

# Wheel Tracks



**VAE's Photographer  
Laureate....  
Kenneth Barber**

*..... on page 6*

*How to cook a husband?...on page 7*

*You are invited to Alaska..... On page 11*

*Pevy and Gael's \$75 Pierce Arrow barn-find... on page 13*



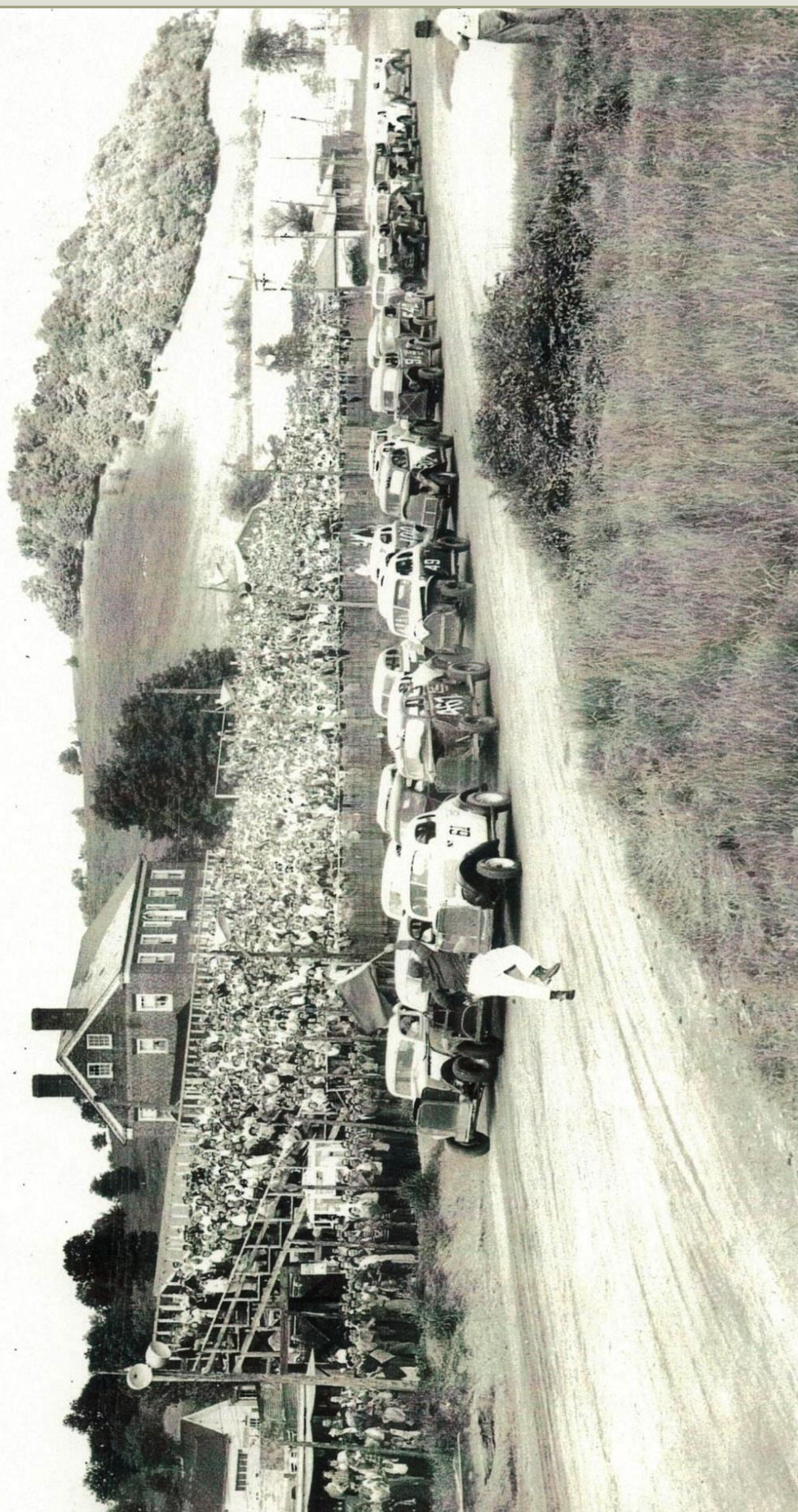
### State Line Speedway— May 1953

Some of the "Feature Start" contestants... **Steve Danish #61** at the pole, **Jeep Herbert- outside#3**, **Charlie Morse #467**. The Starter is **Chet Hames**.

The brick building is a tavern and is located in New York. The tavern served alcohol on Sundays but in Vermont Sunday alcohol sales were illegal. 25% of the grandstand was in NY and 75% of it was located in Vermont, along with 99% of the race track.

State Line was a NASCAR sanctioned track for the 1952 and 1953 seasons. Danish would be NYS NASCAR champion for 1953. Ed Ryan, who promoted Rhinebeck Speedway, Pine Bowl Speedway and Rt. 66 Speedway (Hollywood Bowl in its last year) all in NY also promoted State Line.

Turn to page 12 for more.....





## A FAITHFUL OLD METZ AUTO ENGINE by William S. Strayer



Several years ago, while reading a story of the Metz Automobile in an issue of the 'Antique Car Magazine', the following story was recalled to my memory. Many details have been forgotten, but the lump on my wrist, caused by the crank of my old Metz when it kicked backward while starting, will never be forgotten.

My first encounter with a Metz came about when my family moved into York County, Pa., and, of course, yours truly had to go to a new school at the age of thirteen. All schools in the country at that time were the one-room pot bellied stove type and a school room visitor was something special. All school districts were subject to the yearly visit by some local photographer with the magic birdie box mounted on a tripod. This usually meant three visits-first, to take the posed picture; second to show samples and take orders; and third to deliver the pictures and collect the

usual twenty-five cents. All three visits meant no classes for several hours while the pupils did about as they pleased.

Now at the new school the photographer was a rather small, frail looking man driving a car that fit the same description - a Metz roadster. It was soon discovered by the older boys that by holding on to the back end and maybe with several well placed bricks, the driver had some difficulty in getting the car in motion. This resulted in one of two things happening, either the engine stalled necessitating recanting or a cloud of foul smelling smoke from the friction drive.

