

Mar

The Sidelights 2020



Santa Rosa
Regional Group

Horseless Carriage
Club of America

March 2020 President's Message

Notes from a very calm February meeting.

Where is everyone was our first question. Second question -is it really Thursday? Next question- Kathleen, did you check e-mails ? *I took the fifth.*

A phone call to John Pearson confirmed everyone was somewhere else. Good grief, they are all lost together! We enjoyed our pizza and drinks. We took a vote and it was unanimous-we screwed up.

Looking forward to our next meeting at 6:00, in Sebastopol, at Mary's

Stan



**Thankful someone took the time to photograph this type of beauty - April 1937.
Buttermilk Junction, Martin County , IN.**

Santa Rosa Horseless Carriage Club Monthly Meeting Minutes

February 20, 2020

Meeting called to order @ 7:07 PM by Vice president Wayne Simoni

Attendees:

Dick Winterhalder
Don & Pam Johnson
John & Linda Pearson
Jeff Owens
Donna Jones
Wayne & Kim Simoni
Guy & Michelle Smith
Cinda Craven
Vicki Porter

First meeting being held at SEBASTOPOL Round Table Pizza. Stan Ramondo (President) forgot and went to Marlow Road 😊

- No new members
- No minutes (January meeting was the Installation Dinner at Union Hotel)
- No treasurer's report (Linda Eggleston had the flu)
- **Annual dues are due!** (\$35.00); please mail to Linda Eggleston

No Old Business

New Business:

- **Our monthly meeting will now start at 6:00PM!**
- **Our next meeting will be held at Mary's Pizza Shack**

Tour Director (John Pearson):

- Simoni Tour March 29. Meet at Pacific Market in Sebastopol @ 9:30, depart @ 10:00. More nfo coming
- May 3 Is Fisherman's Festival (Pearson Tour)

Sunshine Report:

- Warren Welsh passed away Sunday February 16. Service/Celebration expected in late March. Kim will ask Ron where SRHCCA can make a donation in Warren's name.

Editor:

- Wayne Simoni is currently producing SideLights and expects to continue to do so. We will keep mailing hardcopy to Jay Whited. Any/all comments and content contributions are welcomed!

Open Floor:

- John P is attending a 1&2 cylinder tour in Modoc
- HCCA National Convention is at Harrah's So Lake Tahoe April 19-22
- Jeff Owens shared rare antique jack knives and a matchbox from his collection
- Kim Shared plans for Simoni's old car/bike tour in the southwest in September.

Meeting closed: 7:34PM

Respectfully submitted by Kimberly Simoni, Secretary

HCCA NATIONAL NEWS

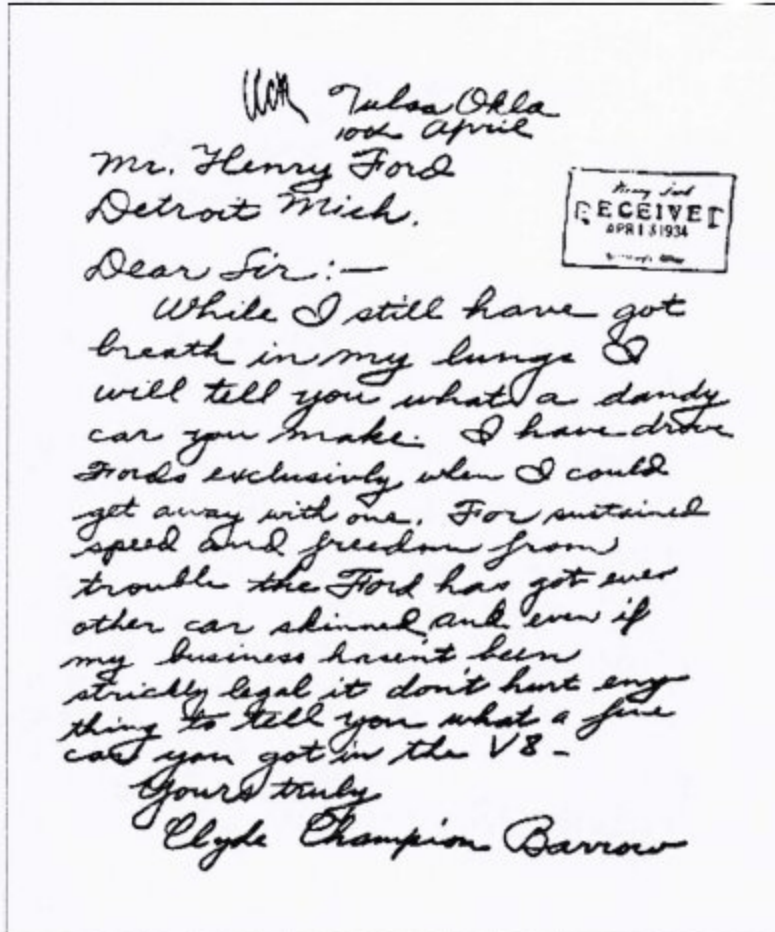


Re: AACA Museum display, Regional Groups, June HCCA Board Meeting, A Texas Swap Meet ...
Issue: 2020-03-03 #03

