

# Wheel Tracks



Ernie Clerihew's 1960 Hillman Minx  
The story on page 6 & 7



The Official Monthly Publication of "Vermont Automobile Enthusiasts" by "The Vermont Antique Automobile Society"

3]... Our new President's 1st. column

4]... Bengt Ohman's Chevy & The Chicken Gun

5]... A Little Humor

8]... Dave's Garage, This month we  
discuss Batteries

9]... Compelling Gossip....

11]... The Stone Family gets the 2013  
President's Restoration Award

12]... Our Guest Car Club, The Tri-Pedals

13]... Gael's "The Way It Was...back in The Day"

15]... The Classifieds

"I wonder how many people don't get the one they want,  
but end up with the one they're supposed to be with." .....*Fannie Flagg*



## VAE OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

**Jim Sears – Chairman**  
802-482-2698 packardsu8@netscape.net  
**Robert Lalancette – President**  
802-849-2692 rjlalaancette@myfairpoint.net  
**Dan Noyes – 1st vice & Activities Chair**  
802-730-7171 dan@streambanks.org  
**Dave Lamphere- 2nd. Vice & Assistant Activity Chair** 802-878-4020 davelamp@together.net  
**Dick Wheatley- Treasurer**  
802-879-9455 rwheatcpa@aol.com  
**Bill Sander,- Recording Secretary**  
802-644-5487 sander@pshift.com  
**Joanna Therren Conti** 802-244-8375  
**Les Skinner Exp. 2014** 802-485-8150  
**Ed Hilbert** 802-453-3743

Auditors– **Leo Laferriere, Doris Bailey,**  
**Ray Tomlinson**

## VAAS Directors

**Wendell Noble– Chairman**  
**Tom McHugh**  
**Charlie Thompson– Secretary**  
**Dick Wheatley–Treasurer**  
**Gael Boardman**  
**David Sander**  
**Bob Chase**

## **MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT TEAM**

**Membership Secretary (Ex-Officio)**  
**Christina McCaffrey**  
89 Ledge Road  
Burlington VT 05401-4140  
VAEmembership@gmail.com  
christina.mccaffrey@vtmednet.org

**VAE Show Chairs/Board Ex-Officio**  
**Antique and Classic Car Meet (Stowe)**  
**Bob Chase, Chair, 802-253-4897**  
**Duane Leach, Co-Chair, 802-849-6174**

## **Wheel Tracks Editor (Ex-Officio)**

**Gary Fiske**  
Home 802-933-7780  
cell 802-363-1642  
gafiske@gmail.com  
2503 Duffy Hill Road  
Enosburg Falls, Vermont 05450

**Edi Fiske—Wheel Tracks proof-reader**  
**Clark & Isabelle Wright- Burma Shave editors**  
**Rachel Smith- Webmaster**

**Sunshine Chair**  
**Christina McCaffrey 802-862-3133**  
christina.mccaffrey@vtmednet.org

**Welcoming Committee**  
**David Hillman**  
david.hillman@vtmednet.org

**L. Brown & Sons of Barre, VT- publisher**

### **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**

**\*\*\*Our Website Is\*\*\***

**vtauto.org**

**Membership**  
**Only \$30**

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

### **January**



**January 6th, Monday 7PM.**

VAE Board of Directors meeting at Whitney Hill Homestead's common room. Williston, VT. All are invited.



**January 20th, 1:30 PM**

VAAS Board meeting at Dick Wheatley's office in Essex. All are welcome.



**January 25th, Saturday 11AM**

VAE/ AACA meet at St. Leo's Hall in Waterbury.

See page 9 for details.

### **February**



**February 22 – Brownell Library, Essex Junction –Automobile Crime**

Scene Investigation with Richard McLay... You won't believe how it happened! Special Guest....W.N.

### **March**



**March 15th – Good News**

**Garage** Learn how a donated car changes a life – Tour the shop that has helped over 4,000 individuals and families across New England get back on the road to future financial success by helping with transportation.

### **April**



**April 7th, Monday 7PM.**

VAE Board of Directors meeting at Whitney Hill Homestead's common room. Williston, VT. All are invited



**April 26 - VAE Meet.....TBA**

### **May**



**May 24 - VAE Meet .....TBA**

### **June**

**June 21st.....** 50th National MG T meet in Middlebury

### **July**



**July 7th, Monday 7PM.**

VAE Board of Directors meeting at Whitney Hill Homestead's common room. Williston, VT. All are invited.

