

April

**The Sidelights** 2020



**Santa Rosa  
Regional Group**

**Horseless Carriage  
Club of America**

## 2020 EVENT SCHEDULE

**April 19-22nd** HCCA Convention & Tour. Stateline NV **CANCELED**

**April 26th, 10am-4pm.** Pacific Coast Dream Machines show. Half Moon Bay Airport.  
**CANCELED**

**May 3rd, 10:00** SRHCCA Tour to Bodega Bay Fisherman's Festival. Tour leaders Pearson  
**CANCELED**

**May 21st, 6:00** Monthly meeting at Mary's Pizza Shack, 790 Gravenstein Hwy N, Sebastopol.

**May 24th, 6:00** Monthly Tour.

**June 6th, 7:00** Historic Downtown Lincoln Classic Car Show in Lincoln CA

**June 12-13th,** Peggy Sue Car Show, Sonoma County Fair Grounds

**June 18th, 6:00** Monthly meeting at Mary's Pizza Shack, 790 Gravenstein Hwy N, Sebastopol.

**June 20th, (Saturday) 10:00** SRHCCA Monthly Tour. Tour leaders: Simoni

**July 16th, 6:00** SRHCCA Monthly meeting

**July 19th, 10:00** SRHCCA Tour. Leader TBD

**Aug 20th, 6:00** SRHCCA Monthly meeting

**Aug 23rd, 10:00** SRHCCA Monthly Tour. Tour leader: Owens

**Sept 17th, 6:00** SRHCCA Monthly meeting

**Sept 20th, 10:00** SRHCCA Tour. Leader TBD

**Oct 6-10th** Hershey Swap meet. Followed by the Hangover Tour

**Oct 15th, 6:00** SRHCCA Monthly meeting

**Oct 18th, 10:00** SRHCCA Monthly Tour. Tour leader: Smiths

**Nov 19th, 6:00** SRHCCA Monthly meeting

**Nov 22nd, 10:00** possible SRHCCA Monthly Tour, weather permitting

# HCCA NATIONAL NEWS



**Re: Emergency Extended, AACCA Update, NY Auto Show, The Henry Ford, Zoom Board Meeting .**  
**Issue: 2020-04-01 #05**

- **National Emergency Extended** – President Trump on Sunday announced that “All Americans must continue to avoid nonessential travel, going to work, eating at bars and restaurants, or gathering in groups of more than 10 for at least another month and perhaps until June.”
- **AACA Event Cancellations & National Headquarters Shutdown** – “The AACCA Western Spring Nationals and Founders Tour in April have been canceled.” . . . “The AACCA Central Spring Nationals in Auburn in May has also been canceled and will not be rescheduled.” . . . . . “Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf has ordered a statewide shutdown of all non-life sustaining businesses in an effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19, therefore our national headquarters and library are in fact closed.” . . . “We are hopeful that our normal schedule can return beginning in June, but all of that remains to be seen.”
- **New York Auto Show Rescheduled** – “After the cancellation of the [Geneva International Motor Show](#) earlier this month, the organizers of the New York International Auto Show announced this week that they are rescheduling the show from April 8-19 to August 26 to September 6. For more information, visit [AutoShowNY.com](#).”
- **The Henry Ford** – “The Henry Ford has closed all of its public venues, including the Henry Ford Museum of American Innovation, the Ford Rouge Factory Tour, the Giant Screen Experience, and the Benson Ford Research Center for a week with a re-evaluation of the decision to keep the venues closed” . . . For more information, visit [TheHenryFord.org](#).
- **Chickasha Swap Meet Cancelled** – “The 30th International Chickasha Pre-War Swap Meet at the Grady County Fairgrounds has been canceled.” . . . “The Grady County Fairgrounds and Events Center announced they will be postponing all events through April 1, following the guidelines regarding COVID-19.”
- **Bakersfield Swap Meet Cancelled** – As seen on “the Kern County Model T Ford Club’s site. They have canceled the April 17-18 swap meet.”
- **BBC National Tour & Flea Market** – “Unfortunately, HCCA has canceled both BBC events due to Corona Virus.”
- **HCCA President-elect Don Plumb** – “Now that we have shut down the convention and attendant board meetings, we need to find a new way to move forward. Our two upcoming board meetings are scheduled for April 20.” . . . . . “I propose” . . . “we hold the two April 20 board meetings as planned, at 4 PM PDT.” . . . “We will do this using ZOOM videoconference.” Stay tuned.