One of the jokes back-fired as I remember it; the teacher appeared on the porch during the critical time, took one look at the photographer's predicament, then disappeared to ring the bell for classes to convene. This was a simple case of being saved by the bell.

This man was also employed as a substitute rural mail carrier and would use the Metz when weather and roads were favorable. But here again both the driver and car were the butt end of many jokes because it was said that when the car was caught in a sudden thunder shower the mail was always late as the mail then had to depend on some nearby farmer's horsepower to get it going or even pull the Metz home.

My dad was a farmer but would also contract for logging and lumber hauling for some local sawmillers during any slack period and winter months. During the week yours truly would count the days until Saturday when it was possible to visit the sawmill while dad worked in the woods, but the fun gradually turned into helping with the teams which was much better than sitting in a school house.

*Story to be continued next month....*

### YOUR EDITOR... GARY FISKE

Has everyone noticed the sun still shining at 5PM? Our road here on Duffy Hill looks very much like the roads pictured on Christine Stone's "Softer Side" this month. How much do you want to bet "that" muddy 1940 Stowe road has long been paved over. Not to worry... we are preserving muddy roads here in Enosburg....FOREVER

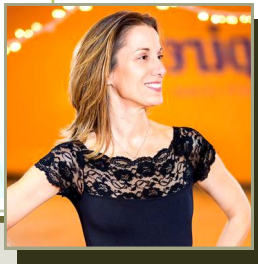
I had a lot of fun collecting the story for this month's feature on Ken Barber. One of the huge benefits of this editor gig is meeting folks like Ken for the first time and "learning" a little how other people have put their lives together. Ken is doing a great job in that respect.

We have another Pevy story from Gael Boardman this month, it's always a treat to get a story from Gael typed on his old "typewriter". Whatever you do, don't ever tell him how easy it is to correct typos using MS Word. I "archive" every one of his wonderful mailings and don't want them to stop. I have noticed there are a number of ways to spell Mr. Peake's first name, kind of depends which "Peake adventure" you are on. Don't you wish you could keep your cell phone and fuel injected engines and go back in time when there were \$75.00 Pierce Arrows to be purchased from old barns?



Wheel Tracks has just been notified..... **Anita Bean** has passed. Anita is the **wife of Carroll Bean** and the **Mom of Seth Bean and Marnita Leach**. Anita has been part of the "institution" of workers at the Car Show in Stowe, for many years. We will miss her.

# "THE SOFTER SIDE"



A Column Shared by Mary Noble (Left), Christine Stone (Ctr) & Nancy Olney (Right)

## "It's All About the Mud" from Christine Stone

**Disclosure:** "The views expressed in this article belong solely to the writer and do not reflect the VAES' idea of a good time".

**Mud season is frustrating for non-mud enthusiasts**, most classic car owners and livestock caretakers alike. If Vermont were to name a state season, mud season would be a viable candidate.

Vermont's fifth season is undeterminably long, it disappears only to reappear spontaneously, striking without notice. June tent weddings, Fourth of July and the Stowe Car Show have all fallen victim to torrential rain and mud. I like car shows best when the solar deity, Ra, chooses to be in attendance.

**Some folks are drawn to mud like a moth to a flame**, adding mud to sporting events to

enhance player and viewer enjoyment. Mud wrestling, mud volley ball, mud football, and let's not forget my personal favorite - mud bogging caravan style, entice a cult following. I have personally experienced mud bogging due to a kind hearted gentleman who saved my husband and I a coveted spot in the back of his 1952 Dodge Power Wagon. His vehicle was meticulously restored and CLEAN which meant its occupants were not motored through a 30' by 60' foot pit of mud. This pit was truly impressive, indiscriminately swallowing up jeeps, miscellaneous retired military vehicles, men - women - children- dogs, and beer coolers. Needless to say my husband now attends this rally alone.

On the brighter side, mud season is the catalyst for change. It ceremoniously welcomes in the running of the sap, spring flowers and the highly coveted dog days of summer.

Picture on the right is from the Library of Congress.  
Taken in April, 1940 and captioned....  
"Muddy road after thaw, near Stowe, Vermont"







The little old lady was driving her VW beetle when she experienced some trouble...it died right there!

Well, she managed to get her vehicle out of traffic, got out via driver's door, proceeded to the front of the car, and raised the "hood". While she stood there looking, another elderly lady pulled up...also in a VW Beetle...and offered some assistance.

"What's wrong?" the second lady asked the first. "I seem to have lost my engine!" replied the first lady. "OH! How lucky!! I just happen to have a spare in my trunk!", exclaimed the second lady.

\*\*\*\*\*

A mechanic was removing a cylinder head from the motor of a Harley motorcycle when he spotted a well-known heart surgeon in his shop.

The surgeon was there waiting for the service manager to come take a look at his bike when the mechanic shouted across the garage, "Hey, Doc, can I ask you a question?"

The surgeon, a bit surprised, walked over to where the mechanic was working on the motorcycle. The mechanic straightened up, wiped his hands on a rag. "So Doc, look at this engine. I open its heart, take the valves out, repair any damage, and then put them back in, and when I finish, it works just like new. So how come I get such a small salary and you get the really big bucks, when you and I are doing basically the same work?"

The surgeon paused, smiled, leaned over, and whispered to the mechanic...

"Try doing it with the engine running"

\*\*\*\*\*

MY FRIEND JACKIE, a busy mother of five boys, frequently did maintenance jobs on her house. One day, after hours on a ladder painting the upper windows, she complained to her husband that she'd felt dizzy. For her next birthday she received some scaffolding.

## Some One-Liners.....

Corduroy pillows; they're making headlines!

#####

Gravity; It's not just a good idea,  
It's the LAW!

#####

Life is too complicated in the morning.

#####

Nobody's perfect. I'm a nobody.

#####

Ask me about my vow of silence.

#####

The hardness of the butter is directly  
proportional to the softness of the bread.



