storm by Max Lucado

It happened every Friday evening, almost without fail, when the sun resembled a giant orange and was starting to dip into the blue ocean. Old Ed came strolling along the beach to his favorite pier. Clutched in his bony hand was a bucket of shrimp. Ed walks out to the end of the pier, where it seems he almost has the world to himself. The glow of the sun is a golden bronze now.

Everybody's gone, except for the few joggers on the beach. Standing out on the end of the pier, Ed is alone with his thoughts...and his bucket of shrimp. Before long, however, he is no longer alone. Up in the sky a thousand white dots come screeching and squawking, winging their way toward that lanky frame standing there on the end of the pier.

Before long, dozens of seagulls have enveloped him, their wings fluttering and flapping wildly. Ed stands there tossing shrimp to the hungry birds. As he does, if you listen closely, you can hear him say with a smile, "Thank you. Thank you."

In a few short minutes the bucket is empty, but Ed doesn't leave. He stands there lost in thought, as though transported to another time and place. When he finally turns around and begins to walk back toward the beach, a few of the birds hop along the pier with him until he gets to the stairs, and then they, too, fly away. And old Ed quietly makes his way down to the end of the beach and on home.

If you were sitting there on the pier with your fishing line in the water, Ed might seem like "a funny old duck," as my dad used to say. Or, "a guy that's a sandwich shy of a picnic," as my kids might say. To onlookers, he's just another old codger, lost in his own weird world, feeding the seagulls with a bucket full of shrimp. To the onlooker, rituals can look either very strange or very empty. They can seem altogether unimportant...maybe even a lot of nonsense. Old folks often do strange things, at least in the eyes of Boomers and Busters. Most of

them would probably write Old Ed off, down there in Florida. That's too bad. They'd do well to know him better.

His full name: Eddie Rickenbacker. He was a famous hero back in World War I and II, earning the Medal of Honor during WW I.

During WW II, he carried out special assignments for Henry Stimson, the Secretary of War. In October, 1942, flying in a B-17 over the Pacific, on such a mission to Douglas MacArthur, the plane went down in the Pacific. Miraculously, all of the men survived, crawled out of their plane, and climbed into a life raft. Captain Rickenbacker and his crew floated for days on the rough waters of the Pacific. They fought the sun. They fought sharks. Most of all, they fought hunger. By the eighth day their rations ran out. No food. No water. They were hundreds of miles from land and no one knew where they were.

They needed a miracle. That afternoon they had a simple devotional service and prayed for a miracle. They tried to nap. Eddie leaned back and pulled his military cap over his nose. Time dragged. All he could hear was the slap of the waves against the raft. Suddenly Eddie felt something land on the top of his cap. It was a seagull! Old Ed would later describe how he sat perfectly still, planning his next move. With a flash of his hand and a squawk from the gull, he managed to grab it and wring its neck. He tore the feathers off, and he and his starving crew made a meal – a very slight meal for eight men – of it.

Then they used the intestines for bait. With it they caught fish, which gave them food and more bait....and the cycle continued. With that simple survival technique, they were able to endure the rigors of the sea until they were found and rescued (after 24 days at sea)

Eddie Rickenbacker lived many years beyond that ordeal, but he never forgot the sacrifice of that first lifesaving seagull. And he never stopped saying "Thank you." That's why almost every Friday night he would walk to the end of the pier with a bucket full of shrimp and a heart full of gratitude.

.See note on page. 8.

Moving on Down the Road..... with Pres. Jim Johnston



Well, we've had another Veterans' day BBQ with the LCOC Club in the history books. Fun was had by all. The weather was great, and everyone seemed to have had a good time.

At the Veterans Day BBQ we also got our 2022 Officers and Directors elected with one exception, the Secretary position. However, 3 days after the BBQ a new member, Tanna Watson, stepped up and volunteered for the position. Her nomination by Robert Wheelless has been approved by the Board for us to ratify by the members at our December luncheon at the Monument Inn where we will provide all a list of our 2022 Officers and Directors. See pictures at end of AE.

We also had a display at this year's AutoRama. To get more information on the Autorama see Ashley Griffin's article on page 7 in this newsletter.

So, what are we looking at "Down The Road"? Well, on Saturday, December 4th is our annual Holiday Lunch at the Monument Inn Restaurant just down the road from the San Jacinto Monument, and just across from the Battleship Texas. Looking forward to seeing you all there. !!! **And don't forget to bring one or two unwrapped toys for our annual "Toy's For Tots" toy drive.**

Tuesday November 30th, I picked up Elaine and Robert Bullard and we drove to the Lone Star Mushroom Farm in Tomball. First off, this was a very interesting visit to say the least. The facility was nothing like I was imagining a mushroom farm to be, and I'm pretty sure Robert and Elaine felt the same.