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Board Member – HCCA NN Editor . . .

# Drunken Mitchell

At some point in their lives most people lose their innocence about the world and life in general. We begin to realize that things that once seemed to be permanent, the very foundations of our world, can crumble and fall virtually overnight. Life can change so quickly, it's scary.

That's what happened at the Mitchell Motor Car Company. One day, everything was fine and dandy; the next day, the bedrock was knocked out from under them and they got hammered. It's why Mitchell isn't around today.

Mitchell was one of the oldest automobile makers in the country, having begun producing motorcars in 1903, the same year as Ford Motor Company and what would become Willys-Overland.

But Mitchell's history stretches back even earlier, to 1838 when Scottish immigrant Henry Mitchell moved to Kenosha, Wisconsin, and established a wagon works that became known as "The first wagon maker of the Northwest."

In 1854, he moved his business to larger quarters in nearby Racine. Over time, his sons joined the business, as did son-in-law William Lewis. The firm eventually changed its name to Mitchell & Lewis Wagon Company. During the Gay Nineties, they also established the Wisconsin Wheel Works to produce bicycles, and around 1898 began building light motorcycles, as well. Going into production of automobiles was thus a natural move.

Wisconsin Wheel Works sold off its bicycle business and was succeeded by the newly-formed Mitchell Motor Car Company (a subsidiary of Mitchell-Lewis Wagon Co.). The new firm offered two runabout models, one powered by a 7-hp, single-cylinder two-stroke engine, the other by a 4-hp, four-stroke single. Sales were modest initially, even though the smaller Mitchell could be purchased for a mere \$600, because the company had difficulty obtaining all the components it needed for its assembly operations. Over time, that problem was corrected and sales grew. Two-cylinder and four-cylinder models replaced the singles early on, allowing the company to produce

larger and more varied body styles.

By 1910, Mitchell offered six models: two- and three-passenger runabouts and a runabout Surrey, each powered by a four-cylinder engine, plus two touring cars, a four-cylinder and a six. Prices ranged from \$1,100 to \$2,000. Sales that year totaled some 5,733 automobiles. There was even a song published: "Give me a Spin in Your Mitchell, Bill." The four-cylinder models were dropped after 1915.

By 1919, Mitchell prices ranged from \$1,275 to \$2,850, and retail sales had climbed to over 10,000 cars. The company was solidly profitable, and there's every indication it was feeling a little cocky, perhaps more than it should have. For 1920,

management decided it would set a new styling trend for the industry; quite a bold move for so small a firm. The 1920 Mitchell cars featured new styling touches to make them stand out from the crowd. Sedans boasted unusual vee'd windshields, with a prominent center post supporting angled side panes, and cowls featured a molding

on each side that swept forward, European-style, as it reached down to the running boards. But the biggest styling feature, one that was impossible to ignore, was the radiator; it was tilted back at a very noticeable angle. Print advertisements bragged that "Future Styling Trends" were "Forecasted by the new Mitchell Design." "These new Mitchell Sixes bring to motoring America its first accurate example of the coming style...viewed from any angle—from inside or out—the effect is impressive." It certainly impressed most people, unfortunately not in a good way.

The public can be cruel. Pundits looked at Mitchell's swept-back radiator—which management was sure would be the next big styling fad—along with the sedan's split vee'd windshield, which, regrettably, had a different slant than the radiator—and pronounced them "The Drunken Mitchells." The name stuck. Sales fell through the floor, the slump continuing into 1921, when a mere 2,162 cars were sold, this even after a hasty restyle; 1923 saw Mitchell produce just 100 cars. Despite a history going back more than 80 years, the company was gone by 1924, its plant sold to Nash Motors for \$405,000. 62



# Birthdays



Mark Bryant - April 20<sup>th</sup>

