

The Mudflap

News and Activities from the Tidewater Region— Antique Automobile Club of America

Volume 71, Issue 1

January 2025

Member Spotlight

1951 Packard 200 Deluxe Story

Bruce Sedel

I have owned and driven Packard automobiles for more than fifty years and I can say without a doubt that, even by today's standards, these post-war Packard cars are still good handling, performing and reliable automobiles. I recently acquired a 1951 200 Deluxe Sedan that one might think, "who would want a fifty-one Packard four-door sedan." They were conservatively designed, unpretentious and very austere looking cars. But they were extremely well put-together and functionally, downright sensational. For reasons that cannot be fully understood, the collector market for these cars is thin. The thoroughly over-used marketing dictum, "you either love them or hate them", would probably accurately apply. The most amazing thing about this particular Packard is one glance might suggest that this car was brought back by reaching through a time warp. It is the most thoroughly original old car I have ever owned. In order to fully appreciate the unusual circumstances that lead to its acquisition, I have presented a short history update of Packard Motor Car Company as it entered the era of the 1950's.



TRAACA Calendar

Check traaca.com for the latest info on upcoming events!

January

**11 Installation and Awards Banquet,
Holiday Inn Convention Center, Virginia
Beach**

March

**8 TRAACA Annual Swap Meet,
Nansemond-Suffolk Academy**

Readers who are familiar enough with the history of the automobile industry probably know that the era following the post-war was a time of mind-boggling change and growth in the automobile industry. Manufacturers could no longer rest on their laurels. Newer and more elaborate model changes were being introduced at more frequent intervals than ever before. During that post-war boom time, Packard was in good financial shape and they had on their payroll some quite talented automobile people. One of these people employed in their styling department was an enthusiastic young man by the name of John Reinhart, who just happened to have had a significant role in the design of the fabulous new 1951 models. Packard's first all new car of the postwar era, introduced to the public in August of 1950, featured an innovative, sweeping high front fender, high belt-line design termed "Contour Styling" by Packard advertising. This single, industry-first design feature, helped along by soaring demand from a car-hungry market, enabled Packard to build and sell over 100,000 vehicles for the 1951 model year, making the model sales year the second-best in Packard history. The Briggs Manufacturing Company, located just down the street

from the Packard factory in Detroit, continued to manufacture and supply the solid, well-constructed bodies as it had been doing since 1941. The 200's were offered in standard and deluxe two door sedan, four door sedan and business coupe. All were powered by Packard's legendary, precision-built straight-eight engines in displacements of 288 or 327 cubic inches. When equipped with either manual three-speed or Ultramatic (Packard's all new fully automatic transmission), both offered smooth, quiet and lively performance along with excellent fuel economy. With prices starting at a very reasonable \$2,469, the 200's offered traditional Packard high quality and remarkable value in an extremely crowded and competitive mid-price automobile market.

In August of 2023, I received a call from my friend Ross Miller in Parkton, Maryland, who specializes in Packard car repairs. Ross

had previously done some repair work on a 1951 200 Deluxe sedan that was owned for a very long time by a funeral home family located in Allentown, Pennsylvania and they had indicated to Ross that it was time for them to sell the car. It took only one look at a picture for me to hook up my trailer and head to Parkton, where Ross agreed to accompany me. We set out the following morning from Ross's place, headed to Allentown.



We arrived at our destination, located in a quaint and peaceful area of old Allentown at this architecturally beautiful, vintage brick building identified by its signage as Reichel Funeral Home. The Packard was parked outside the funeral home's service garage where the story began to unfold. We were told the Packard was originally purchased at the Fenstermacher & Rems Co. Packard dealer located at 13th and Turner Streets, just down the street from the funeral home by Lewis W. Clause, who was (you guessed it) in the funeral business.

Some of the outstanding features of the Packard included the original mileage reading on the odometer of 38,000, the arrow-straight, unscarred body with its remarkable, still shiny original black lacquer paint, the perfect dash and gray mohair interior in absolutely mint original condition and the original new car invoice. The car came very modestly equipped with Packard's 288 cubic inch straight-eight, Ultramatic transmission and heater. That's it! The invoice, dated February 9, 1951, totaled \$2,862.29 which included dealer handling, transportation charge, titling tax, transfer fee and notary fee. I was absolutely in a state of utter amazement.



After a very reasonable transaction was concluded, we loaded the Packard on the trailer and headed back to Parkton



where it required only minor servicing. The straight-eight engine is powerful and the car is smooth-running and quiet, just like a Packard should be. It was truly one of the most remarkable old-car buying experiences of my life and one that I will not soon forget!



Ramblings from the President

Happy holidays and best wishes for whatever we do in the new year. Some people have seen the results of my working in the wee hours, long past normal bed time, and have told me that it is usually some of my best. So here goes.

Plans are going well for the Awards Banquet. I hope many of you plan to attend. I am working on some of the undone, and I know volunteers are working on the rest. Since coordinating the selection of this year's award recipients and ordering the awards, I have heard from several sources that we might be overspending. I will work on that to do more of what the club wants for next year.

What do we do to make our club more interesting and inviting to members old and new? We do what we traditionally do well and try to improve. Beyond the January awards, our next event will be the annual swap meet. We have excellent volunteers already working on this and are ahead of schedule. The flyer for Swap Meet 2025 is already done, and available on the website.. Hope to see more buyers and sellers out for the day on Saturday, March 8, 2025.