Pretty flowery!

I kind of compared the visit to what I was expecting to see, topography wise, the first time I visited the State of Maine. Can't really put my finger on what I was expecting Maine to be like, but what I saw was more like driving through the piney woods of East Texas! So the short of it is, all three of us were looking for some sort of a greenhouse structure, NOT!! It's kind of hard to explain, except to say you'll have to visit the mushroom farm to understand. See the interesting pictures of the growing mushrooms at the Lone Star Mushroom Farm later in this edition of the AE.

We all found it a very interesting and fascinating visit and well worth the trip. After the tour of the mushroom farm, we took a short drive to "Mel's Country Café," also in Tomball and another place well worth the visit.

So, the plan is to have a driving tour to the Mushroom Farm as a potential replacement for our regular monthly meeting in January. tentatively on the Saturday after the second Monday in January on the 15th. More on that at our holiday luncheon at the Monument Inn.

That's all for now, see you all at the Monument Inn on this Saturday December 4th for our annual Holiday Luncheon

Jim Johnston

Club October Outing to LaGrange

By Stephen J. Morris

On Saturday, October 23, an intrepid group of club members traveled to the Hill Country to visit John Burkland's "Five Garages" in LaGrange. The weather was perfect and a few folks even brought their cars despite the distance. To call these buildings "garages" seriously understates their magnitude. Each of the five "garages" was large enough to hold twenty or more cars, and they were full of one of the most eclectic collections imaginable. There were Model As and a brand new mid-engine Corvette, and nearly everything in between. The collection is particularly strong in 60s and 70s muscle cars — many modified for even more performance — ranging from survivor to restored condition. Of particular interest to many was one of the garages containing at least one example of every series of Corvette from its inception up to the most recent.

John was a most excellent host. His staff had pulled many of the cars out on the lawn for better viewing. Tours were offered, but we were also encouraged to wander about on our own. The cars were all unlocked and we were encouraged to slide behind the wheel and get a feel for the cars and even start them! He had people there to guide us and talk about the cars and answer questions.

We were expecting a "box lunch" at noon (visions of inadequate ham sandwiches and chips dancing in our heads). Instead we were provided with an excellent barbecue lunch served in the air conditioned main building, which was full of other memorabilia. (To be fair, lunch WAS contained in a box...)

All in all, it was a very pleasant and enjoyable day. Many thanks to John Burkland for his generous hospitality and for sharing his collection with us. If you weren't there, you missed a good one!

(Continued from p. 2—Christmas Story)

Not a serious accident for me but if I had been a horse, my life would have been over. On the positive side, I got a tow back to Cricklewood to see Dad. Bill Rockell, a member of the repair staff fixed me up and sent me back home "fit as a fiddle". I am proud to say that is the only mishap that I have had during my life time.

Unfortunately, I came to know what that horse felt like in retirement because I thought it was happening to me when Mary sold me to Major Grose in Woking. As a second family car, I did not spend much time getting the exercise that I yearned for. I admit that I was well maintained by J.V Morand and housed in a comfortable shed but it was not a castle. Then in 1936, Keston Pelmore, invited a bunch of fellow Vintage Bentley fanatics to a meeting to form the Bentley Drivers Club. My invite to the club came in 1937 when Capt. Darell Berthon adopted me. I was rather standoffish at being called "Vintage" but the word "drivers" and not "owners" put a chilling thrill through my chassis. Once more I was on the road! Darell was quite the enthusiast and previously owned a 3 Litre Bentley Saloon and later became the Club Secretary. My first racing competition came in August of 1938 at the Kent and Sussex Speed Trial where we came in 3rd. Being driven meant a lot to me and I was now driving in rallies and vintage races. But 1939 brought World War II and the Army sent off Darell to serve England. I packed up and spent the next several years resting in a garage. Was this the end? More new owners admired my aging coachwork and recognized that there was a strong engine beneath it. Still, waiting for some excitement in my life, Noel Mitchell came to the rescue in 1955. A Lt. Commander in the Royal Navy, no less. These military men did have a passion for Vintage Bentleys. Although, Noel did maintain me well, gave me a fresh coat of paint, in stylish British Racing Green, he only took me out for a brisk run once a year on the Manchester to Blackpool Veteran & Vintage Run. When Noel sold me in 1979, he looked at my odometer at the buyers request and confirmed the low mileage as original which was less than 3500 miles. To me that was most embarrassing. I visualize myself as a high strung touring machine and not a trophy on a pedestal. Sure, I am well preserved but that was not W.O.'s intent. George Dodds looked me over and after some maintenance, he gave me an exciting run in the pre 1980 LeMans 24 Hour Race Bentley Commemorative Tour and an opportunity to dice it out on the track with dozens of Vintage

(Continued on p. 9)

Autorama Revisited

by Ashley Griffin

Every year, the Houston Autorama brings together car owners and enthusiasts alike during the long Thanksgiving weekend. This year's event was held November 25 – 28, 2021 at the George R. Brown Convention Center, and brought out about 600 vehicles – both stock and customized, new and old.