### **September**



**September (no date yet)– Allsops Best of Britain Newbury VT Jaguar E-Types restoration shop ..Tentative**

### **October**



**October 6th, Monday 7PM.**

VAE Board of Directors meeting at Whitney Hill Homestead's common room. Williston, VT. All are invited







## FROM THE PRESIDENT... BOB LALANCETTE

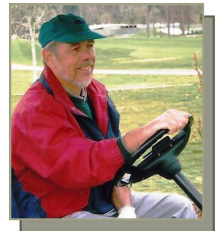
As your new VAE president, I would like to wish you all a Happy New Year. The anticipation of working on car projects, attending the monthly meets, and having the dirt road dry up so that the Nova can make it to the black top is exciting. As I look back to the past year, there is one thing that really sticks out for me. **Bill Turner's** story and pictures and the deaths of club members **Joe Kaelin** and **Gene Towne** prompts me to ask a question of all of you. What is your story? Only a few members can match the name, face, and story. There was a PBS half hour show called "Roadside Stories". The host put signs up along the road asking "what's your story?" He would then wait for someone to stop and tell him something about themselves. The people would think they had nothing but even a simple thing turned out to be interesting. We need to do this for each other.

**In the next few months**, I will tell you my story. I hope to show how easy it is to do. Just put the pen to the paper. If you can't type it on the computer and send it to us, don't worry. We will find someone to type it up for you. Find those old pictures and we can scan them to accompany the story. This is a very important personal project for you all. Wheel Tracks is more than just about cars, it is about the people who own them and the story that was created with it.

So let me start. My first experience with an automobile was with Dad's 55 Chevy two door station wagon. He did not work on cars as a hobby; just kept it on the road. We did not have child seats, Mom with the baby on her lap with two kids in the back seat, Dad driving with two more kids on the front bench seat, and two of us in the way back, on a piece of carpet. The luggage went in the roof top suction cup rack covered by the canvas that Dad sewed. He was in the Navy and did everything from welding to making duffle bags and repairing our country's flags. My sister and I would tear up little pieces of paper, drop them into the thumb hole of the spare tire cover, and think we saw them fly out of the rear of the car. When one of the recapped tires blew out, we found out that they just filled the spare tire compartment. Dad thought he had mice in the car! See you next month. Bob

### My 2014 Wish-List.....

### YOUR EDITOR... GARY FISKE



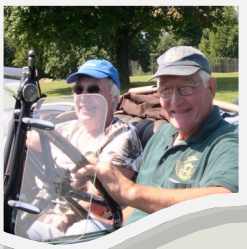
**I wish.....** the **Vermont Automobile Enthusiasts**, our beloved 61 year old car club and the **Vermont Antique Automobile Society**, our VAE non-profit arm, would become one organization as we originally planned. The duplicate work of keeping the two going, the "us-and-them" that rears its head every once in a while and the fantastically great possibilities for our future are just three good reasons why it should happen as soon as possible.

**I wish.....** we could take our newsletter **Wheel Tracks** to another level in 2014. I am not asking for a big move, just a move to keep it fresh and interesting. I hear all the time how much everyone likes the publication but I worry that it will become oh-hum. I am encouraged when I listen to our new President, Bob Lalancette and 1st vice, Dan Noyes when they tell me some of their plans for 2014. My hope is their energy will spill over into Wheel Tracks.

**I wish.....** we could make some better connections with other car clubs. Most all car clubs deal with similar hopes and dreams for the future. I am 100% certain we could help one another out if we could find that boundary-reach that we would need. We all have our ways of dealing with membership levels, bylaws, the IRS, material for our newsletter, etc. We all have our own basket of 'magic' that keeps us unique, I can't imagine a good reason why we should not be sharing more.

**I wish.....** I had the discipline to reduce my shop projects to one or two....well, maybe three or four. I can't believe the fun I have when I walk into my shop and decide what I 'feel' like doing that day. But what happens is a sort of 'energy scatter' and at the end of the day a lot gets done but on 20 projects instead of two. I don't dare ask a member how to fix my problem. When I asked a member years ago how to treat my urge of wanting more old cars I got what turned out as terrible advice. He told me I should go ahead and buy one in the Spring and that would take care of the urge for the rest of the year. Well it's been maybe five years and guess what has happened.....yup, 5 more old cars. I don't think it is suppose to work like that.