## Ken Barber's title, "VAE Photographer Laureate", has been decided upon by a committee of One....and that is me.

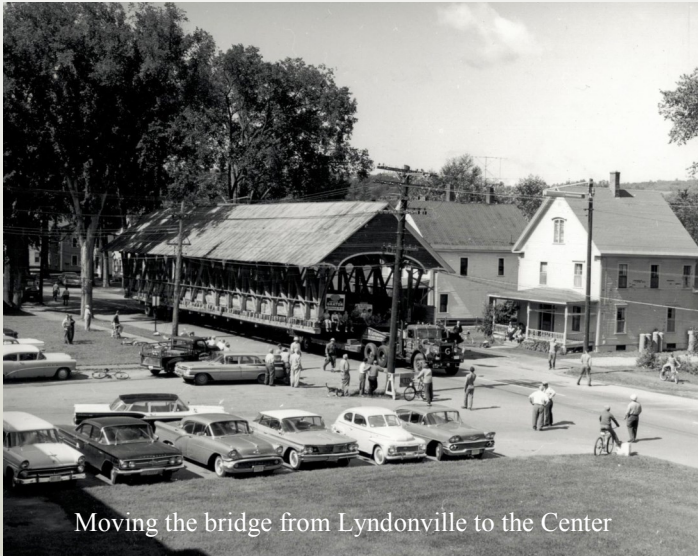
I believe 100% if you were part of that committee you would agree with me. Photography has been a huge part of Ken's life and it just so happens old cars and VAE car shows, all the way back to Spruce Peak, has been some of his main subjects.

I had heard about this "photographer gent" from Barton, Vermont but had never met him. Then, I received two photos in the mail one day and a nice note from him giving me permission to use them in Wheel Tracks. Those photos take us back in time to 1917 during a special period in the automobile history (*they are on page 2 of the last two issues*).

Whenever I visit the NEK (Northeast Kingdom) it is always a treat to me and when I met Ken at the Parson's Corner Restaurant in Barton a few weeks ago it became a special treat. I know more than got my head in the door when Carmon Brown called me by name and directed me to his table. Carmon is a waitress there and if only I had her ability to remember names and be 'that happy'; I would have it made. I doubt if it was two minutes after meeting Ken that I knew he had a very special talent and I also knew that he was going to be one of those long time friends I would always learn from.



Ken with his cat Sarah Jane



Moving the bridge from Lyndonville to the Center

Ken spent most of his career as a machine operator in an area machine shop. Other than an adventure as a young man when he worked for Douglas Aircraft in California for a short time, he has spent most of his life in the NEK. The camera that you can see at his right elbow was his first real dive into photography, it is a Mamiya twin lens reflex and the "dream camera" in it's day. The camera led him to a very good fortune one day when he rented a space for a darkroom at a local business. The landlord asked Ken if he would take some boxes off his hands that were in his attic. The boxes had been left behind by a photographer many years before. It turned out to be hundreds of glass negatives from the early 1900s. Producing photos from those negatives and from the thousands that he has taken with his Mamiya has been Ken's passion over many years. The bridge pictured to the left is one of his Mamiya photos from the 1960s. Ken said he waited for hours to get that shot. Photographers have a very special way of watching life's everyday happenings and picking out scenes that you and I would never pick as important.....but are very important. That is why Ken

Barber is so interesting to talk to and learn from.

Ken has also been struck by the same fever that many VAEers are afflicted with. He says now that he is 86 years old, he seems to be bothered by it less these days. If you have 'the fever', you are required to seek out and drag home any object that even looks like a gas powered vehicle...even diesel powered will do. I remember asking Ken when we first met if he had brought any old cars home, in his days. I got the impression there had not been many. As the conversation went on and a second visit to his home plus a few phone conversations, I have determined there have been many "barn-finds" in his life..... I have seen pictures of piles of steel "basket-cases" on his trailer, only his explanation allowed me to see that it was, in fact, a car of some sort. There was a picture of a collapsed barn with a vehicle hiding in it's shadows. Ken dug that car out and if I have correct notes, he drove that car for a number of years. Another hint that revealed his true identity was the folks he has kept company with over the years. Gael Boardman, Dave Maunsell, Gary Olney, A.K. Miller and Pevy Peake....I needed to hear no more.

Ken is flying to Arizona to visit his brother soon and speaks about his friend wanting to go on a balloon ride while out there. I challenged him (sort of) to doing the ride also, I will ask when he returns to the NEK. What photographer worth his salt would turn down a new adventure.....

*Written by Gary Fiske*



One more of Ken's pieces of history.  
Is that a Newport street lamp we see?





# The Roadside Diner



**How to Cook a Husband** from our proofreader Edi Fiske  
(continued from last month)



It does not make as much difference what you cook him in as how you cook him. See that the linen in which he is wrapped is white and neatly mended with the required number of strings and buttons.

Don't keep him in the kettle by force, as he will stay there himself if proper care is taken .

If he sputters or fizzes, do not be anxious; some husbands do that. Add a little sugar in the form of what confectioners call "kisses", but no vinegar or pepper on any account. A little spice improves them, but it must be used with judgment. Do not try him with anything sharp to see if he is becoming tender. Stir him gently all the while, lest he stay too long in the kettle and becomes flat and tasteless.

If thus treated, you will find him very digestible, agreeing nicely with you, and he will keep as long as you want.



*I found the original clipping in my mother's cookbook, I never tried this recipe, but I thought it was cute... Edi.*

**This from Lloyd Davis of Rutland, Vermont....** “Just a note to say that the latest “Air Cooled News” (A Franklin Car Club Publication) article on mica spark plugs must, I am sure have a Vermont connection. I have always heard that the Benton spark plugs, mentioned in the article, were made in Vergennes, VT. A friend, 50 years ago, had a milk pail almost full of Benton plugs, a bit rusty from age and neglect. I thought little of them at the time as they appeared as common as any. The Splitdorf plugs on the other hand seemed special as their appearance was eye catching”.