- **AACA Museum display** – The HCCA display will appear from mid-May to mid-October. The exhibit will be called “YES, WE DRIVE THESE CARS!” and will consist of early signage and artifacts as well as a video showing our cars on tour. There will be three cars on display, a 1904 “curved dash” Oldsmobile, a 1908 two cylinder Reo, and a 1911 Stevens-Duryea. Plan a visit.
- **Fun Facts** – The Northern California Regional Group is celebrating their 71st year this year. The Nickel Era Touring Registry in California is celebrating their 14th year. The Twin Cities Regional Group in Minnesota is celebrating their 31st year. Congratulations to all three! How many years has your Regional Group been active? If you send the National News Editor your Newsletter, he will share your news!
- **June HCCA Board Meeting** – Has been re-scheduled to Saturday, June 27th at 8:00 AM. The Board Meeting will be held at the Stoney Creek Hotel and Conference Center, 2601 S Providence Road, Columbia, MO. The hotel is the starting and ending point for the Circle Missouri Tour. Contact Chris Paulsen for details at 316-648-7887.
- **A Texas size event** – The Pate Swap Meet, celebrating its 48th year as an annual event, is the largest transportation venue of its kind in the United States. With over 200,000 visitors in 2019, the widely attended Pate Swap Meet is a leading collector’s choice for its diversity of auto and motorcycle related products offered by vendors from across the country. The three day event, encompassing an average of 8,700 vendor spaces, is host to everything automobile, motorcycle, and transportation related. Texas Motor Speedway - Fort Worth, Texas, April 30th – May 2nd.
- **Horseless Carriage Education** – From our Web Page: “Every Horseless Carriage enthusiast has held impromptu presentations of our rare and beautiful automobiles in unanticipated situations. Sometimes it comes in the form of a friendly wave and a honk, other times a crowd at a lunch stop, or a red-to-green light conversation at an intersection. With a brass car, every event cannot help but be an educational event.” Ever wonder how you can be more effective at your sidewalk presentation? On the HCCA Web Site Home Page, under the EDUCATION tab, take a look at some of the Club video offerings; check out the lesson plans and course materials. The drop-down menu includes: HCCA Presents Videos; HCCA Lesson Plans; What We’re Doing; Technical Articles; Feedback. See for yourself.
- **Trivia Question** – How many children fit on a horseless carriage? Answer: You have to go to the HCCA web site Home Page, wait for the 8th picture to scroll past, and count for yourself. It looks like they were having fun too. Don’t wait, Brad may change the pictures soon.
- **Facebook Knows** – Tracy Leshner noted: Several of our HCCA friends were recognized for their brass era automobiles at the AACA Annual Meeting in Philadelphia. Karl Darby received the Mercer Plaque 50 years after his father. And, Matt Goist was a panelist for one of the seminars too. Also winning awards were Larry DeBaugh’s 1910 Ford and Bob Richmon’s 1907 Ford.
- **More Planning for 2020** – Here are the latest Tours listing additions from the HCCA Web site:
 - Pate Swap Meet, Fort Worth, TX.
 - Gilmore Car Museum Tour & Show, Hickory Corners, MI.
 - Mid Atlantic Pre War Swap Meet, Luray, VA
 - BBC 2020: National Tour & Flea market, Morgantown, PA
 - Single Cylinder Tour, Yreka, CA
 - AACA Reliability Tour, Lock Haven – Wellsboro, PA
 - 4th Annual HCCA Tri-County Tour, CA
 - One and Two Cylinder Tour, Lancaster, PACheck the Gazette, as well as the Club Web site, to see dates, and the latest updates.

Doug Tomb / Douglas.tomb@verizon.net
Board Member – HCCA NN Editor ...

Note: next meeting is at Mary's Pizza, Sebastopol, at 6:00



Re: Bonny and Clyde



Note: next meeting is at Mary's Pizza, Sebastopol, at 6:00

Read this !!

Are you an **OLD CAR** guy?