And before that is the AACA National Convention, the first weekend in February in Charlotte. Many of our members will be there sharing what Tidewater is doing and learning what has been working for membership and success in other regions. I know it is a 7 hour drive each way, but many combine the trip with a visit to friends or relatives. If you have not attended an AACA Convention, it is worth the trip.

Congratulations to Joe Gentile for his National Award that will be presented to him at the Annual Convention in Charlotte NC in February 2025. Joe has a 1970 AMX that he restored himself and will be featured in a later series on TRAACA members.

Maybe those who attend will come home with a fresh idea for what Tidewater can do in coming season. The activities committee needs help choosing and planning events. Maybe a picnic or mini-cruise to a lunch destination can be scheduled for a time when no regular dinner meeting is scheduled.

Talk about your ideas with other members. If one idea tops the list, be sure to pass it along to the activities committee or a board member.

Participation by more active members is key to the success of Tidewater region.

Again, best wishes for your new year, and I hope to hear from you soon.

Come to our 70th birthday party January 11th.

Bill Treadwell



THE MUDFLAP is the newsletter for the Tidewater Region of the Antique Automobile Club of America.

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Reporters: Aubrey Austin, Rick Seaman,
Bob & Dot Parrish
Reporter and Photographer: Bob Stein

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Visit us on the Internet at: traaca.com

Happy New Year and welcome to 2025. Everything you need to know about our upcoming Swap Meet!

By Jerry Adams

Traditionally the Tidewater Region has kicked off the new year with our Annual swap meet in early March. This is a great ice breaker to kick off a new and exciting car season and to get us out of the house and into the car spirit !!

This year is no different as we will venture back out to Nansemond-Suffolk Academy (NSA) to their beautiful complex. I will be helping out again this year with registration.

I always enjoy seeing everyone and checking them in. We see many returning faces as well as a few new ones each year.

Our Swap Meet has a long history. I first started helping out when we were at the Hickory Ruritan Club, at that time I was helping with parking cars and outdoor vendors. Out there we had a small indoor space for vendors, and a decent space outside around the building for outdoor vendors to set up in the grass. This worked great as the number of vendors fit the venue, yeah we could pack them in like sardines! Shoppers were parked in the farmer's corn field next door. We Also had food that Club volunteers took care of in the Ruritan Kitchen, as you know this club does not operate without food present.

Later, we moved out to the Military Aviation Museum (MAM), in Virginia Beach. This was a huge upgrade in space for our swap meet. When we moved there I helped Terry Bond with field layouts, parking vendors, and then, using the registration check list, I was able to validate who was there. This was a great way to get to know them personally. At the MAM we used one of the hangars for indoor vendor setup right among the vintage planes as a back drop. With almost unlimited outdoors space, it was a great venue, with loads of spectator parking. While it was a great venue, it was a bit off the beaten path and lacked the usual drive by traffic.

In 2019 we moved to our current location, NSA in Suffolk, VA. During this transition Terry passed the Chairman baton over to Bill Treadwell, and Neil Sugermeyer passed the registration baton over to me.

Now, in our current location, we have use of their large multipurpose room for our indoor vendors. Tables and chairs are provided too.

The indoor space is also a great place for local car clubs to set up and promote their clubs. It's proven to be a great membership tool. There is plenty of room for outdoor spaces -around 80, approx. 10 x 30. Vendors seem to like the layout too! We also reserve a few spaces front and center for car corral or car clubs to set up a car display. This is a prime spot to promote clubs as ALL shoppers have to walk past this area to get to both indoor and outdoor vendor spaces.

There is plenty of convenient parking for shoppers.

Indoors, the club always has an array of baked goods and snacks, while our regular food truck vendor serves up fresh, hot food including some great chili-dogs!

As they say - "location, location, location." NSA is located on Rt 460 and approximately 1 mile off of Rt 58. Access from all neighboring communities is very convenient and largely uncongested.

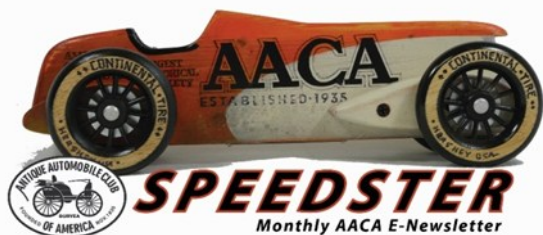
Popularity of our Swap Meet has really increased as it represents the old car world's "Spring is coming" venue. So many car enthusiasts look forward to it each year. The number of vendor spaces sold/occupied has almost doubled and our foot traffic (shoppers) has almost tripled. 2023 was one of best and biggest years with 69 vendors registered and a total of 93 spaces sold !! We hope the 2025 Tidewater Region AACA Swap Meet continues our success here. NSA has been a great host.

The 2025 swap meet is coming up March 8, 2025, details are on the attached flyer. If you attended our swap meet in the last 3 years then you got an invite from me just before Christmas with details and the flyer via email. So come on out check us out, see what your club is up to.

Go clean out your garage, shed, spare room, or storage unit. If you have vehicle related items to sell, sign up for a spot and join us. Don't have a lot of things for sale? Then team up with another member or friend and share a spot.

We encourage you to stop by and support our vendors and enjoy spending time with your club. It's a great time for camaraderie and visiting old friends and talking cars.

If you would like to volunteer to assist, we can always use the help setting up and marking spaces the Friday before, then on the day of you can help Parking vendors, directing traffic, or even help me out getting forms filled out 😊. It is a great time!



