

Happy Holidays



The Mudflap



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

Volume 70, Issue 12

December 2024

Member Spotlight

Tom Spina



My association with the Figaro started in late 2021 when Ellen (my long-time sweetheart) and I visited the local Honda dealer in her hometown of Christiansburg, VA. A pristine, yellow 1972 Honda Civic was on display in the showroom.

"I'll take that one," I announced to the rapidly advancing salesman ... who just as rapidly replied "No you won't. Not for sale. But if you have a taste for the unusual why don't you pay a visit to our classic collection located a few miles down the road." And so we did.

Duncan Imports/Classics, located in a huge warehouse-type building in an industrial area, is literally a museum loaded with 400+ collector vehicles ... everything from Lincoln Continentals to Suzuki Cappuccinos ... and all for sale.

Tucked away in a separate segment of the building were two endless rows of Figaros ... 60 of them, wall-to-wall. Our curiosity was piqued.

TRAACA Calendar

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

December

8 - Holiday Brunch, (RSVP required), Princess Anne Country Club, Virginia Beach

January

11 - Installation Banquet, Holiday Inn Convention Center, Virginia Beach

We started asking questions. I started to think (usually a VERY bad omen). Back home I began doing research, viewing countless you-tube videos and constantly checking the Duncan web site (the omen intensifies).

This went on for the better part of a year as my curiosity and interest grew (there's that omen again). I had to have one. But which one? I finally narrowed the field down to 4 possibilities.

Research continued. I reminded myself how procrastination saved me from an Avanti when Studebaker finally shut down.

Gary Duncan rounded up about 100 Figaros back in 2016 when they officially became antiques. He still continues to hunt them down. There were a few new arrivals in March of '23. One of them struck my eye ... BIG TIME! I caved in. It's in my garage right now.

The Nissan Figaro made its debut at the 1989 Tokyo Auto Show. The theme was "BACK TO THE FUTURE". It featured retro styling (complete with large circular gauges, skinny bakelite steering wheel, big round headlights, chrome trim, toggle

switches, etc.) and modern (for the time) amenities like air-conditioning, power windows, AM/FM stereo with cassette player (and CD player!), leather seats, retractable antenna, automatic transmission, safety flare and numerous audio warnings and signals). The design was probably inspired by the Citroen 2CV, Renault 4 and the original Fiat 500. Response at the show was insane. Dealers were ready to order and the general public was ready to buy. Finally, the car went into production in 1991.

In an attempt to tame the overzealous public (and create a mystique, I'm sure) potential buyers were required to enter a lottery from which 8,000 names would be drawn in March of '91. A visit to the dealer to sign a contract and make payment closed the deal. Delivery usually took place in about 3 months.

Demand was still strong and 2 more drawings were held, one in June and one in September (each for an additional 6,000 vehicles).

Records indicate a total production of 20,073, the final unit rolling off the line in mid-December of 1991. Occasional references to 1992 (and even 1993) Figaros are "FAKE NEWS". VIN records attest to this.

The Figaro was made strictly for the Japanese domestic market ... all with right hand drive (a few aftermarket left-hand conversions exist) with no intent to modify or alter to conform to any foreign regulations. The car cannot legally pass Virginia state inspection.

It shares the basic platform with the BE-I , PAO and S-CARGO (also Nissan limited production specialty vehicles assembled in the "Pike Facto-

ry") and the Nissan March ... all for the Japanese market.

The Figaro is powered by 987cc turbo charged 4 cylinder engine developing 76hp and 78 (b-ft of torque. 0-60 in 12.3 sec, top speed 107mph, est. 32mpg. Weight 1,780#. I've had this car up to 50mph (3,300 rpm). The day hell freezes over I plan on shooting for the 107 . Tires? 165/70R/12 While checking sources for this size some clown told me to try Tractor Supply.

The same engine, without turbo, powers the BE-I , PAO, S-CARGO and MARCH and develops 54hp.

The car was only offered in 4 colors (representing the seasons): Lapis Grey (winter), Emerald Green (spring), Pale Aqua (summer) and Topaz Mist (fall). Lapis grey was the most popular color with a total run of 8,156. Emerald green was next with 5,632, Pale Aqua only 3,989 and Topaz Mist the least popular with a total production of just 2, 279. (There are VINs listed for an additional 17 units without color designations.)