Let's go under the hood of an old car and see what we can find. What, for example, is that thing pictured above? And why would a Mario Brother braze a plumbing part onto a spark plug? Well, THAT is a **Primer Spark Plug**. Those were once made by every major spark plug company and you could buy one for any car.

Why would you want a faucet attached to your spark plug? Early gasoline formulations had a problem with volatility, especially at low temperatures. That made starting difficult on a cold day. The **Primer Spark Plug** permitted you to prime your car engine prior to starting it. You would open those faucets on each of the spark plugs and, using a small funnel, pour gasoline or, better, more volatile liquid ether, into each cylinder.

You could easily buy the ether in small screw top tins at any pharmacy. After closing the valves on the spark plugs you could start the car using that primer fluid. But why not simply pour gasoline into the carburetor? Because of this:

Green Spark Plugs?



You thought all spark plugs had white porcelain insulators, right? They do now. But at one time the **Splitdorf Company** made a premium spark plug that was very recognizable because of its hexagonal insulator and its green color. The color was not a marketing or esthetic choice. **Splitdorf Spark Plug** insulators were made out of ruby mica rather than porcelain. The mica was more durable than porcelain being less susceptible to cracks and breaking.



Glass Spark Plugs were once used for tuning cars. The glass insulator allowed the mechanic to see into the

cylinder while the engine was running and view the color of the combustion. If the burning air/fuel mixture was a yellow-orange color you knew the mixture was too rich and you turned in the low or high speed needle valves on the carburetor. When the color seen through the **Glass Spark Plug** was pale blue the mechanic knew that the air/fuel ratio was around the desired



14.6:1. I used similar glass spark plugs as late as the 1970s.

Rebuildable Spark Plugs?

When the center electrode of a spark plug has been burned up or filed down or if the porcelain insulator has cracked you throw it away, right? Not in the teens and twenties. Spark plugs were once rebuildable. Here is a page from a 1921 auto supply house catalog. Look at the bottom right corner of that page.

Those are separate spark plug center electrodes and insulators. Now look carefully at the spark plug shown at the top left of the page. See the hex nut just below the porcelain insulator and above the metal

hex body of the plug? Those spark plugs were rebuildable.

You could unfasten the hex nut, remove and replace the insulator and center electrode, insert a new gasket to seal the insulator within the metal body of the plug, and replace and tighten the hex nut giving you a rebuilt spark plug.

Champion Spark Plugs

Model	Price
1/2 Inch Heavy	12.00
3/8 Heavy	12.00
7/8 Long Heavy	12.00
1/2 Inch Rebuildable	7.00
3/8 Rebuildable	7.00
7/8 Long Rebuildable	7.00

CHAMPION CORES

Core	Price
A-10	1.00
A-11	1.00
A-12	1.00
A-13	1.00
A-14	1.00
A-15	1.00
A-16	1.00
A-17	1.00
A-18	1.00
A-19	1.00
A-20	1.00
A-21	1.00
A-22	1.00
A-23	1.00
A-24	1.00
A-25	1.00
A-26	1.00
A-27	1.00
A-28	1.00
A-29	1.00
A-30	1.00
A-31	1.00
A-32	1.00
A-33	1.00
A-34	1.00
A-35	1.00
A-36	1.00
A-37	1.00
A-38	1.00
A-39	1.00
A-40	1.00
A-41	1.00
A-42	1.00
A-43	1.00
A-44	1.00
A-45	1.00
A-46	1.00
A-47	1.00
A-48	1.00
A-49	1.00
A-50	1.00

For the proper type of Spark Plug for every type of engine, refer to our Index Chart

Champion Spark Plugs when purchased in quantity lots may be secured in any number of types. Core also ordered with Plugs take the same quantity price.



David Dunbar Buick

Founder of the Buick Manufacturing Company, he was a gifted visionary who suffered an ignominious end

BY JIM DONNELLY • IMAGES COURTESY OF THE LAWRENCE GUSTIN COLLECTION

It's probably because he died broke. And when he did so, it was in early 1929, before the stock market went down in flames and created millions of impoverished individuals. Beforehand, if you went to your grave without leaving a big fortune in your wake, you were summarily considered a flop. It was the last of the Gilded Age and cash was flying everywhere, some of it nefariously. And in his last job, before he died penniless at age 75, the man who created a big measure of General Motors' foundation was supporting himself by teaching a shop class at a Detroit vocational school.