Are you getting the AACA Speedster? It's the AACA's monthly e-newsletter that will keep you up-to-date on what's going on in the wonderful world of antique autos and AACA. You can even contribute your own articles and photos!

Need info about upcoming events? What's going on with AACA? Need touring information? Where to go, how to get there and what to do?

SPEEDSTER is the Antique Automobile Club of America's monthly e-newsletter, containing updates from the club and library, member contributions and stories, antique auto trivia, Nationals (Meets) & Tour details, interesting industry articles and much more.

Current AACA members may submit stories and photos for potential publication in. We are always looking for more articles about accounts of tours and shows you have attended, restoration projects, unique vehicle stories and history, and any other items you may want to share.

Send an email to sign up:

szimmerman@aaca.org



From Your Editor's Keyboards

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!! We're excited about 2025 and our old car hobby.

Look at the 2025 calendar of National AACA activities and the chance to attend National meets and tours. Some are not far from us. They all offer the chance to go somewhere interesting and spend time with old car enthusiasts from all over the country. Interested in attending a tour? Don't have a suitable car (or trailer to haul it)? No worries - go anyway and catch a ride. There is always a back seat available, and some drivers would even appreciate help navigating. We've done it a lot and never had to help push anyone! It's a thrill to tour with AACA!

If you want to attend a few of the Nationals scheduled, start planning now. Want to join us on the field judging? Each of the National Meets will have a judging school available. If you're interested, just ask and we'll help you get started.

Thanks to those who have contributed items for our *Mudflap*. It's really been great to have members writing articles about their old cars or their experiences and sharing that with all our members. It's a great chance to get to know each other. So – the story about **your** car is welcome for a future issue. Give us a call and we'll help you get published here. It's easy and fun.

Want to help with the *Mudflap*? There are lots of chances to report on events, help take some photos, or do some typing or research. Got some ideas for stories? Bring them on!

Think Spring! It's coming, we promise!

Terry & Susan

TRAACA MEMBER'S PAGE

Members celebrating birthdays in January

January Birthdays

Jerry Adams
Tom Bottoni
Holly Chipchak
Jane Cutright
Diane Gresalfi
Tyler Gimbert
Richard Hall
Pamela Hamilton-Bond
Phyllis Hund
Dana Meadows
Hilary Pavlidis
Tom Spina
Sue Strang
Boyd Swartz

Members celebrating anniversaries in January

Jerry & Ellen Adams
Gordon & Melinda Spence
Jon & Mollie Hunger
Richard & Sandy Hall
Dan & Chris Ciccone
Robert & Josie Kinker



Dinner Meeting Corner

Chief Contact: Skip Patnode

Members will be contacted via e-mail to obtain their RSVPs for the club's monthly dinner meeting. (Members without e-mail will be contacted by phone.) If you will be attending, please respond to Skip Patnode's e-mail by the re-requested date and let him know how many people will be coming. (There is no need to respond if you are not coming.) Skip will reply to you once he adds you to his attendance list. **It is critical that you respond** so we can let the hotel know how many people will be attending & they can prepare enough food. If you are not receiving Skip's e-mails or want to be taken off the list, please contact him at skippatnode@cox.net or (757) 672-8495.

The RED Car

Chris Ciccone

On Nov 22 we were forwarded an email that was looking for a classic red car. The Email read "I work for an ABC Reality TV Show where we feature classic red cars as a part of a segment. We are looking for classic cars that: are Bright Red (think cherry red), have a backseat (preferably with 4 doors, but 2 doors are okay), and American made before 1973. The shoot will be in the first week of December and we'd be shooting in the Norfolk, VA area".

We responded with our 1950 Ford Custom Convertible and after a lot of back and forth emails we had been narrowed down to 1 of 3 possible cars and the producer would decide in 2 days. We had been told that Dan would be driving and would dress up as Santa and have some fun. During the next 2 days we were ex-

cited and anxious, wondering if we had to find a Santa suit (we knew where we could borrow one from our very own Santa(Charlie)), and would the shoot be Day or Night, when would it air, etc.

Yea... We were chosen!





Details were:

The Great Christmas Light Fight On ABC,
Thursdays 8:00pm in December

Filming Monday December 2nd at 1, Waterside
Dr., Nauticus

Our time was 7:15pm (Do not be early you
could ruin the surprise), filming could go until
4:00 am.

And all kinds of paperwork to fill out (insurance,
employment, responsibilities, etc.).

The weather in November was in the 60's and pleasant but 2 days before the shoot the temperature started dropping and on December 2 it was going to be 32 degrees. Well, we could not figure out how the heater worked in the 50 Ford, we tinkered and pushed/pulled levers and buttons, but nothing let warm air in. So Dan bundled up for the cold. I was lucky because I got to drive the chase car, and I stayed nice and warm. We arrived right on time and were greeted by the assistant costume and makeup artist who explained what was going to happen and proceeded to throw a Santa suit on the front seat of the car and said ok get dressed. So here we are, the temperature dropping and the blustery winds out of the north blowing hard, WOW, so chilly! Dan had to take off his coat and shoes to put the Santas suit on. Well, what an experience with hair flying and blowing everywhere, the beard flying up, the moustache falling down on his chin, and finally a hat big enough to stay on his head and hold the head hair down. The eyeglasses went on easy as did the white gloves. They asked Dan if he was cold and of course he said yes, so they said we'll fix you up with some hand warmers – they were warm but more than his hands were cold.