This year, the Gulf Coast AACA fielded an assortment of cars in a two-fold effort. Primarily we wanted to share, with the public, cars that are not seen regularly as compared to more common vehicles, and secondly, to get our club's name and purpose out into the public.

Five club members exhibited their cars to thousands of show attendants. Stories and memories were swapped between our owners and people as they were awestruck with the club display. Some of the stories included, "My grandfather owned the local Packard and Hudson dealership back in the 40's and 50's while my dad owned the Chevrolet dealership in the 50's and 60's" or "My brother bought a car exactly like that when I was younger, he's in his 80's now and he'll get a kick out of the pictures I've taken" and finally, the "My dad always wanted one of those, but he could never afford anything more than a used Ford."

This year's display included Stephen Morris' 1949 Packard. Those who don't know, this is a mostly original paint, completely original interior car that is driven on a regular basis. He even picked his parents up from the airport the morning he had to have the car downtown for the weekend. Many photos were taken of this car to help in the correct restoration of another '49 lurking in the area.

Pat and Lydia Fant had their 1956 Cadillac, "Sheila", posing for the on-lookers. In a stunning Cobalt Blue exterior and light blue interior, the large luxury car reminded people of the steel and chrome that came out of Detroit.

Keeping with the executive automotive offerings, Dean and Diana Forbes' 1956 Continental, "Connie" to those in the know, harkened to a time when sometimes it was necessary to make a few cars at a financial loss to the manufacturer just to supply an exquisite exercise in design.

A little less premier, to the point of being frugal, one of Hudson's selling points was that their car could be converted into a motel room while traveling the roads with the family. Julie Palmer had "Rock," her affectionately named 1956 Hudson Hornet displayed with her interior converted into sleeping quarters complete with sheets, pillows and a quilt, just in case you get cold during your slumber. I questioned why so many women gravitated to the car, some agreeing with the economic purpose of the design and others agreeing with the design purpose of the car – as made obvious by multiple "devilish" grins and elbow nudges into their partner's ribs.

The oldest car represented by our club this year was Bill and Victoria Seward's 1934 Lincoln KA sedan. This was the first show Bill has taken this car to and it was well received by the public who had not seen a Full Classic on display before. Many people were surprised to see the detailed V12 peering from under the hood, as many weren't aware that so many cylinders were available so long ago.

The love and effort given to these cars was evident and made public Saturday evening during the awards ceremony. Every car in our club display was recognized in front of other vehicle owners as each club car won an award in its class, something other car clubs at the show could not say. Remember, this show is judged by National ISCA show judges, not local people that could be biased towards friend's and fellow club member's cars. In a discussion I had with one of the judges, I was told he

(Continued on p. 9)

Down the Road

Underlined items are club (GCR AACA) sponsored activities.

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- Jan. 10, 2022 First meeting of the new year will be at Tracy Gee Center unless otherwise advised .
 - Jan. 25 Deadline for contributions to the Feb.-March issue of the Antique Expression.
 - Feb. 10-12 AACA Annual Convention, Philadelphia
 - Feb. 24-26 AACA Winter Nationals, Melbourne, FL
 - Feb. 12 Our annual February Valentine's celebration.lunch will be held at the Brookwood Community in the Sealy area. Exact registration details will be sent in early Jan.

Public Car Outings.....

The items below have not been checked as to their current availability . You might call in advance to confirm or check Showplace Classics. If you know of any changes, please advise.

Sunday, 8-12 Prince's Hamburgers, near Sharpstown Golf. Kicking tires with friends.

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.

Last Sat. morning of the month: Coffee and pastries at Gateway Classic Cars, 71 Esplanade Blvd., Houston, 77060

Third Sat. of the month: Tailpipes and Tacos, 8-11 AM. 99 & Kingsland.

Send me any recurring items you wish to advertise here.