And so, as a result, a lot of the life's work of David Dunbar Buick remains lost to history today. We know his namesake car, of course, which survived the great shakeout of GM brands during the last decade to prosper in... of all places, China

We know the legion of great auto industry leaders who studied at Buick's feet, men with surnames that ranged from Chrysler to Nash. We know that Buick made its reputation with superior engineering and racing success, and can be credited with developing a workable valve-in-head engine that transformed the way cars were powered. For David Buick, however, it all came to naught. His obituary claimed he was never embittered by the poor fortune that befell him late in life, but you have to wonder about that.

"Professionally, Buick and Durant existed on two separate planes," says Larry Gustin, whose career took him from automotive editor of the *Flint Journal* in Michigan to Buick public relations to acclaimed biographies of both Buick and Billy Durant. "David Buick was looking for \$1,500 so he could build a better car

but Durant was looking for \$15 million so he could build a corporation. We can't really know for sure how much he actually had to do with the design when they were developing the car, but for sure Buick was the boss. He did have great mechanical ability."

Even his journey to America was improbable. David Dunbar Buick was born in 1854 in Arbroath, a prosperous Scottish fishing village on the North Sea, to parents who spelled their last name "Buik." The family name, before the "c" was added, may be Old English designating a farm or a component of a cannon. The family patriarch, a carpenter and joiner, saw the coming of the railway to Arbroath before following several relatives to America, emigrating when David was only two years old. Most of the Buick relatives had settled in Michigan



Engineer Walter Marr pilots the first Flint-built Buick back to the factory following a test drive in July 1904. Tom Buick, David's son, rides high in the passenger seat.

within three years, the elder Buick was dead. His wife remarried to a Detroitier and operated a candy store in the booming city for years.

In 1865, David Buick left Detroit to work on a farm but returned to the city four years later, finding a job at the Alexander Manufacturing Company, which produced plumbing fixtures. Sometime in his teens, Buick became an apprentice at the James Flowers & Brothers Machine Shop in Detroit, learning to polish newly made brass fittings. A decade later, a young guy named Henry Ford would apprentice there in the same capacity. Buick learned well and returned to Alexander as a foreman. The fixture business boomed because in the 1870s, an Englishman with the wonderfully coincidental name of Thomas Crapper had helped to popularize the flush toilet, and suddenly, everyone on both sides of the Atlantic wanted one in their homes. By the time the 1880s had run their course, Buick owned more than a dozen U.S. patents for plumbing-related innovations, one being for a process he developed to bond porcelain to cast iron. That means that, at least in America, Buick could lay claim to being the father of the all-white porcelain bathroom.

Despite the industry's overall good fortunes, the Alexander company was failing. Buick and a close associate, William Sherwood—they may have been classmates or fellow apprentices; the record remains unclear—managed to acquire Alexander and rename it for themselves. By the early 1890s, the Buick & Sherwood Manufacturing Company

became one of the largest plumbing suppliers in Detroit. Yet Buick, who was clearly successful, was becoming bored, or maybe distracted is more correct. He developed a deep fascination with gasoline-fueled engines, the kind that could be used to power vehicles. It was a timely evolution of Buick's fortunes. The first automobile race in the United States took place in Chicago in 1895, and Charles King drove the very first powered car on the streets of Detroit a year later. Also in 1896, Ford drove his first quadricycle. Buick would later say that he was interested in developing a self-



This is the first-ever Buick automobile, being tested by Walter Marr on a Detroit street, assembled gradually between 1899 and 1901. Marr later bought the car for himself.

propelled dray for making deliveries, but it's obvious his obsession with gasoline power ran far deeper than that. By 1897 he was selling his own, self-branded stationary L-head engines for farm and industrial use. Sherwood became increasingly irritated at Buick's lack of attention to the plumbing business. In 1901, Buick left the company and used his \$100,000 stake in its liquidation as start-up capital to establish the Buick Auto Vim (a play on "vim and vigor") & Power Company, its purpose being to build engines.

That was when Buick made perhaps the most fortuitous acquaintance of his life. Walter Marr was a self-taught engineer and all-around mechanical genius who, if anything, loved gasoline engines even more than Buick did. A one-time bicycle mechanic, Marr had gotten a gasoline-fueled engine wagon running by 1898. He is widely credited today for inventing the mechanical spark advance. Marr built maritime engines, and apparently met Buick when the latter was commodore of the Detroit Yacht Club. Buick hired him at once. Again, the history is foggy, but it appears that Marr was likely the person who convinced Buick to build a car. Buick and Marr were both known as prickly personalities with short tempers. Marr quit Buick at least twice before he left for good in 1902. Before that final breakdown, which saw Marr briefly join forces with Ransom Eli Olds, he got the first Buick automobile running, a single-cylinder buckboard with a tiller, and ultimately bought the car for himself. Buick reorganized his own firm

the Buick Manufacturing Company.