Now to drive the car. The white gloves were very slippery on the big old hard-to-turn steering wheel, but there he goes with cameras on booms going up and down and swiveling every which way and camera men on foot running backwards filming as the car drives towards them.

Then they have him drive around and pull up again to adjust lighting. Now everything is good. They start filming and have Dan get out of the car and polish a spot on the fender, then get back in and start the car. They have put a walkie talkie on the seat so they can tell Dan what to do. Now the host of the show gets in the back seat with his prize bag and they drive around the circle and pull up to the spot and Santa blows the horn, only the horn sings a Christmas song, then the host gets out of the car with his prize bag. They did these 7 or 8 times till they finally got what the producer wanted. During a lot of this time, one of the assistants and I got in my car to fill out more paperwork, so I missed some of the filming but was so glad to be in my car with heat.

It took about 2-1/2 hours and then Dan had to retire the Santa suit and return it. Didn't take nearly as long to get out of the suit and hair as it did to get into it.

So we were hoping it was going to air next Thursday but NO, it will air next year, December 2025. Sure hope we remember to watch next year. It was interesting and fun. Now our 1950 Red Ford is a famous TV Star along with Dan the Santa man. Can't wait for next year!



YOU SHOULD HAVE BEEN THERE

2024 TRAACA Holiday Brunch
Reported by Bob Stein

On December 8, 2023 - TRAACA held their Annual Holiday Brunch -at the beautiful Princess Anne Country Club in Virginia Beach

More than 90 members turned up at the event. The near perfect weather also helped draw a number of antique cars a display along the circular drive in front.



Cars included Tony Miller's 1924 Model T Ford (driven all the way from Portsmouth), Harry Boon's 1940 Ford coupe, Alfonso and Patrizia Ludovici's 1949 Mercury, Bob Stein's 1949 Nash Ambassador, Dan and Chris Ciccone's 1950 Ford Convertible, Harry and Tammy Park's 1953 Ford Customliner, Jere and Carol Avenson's 1954 Packard Patrician, Casey and Danny Bostjancic's 1956 Chevrolet Bel Air, Bill Wilcox and Robyn Burnham's 1956 Imperial, Jim and Betty Viller's 1961 Mercedes 190 SL convertible, David and Valerie Dillahunt's 1964 Corvair Monza Spyder, Hilary Pavlidis' 1967 Mercury Cougar, Skip Patnode's 1967 Alfa Romeo, Boyd Bostjancic's 1967 Camaro, Riley Best's 1971 Plymouth Satellite hardtop, Nick Smith's 1978 Thunderbird, Mickey and Toni McChesney's 'new' 1982 Buick Riviera convertible, Paul and Cori Fuqua's 'new' 1986 Mercedes 560SL, Fred and Sallyanne Cole's 1989 Buick Reatta, Ken and Barbara Talley's 1992 Buick Roadmaster, Boyd Swartz's 1993 940 Turbo Wagon, and Rick Overbaugh's 1994 Porsche 968.





President Bill Treadwell kicked things off with a few announcements, then Nick Smith provided the blessing, and then it was time to eat!

The country club always puts on a spread, and the bunch included huge cocktail shrimp, prime rib and omelet stations, as well as breakfast fare such as eggs benedict, bacon, cheese grits, and spinach quiche.



Following the meal, Terry Bond gave his annual commentary on the year's activities. It was done in the form of a typical annual letter to friends and family telling about the past year. Memories of some great antique car events done with an occasional twist of humor kept everyone entertained while remembering all the fun we had in 2024.

Later, it was time to write an "annual letter to Santa." That, however, was interrupted with an unexpected visit from none other than St. Nick himself! He had just finished his rounds it seemed, but had one remaining gift to be shared with the club. The "special gift", once it was unwrapped, was a large book, with "TRAACA FUTURE" boldly printed on the cover. The pages are blank, providing the club with an opportunity to write something special into the coming year's history book.



It was a special afternoon for everyone and a big thanks goes to Charlie Edwards for so perfectly taking on the role of Santa!

Aubrey Austin
Junior Editor



Christmas **BRUNCH**



On December 8th, 2024 we attended a Christmas Brunch at the Princess Anne Country Club in Virginia Beach. Santa even made a special stop to see us! There were about 95 club members that attended the event. Terry Bond read his letter to Santa. We also competed in a game of trivia.





2025 AACA Annual Convention Registration Now Open
Charlotte, North Carolina ■ February 6-8

We are excited to announce that registration
is now open for the Convention!

If you have never been to the Convention and you're not really sure what it's all about, please take a few minutes to [watch our brand-new Convention video](#).

Convention is a combination of education, business, entertainment and celebration. There are seminars and judging schools, the General Membership Meeting, a trade show, special excursions, fun evening activities, and the big National Awards Banquet. We encourage all AACA members near and far to seriously consider joining us for this event.

Convention highlights include:

- Thursday pre-convention excursion to the NC Transportation Museum
- Thursday pre-convention excursion to the Hendrick Heritage Center
- Friday luncheon hosted by AACA's First Lady with keynote speaker Lyn St. James
- Friday evening Roaring '20s Speakeasy Casino Night
- Saturday evening National Awards Banquet

[Click here for the Convention brochure](#)
[Click here to register online for the Convention](#)

If you would like registration materials mailed to you,
please [email Sue Eitnier](#) with your name and member number.

REMINDER: Your 2025 AACA membership dues must be paid prior to
registering for any 2025 National shows and tours, including Convention.
[Click here to renew your membership if you haven't done so already.](#)

AACA ANNUAL CONVENTION

Who's going with us?