I chose "Topaz Mist" since I thought it would be discreet. (a "senior moment", faulty reasoning, poor judgement and tack of awareness I guess). The color didn't seem to matter, did it? My car rolled off the assembly line in August and was #199 of 372 Topaz Mist models made that month.

There were numerous "accessories" available (for installation by dealer or owner) some of which were: Figaro Brief Case, key pouch, car care kit, ski rack, luggage rack, cup holder, passenger-side net shelf, visor mirror, trunk organizer tray, trunk light, mud flaps, car cover, headlight "eye-lids", side window wind deflectors, door sill trim, floor mats, parking stick, door handle scuff cups, chrome side mirror covers ... and on and on.

All interiors were "ivory" but dashboard, carpeting, upholstery piping and horn button were keyed to the exterior color of the car.

It might be interesting to note that the Fleur de Lis logo appears more than 20 times on the car however "NISSAN" appears only twice outside the engine compartment ... but you need to know where to look!



The manually operated "fixed profile" convertible top is one of the highlights of the Figaro. In a matter of minutes one person can easily stow the top (which includes the defroster-equipped glass rear window and surround) into the upper rear deck compartment. The trunk is located within the much smaller (VERY, VERY much smaller) compartment behind the license plate.

The vehicle does have a back seat but anyone small enough to occupy it really should be home in a crib. Driver's and front passenger areas are surprisingly comfortable and roomy.

Parts?? Ugh. Folks at the local Nissan dealerships never heard of the Figaro and Nissan has long since depleted its supply of parts. However The Nissan Figaro Shop does have most parts, new and used. They're located in the U.K. so exchange rates and duties come into play. Orders are often dispatched the day of order. Their excellent web site includes many "how to" videos and emailed inquiries are answered promptly.

I have not been able to locate a genuine Japanese owner's manual but I do have translated reprints of owner's and shop manuals from a company in New Zealand.

So why is this car called FIGARO? The favorite opera of Nissan's Chairman was "Le nozze di Figaro" (The Marriage of Figaro). There seems to be more to learn about this little car than there is car to learn about!

Needless to say, I've been asked an awful lot of questions at shows, parking lots and intersections.

"What the hell is that?" seems to be the most frequent. (I've yet to convince anyone that it's a retromod '59 Galaxie 500).

"What made you buy this?" is a question I really can't answer.

"Is it difficult driving with right-hand drive?" No. Having been a passenger in a left drive car I know where to position myself on the road. However the stalks on the steering column are "reversed" and I sometimes find myself turning on the wipers when trying to signal a left turn.

But the most entertaining question was from a young lady at a show last year who inquired "Is this a regular car?" I reached in, sounded the horn and replied "I guess so."



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

Editors: Terry and Susan Bond
Reporters: Aubrey Austin, Rick Seaman,
Bob & Dot Parrish

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Treasurer - Charlie O'Dea

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Board - Paul Fuqua
Board - Herbert Mumford
Board - Hilary Pavlidis
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Visit us on the Internet at: traaca.com



Ramblings from the President

Bill Treadwell

What keeps your Tidewater president awake at night? I do not know for sure, but last night I did a lot of thinking about this newsletter. What do I say to make more members interested in being active volunteers? What do we do to make our club more interesting and inviting to new members?

We had a very talented group of volunteers who hosted a national Grand National Meet just two years ago. They haven't all disappeared, but we need to find out who will step up next time. It is likely that the Board of Directors for 2025, once installed on January 11th, will be asked if we can host the ODMA tour in 2025, and a national tour or meet in 2026.

So, the board and I need help. While we are enjoying the Holiday Brunch on December 8th, we will chat about a great variety of plans for Christmas and plans for our automotive hobby in 2026.

When I think more about our members, I realize there are many who have been helping and enjoying the friendships of Tidewater for more than 40 years. I personally got a late start, collecting Social Security before joining the AACA, so 40 years is probably not in my future. A decision was made years ago to honor 40-year members by making them dues exempt. Good for them, and more on that later.

Back to making our club more inviting, I understand for many of our members, traveling after dark becomes more difficult. Chatting with members at November events and via email, I realize this is now affecting some who I considered active members. Do we need more daytime activities to be more inclusive of our membership? The Sunday brunch in December and Saturday afternoon Awards Banquet in January will give us an opportunity to talk about this idea. So I ask you to be there and, if you cannot, then give your comments on the idea to me, to your elected board, or any other members to pass along.

If you have other ideas for activities that you would enjoy – garage tours, technical sessions, meetings without dinner, whatever, get them to Paul Fuqua, who is leading the activities committee. Maybe become a member of his committee.