### VAAS LISTENING POST from Wendell Noble, VAAS Chairman



As the holiday season and the new year end close in on us, we are tying up a couple of loose ends before year end. Gael Boardman, Andy Barnett and Jim Sears presented our donation to Tom Denenberg of the Shelburne Museum to support the display of transportation history. Appropriately, the presentation took place on the deck of the Ticonderoga. Within a week of this writing, we intend to formally present our donation for Vermont Disaster Relief to a key representative of that program.

Throughout the year, the directors have met monthly with full agendas, lively discussions and plenty of follow up actions. We are taking this month of December off. Our next meeting will be the annual organizational meeting on January 20th at 1:30 in Dick Wheatley's office. All club members are welcome and encouraged to join us. Two

new members will be joining the board as two present directors retire. This turn over is very desirable. It is important that as many members as possible have an opportunity to take a direct role in guiding the VAAS programs and represent their points of view. There's a lot of gratifying work to be done and I look forward to seeing another year of enthusiastic participation by all members. Here's wishing you a Merry Christmas and a happy fruitful New Year.



## "THE SOFTER SIDE"

A Column Shared & Written by Mary Noble (Left) & Nancy Olney (Right)



Mary and Nancy are off this month.

A welcome break for them. Wheel Tracks receives many encouraging comments and The Softer Side is always toward the top of the list.

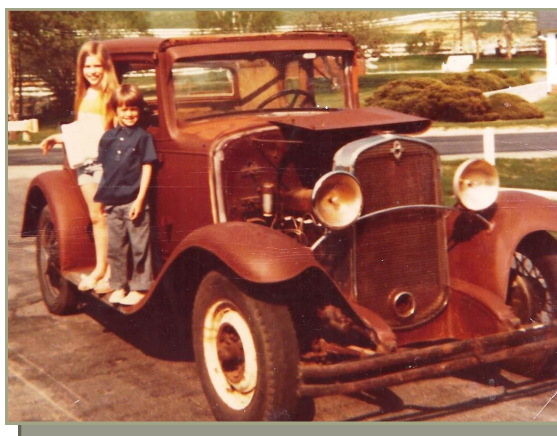
Thank you ladies for your hard work.

### Old Cars in My Genes by VAE member Bengt Ohman

Old car genes come from my grandfather Pontus Lindstrom, who was one of the early car owners in Sweden. It was a **Darracq automobile**, and his license plate in the province where he resided was T1. In the early twenties he especially enjoyed ice racing with his car. I obviously inherited his genes.

In 1975, after much searching, I found my car sitting in a gas station in Potsdam, NY. It cost me about \$250, and was a 1931 Chevrolet five-window coupe with a rumble seat. The roof and rumble seat were missing and the seat was in pieces.

Some years after I purchased the Chevy, our daughter asked to be brought home from high school graduation in the car (1984). Unfortunately, I disappointed her because it was not road worthy in any way at that time. The same request came from our son, three years younger, and, again, disappointment.



Along the way, I found bits of the upholstery's filling scattered about the auto. A family of mice had settled in. I took the seat out and shook them out. Little by little, over quite a number of years, the car took shape and today looks like a '31 Chevy with rumble seat! Hopefully it will be completely finished for our five-year old granddaughter's graduation.

*Chevrolet reclaimed first place in the United States in 1931 producing 619,554 vehicles. In 1931 Chevrolet offered 12 different body styles ranging in price from \$475 to \$650. Power and performance were continuations of the year before but with considerable refinement of the new-for-1930 six-cylinder engine that was refined and brought up to about 50 horsepower*



*Not a picture of Bengt's G-father's car, instead this is one of the 1st. they made in 1905. The Darracq was French made founded in 1896. By 1905 it established branches in the UK, Spain and Italy and then expanded into both cars and aviation engines. In 1920 the British arm became the majority shareholder in Sunbeam-Talbot-Darracq ('STD Motors') which was sold to the Rootes group in 1935 when the Darracq ceased to be a distinct marque*

### The story of the Chicken Gun Sent to Wheel Tracks by VAEer Dave Steinman

Scientists at NASA built a gun specifically to launch standard 4 pound dead chickens at the windshields of airliners, military jets and the space shuttle, all traveling at maximum velocity. The idea is to simulate the frequent incidents of collisions with airborne fowl to test the strength of the windshields. British engineers heard about the gun and were eager to test it on the windshields of their new high speed trains. Arrangements were made, and a gun was sent to the British engineers.