## ***Taken from the W.D. Benton of Vergennes website “History and Lore”***

The office of W.D. Benton Inc., Appraisers has a long and storied history. William Benton is a sixth generation Vergennes area resident. His great, great grandfather Azro Benton moved to Vermont from Connecticut. Great grandfather, Leicester Felix Benton was a teacher at Bristol Academy in the 19th century and an entrepreneur. In 1906, after a fire destroyed the shop building of the Parker and Hayes furniture factory, he purchased the site and small office on the easterly side of the Otter Creek. He constructed a brick industrial building and began a screw machine business that manufactured “The Benton” spark plug for Franklin Motor Car, Indian Motorcycle and Montgomery Ward. The business was continued under L.F. Benton’s son Cecil Benton, a former mechanical draftsman with Thomas Edison at the Edison Lab in New Jersey. In 1941, the business was sold and merged with Simmonds Aerospace. Cecil Benton’s son Malcolm became general manager of Simmonds until 1958 when he left to pursue a career in banking. The small Italianate office building that has housed W.D. Benton Inc., Appraisers since 1991 is the same office building used by L.F. Benton nearly a century ago.

***Some of the many different types of spark plugs made over the years.....info from “Spark Plug Collectors Club of America” website***

**Quick Detach** – by moving a lever 1/4 of a turn, you could remove the center for quick easy cleaning without tools;

**Double Ended Plugs** – could be turned over when one end was fouled and still have a plug that worked;

**Breathing Plugs** – were designed to allow clean, cool air to be sucked in over the hot end of the porcelain, which would assist in further burning away of deposits;

**Priming Plugs** – allowed you to put a small amount of gas into the cylinder for easy starting;

**Coil Plugs** – where the coil and the plug were actually combined into a one piece unit;

**Intensified Plugs** – having a second firing gap, that was advertised as allowing the plug to “fire hotter and longer”.





## CABIN AIR FILTER

Most cars sold today have a cabin air filter, usually located behind the glovebox in the dashboard. This will filter dust, pollen and dirt entering the Heating, Air Conditioning and Ventilation System.

I recently noticed the airflow on my Subaru's heater was weak on one of the many below zero mornings. I remembered this car had a cabin air filter, and I know I have never replaced it. The owners manual states the filter should be replaced annually, or every 15 thousand miles, depending on the conditions the car is driven in. This car has 230,000 miles on it, and this was the factory cabin filter, I had never changed it. I live on a very dusty dirt road, so I should theoretically be changing the filter more often.

The filter was inexpensive enough, and in stock at my local friendly auto parts store. When I took the old filter out, I was not surprised to find the filter was quite dirty. I was surprised to find a great deal of dirt and pine needles sandwiched between the A/C evaporator and the filter. I pulled out about a cup of dirt, and a handful of pine needles.

I used a vacuum cleaner to vacuum out the HVAC box, and a paint brush to get all the dirt off the A/C evaporator. I turned the heater fan on high to blow out any remaining dust, dirt and debris.

I was very impressed with the improvement in the airflow with the new filter. The volume of air going through the cars vents was noticeably higher. The heater works much better now.

Cabin air filters in cars are a relatively new phenomenon. As cars have become more and more maintenance free, it is a bit unusual to have something new to remember to maintain. If the new filter does not include a sticker to log the date and the mileage of the replacement, it is a good idea to log this information on a piece of masking tape and place it somewhere on the car as a maintenance reminder.














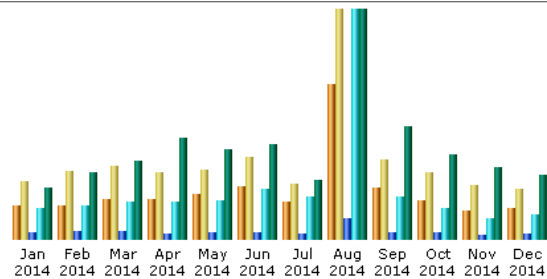
Old filter on the left....

New one on the right

## Does Anyone use our vtauto.org website?

### Top 10 Countries Visiting in January 2015

Countries			Pages	Hits
	United States	us	6,644	36,167
	Ukraine	ua	1,295	1,818
	China	cn	556	1,105
	Israel	il	504	504
	South Africa	za	462	473
	Latvia	lv	433	434
	Germany	de	371	551
	Canada	ca	362	4,034
	Luxembourg	lu	224	224
	Turkey	tr	187	235
	France	fr	150	414



Month	Unique visitors	Number of visits	Pages	Hits	Bandwidth
Jan 2014	1,599	2,757	9,470	45,663	6.34 GB
Feb 2014	1,631	3,254	11,944	49,036	8.31 GB
Mar 2014	1,879	3,508	12,393	53,873	9.64 GB
Apr 2014	1,912	3,197	9,212	53,958	12.59 GB
May 2014	2,120	3,282	10,087	56,430	11.09 GB
Jun 2014	2,537	3,878	10,046	73,555	11.80 GB
Jul 2014	1,799	2,639	7,862	62,042	7.32 GB
Aug 2014	7,352	10,893	30,171	333,977	28.34 GB
Sep 2014	2,455	3,792	10,615	62,432	13.86 GB
Oct 2014	1,823	3,183	10,677	45,245	10.47 GB
Nov 2014	1,390	2,567	6,878	30,635	8.90 GB
Dec 2014	1,485	2,394	7,464	36,471	7.98 GB
Total	27,982	45,344	136,819	903,317	136.64 GB





**Sorry but it was a spoof.... Well sort of.** Last month's pic on page 15 of the supposed picture sent from Chibougamau (pronounced sha-boo-ga-moo), Canada was just a cute joke on a friend. I have never been to Chibougamau, Canada but I have always loved saying the word, maybe someday I will get the chance to drive down their Main Street, if they have one. The city is 500 miles north of us in Quebec and I understand they even have a golf course.

The picture is one that Ken Barber took many years ago of Gael Boardman (pictured left) and the famous Pevy Peake (in suspenders).



**When I offered a ride in my model T to Bill James back in 2012, I didn't know he was a movie star.** Bill joined me in crossing the new Champlain Bridge in the VAE parade to celebrate it's opening. Have you seen him on TV lately in the Heritage Ford commercials? Bill is from Bristol and in 2012 when we crossed the bridge he was going to be 101 years old in just a few months. If you have missed his performances, you can still see the Youtube videos on the net... there are two of them.

Great job Bill!