I cannot say thank you often enough to our active volunteers.

Enjoy the holidays. Come to our 70th birthday party in January.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

See you at an event soon.

We can't think of a better gift to give someone who loves this hobby than an AACA membership. Do you have friends and family who aren't current members and enjoy antique cars as much as you do? With the benefits of *Antique Automobile* magazine and the Library & Research Center alone, how can you go wrong?!

U.S Membership \$45 – Non-U.S. Membership \$50
Student Membership (up to age 25) \$12
U.S. Life Membership \$700 – Non-U.S. Life Membership \$900



Call headquarters today at 717-534-1910 to purchase a gift membership for 2025!

TRAACA MEMBER'S PAGE

Members celebrating birthdays in December

Kimberly Berry
 John Blair
 Darlene Brown
 Raymond Brown
 Cheryl Casper
 Becky Clifton
 Fred Cole
 Faye Curl
 Genny Formato
 Jane Gaylo
 Bob Gurnee
 Sandy Hall
 Ron Hartman
 Judy Harding
 Nancy Soscia
 Tom Norris
 Missy Hespenshide
 Ken Packard
 Sandra Rast
 Ken Talley
 Jim Villers
 Mathew Weinstein

Members celebrating anniversaries in November

Jeanie & Roland Downing
 Charley & Barbara Edwards
 John & Lynn Heimerl
 Ron & Tina Pack
 Daniel & Sandra Rast



Welcome to our New Members!

Travis Baker
 Andrew Heath



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-quested 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.

THINK SPRING!

Our Annual Swap Meet is coming!

It's not too early to start thinking about our spring Swap Meet at Nansemond-Suffolk Academy. This year, Saturday March 8th is going to be another great event with plenty of vendors offering great stuff! If it's antique automobile related, it'll be there. We've seen everything from brass era stuff to late-model muscle car stuff represented there. There is always plenty of great automobilia, including gas and oil related items, antique toys, tools, and parts of things

So — it's time to put old-man winter's spare time to good use and begin sorting out your left-over parts and collectibles so you too can be part of the fun. Both indoor and outdoor spaces will be available and, as always, some good things to eat.

Watch for more information and a registration form on our website and in the next issue of "The Mudflap."

ELECTION REPORT

At our November meeting, the following members were elected to serve in the coming year:

President Bill Treadwell (2nd year)
 Vice President Harry Park (2nd year)
 Secretary Nick Smith (2nd year)
 Treasurer Chris Ciccone
 Director Hilary Pavlidis (2nd year)
 Director Bill Coburn (2nd year)
 Director Mike Haag
 Director Rick Seaman

From Your Editors' Keyboards

Terry and Susan Bond

The Holiday season is here! We've had a whole year to plan, but it always seems like there is so much yet to do. Come to think of it, the entire year has felt like that. Isn't it wonderful to keep moving and be so active enjoying our great hobby?

There is more to come as an entire old car season awaits us. To help get ready so we can keep you informed, we've got some additions to our staff –

Audrey Austin is our "Junior Reporter" and will be sending in additional articles from the perspective of one of our youngest members.

Rick Seaman has volunteered to give us some reports on our dinner meetings.

Bob and Dot Parrish will be writing more stories about some of our club members, and we will be adding feature stories about some special cars in the club.

We've got a great article from long-time member Bob Woolfitt, who sent in some memories of touring with his 1934 Packard .

We have some great stories coming also from Sigur Whitaker about her family history and the Indy 500.

So – don't be surprised if you too get asked to "send us some ink" about what you've been doing or where you've been.

If you'd like to join us working on the Mudflap all you need to do is ask. Your thoughts, ideas, your stories and photos are always welcome. Remember, it's more fun when you share!



TRAACA Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

November 14, 2024!

6:00 PM: Call to order. Board members present were: Bill Treadwell, Pres.; Tim Hund, Pres. Emeritus; Charles O'Dea, Treas.; Nick Smith, Sec.; Hillary Pavlidis, Dir.; Bill Coburn, Dir. Members absent: Harry Park, VP; Paul Fuqua, Dir.; Herbert Mumford, Dir.

President's Remarks: Latest AACA magazine had an article about the Hampton show. (TRAACA members dominated the photos for Hampton).

Chili Cook Off was a success with a great location. Same location is set for May 2025 picnic.

Treasurer's Report: Emailed and approved.