When the gun was fired, the engineers stood shocked as the chicken hurled out of the barrel, crashed into the shatterproof shield, smashed it to smithereens, blasted through the control console, snapped the engineer's back-rest in two, and embedded itself in the back wall of the cabin, like an arrow shot from a bow.

The horrified Brits sent NASA the disastrous results of the experiment, along with the designs of the windshield and begged the U.S scientists for suggestions.

NASA responded with a one-line memo -- "Defrost the chicken." (True Story)





A real estate agent bought a new sports car and had the engine revamped so that it would go even faster. I asked him

why he needed a car that goes 150 m.p.h.? He chuckled and replied, "I advertise this one house as being 5 minutes from shopping and I don't want to lie!"

\*\*\*\*\*

The man pulled over to the side of the road when he saw the police lights in his rear view mirror. "How long have you been riding around without a tail light?" asked the officer. "Oh, no!" screamed the man, jumping out of the car. "Calm down, it isn't that serious." said the officer. "Wait'll my family finds out." "Where's your family?" "They're in the trailer that was hitched to the car!"

\*\*\*\*\*

Paula was having a hard time selling her car because it had 250,000 miles on it. She told her friend, so her friend told her about Jay the mechanic that could turn back the mileage for a couple of bucks. A few days later she met that friend and the friend asked her, "well, did you sell the car?" "Are you crazy?" Paula replied. "It only has 50,000 miles on it why would I sell it?!"

\*\*\*\*\*

When I was giving driving classes to a bunch of teenager's, I had one smart kid who always had something to answer back. So one day I said to the class, "you know that 90% of accidents happen within 3 miles of your home!" So this smart kid raises his hand, "what do you want Tommy?" I ask. He grins and replies, "big deal I'll move!"

\*\*\*\*\*

My 16 year old son was getting his permit, so I kept telling him, "remember, when you get into your car with friends do not start driving until everyone is strapped in." He kept on asking me to repeat it, so finally I asked him, " why do you need it repeated so many times?" "Don't worry" he replied, "I just love hearing the words 'your car'! "

## Husband/wife communications art!

He: "My dear, what can I help you with?"

She: "Take this bag of potatoes, peel half of them and put them in the pot."



### WORDS YOU DON'T HEAR ANYMORE.

Fix your nylons - your seam is crooked. I am rubber, you are glue.

Whatever you say bounces off me and sticks to you

Kindergarten baby, stick your head in gravy

Step on a crack, break your mother's back

Gotcha!

"What time is it kids? It's Howdy Doody Time?"

"Move, are you made of glass? I can't see through you".

"You're just like your father."

"When you get my age, you will understand."

My mom taught me anticipation with this phrase. "Just wait until we get home."

My Mom also taught me about receiving. "You're going to get it when you get home."

"We got a new typewriter at work, they are so cool, no more keys, it has a new thing called the 'selectric ball."

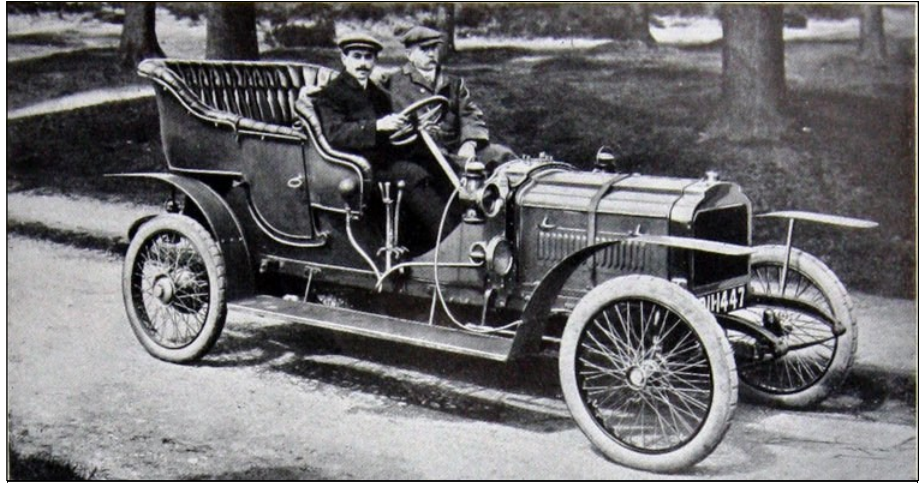
"Meet me at Big Boy Friday night."