#### **A small contingent of VAEers are leaving soon for**

Chickasha Oklahoma and the swap meet they have every Spring. The two "seasoned" VAEers are **Vin Cassidy and Gary Olney**. The two "newbees" who might have no idea what they are in for is **Charlie Thompson and Wendell Noble**. Remember the WT article a few years ago about three guys going to Chickasha in a dump truck pulling a trailer full of vender items to be sold? Well the two "seasoned" folks mentioned in this group.... was in that group!

I was enjoying a quiet day last year when my phone rang and Gary Olney was on the line. He asked if I was interested in buying another Franklin, that a fellow vendor in Chickasha had one for sale. He and Vin were at Chickasha waiting for the show gates to open. I declined but asked what it looked like. Gary told me he had not seen it because it was sitting in a garage in Texas at that moment....but if I wanted, they could SWING BY on the way home and take a look for me. A wonderful gesture but do you realize where Texas is in relation to Oklahoma.... and Vermont?

I can't wait to talk to Charlie and Wendell when they get back.

**Do you have a "spark plug collection"?** I would like to hear from you and maybe get a complete story of the hobby for "Wheel Tracks". I knew there are folks out there who collect just about anything in the world but until I did a little research for Lloyd Davis's article about the Benton spark plugs, I had not realized spark plugs were such a big deal. There is even a national spark plug collectors club, can you believe it?

I have heard about collecting old **Barbed wire and Barbie Dolls**. There is even a dude who collects **Already-Been-Chewed Nicotine Gum** (he has a 175 pound ball of it) and then there is the gent who has an extensive **Belly-Button-Lint Collection**. So, why not spark plugs....seems very tame.

**On the right.... another great old car related picture** sent in to Wheel Tracks. Sorry, I have lost the name of the "sender" but thank you for your effort. Do you have more?



## "M" is for Milburn Electric

Greetings enthusiasts! Have you seen a Milburn electric in your travels to auto shows? Boy, I am always happy to see them! Pleasing lines, gorgeous interiors, and usually in beautiful condition! There's a maroon example that regularly makes appearances at the annual Stowe show! The firm's history is pretty interesting.

The founder of the firm, **George Milburn**, was born in England in 1820. As a child, he emigrated to Canada and by 1835 was in Indiana. He married in 1841 and moved to the town of Mishawaka. He opened a successful general store in town and invested some of his profits in the Mishawaka Hydraulic Company, which was involved in maintaining a dam and selling water power. He also diversified and bought a one third interest in James Oliver's first plow company and by 1869 he formed the Milburn Wagon Company.

As his **Wagon Company** expanded, he encouraged the town's fathers to extend the railway connections to his factory. The town failed to act, so Milburn moved his firm to Toledo. After a few years in Toledo, it was reported that in 1875 the Milburn Wagon Company was the largest manufacturers of farm wagons in the world! His factories only required employees to run the machines, as most of the work was mechanized! Wow!

### Greetings from Chris Chartier And His next "Auto ABCs"

Join us for a walk through the alphabet learning  
about obscure American auto makes



With the coming of the auto age, Milburn contracted to make some bodies for the Ohio electric car. There were even some negotiations to merge the two companies, but that never came to pass. Instead, Milburn decided to make their own electric automobile, and did this with real style! Their car was lighter and cheaper than other conventional electric at the time. Several different models were offered. It is estimated that they made about 4000 examples in their run from 1915 through 1923. GM bought the firm in 1923, which phased out their operation shortly after its acquisition. Milburn continued to make electric trucks, parts for existing models and special order vehicles. The firm carried on and some of its diversified interests made window operators and even convertible tops for cars.

M is for Milburn. The founder, George, was certainly an energetic dynamo! Those surviving cars are sure to be appreciated! See you next time, "On the Road Again!"



Editor's notes from the "American Cars catalog, 1805-1942.....

**The car has no "steering wheel" but is "tiller driven" instead.**

*The roadsters could go 19 mph and the heavier coupe only 15 mph with it's 76 volt General Electric DC electric motors .  
The driving range was 60 to 75 miles.*

**The company advertised in 1918** that they had devised a way where there was no delay when the driver needed a "re-charge". Milburn put the batteries in wheeled boxes to facilitate rapid exchange of spent batteries for charged ones at central power exchanges. When General Motors paid \$2 million for the company in 1923 the Milburn company workers were allowed to stay on for an extra 2 months to finish up cars and bodies that were under contract.....but then Buick moved in and Milburn Electric was no more.



The Planned Alaska Trip, June 12th to July 1st, 2015

## At Fairbanks - the End of the Alaska Highway



EARLY SNOWMOBILE IN THE FOUNTAINHEAD ANTIQUE AUTO MUSEUM IN FAIRBANKS

Snowmobiles are peculiar to Alaska. They were constructed there from various cannibalized vehicles long before BOMBARDIER began making a fortune manufacturing and selling them. This MODEL-T based vehicle was built to transport the adventurous along snow-covered streets in Fairbanks, prior to them being paved.



The LOOSE MOOSE Café in Fairbanks

With 50 meters of permafrost underneath our feet, we'll make a visit to the LOOSE MOOSE Café at 3450 Airport Road in Fairbanks, where we'll choose from a menu including Caribou Steak Alaska or the Loose Moose Signature ½ lb Burger: a blend of buffalo, beef, and pork. It all comes with homemade soup and fresh salad. We'll be tempted with hand-dipped milkshakes for dessert! The restaurant also has a butcher shop that sells game meat from the north. Welcome to the 1950s.

Remember, the plan is that the VAE members will meet in Dawson Creek, British Columbia on June 12, 2015. We will form a caravan with the utility vehicles bringing up the rear. One will have a towing package to rescue any lost souls having breakdowns in the wilderness. The goal is to arrive in Fairbanks on or slightly before June 21<sup>st</sup>, the summer solstice, when we'll experience the "Midnight Sun". At midnight, it will still be twilight in Fairbanks on June 21<sup>st</sup>.



**Event:** "Touch a Truck"

**Location:** Essex Town Recreational Area, Essex Center, Vermont

**Date:** May 2nd, 2015 Saturday 9am till noon

**Needed:** 5 unique vehicles that children can view and sit in.

This event happens every year and there are fire trucks, snow plows, log loaders, excavators, and tractor trailers. The organizers have given the VAE an opportunity to represent the club at this event.