Secretary's Report: Minutes were previously emailed and approved.

Activities: Square Car Tour scheduled for November 16. Dinner meeting and silent auction scheduled for November 21 at Holiday Inn.

Holiday brunch scheduled for December 8 at Princess Anne Country Club, Va Beach.

AACA Annual National Convention scheduled for February 6-8, 2025 in Charlotte, NC.

Contract for 2025 has been signed and accepted by Holiday Inn for dinner meetings.

New Business: Awards were reviewed and approved, with the exception of 2 awards which will be determined at a later date. Award winners will not be printed on programs as was done at the previous banquet. Award winners will be kept confidential by the board until presentation. Winners will be announced from the podium.

Motion made and accepted to adjourn.

6:59 PM: Meeting Adjourned

Respectfully Submitted,
Nick Smith, Secretary

Silent Auction Rick Seaman

The Tidewater Region AACA monthly dinner meeting silent auction was a great opportunity to support the club and acquire some unique items. Members brought classic car memorabilia, automotive parts, collectibles, gift baskets, and many gift cards, making it an exciting event for the members!!!

The silent auction was a great way for club members to showcase their items and raise funds. The excitement of bidding and the variety of items made for a memorable experience, I bid and won a unique picture of a '59 Imperial with a store in the background that said "Hershey" on it, and am pleased to announce it hangs proudly in our living room.

There was a record turnout at the meeting and strong member engagement and interest in club activities, most importantly our annual Holiday Brunch and our Annual Convention coming up in 2025.



TRAACA 22nd Annual Square Car Tour

Bob Stein

The 2024 Square Car Tour was the 22nd such drive since Ken Talley came up with the idea in 2002.



We had surprisingly nice weather for mid-November, and more than 30 members and guests on the drive. The group left the Kroger parking lot on Centerville Turnpike in Chesapeake and took a mix of main and back roads to the Dismal Swamp rest area in North Carolina. After a brief stop there, the group returned on different back roads to the Jackson Grays Confederate Memorial, where member Bob Parrish gave a brief talk on the Grays and his connection through relatives.

From there the group returned to the shopping center where we had started and enjoyed a great late lunch at Little Italy Restaurant.

Participants included Alfonso and Patrizia Ludovici in their 1949 Mercury, Jere and Carol Avenson driving their 1954 Packard Patrician, Ken and Barbara Talley in their 1955 Buick Century, Casey and Danny Bostjancic in their 1956 Chevrolet Bel Air, Bob Stein in his 1956 Thunderbird, Keith Colonna in his 1956 Lincoln Mark II, Bill Wilcox and Robyn Burnham in Bill's 1956 Imperial, Bob and Dot Parish in their 1958 Chevrolet impala, Hilary and Jack Pavlidis in Hilary's 1967 Cougar XR-7, Skip Patnode in his 1967 Alfa Romeo, Boe Bostjancic in his 1967 Camaro, Bill Treadwell in his 1969 Camaro, Nick Smith in his 1978 Thunderbird, Chip Woolford and sister Jennifer Beach in Chip's 1973 MG Midget, Mickey and Toni McChesney in



their 1984 Oldsmobile 88, Richard and Sandy Hall in their 1988 GMC pickup, Wayne and Dewey Milligan in Wayne's (almost antique) 2000 Chevy truck, and Rad and Marge Tillett and Scott Davies driving modern iron. Bill Coburn had a prior engagement, but was able to join us for lunch afterwards.

The tour lasted about 2.5 hours and totaled 56 miles. Many thanks to Richard Hall for setting up a great and very different drive!



Meeting at Kroger parking lot



Square Car Tour



President
Bill
Treadwell





Jackson Grays Confederate Memorial

Square Car Tour



Bob Parrish





Square Car Tour



Late lunch at Little Italy

Making Memories

Thanks to long-time member Bob Woolfitt for sending in this great story!

Many of us fondly remember all the great times we had when both Bob and Ivan Joslin were active with us. They did everything from organizing events to running together cross-country. Their tales of adventure made us wish we'd gone along for the ride. There are others of us who have great stories to tell also, so watch for them in the coming year.

Were these “the good old days” everyone speaks about? Of course they were. But – these are those “good old days” for tomorrow just waiting for you. Take advantage of every opportunity to make more of them. They are previous treasures that will keep us rolling into the future with our hobby. Make it your “new year’s resolution” to go somewhere, have fun, and share your journey with us.