The AACA Annual Convention is "just around the corner." Literally- it's nearby in Charlotte, NC this year and many of you certainly know the way, judging from the large numbers of TRAACA members who attend the Spring Auto Fair there.

Some of our own members will be there presenting seminars and enjoying the tours, the dinners and the social opportunities. Many will be learning more about judging in the several schools offered there. It's a fantastic weekend ending with AACA's "Oscars." One of our members will be receiving a National Award too - Congratulations to Joe Gentile for his National Award for his a 1970 AMX that he restored himself and will be featured in a later series on TRAACA members.

ADDITIONAL HOTEL INFORMATION

Because of the SOLD OUT status of the Embassy Suites host hotel,
we have contracted room blocks at the 3 hotels within walking distance (0.2 miles)

Residence Inn by Marriot Charlotte-Concord
7601 Scott Padgett Parkway, Concord, NC 28027

Room Rate: \$159 + tax per night; includes complimentary breakfast, Wi-Fi, parking
Reservation Link: <https://tinyurl.com/AACAcourtyardresidenceinn>
Reservation Phone: 704-454-7862 (mention AACA Annual Convention)

Courtyard by Marriot Charlotte-Concord
7201 Scott Padgett Parkway, Concord, NC 28027

Room Rate: \$159 + tax per night; includes complimentary Wi-Fi, parking
Reservation Link: <https://tinyurl.com/AACAcourtyardresidenceinn>
Reservation Phone: 704-453-2600 (mention AACA Annual Convention)

Homewood Suites by Hilton Concord Charlotte
7300 Scott Padgett Parkway, Concord, NC 28027

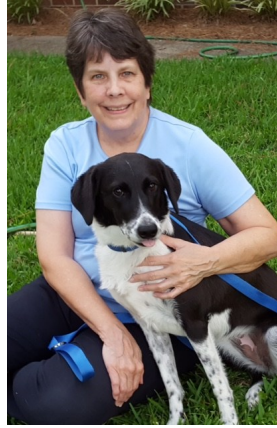
Room Rate: \$159 + tax per night; includes complimentary breakfast, Wi-Fi, parking
Reservation Link: <https://group.homewood-suites.com/4aexxd>
Reservation Phone: 980-313-3100 (mention Antique Car Club National Convention or Group Code 901)

TRAACA has always been represented at these Annual Conventions so don't be left behind! Join us for the fun. It's not too late to register – check AACA.org to sign up.

NOTE – although the Embassy Suites is now sold out for this event, special rates have been arranged at several additional nearby hotels.

Editor's Note -

We're thrilled to have this bit of history from our own member and noted author Sigur Whitaker. If you recall from one of our previous dinner meetings, Sigur's Great-Great Uncle is Jim Allison, a founder of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Her previously published books focus on the history of the Speedway, Indy racing, and the Indianapolis automobile industry.



Sigur Whitaker, Author

Racing with Roger Penske, A History of a Motorsports Legend

The Indianapolis Automobile Industry, A History 1893-1939

The Indy Car Wars, The 30-Year Fight for Control of American Open-Wheel Racing

Tony Hulman, The Man Who Saved the Indianapolis Motor Speedway

James Allison, The Engine Manufacturer and Indianapolis 500 Cofounder

If you are interested in subscribing to her great Blog please contact her at

sigurwhitakerbooks881@gmail.com

The Winningest Driver at IMS

Sigar Whitaker

The winningest driver at IMS isn't one of the four-time Indianapolis 500 winners or Jeff Gordon, who won five Brickyard 400 races. Rather, it is Johnny Aiken who amassed fifteen victories on the fabled track. Known as "Happy Johnny," he started racing in 1905 as a member of the National Motor Vehicle Company team which won twenty-four races at the Indianapolis Fairgrounds.

In the two years preceding the Indianapolis 500, the Speedway hosted weekends of racing. Each day, there were races of various lengths and by engine size culminating in a featured race of 250 or 300 miles. It was during this period that Aiken set the record against some of the premier drivers including Barney Oldfield, Bob Burman, Louis Chevrolet, and Ray Harroun. Aiken was the only driver to win races in each of the four automobile race weekends held during 1909 and 1910. He also holds the record for the

most starts at IMS at 41. The next closest is A. J. Foyt at 16 races.

An Indianapolis native, Aiken worked for National Motor Vehicle Company. The featured race on the final day of racing in 1909 was the 300-mile Wheeler-Schebler Trophy Race. Aiken set a world record for the first 100 miles of the race at one hour, 31 minutes, 41.9 seconds. His lead did not last long. Two laps later, his car's cylinder head cracked, ending his day of driving. The race didn't finish the 300 miles because the AAA officials ended it due to the track's severe deterioration causing several serious crashes.

The owners faced a decision. Would they resurface the track, or would they abandon their investment? They turned to Johnny Aiken to test if it was better to pave with concrete or the more expensive bricks. He made several high-speed runs over the bricks. To further test the bricks, Aiken's National racer was anchored to the track with ropes attached to two posts. Aiken ran the car at full throttle causing the tires to churn on the brick surface. After the track was resurfaced with bricks, the racers returned to IMS for Memorial Day in 1910. Indianapolis manufacturers Marmon and National had strong teams and rivalled the Chevrolet team. At the end of the weekend, the Marmon and National teams had won twelve of the 24 races with Ray Harroun of the Marmon team and Aiken winning four races each.