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, or 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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NOTE TO EDDIE RICKENBACKER ARTICLE

In 1924, Everitt and Flanders of EMF fame, asked him to join their company as VP to make a car named the Rickenbacker. There are very few of them for the collector, and chances are most of us have never seen one..

(Continued from p. 8— Christmas Story)

Bentleys. A grand tribute to the five times that Vintage Bentleys won at LeMans between 1923 and 1930. Can it get better than this? Yes, and it did.

In a long search for a “proper” Vintage Bentley, Rob McLellan, a Texan, came to England and chose me from many that he tested. Unlike most well used models of my age, I still have my original touring body (#1113) and original engine (#877) plus I had low mileage. The next thing I knew was that I was off to America and to this day, I am still there. The 1980s were good to Rob and me with tours all around Texas with several clubs. The Texas Hill Country around Kerrville and the challenges presented by the “Twisted Sisters” route of mountainous back roads had my engine happily reviving and exhaust howling. Resting comfortably in Rob’s shop, well maintained with other auto companions and visitors from around the world, including former owners, I was in heaven. In 1987, a major decision was made. I must admit, the joints in my wooden frame were creaking, my upholstery dried and cracked and I was looking my age. With a visit from James Pearce, a prominent Vintage Bentley restorer, the decision was to completely disassemble me and put me back as W.O. Bentley originally built me. As it turned out, Rob needed a rebuilt more than I did. In addition to a major stroke there was his heart condition and the death of his wife. Suddenly, I am lingering about with parts on the floor and waiting for help. Years passed but visits from Rob were frequent. My roommates disappear one by one. But there had to be a light at the end of the tunnel. Bea entered the scene in 2014 and with their marriage the light at the end of the tunnel showed brightly. Rob and Bea energetically brought life into everything they touched and thankfully, I was a priority. The first thing I knew was that I was being shipped off to England and under the care of Jim and David Pearce, transformed back to new. Appropriately, in the old English tradition, I received a new name, “RobBea”, and had it printed in script on my bonnet. Rob and Bea visited me in England during my rebuild and to celebrate the event, I met Susan and Merlin Culleton, descendants of the Colliston Castle’s Bruce family who once owned me. After that homecoming celebration in Houston, we went on our first journey with a week’s tour in the Texas Hill Country west of San Antonio where once again, I was on the winding back roads but with performance as if I was brand new. Happily, Sue and Merlin joined us and in addition to all the fun and attention that we received, we picked up a prestigious trophy, four award plaques, first place and 4 ribbons. One award was rather humorous.

(Continued from p.7—Autorama)

“Appreciated the determination our owners had to keep these cars in original condition” and “it was refreshing to see cars brought out to compete in such shows.”

Separately from the exhibition of the cars, club member Diana Forbes found herself reaching for the stars on the bungee jump located in the convention center. On a dare (and a small bet), Diana pushed several small children over to get harnessed up and jumped on the trampoline reaching heights of three to four feet, but Diana is sure to tell you she was at least twenty feet in the air. Dean and Elijah were on hand to witness the spectacle while club members Julie Palmer and Lisa Griffin were sure to get the event recorded.

If you missed the event for any reason, you missed a great time. Talk with one of the club members who participated in the show, and they will tell you how entertaining it was to talk cars and do some people watching.

Perhaps you’ll choose to dust off your car and join us on our next adventure.

(Continued from left column)

Known as the “Gas Attack Award”, a reference to gasoline leaking along the fuel line”. You see, they do not use ethanol in their gasoline in England and when used here in the USA, my gaskets dissolved. The fix was easy with a dozen club members all underneath at one time with wrenches and new gasket material from the local auto parts store. Such enthusiastic club members! Overlooking that award, I was most proud of the “Long Distance Award”, “First Place” and the “Robert Atwell Award for Most Exotic Coachwork”. Ok, I am bragging but there have been a lot of car meets and tours since then and Rob and I have now accomplished our main objective of driving as much and as often as possible. With all the hand waving from the modern cars on the road, our presence is well appreciated. The Klaxton horn sends a return greeting. Life continues to be good and in addition to tours and local meets, I have a companion, Benjamin, the family dog, who enjoys rides in the backseat. When not navigating, Bea drives her antique, a 1960 Thunderbird Hardtop, so when it is raining, I get to stay inside and keep my interior dry. At 8000 original miles, we have doubled what previous owners have accomplished and I look forward to my 100th birthday on Christmas 2024.

"Author" of the Christmas Story, RobBea the Bentley



MUSHROOMS, anyone???



How about some delectables from the Veterans' Day Picnic?



Thanks to all who participated and those who were kind enough to take pictures for us all to enjoy. The Editor