My First Cross-Country Road Trip

Bob Woolfitt

When the Classic Car Club of America announced its first-ever Coast-to-Coast CARavan for its members, to be held in the summer of 1995, I wanted to go. Because it was to take longer than my allotted vacation time, I had to get special permission from my Radiology partners. They graciously provided it.

I asked Ivan Joslin to go with me and he agreed, so preparations proceeded. I had a cover made for my accessory trunk, as I knew it leaked when rained on. Ivan had a sign made for the trunk that said something like: “Two Virginians traveling cross-country in a 1934 Packard Twelve Formal Sedan. Please be careful.” He glued Velcro strips to the back of the sign and the trunk cover, so the sign could be held on. The idea was that we hoped no one would inadvertently run us off the road while they were trying to find out what kind of old car was in front of them.

In the Spring of 1995, we drove the car to Gunston Hall for their annual car show. While there, I put the car into a “corral” by itself and Ivan took a side-view photo of it, at his suggestion. Unbeknownst to me, Ivan had T-shirts made for us at Wal-Mart with that photo printed on the front. There was another use of the photo that I’ll get to in the next paragraph.

When it came time to leave for the CCCA tour, we drove up the Eastern Shore to Long Island, where we stayed overnight with former neighbors of Ivan, Mr. and Mrs. Sid Arnow. The following day we took the car ferry to Groton, CT, driving on to meet and stay with Ivan's former Commanding Officer in the Navy, Capt. Richard Alexander. He had a vineyard near Newport and presented me with two cases of custom-labeled wine, using the photo of the Packard that Ivan had taken. One of the cases contained white wine and the other red wine. We handed those out to folks we met along the tour, coming home with a few left-over bottles, one of which is shown in the photo.



After leaving Capt. Alexander, we drove to Providence, RI, where we met a friend of a friend, Rueben Marks. He drove us to see his car collection, which was scattered all over town.

We ended up back at his house, where he showed us his "crown jewel" – an original 1932 Packard Club Sedan. And I do mean original - original paint, chrome plating, interior, suitcases in the accessory trunk, etc. The only new things were tires, radiator fluid, gas and oil. Taking our leave, I backed out of his driveway and into the rear of a car parked across the street! That set off that car's alarm, bringing the owner outside. We exchanged insurance information. I called my car insurance company to tell them and was assured that they would pay for the needed repairs to both cars. My car's damage was a broken left taillight and license plate stanchion and dented left fender. Ivan pulled the bent fender off the tire by hand and we drove off to meet the rest of the tourers at Goat Island, near Newport, RI. While I thought this was not an auspicious way to start a tour, it turned out to be a good ice-breaker. We wore our T-shirts with the car on the front and whenever we met a group discussing the

Packard with a dented fender, etc., I'd speak up and say it was me and off we'd go, explaining what happened.

The tour followed the route prescribed in the printed directions given to us and proceeded along the northern tier of the USA before turning South to end in San Francisco. It was arranged so that we drove for several days in a row, then stopped in the same place for two nights, repeating until we reached our final destination. This worked to my advantage (and those of the other tourers, too), as you will see.

After my back-up accident, I telephoned LaVine Restorations, in Nappanee, IN, telling them what I'd done and asking if they could do a quick repair, as one of our stops was to be in Elkhart, IN, just north of Nappanee. Ivan and I delivered the car to the LaVines and they started right to work, with us watching. The car was jacked up and the left rear tire was removed so work could begin on the dented fender. As the tire was being rolled away, I noticed that the rim had a split in it. The other wheels were inspected and a second wheel was found to have a split. As a result, the side-mount tires were used to replace those. After this, Ivan and I were driven to the host hotel in Elkhart. The next day, there was a bus tour to the Gilmore Car Museum in Kalamazoo, MI. While on that ride, I mentioned what we had found out about the wheels and asked if anyone knew where I could buy replacements. One of the tour members said that he had just sent six 1934 Packard Twelve rims to Don Hanson, who lived near La Crosse, and he only needed 4. I was put in touch with Don and he kindly agreed to sell me two rims and bring them to me in La Crosse. The following day, my car was returned to me by the LaVines and it looked brand-new. I was overjoyed!