National had three cars entered in the inaugural Indianapolis 500. Aiken dropped out of the race after 125 laps for a 27th place finish. Marmon, which won the 1911 Indianapolis 500 with Harroun at the wheel, decided to terminate its racing team. They had nothing else to prove, and should they lose, it could negatively impact sales. Aiken announced his retirement from racing, Arthur Newby appointed him the manager of National's racing team.

The 1912 race was dominated by Ralph DePalma driving a Peugeot. At the halfway mark, he was leading by two laps which increased to five laps with 100 miles remaining. On lap 195, his car began to slow after a broken connecting rod damaged the crankcase. With only three cylinders running, his pace, which seemed insurmountable, slowly deteriorated. As he and his riding mechanic pushed the racer down the front stretch, he was passed by Joe Dawson handing the 1912 Indianapolis victory to National Motor Vehicle.

For the next two years, the Speedway depended upon entrants from Europe to fill out the field as Chevrolet, Marmon and National all dropped out of racing. Lured by the race's purse, Britain, France, Germany, and Italy sent teams for the 1913 race. The French team included Jules Goux in a Peugeot, considered the fastest car on the continent. Used to road racing, the European drivers had trouble negotiating the Speedway's turns during practice. Although offers of help were made, the Europeans were suspicious that the Americans might benefit by learning things about their cars. After several frustrating days of practice and tire failure, Jules Goux asked Carl Fisher to recommend a technical advisor. Fisher immediately recommended Aiken. After watching Goux practice, Aiken told Goux he was entering the corners too high and too fast. He also recommended using Firestone tires and different shocks. These recommendations made all the difference. Goux took the lead permanently on lap 136 and crossed the finish line first. He was the first driver not to utilize a relief driver and finished the race in six hours, 35 minutes, and 5 seconds.

Aiken repeated as the manager for the Peugeot team when it returned to the Speedway in 1914. When the Peugeot team was returning to France, they extended an invitation for Aiken to come visit their factory. After landing in France, he couldn't help but notice that there were cards in the windows telling the citizens that war was almost a certainty. One day, when he went to breakfast, the streets were filled with soldiers. Arriving at the Peugeot factory, he found the doors closed. The French had deserted the factory. It was more important to protect their homeland than build race cars.

With war looming on the horizon which would keep the European racers away, Aiken suggested that IMS should develop its own racing team. Fisher and Allison negotiated to purchase two Peugeots from France and had Indianapolis manufacturer Premier build three racers. With these cars, they started the Speedway Team with Aiken as the manager, chief mechanic, and driver. When Maxwell Motor Company decided to terminate its racing team, Eddie Rickenbacker approached Fisher and Allison to form a second team. They did with two Maxwells with Rickenbacker as the manager and driver. This decision was very beneficial to the Speedway. The two teams provided one-third of the twenty-

one cars which qualified for the 1916 race. The race was shortened to 300 miles with Fisher believing that possibly 500 miles was too long of a race. Johnny Aiken took the pole with an average speed of 96.690 mph, Eddie Rickenbacker started from second, and Gil Anderson in a Speedway Team Peugeot qualified third. Despite the strong starting positions, they were not a factor in the race which was easily won by Dario Resta in a Peugeot.

In 1916, AAA established the championship series that included more than a dozen races. The racing started at the Sheepshead Bay Speedway and ended at Ascot Park in Los Angeles. Aiken dominated racing in that season and won more than \$50,000. IMS management decided to hold a fall day of racing to support the championship series and give them a financial cushion should World War I involve the United States. The Harvest Auto Racing Classic went back to the original format of racing at the Speedway with a 20-mile race, a 50-mile race and a 100-mile race. The week before the Harvest Classic, there was a race at Cincinnati and many of the racers expected at the Speedway withdrew because of mechanical issues. The field had sixteen racers, of which the Speedway Team provided four cars. Johnny Aiken easily won the 20-mile and 50-mile races. Eddie Rickenbacker of the Prest-O-Lite Team did not participate in the first two races, but the 100-mile pitted the Speedway Team cars against Rickenbacker.

The 100-mile race was very close for the first 75 miles. At the 90-mile mark, Aiken's car broke a steering arm. While he could continue to drive, it appeared that Rickenbacker would win the race. At the 95-mile mark, Rickenbacker's left wheel spokes began to break. He continued on but on the last lap, his tire burst and he crashed, handing the victory to Aiken. After the race, Aiken again announced his retirement from racing.

Despite participating in a very dangerous sport, Aiken never had a serious accident. In 1917, he wrote to Stuart W. Sanders of the Herald Bulletin, "During my racing career, however, many of my closest friends, some teammates and some competitors, have met with sad fates. This luck is not due to extraordinary skill on my part-it is just luck."

Johnny Aiken died of pneumonia at his home on October 15, 1918, during the great influenza pan-

demic. Arthur Newby, president of National Motor Works, commented to the Indianapolis News, "Johnny was one of the most fearless, resourceful and daring drivers I ever saw pilot a race machine around any track in the country." "He was a wonderful man in the research department and a man who could be depended upon to do the right thing at the right time in any emergency."