If you have that old vehicle that would stir the attention of a child, please contact Bob Lalancette 802 849 2692.

## STATE LINE

**SPEEDWAY**.... Picture on page 2 and this page sent in by Ken Gypson of Poestenkill, NY

**Sunday afternoon?** State Line was the fifth track within about 25 miles that ran Sunday afternoons in the late 40's into the early 50's. And, car counts were all more than sufficient to put on a great afternoon of stock car racing. The four other tracks to run Sunday afternoons were Pine Bowl, Carroll's Grove, Rt. 66 and Burden Lake Speedways.

**State Line** was located on Rt. 67 between Hoosick, NY (where the Battle of Bennington actually took place and which was called Hoosack at the time) and North Bennington,

VT. Just as Rt. 67 took a sweeping right hand curve into VT from NY and across the road from an 1800's brick tavern, which still stands. State Line was a converted  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile horse track that was perfect for stock cars. There were no trees to clear because before it was a horse track it was an open field. It even had a large covered grandstand already. Interestingly, some of the grandstand was in NY along with the tavern which could serve beer as VT couldn't because of New England's "blue laws". "Blue laws" would come into play a few years down the road.

**The first race ran on August 24th, 1947** and State Line ran until 1958. Supposedly, Joie Chitwood of Hell Drivers fame won the first feature event. Early on, Joe Wunderlick was known as the "guy to beat". Joe went on to be one of Kenny Tremont's 115 first major sponsors. Wunderlick's reign ended with drivers like George Welch, Bot Mott, Don Rounds, Pete Corey, Jeep Herbert and, of course, the well-known Steve Danish from Cropseyville, NY, who invaded the half mile oval. Other notable drivers to run State Line were Rene Charland, Link Petit, Carl Fink, Henry Bouchard, Cliff Kotery, Don Hendonberg, George Gallup and Dee Goodermote.

Remember the "blue laws"? The State of VT and Bennington finally got their way and shut down Sunday racing. Racing changed to Friday nights with an occasional "National Championship" race running on Saturdays.

Like the aforementioned tracks, State Line succumbed to the rising cost/investments that stock car racing was incurring and of course tracks like Fonda and Lebanon Valley were stealing both cars and drivers. The BTL truck leasing company now occupies the land that once hosted large crowds of cars and spectators on weekends from '47 to '58. Another great race track, now just a fond memory.

I would like to thank **John Danish**, Steve Danish's son, for many of the important details in this article. You may also want to visit <http://catamountstadium.com/bennington.htm> for more photos of State Line.

Jeep Herbert #3 and Steve Danish #61 in turn 3 or 4.

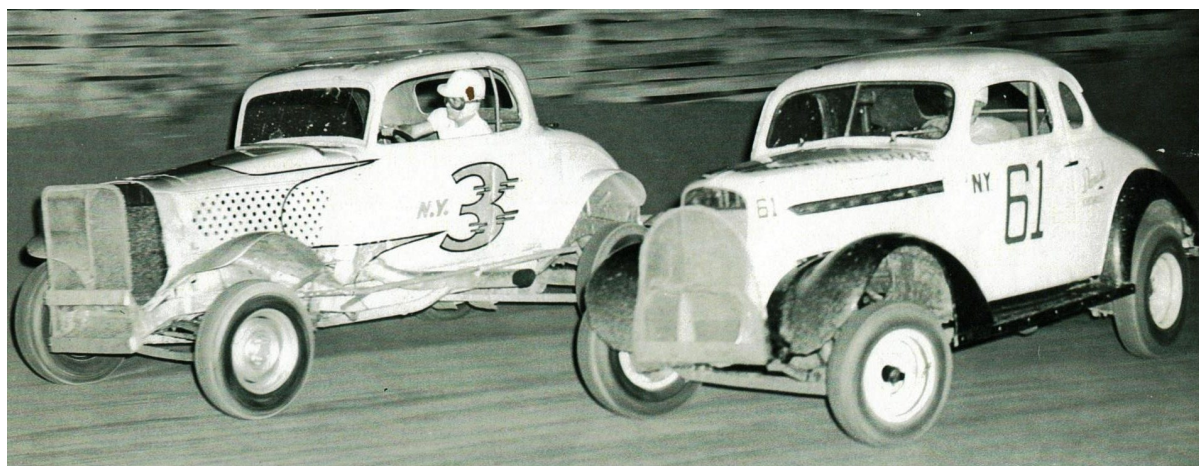
No belt restraints visible and you could possibly slide a dollar bill under the left rear tire on #61.



**L-O-O-K**  
**NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP**  
AT THE  
**STATE LINE**  
**SPEEDWAY - RT. 67**  
Between No. Hoosick, N. Y. and No. Bennington, Vt.  
**OPEN COMPETITION**  
**MODIFIED and SPORTSMAN**  
NOTICE, NO MUD, SNOW, CUT OR RACE TIRES  
Fastest Half Mile Dirt Track in the East  
**Sunday, Aug. 22, 2:15 P.M.**  
**RAIN DATE AUG. 29**  
GUARANTEE PAYOFF AS FOLLOWS

4 HEATS	30	15	10	5	5	5	5	5	5
30	30	15	10	5	5	5	5	5	5
CONST	1	2	3	4	5	5	5	5	5
50 LAP FEATURE	6	7	8	9	10	10	10	10	10
	\$400.00	300.00	200.00	100.00	75.00				

General Admission \$1.25 — Children Under 12 Free  
Accompanied by Parents  
Grandstand Seats 25c — Box Seats 50c  
Cars and Drivers to Compete from 10 States  
**RACING TONITE ALSO 8:30 P. M.**





## Gael Boardman tells a story of bringing home a "barn-find".

**It must have been in the middle 1950s;** my most active or at least my most involved "old car years". Most of this activity evolved around my position as the acolyte and groupie to Peveril F. Peake of Bristol, VT. There were a number of us young folks that came under the Peake influence..... if you were about my age and lived within a couple hundred miles of Bristol, chances are you did. Ask Clark Wright, George Farr, Steve Dana, Art Monaghan, et al. It was an experience. Pev knew everything, always had a wonderful new (old) barn find, would let you drive it on occasion.... and sometimes found you one.