Ivan and I had started out swapping driving and navigator duties, but it quickly became apparent that Ivan wasn't comfortable behind the wheel. I suggested that I drive and that he be the navigator. This worked well for the rest of the trip. He stayed up late, watching sports on TV, while I went to sleep. The next day, he would doze while I drove. My best remembrance of this is when we once came to a T in the road and I stopped the car. Ivan woke up and I asked, "Which way?" He looked for a second and said, "Right." He wasn't wrong! The other thing he had a knack for was picking a restaurant for us to

eat each evening when there wasn't a group dinner. For instance, as we rolled into Jackson Hole, WY, and went through town, I asked Ivan where we should eat. He said, "Right there!" I said, "Really? Bubba's?" It turned out that lots of our tour group ate there and it was really good.

On the tour, we had the opportunity to see parts of the US that we would not have visited otherwise, but we had a few more oopsies.

Back to our trip, we made it to La Crosse, WI, and drove to an overlook of the Mississippi River. After we got back in the car from the overlook, the car wouldn't start and the battery was dead. The generator had stopped working, so we ended up getting towed to a shop in La Crosse that mostly did business servicing fleet trucks. The tow truck dropped us off at the shop, the shop owners raised the shop door, got the car inside, handed us each a Coke and went to work. It took a while, but they fixed the generator and wanted to keep the car overnight to make sure everything was okay and that our battery got charged. I don't remember how we got to the hotel or back the next day, but everything worked perfectly and they refused to let me pay for what they had done!

I did get the wheels from Don Hanson and drove the Packard to a tire shop that swapped the split rims with the "new" rims. I felt a lot better about continuing our trip with those "new" spares.

In order to get to Jackson Hole, our route took us through Rapid City, SD, the Black Hills, Deadwood (to see Wild Bill Hickok's and Calamity Jane's graves, among others), Devil's Tower and on to Yellowstone Park. On the way to Yellowstone, the road was being repaved. Unlike in the rest of the US (as far as I know), the state had torn up all the pavement for a long stretch of both lanes of the highway and we were left to drive in mud. Once we got to Jackson Hole and were parked at our hotel, I used the hotel's hose and to clean the under-surface of the Packard. There was mud in every crevice!

The next day, Ivan hitched a ride to the Tetons with one of the tour members in their Rolls Royce, while I had a visit from my relatives who drove from near Salt Lake City, UT. I took them



for a short ride in the Packard and we had a nice chat over lunch before they had to get back home.

Going further West, I remember a visit to Crater Lake, where there was still snow on the sides of the road – in summer, mind you! At Bend, OR, we had a jet boat ride and spent the night with friends of mine from my Navy days on Guam. They lived in Medford, OR. The tour had turned south and we drove along the coast to our last stop. I was too busy driving the coastal highway to see much of the scenery, but Ivan said it was grand.

Our final banquet was held at the Blackhawk Museum, adjacent to the fabulous cars in that collection. The cars literally glittered under the lights.

While the CCCA tour was over, our trip wasn't. We drove to LA and spent the night with a friend from my college days and met a previous owner of my Packard the next day. We drove across the desert on our way to Las Vegas and were pleasantly surprised to find that all of us (including the car) did well in 100+ degree weather. Ivan and I toured the Imperial Palace Collection of antique cars, each of us having lost one dollar to the one-armed bandits. There were so many Duesenbergs, each in a separate room, that we were visually and mentally overloaded before we got to the last one. After an overnight stay in Las Vegas, we drove across the Hoover Dam to the Grand Canyon. We went to a service station, had the oil changed and the car lubed, visited the Grand Canyon rim on foot and flew over it by helicopter, then went out for dinner. On the way back, Ivan asked if I wanted to see the Grand Canyon again. I almost said no, but thought, why not? It turned out to be the best decision. As the sun was setting, the canyon came alive with gorgeous colors – practically indescribable – and we almost missed it!

We hit Four Corners the next day, stopping to put an extremity in each of the four states at the same time, then set our sights on getting to Colorado Springs, CO, with the idea of going up Pike's Peak. I hadn't counted on the elevation making a difference, but it did. The Packard struggled to get up the first big mountain we came to. We got near the top and the car overheated, spouting antifreeze everywhere. We turned around and found a service station where we put a little diesel in the gas tank to lower the boiling point of the gas and refilled the radiator. I don't remember if that worked or not, but we managed to struggle into Colorado Springs. We spent the night in a motel, then made our way to the entrance to Pike's Peak while the car was cool. We made it up to within 9 miles of the top before the car said it was done. I turned around and we made it back to the entrance and then onto the Interstate towards Denver. Our desti-