TOURING - a Tidewater Region tradition

Over the years, some of the most fun we've had together has been on tour with each other. Among our most active touring enthusiasts have been Ken Talley and Bill Wilcox. Over the years they have "set-the-pace" as we wander the back roads of Virginia (and other states). It's been great fun, and they both still have the enthusiasm to wander. It was fun to tour with them last year in the AACA's tour in Fredericksburg, Va. I know I can speak for many who have followed you down the highway before, we're ready to go again! Terry

TOURING MEMORIES

Ken Talley

Since joining AACA and the Tidewater Region I have enjoyed many memorable events, but touring has etched many memorable experiences in my brain! Bill Wilcox and I have organized several local tours, which takes time and can be an experience in it's self. We have gained the dubious reputation of "Getting lost again with Bill and Ken". However, that does not mean we don't have great fun!

One of the most memorable tours (not a AACA sponsored tour) was the 2003 Lincoln highway tour starting in New York city at Time Square and ending up in San Francisco 16 days later. I, along with Bob Stein, went with Bill Wilcox in his 1932 Packard. On the first day, while going up the Eastern shore of Maryland, we stopped for a stop light and a motorcycle pulled up beside us and signaled to Bill and commented "you need to take that slow moving sign off that car, you were running 70 MPH back down the road"

Another memorable event append in Ely Nevada. We were asked to join in their parade that was forming up sooo in the parade we go along

with John and Vickie Peters in their 1959 Cadillac. Bob Stein decided to get out of the car and take a few photos of the cars along the parade route, He would pop out of the line of spectators and take a couple photos then we could see him running along behind the spectators jumping over objects along his path then pop out for more photos!. At the end of town we saw a sign in the Hotel Nevada for real cheap breakfasts so we stopped for another breakfast and also changed the left front tire that had lost part of the lock ring!

On day 10 we left Sydney Nebraska when a awful noise developed in the right rear wheel. We stopped and had the trouble truck take us into Cheyenne in hopes of finding someone that could help us! I got a phone book and called a shop that looked like they might be what we needed, the owner said he was too busy but for us to come to his shop. When we got there he took us to his home close by and let us use his garage, jack and tools to remove the axle, we then went to the bearing dealer and got a new bearing and back on the road!

On the 2013 Lincoln highway tour, Lesley and Tony Scarpelli decided to get married in Sacramento, California. What a time! I remember Tony rummaging around in the trunk of his Chrysler as bystanders were admiring his car and Leslie was primping in the reflection in a store front window!

Not all plans go well, I planed a tour to Louisville Kentucky for the AACA meet and 75 anniversary celebration. The first nights lodging in Warm Springs was less than expected. I had visited the Warm Springs Inn which in the early 1800's had been the courthouse, clerks office and jail. We checked out a couple of the rooms and it looked like a neat quaint place to stay so I reserved our rooms. The next morning I heard complaints about no hot water, bed headboards falling, showers barely trickling water, etc.

So, if you have never been on a tour, give it a try. On our local tours you can drive a modern car if you like. Also, if you have an idea for a tour in our area let's talk about it.



STILL COLLECTING - PLATES

By Terry Bond

Looking at the holidays and all that great food for the many dinners you've enjoy, one thing the have in common - they were all served on plates.

Imagine a fancy dinner served at the home of an early motorcar enthusiast. If they were well-off enough to afford an automobile, any opportunity to show off that enthusiasm would be found in everyday household objects. Decorative plates were something that could be enjoyed displayed on a rack, on the wall, or even while serving a meal. In pubs and inns of the day they would be an obvious welcome sign for traveling motorists.

While in use, such items would have been scratched by knives and forks, or chipped and broke during handling. For those reasons, many of them were simply considered works of art and displayed. For early motorists, they were often viewed as prized possessions. Some of them were even produced with small holes in the base so they could be hung by string or wire.

In the earliest days of the automobile, motoring themed plates were produced by some of Europe's finest porcelain manufacturers. Most were hand decorated by what was known as the "transfer print" process. A simple black outline decal was applied to the porcelain blank. That decal was then hand painted by artists or by groups of art students and then glazed and fired. The result was a work of art that gave the appearance of being hand painted.

Some of these items were done in series. Some were done to commemorate special events, or to tell a story when the whole set was exhibited together. Those were known as "Talking Plates." Display plates are often referred to as "Rack Plates."

I've written previously about Doulton motoring series plates - 8 different scenes appeared on a whole range of pottery but only six of the scenes are known to have been used on plates. Plates came in two different sizes - 10 5/8 inch-

es or 9 3/4 inches diameter. There are two different large 13 inch platters (also known as chargers) that were used but only two different scenes are known to have been used on those.

Here are a few examples of Doulton plates from my collection:

An example of a Royal Doulton Motorist series plate The value of these has declined somewhat in recent years.



Royal Doulton Motorist series plate.

Commemorating the 1904 Gordon Bennett Cup race in Europe, these plates are part of a set of an unknown number. They were hand painted by an Austrian artist (Obert) and were produced by the porcelain factory of K & N.

A colorful hand-painted plate by Ober, produced by K&N depicting a scene from the 1904 Gordon Bennett Cup race. Due to their rarity, values range in the \$200+ area.





Another K&N plate from the same series. These plates are known in two different sizes.

R.S.. Prussia hand painted, gold edged plate with a motoring scene. This plate is also known to come in two different sizes. It was produced around 1905-6.



Very few "catalogs" from the companies producing them are known to exist. That makes it very difficult to determine how long specific patterns were offered, or how many similar plates were ever produced.

A beautifully detailed automobile plate, French, circa 1903.



A fairly common plate from a series known as "Les Sport." This is the only plate in a group of six depicting various sports popular during the early 1900s. I never thought of automobiling as a sport, but perhaps chasing geese in a car was? These plates can be found for less than \$75.