Remember when the movies was \$1.00...that included 2 movies, a cartoon, the news AND a coke and popcorn?

# MY 1960 HILLMAN MINX WITH EASIDRIVE AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION

By Ernie Clerihew

**Hillman is a name not well known** in the automotive field anymore. Hillmans are British and like most British manufacturers of automobiles, the Hillman Motor Car Company is defunct. The last Hillman imported into this country was the Super Minx of the mid 1960s. The company was still being run by Lord Rootes, a founder, at the time. The Hillman Motor Car Company began in 1907. Previous to that, the company had made sewing machines and bicycles. Hillman played a role in pioneering the American automobile market, opening doors for other makes back in the days when those funny foreign cars drove a lonely road in this country.



Louis Coatalen, William Hillman's partner and designer, at the wheel of the first Hillman car in 1907



Hillman had been importing small sedans since before World War II, but after the war, the small car market became more competitive. To get a leg up in styling, Lord Rootes hired the designer Raymond Lowey (think Studebaker Hawk of 1953) in 1948 to design a new car. Thus

came about the shaping of my car, which takes styling cues from the 1953 Studebaker and the 1955-56 Ford. To further compete in the American market, Rootes sought a technical advantage as well. After all, some American manufacturers were starting to build "compact" cars, bidding for sales with fresh new packages. Consider the Ford Falcon or the Chevy Corvair. In 1960, Hillman was offering a product that no one else had—a fully automatic transmission that did away with the power loss associated with ordinary automatic transmissions of the day. Acceleration of a Hillman does not suffer as a result of the Easidrive option. This was important in 1960 because thousands of drivers in this country didn't want small cars because of the bother of shifting gears manually. The Easidrive was a significant small car development in the days of oversized Detroit sedans and small, slow American cars optionally equipped with automatic transmissions.

I bought my car in 2002 from an antiques dealer in Wiscasset, Maine. It had been acquired by him as part of an elderly man's estate. It had 40,000 miles on it then and I have taken it 24,000 sort-of carefree miles since then. My initial test drive of the car did not inspire confidence. Looking behind the steering wheel I noticed it had....an automatic transmission? I had always feared foreign automatics of the post-war generation since they could be weird and prone to trouble. Oh well, the car did start right up and sounded solid and quiet. The gear selector quadrant is minimalist in nature: D 2 N R in that order. There is no P position and I assumed the handbrake was a dubious instrument as evidenced by the rock placed behind the rear wheel. The car moved forward in D but would not shift into a higher gear. I stopped and gave it another try. This time, at about 15mph, I lifted my foot off the throttle and heard a distinct "clunk" and then we were in 2nd gear. At about 27mph the car shifted automatically into 3rd which felt like top gear. I could live with this. I came to a full stop and tried reverse. There was a slight grinding of gears to be heard as I shifted the lever. What the hell kind of automatic was this???

Thus begins the tale of what makes this car different. Here in layman's terms is the Easidrive story. Remember the science experiment back in elementary school in which iron filings placed on a piece of paper were arranged in lines of magnetic flux by a magnet placed beneath the paper? If you can visualize that experiment, you have the basic idea of Easidrive. Easidrive uses a magnetic powder coupling in place of a friction clutch. The transmission itself is a regular sliding gear type 3 speed transmission. Imagine a drum bolted to the flange on the rear of the crankshaft. Then, imagine a slightly smaller drum which fits inside the aforementioned drum and is connected to the transmission input shaft. These drums are separated by a small air gap filled with an amount of iron powder. In neutral, as the crankshaft turns, this powder is thrown harmlessly by centrifugal force against the inside of the outer (crankshaft) drum. Now surround these drums with a stationary magnetic coil mounted in the transmission's bell housing. When this coil is energized, the iron powder organizes itself in columns of magnetic flux between the two drums, forming a solid coupling between the engine and transmission. The advantage to such a coupling is that there is little or no slippage. There is no hydraulic torque converter to waste power, an important consideration in a 57 hp, 2375 lb. car such as the Hillman. This represented a design coup, applying a fully automatic transmission to a 1500 cc car.