nation was Loveland, CO, where we were to stay with Ivan's brother, Arnold. Somewhere on the Interstate near Denver, the car gave up the ghost and we coasted to under an overpass. Soon, a motorcycle came along with a Police officer driving. She asked if she could help and I asked her to call for a tow truck to take us to Loveland. Once at Arnold's place, Ivan did all he could to make the car behave. The next day, we drove to Estes Park. While we made it up to Estes Park, on the way back, I turned around to see if we could go up again. We couldn't. I made the "executive decision" to have the car shipped to Nappanee, while we rented a car for the drive back. Of course, once the car was back at a lower elevation, it performed flawlessly! Regardless, I had already arranged with the LaVines for them to do a total restoration. I drove Ivan to the airport for his flight home and I went to Michigan for a family reunion, the fitting finale to my expedition of the summer.

STILL COLLECTING (at Christmas time)

By Terry Bond

FLASH ANNOUNCEMENT – SANTA HAS PARKED HIS SLEIGH IN FAVOR OF MOTORIZED TRANSPORT THIS YEAR!



German made card, postmarked in 1903

As the automobile became more commonplace in the early 1900s, it was only natural that we'd begin to see Santa Claus using one to make his annual rounds.

From my collection of antique auto related postcards, there are numerous examples of how Santa "got modern" to speed up his deliveries.



British made card, postmarked in 1904

Today we send cards (by mail or electronically) but in the early 1900s it was the postcard that was the primary method of sending holiday greetings.

The age of the postcard itself pre-dates the turn of the century by a long time. As developments in lithography permitted, colorful postcards rapidly became popular.

Until about 1906, postcards were known as "Undivided Back." The entire backside was blank, but per postal regulations, that side was reserved for addressing it only. Any messages were written on the front in a small blank space provided for that purpose. As their popularity increased, people began writing over any images on the card front. It quickly became obvious



Part of a series, these two cards show Santa in a different pose wearing different colored clothing. Both were printed in England



Printed in Germany, postmarked 1906

existing regulations needed revision. By 1907, the back was divided into two parts, one for the message, and the other half for the address. From this point on, postcards were known as “Divided Back.”

What is known as the “golden age” of the postcard was between roughly 1907 and 1915. Some of the most beautiful cards ever made were produced during that time frame.

Germany, France, and England were leaders in printing and embossing and postcards from those countries quickly gained world-wide popularity.

The holidays lent themselves especially well to production of beautifully embossed, gilded and brightly colored renditions of Santa using the latest mode of transportation to make his deliveries.

Although we know Santa wears red, it wasn't always like that. At the turn of the century, he was often seen wearing brown, blue, white, or even yellow, especially on cards produced in Europe.

The tradition of Santa wearing red actually began in the 1870s when American cartoonist Thomas Nast first depicted him wearing a red suit. Nast produced numerous images of Santa for Harper's Weekly over the next 20 years. In Nast's earlier work, published in Stars and Strips newspaper, Santa wore green. But, it was the Santa depicted in his illustration of “The Night Before Christmas” in 1881 that became the iconic image we know so well today.

Even Santa was not immune to some of the problems facing early motorists as seen in this cute card of him repairing a flat tire, assisted by angels.



Santa has delayed his trip to repair a flat tire.

Collecting Santa in an early automobile is a lot of fun. These cards are not an expensive item to add to your own automobilia collection. Enjoy the collage on the next page to see the variety of them that you can find.

I hope your holidays are bright and your collection continues to grow in the coming year.

Happy collecting – Terry



**News from
across the
Bridge**

HVPR and Chitty Chitty Bang Bang

HVPR members enjoyed dinner and theater Sunday, November 17th, in the form of a late lunch at "Shorty's Diner and 'Chitty Chitty Bang Bang' at the Williamsburg Playhouse. This included Tony and Leslie Scarpelli, Jim and Donna Elliott, and Jonathan Smith. Tony Scarpelli drove his 1962 Imperial convertible, which was displayed outside the theater. (Photos by Jonathan Smith).



Coastal Va Auto Show Virginia Beach, November 22-24

Harry Park

The 9th annual Coastal Virginia Auto Show went off in November and TRAACA had a membership booth and small display thanks to the quick hard work of Rick Seaman.

On display inside the convention center were 3 Cadillacs, 2 Chevelles, a 1950 Ford, and a Barracuda.

At the outside Saturday show TRAACA was represented by Bill Treadwell and Joe Gentile (Runner up Best Of Show).