**My 1928 Willys Knight was such a car.** Purchased from a junkyard in 1954 for 35 dollars, Pevvie bought it as a birthday present to himself in the Fall. It is a coupe and he thought that it would be a lot warmer than his Jewett open touring car (that is, when it would start.... with it's sleeved valve system, 9 quarts of oil and the usual tired 6 volt battery). Pev loved the Knight but his wandering eye turned elsewhere. Oil consumption was high and his Saturday afternoon barn-broom paint job diminished its luster. I bought the car out of temporary storage in the carriage house of the old Bristol Inn for what he had recently spent on an aftermarket exhaust pipe: \$12.00.

I drove the Knight on and off as oil permitted through high school. It helped me pass a biology exam but that is another story.

**Pev came by one day and entangled me in yet another barn extraction,** this being in the Colchester area. We agreed to take the Knight because he always drove the new find home, almost always. Mid afternoon or later we arrived at the first house in, on Redmond Road (off Rt2 towards the islands). It was the Redmonds. Wonderful people with a wonderful 1931 Pierce Arrow in their modest garage. A 5 passenger, 4 door sedan, blue and nearly perfect. The Redmonds were long-term seasonal people with extensive property that extended to the lakeshore. It was only later that we got to see the barn down there..... another story.

The Peake "**Bring 'em Back Alive**" philosophy included a can of gas, a bucket for radiator water, a hopeful battery, quite a lot of Marvel Mystery Oil ..... and faith. I was supposed to have the tools I guess...and probably to use them as needed. We did the usual stuff, tires up, water, battery in and then the high priest poured the Mystery Oil.... quite a lot....was too much, into each of the 8 spark plug holes and then, what was left, into the gas tank. "It is good stuff you know", he always told me. She turned over with the biological gurgling sound until the battery gave up. "Not to worry..." We would tow the car, leaving all the remaining amps in the battery to fire it up. The Knight to the rescue. We (Mr. Redmond and I) pushed the Pierce out of the garage, backed the Knight into the towing position, hitched up and took off toward Rt2. Peake in the Pierce, I was too dirty by now, and me flugging the Knight. Did I mention that the sleeve-valved Knight smoked heavily as it ran? Worse when wound up in 1st gear. I can also vouch for the fact that a 1931 Pierce Arrow-8 with most of a gallon of Marvel Mystery Oil down its bore also smokes....heavily.....that is when it starts....and it did....and stayed smoking (a lot) as long as you kept the RPMs up (a lot).

**The net of this tale** is that in zero visibility we "clouded" out on to Rt.2 unseeing and unseen by anyone as solid matter, and a Pierce is pretty solid matter. We didn't dare shut anything off. Fortunately, we drifted back down Redmond Road killing only mosquitoes. I have never seen so much smoke.

The next day P.F. did drive the Pierce home. The sky had cleared and the Pierce turned out to be an exceptional car. I was never able to get-up my half of the \$75.00 purchase price much less the \$275.00 it sold for. The new owner was a bus driver from Richmond, VT. I still have the Knight. It still smokes. Charlie Thompson, the Knights Godfather, knows.



This a "contact print" that photographers, in the day of film, would use to determine the prints they want to keep. This belongs to Ken Barber and the picture below is a photo of Pev Peake that never made it to a regular photo.

The car above is a Willys that Ken brought home from Boston and later sold to Clifford French.



### VAAS Directors

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Dick Wheatley-*Treasurer*

Gary Olney

Tom McHugh, *Vice Chair*

David Sander, *Chair*

Bob Chase

Jim Carey

*\* Officers will be appointed in the  
January meeting*

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John Des Groseilliers 802-472-5541 (*1 year*)

Duane Leach 802-849-6174 (*1 year*)

### **MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT TEAM**

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Antique and Classic Car Meet (Stowe)

Bob Chase, Chair, 802-253-4897

Duane Leach, Co-Chair, 802-849-6174

### **Mission Statement:**

The Vermont Antique Automobile Society is a tax free 501c3 organization dedicated to the preservation, protection, promotion and appreciation of automotive history and technology.

Wheel Tracks is a monthly newsletter published in print and electronically for the public, and for the VAE/VAAS membership.

Monthly deadline  
The 10th

Your editor and other authors are made aware of some new products, services or information that they feel may have value to VAE's membership. These products, services or informationals are not an endorsement by the VAE unless otherwise noted. The opinions are solely those of the particular article's author.

\*\*\*Contact Us At\*\*\*

[vaeinfo@gmail.com](mailto:vaeinfo@gmail.com)

or

\*\*\*Our Website at\*\*\*

[vtauto.org](http://vtauto.org)

Membership  
Only \$30  
2 years  
\$50

### **EVENTS.... WHAT'S NEXT ?**

## **"VAE April Monthly Meet"**

**Get the Mothballs Out, Tour**



**Saturday April 25th.... Get the Mothballs Out, Tour**

Drive to Rosie's Restaurant on RT 7 in Middlebury for 10:30 brunch.

Person who has DRIVEN their antique or classic the farthest will get their meal bought by Bob Lalancette.

Buy your own Brunch for \$10. Contact Joanna Conti (802-244-8375) if you are attending so we can have a room arranged for us.

**May 15th....Friday 1 PM** Island Pond School Meet and Show. Rain date is the following Friday the 22nd. We will have a bring-your-own-lunch then meet at the school to educate the students about the advancements in safety equipment. Money raised from entry fee will be used for the students' class trip. Fee to be determined.

**June 5,6,7.....Shelburne Museum Vintage Auto Festival**, Food available for purchase at event.

**July 19 Sunday..... Noontime Picnic Silver Lake State Park** in Barnard, VT. Contact Joanna if your going so we can get the reduced entry fee of \$2 per person. Bring your own meat to grill, volunteers to bring salads? Water and soda provided by VAE. Rain or shine event as we will have the pavilion building.

**August 7,8,9.... Stowe Car Show.**

**September 12.... Saturday Garage tour.** Let Joanna know if you want us to visit so route can be planned. We will stop to buy your own lunch.