My prize from Hershey this year was this fantastic circa 1905-6 plate. It was produced in Belgium

The colorful plate shown next was produced in France in 1903. The translation is (literally) "on the job, no need for relays". It probably meant the driver was doing just fine with no need for assistance.

1903 French plate. This nicely colored plate is quite rare. The excellent art-work makes it a premium item for any automobilia collection. Its value would be in the \$200+ area.



Some of the most colorful plates ever produced were in the Art Deco period. (1920s – 1930s). These plates were produced specifically to advertise the Mathis automobile made in France.. Dozens of varieties exists in bold patterns and colors, with automobiles pictured on them in various scenes. While available in Europe, they are seldom found in the USA.

A great example of a Mathis advertising plate. This one depicts a 1920s Mathis automobile.



Two other plates in my collection that I really like are these wonderful examples of a contemporary commemorative plate done in the early 1980s showing the history of the Opel automobile. There are several in the series but these two examples of their earlier cars are the most interesting.

These plates were limited production and were made in West Germany for the European market. They don't often turn up in this country. These examples were purchased using the French version of E-Bay. The price was nominal and shipping was actually reasonable.



German made 1980s commemorative plate for the Opel automobile

Another in the Opel commemorative series.



Enjoy collecting and displaying your treasures. I hope the coming year offers you great opportunities to discover more wonderful treasures.
Happy collecting - Terry

National AACA 2025 Event Calendar

FEBRUARY

6-8, AACA Annual Convention, Charlotte NC,
hotel reservations open at [https://
www.hilton.com/en/attend-my-event/
aacaannualconvention/](https://www.hilton.com/en/attend-my-event/aacaannualconvention/)

APRIL

3-5, Southeastern Spring National, Charlotte NC

MAY

1-3, Western Spring National/Grand National,
Tucson AZ

JUNE

1-7, Vintage Tour, SE PA
19-21, Eastern Spring National, Beckley WV

JULY

2-5, Central Spring National, Auburn IN
24-26, Grand National/Zenith, Dayton OH

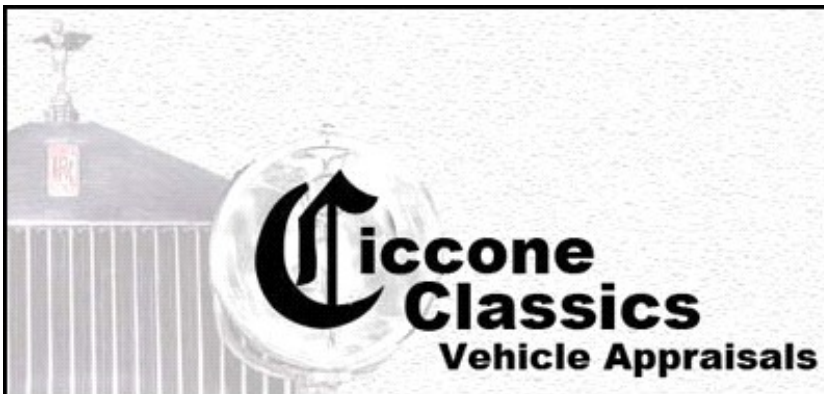
SEPTEMBER

7-12—Revival AAA Glidden Tour®, Owensboro KY
18-20—Southeastern Fall National, Corydon IN

OCTOBER

7-10—Eastern Fall Meet, Hershey PA
22-25—Central Fall National, Galveston TX





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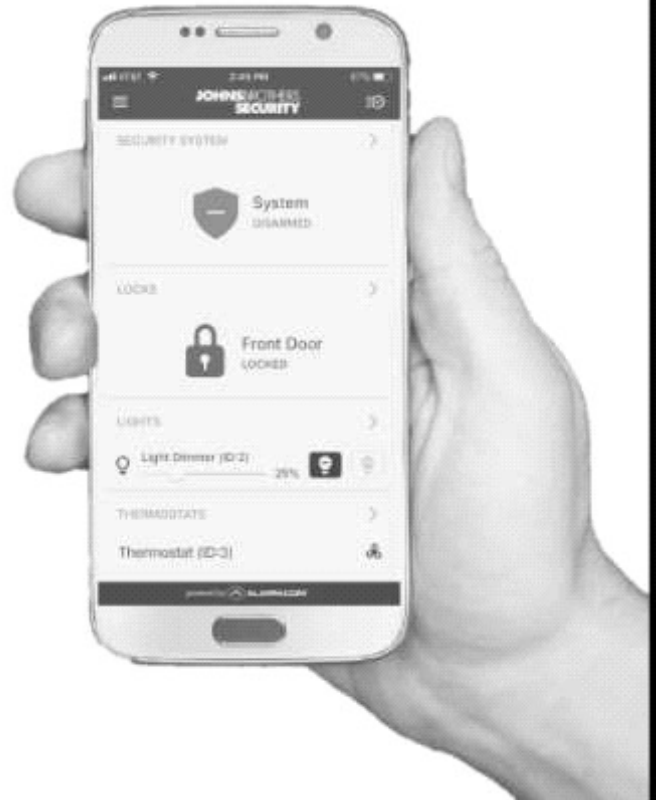
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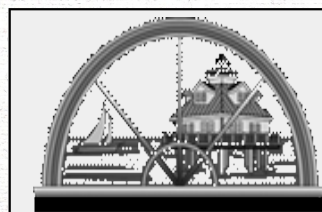
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