Inside, TRAACA had a membership booth manned by Bob and Dot Parrish, Chris and Dan Ciccone, Rick Seaman, Tim Hund, Tom and Tammy Cox, and Harry Park. Many members stopped by to view the 290 autos on display and visit. We spotted Mickey, Bill, Joe, Paul, and Frank. On the membership side we got 1 new member and many new prospects.



1970 Chevelle, Harry Park



1957 Cadillac, Dwight Schauback



1965 Plymouth Barracuda, Rick Seaman



1906 Cadillac, Tim Hund



Bob Parrish, Tom Cox

Tom Cox, Harry Park



This was a break-the-ice event with CVAS leadership and looks to be more promising for next year's show with a bigger presence for TRAACA.

Thanks to all who came out and supported this event. HUGE thanks to Rick Seaman for setting this up on short notice and Bob Parrish for getting all the membership information needed for the event. Your club was well represented to the community and a lot of Hampton Roads auto enthusiasts we had not seen before.

Here are links to two You-Tube videos of Tom Cox with Bob Parrish and Harry Park talking about how they began in the antique car hobby.

<https://youtu.be/E-PZ9KvJpV0>

<https://youtu.be/AioL2SIFiWI>



1950 Ford, Dan Ciccone

What's So Special About the Annual Convention?

By Stacy Zimmerman, *Speedster* Editor,
szimmerman@aaca.org

The first AACA National Activity of 2025 is the Annual Convention. If you have never been to the Annual Convention and you're not really sure what it's all about, please take a few minutes to watch our brand-new convention video at aaca.org on the 2025 Convention tab.

The Annual Convention is different because it's not a car show or a tour. It's 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. There is really something for everyone to enjoy. Finally, the Annual Convention is a great place to meet up with old friends, as well as make new ones from all over the country.

Each year the event gets better and better because of the planning committee's creativity and hard work, but also because of all of you who attend. We love seeing your enthusiasm and excitement during the convention, and we especially love hearing you spread the word to other AACA members helping to make the Annual Convention a MUST ATTEND event.

This year, the Annual Convention will be held in Charlotte/Concord, NC February 6-8 at the Embassy Suites by Hilton Charlotte/Concord Golf Resort & Spa. We have a great lineup of activities planned for you and here's your sneak peek...

The Convention officially gets started on Thursday with two different excursions. The first excursion is to the **Hendrick Heritage Center**, which is a private museum dedicated to the heritage of Rick Hendrick and his passion for cars and guitars. The doors to this amazing collection are not open to the public, so this is a very special opportunity. The second excursion is to the **North Carolina Transportation Museum**, where you will take a tour of the grounds including the period roundhouse and then board a train for lunch. During lunch, the train will take

you all around the property which used to be the Southern Railway's largest steam locomotive repair site. After you've had a little time to rest back at the hotel, join your fellow attendees at the evening **Welcome Reception** hosted by your Board of Directors. This year's theme is a pasta party!

Friday at Convention is filled with lots of seminars and the trade show officially opens. First Lady Audrey Harris will be hosting a very special lunch with **keynote speaker Lyn St. James**. If you are not familiar with Lyn, she was the first female to win Rookie of the Year at the Indianapolis 500 in 1992. At the 2024 Convention, we held a casino night after the dinner hosted by our Regions and Chapters. Everyone raved about how great it was and how much fun they had – insisting that we bring it back again in 2025. Well, again we listened, but have added a little twist to the activity... Friday evening will conclude with a **Roaring '20s Speakeasy Casino Night**. So, don't forget your flapper dresses and Zoot suits!

Saturday continues with several different **Judging Schools**, more seminars and more time in the trade show room. In the afternoon at the **General Membership Meeting**, the business of the club will be discussed, and your new Board of Directors introduced. The finale of the entire event happens Saturday night at the **National Awards Banquet**, where the red carpet is rolled out for our winners. This event is often referred to as our "Oscars" and is one of the most special evenings of the entire year. This is when we take the time to honor and celebrate those who go above and beyond in this hobby. It is a night not to be missed!

As you can see, I was not joking when I said that there is something for everyone to enjoy at the Annual Convention. Why not start a new tradition and join us in February for this great event!

Online registration for the 2025 Annual Convention will officially open on December 9th!

If you would like registration materials mailed to you, please email Sue Eitnier, seitnier@aaca.org, with your name and member number.

Stay up-to-date at the 2025 Annual Convention page on aaca.org



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