Marr's putative replacement was a French-born machinist named Eugene Richard, who may—or may not—have been the leading luminary on Buick's development of the first American overhead-valve engine. Marr and Buick himself likely had input, as well. The larger issue is that with this engine, Buick created its early signature product. An engine with OHV architecture, its valves above the combustion chamber, inherently breathed better and had higher volumetric efficiency than the traditional L-head or side-valve configuration. For all its technological advancement, however, the Buick firm was beset by production delays, largely associated with Buick's personal tinkering that slowed deliveries. Richard did eventually patent the OHV engine design, assigning it to Buick, the company. "Buick knew enough to hire people who were really good, like Marr and Richard," Larry Gustin tells us.

Yet Buick was stumbling. His investors were spooked. In 1903, the company came to the attention of the brothers Frank and Benjamin Briscoe, who were eager to make their thriving Detroit sheetmetal business into a supplier for the toddling car industry. Benjamin Briscoe advanced Buick enough money so he could finish his incomplete, self-branded car. Later that year, Briscoe bought the car, the first ever badged as a Buick, for himself. Next, he agreed to supply more cash to Buick in exchange for a full reorganization of the firm that left the Briscoe brothers in charge of the money. The new business was called the Buick Motor Company.

It's evident today that the Briscoes soon tired of their association with Buick. Later in 1903, they learned that the Flint Wagon Works wanted to enter the auto business, and arranged to sell the firm to the wagon



A Buick Model B from 1904 poses in front of the Flint factory. Wearing the straw boater in the back seat is James Whiting, who brought Buick from Detroit to Flint.

maker and move operations to Flint. With their newfound trove of cash, the Briscoes went off to found Maxwell, which would later help to beget Chrysler. Just that fast, Buick went from captain of industry to hiring, working for James Whiting, who owned the wagon works. The dizzying turns of events continued in 1904, when Buick sold its first automobile to an honest paying customer, a Flint physician, who ordered a Model B. Three months later, William Durant, who owned the Durant-Dort Carriage Company, bought a controlling interest in Buick from Whiting.


David Buick was now an employee of Billy Durant, who was determined to grow the firm's market share, doing so by fielding a factory race team with Louis Chevrolet and the dirt-track immortal Bob Burman as drivers. The model lineup continued to advance, with more sophistication and power on tap. Durant

imported his own teams of engineers, including Marr, who made a return appearance. Buicks acquitted themselves well in the early Glidden Tours.

Having built just 37 cars in 1904, Buick was a well-established automaker, second only to Ford in total sales, running three shifts per day in Flint, within another four years. Durant was intent on making the marque the centerpiece of the corporation

he intended to establish, General Motors. The incorporation of GM took place in September 1908.

David Buick was still on the payroll, at least for the moment, and had a seat on the board. The reality was that Durant was shifting him further and further from the core of the company's operations. Worse, Buick's health was beginning to fail, the consequence of years of overwork. He was interested in heading west to drier climes. When he left in 1909, Durant cut Buick a severance check for \$100,000 in cash, plus stock. Buick headed to California and invested heavily in the oil industry. Newspapers carried paid teaser ads touting Buick as a business genius who was looking to line up new petroleum investors. But in 1910, the Buick Oil Company was listed by *The New York Times* as one of the businesses represented by a securities firm that was accused of widespread stock fraud. Years of litigation with shareholders followed that financially destroyed the oil company.

Buick became involved in promoting other cars, such as the Grand Rapids, Michigan-built Lorraine and a new self-designed car that would have been called the Dunbar if it had ever been produced. He was not invited to Buick's 25th anniversary fete. He was also destitute, the result of sinking the last of his money into a failed Florida realty venture. Journalist Bruce Catton, the future Civil War historian, tracked down Buick at his apartment in Detroit late in 1928. He was too poor to afford a telephone, much less one of the automobiles that he pioneered. When he died of cancer and pneumonia in March 1929, one newspaper reporter quipped that Buick left only his name on a car. 



This official factory photo depicts a 1905 Buick Model C. Buick built between 730 and 750 of these cars, many of them at a second assembly plant in Jackson, Michigan.

BIRTHDAYS



BIRTHDAYS

- 5 - John Pearson
- 17 - Kim Simoni
- 23 - Stan Ramondo
- 24 - Max Meyer

ANNIVERSARIES

- 7 - Dan & Pam Johnson
- 19 - Gary & Janet Filippini
- 30 - Jim & Alama Flint