**October 3rd..... Gypson tour**, bring your own lunch.

**November 7..... Annual Meeting** Holy Family Parish Hall, Essex Junction. Prepaid meal by attendee provided.

**December 13 Sunday..... Noontime Holiday Yankee Swap.** Steak House in Berlin. In Large Rear, Buy your own meal.

*Quarterly VAE Board Meetings Whitney Hill, Williston, VT 7 PM  
April 6, July 7, October 5.*





# Wheel Tracks Classified

**Order Your VAE Name Tag**  
Write \$7.00 check to: Phyllis Skinner  
PO Box 208 Northfield Falls, VT  
05664-0208

**March  
Bumper Sticker...**

Lead me not into  
temptation, I can  
find it myself.

**WAITSFIELD MOTOR CAR COMPANY**

VAE President's Award Winners....

1912 AC Sociable 1948 MG TC  
1925 Voisin 1927 Packard

Phone: 802-496-4277  
E-mail: oldcar1@gmavt.net

DAVID G. STEINMAN  
WAITSFIELD, VT 05673

**For Sale....**



Die Cast VW Coca-Cola model. About 9" long. Made in France. \$60



Die Cast 1912 Ford Coin bank. 1:24th scale Advertising Crayola.



Limited Edition. Becker AutoRadio Europa 582 from a

79 MB280SLC. \$35.00

Jim Sears Packardsu8@netscale.net  
802-598-1663

5/15

**For Sale.....** Both rear doors and the driver's front door for a 1940 Packard 110. Complete with all internal mechanicals and handles, one with glass. Should fit 1939 and 1941 models as well. \$75.00 each negotiable. Call 802-476-6097.

5/15

**For Sale.... VAE Tour Banners.**  
Sturdy Cotton with ties, \$20.00.  
"Your car will wear it softly"  
Wendell Noble 802-893-2232  
wnoble@myfairpoint.net



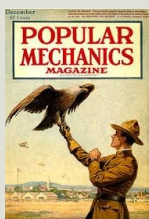
**For Sale.....** About a 1930 Ford engine. Former owner stated it had babbitt work done at 'The Babbitt Pot Shop'. Has new high-iron compression head. I have no paperwork from former owner. \$700.00. Call Marvin Ball 802-425-3529

6/15

**Wanted.....** Popular Science and Popular Mechanics type magazines from before WWII. I loaned some from my shelf and they never came back.

Call Ken Barber, 802- 525-3787

6/15



**For Sale..... 1950 Ford Fordor** w/ sandblasted and painted chassis. Complete minus engine/tranny. \$1,500 of EMS sheet metal panels.

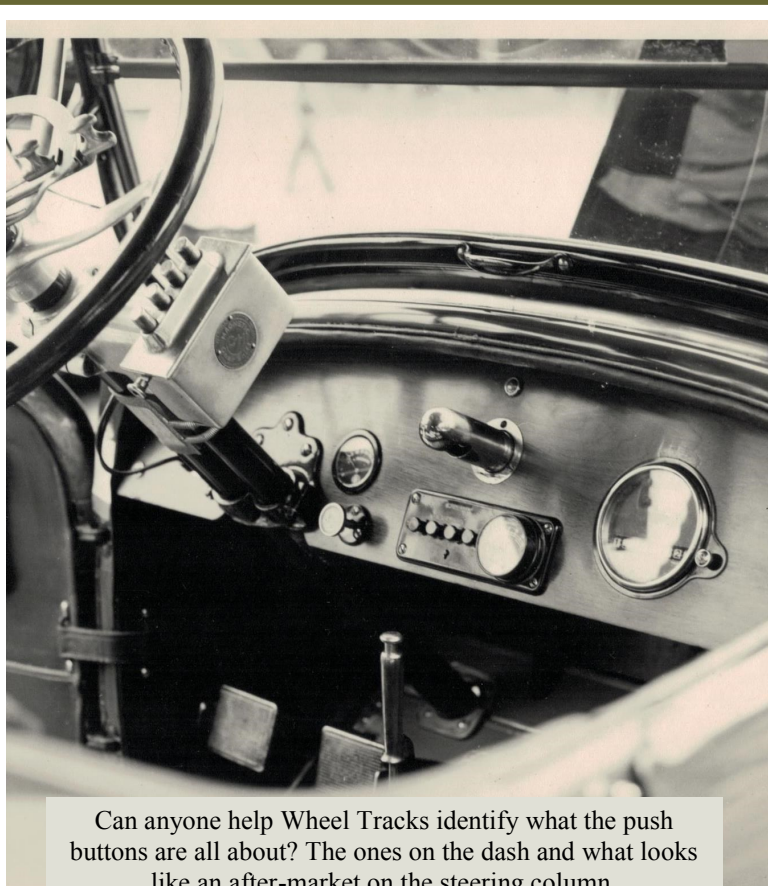
Also **1951 coupe**. No engine/tranny/interior. \$500 of new steering box components. Combine the 2 to make one? \$3,000 for both. Can deliver vehicles for expenses.

Ken Gypson 518 423 7565 kengypson@yahoo.com 6/16

**For Sale.....** 1931 Model A Ford Pickup. Runs great, new (in-the-box) bed, fenders, bumper etc. Put it together and head down the road. Reason for sale: Loyalties have changed and there is a Dodge that needs that spot in the barn. Price guide says finished truck value \$14k plus, all kinds of room with sale price of \$8700.00. Call Gary Fiske 802-933-7780.



5/15



Can anyone help Wheel Tracks identify what the push buttons are all about? The ones on the dash and what looks like an after-market on the steering column.  
What is the make of the car?





**VERMONT AUTOMOBILE ENTHUSIASTS**

Please Send Dues or Address Changes to:

**Christina McCaffrey**

Membership Secretary

**89 Ledge Road**

**Burlington, VT 05401-4140**

*christina.mccaffrey@vtmednet.org*



Mary & Wendell Noble  
On tour in their 1928 Dodge Brothers Coupe

**April 2015**



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**Be Nice.....Buy a VAE Membership for a Friend**



**Ahhhhh....The ways to say "GOODBYE" to  
the winter of 2014/2015**