*See Hillman Minx on page 7*



## FROM THE 'COOKIE' AT THE STOWE SHOW

BY MARNITA LEACH

*Marnita cooks & serves three meals each of the 13 days for volunteer workers at our Stowe Show*



Marnita has this month off.

Marnita's recipes is another column that Wheel Tracks distinguishes itself.

The responses and comments from Wheel Tracks readers are a joy. Many readers within hours of receiving our newsletter have tried out 'the new recipe' and reported back the to editor or to Marnita.

Thank You Marnita

To the Editor....

This is how I became a member of the VAE. You can put this in our beloved Wheel Tracks if you wish. Thanks to you and Edi (our proof-reader) and all the others who contribute to the newsletter. Best regards and Happy Holidays. Al Ward

It is all your fault Gael Boardman! Way back in 1958, I was working on an old fire truck that Gael was making into a fun speedster. One day he stopped in at Paquins where I worked. As we talked, I said to Gael, I would like to have an old car someday, as I have always liked old cars. He promptly said, "follow me and I will show you one". What he made me aware of was a 1927 Reo Wolverine, the car was not over 200 feet from where we were standing. I just could not believe it, the Reo had been in this garage for 17 years and I knew the older couple who owned the car from our church. I tried to purchase the car but the couple did not want to sell. The car coming to the couple's attention also made them realize they had not been paying a storage fee for all those years and so I got a call that they had decided to sell. I bought the car for \$50.00, got it running and our family enjoyed it for many years.

Since then I have bought and sold over 160 old cars, thanks to Gael Boardman getting me started. Many of those cars are still owned by VAE members. As you can see from reading the Wheel Tracks classifieds I still keep my hand into it. I have an MG and a Mustang I want to sell.

Thanks to Gael for keeping me busy all these years, he also had a hand in me being the VAE president for two terms.

*From page 6...Hillman Minx*

But the devil is in the details, of course. All this stuff under the floorboards is controlled by the troublemakers under the bonnet, or hood as we Yanks would put it. This trouble includes: an electric gear selector switch, a governor which monitors road speed and throttle position, a gearshift solenoid and a control unit (black box) which contains eight 2 way relays, a thermal switch and a rectifier. Maintaining this lot is no problem if you're an electrical engineer, which I am not. Fortunately for me and my Minx, my brother is. All the above-mentioned electrical units are wired closed with lead seals from the factory. Even Hillman mechanics were not allowed to open them up and investigate what might be wrong inside. Units were tested and if found faulty, replaced. Even the experienced garage mechanic in the early 1960s had no idea what he was looking at when he got under the hood of an Easidrive Hillman Minx. It was just another weird foreign car that nobody, including the dealers, wanted to deal with. This contributed greatly to Hillman's demise. As the Easidrive reputation spread, dozens of new Easidrive cars sat in dealers lots unsold for years.



Hillman Minx 1124cc first registered  
December 1932

My car has experienced burned relay points and a broken wire in the control unit as well as another broken wire in the governor. My brother was able to decipher its woes from among the 96 symptoms and numerous wiring diagrams featured in the Easidrive repair manual. We broke into the sealed units fearlessly and solved my Easidrive's problems. It wasn't easy. It took about 8 hours, but I've been lucky. Most Easidrives were converted to normal Hillman 4 speed manual transmissions or simply scrapped. And that's a shame because it is a nice car on the road or in town. I've driven without trouble to Ohio and back for 3 different "Hillmans on Holiday" car events, cruising at 65 mph with no trouble. I only know of one other Easidrive in the country, in Washington state, which is still running. I doubt we'll ever meet car to car.





## This month we will discuss Batteries, with a question from John LaVallee:

"Hi Dave. I have a question that may be good for Wheel Tracks as well. Battery life. Since we all have old cars that are not used too much--or not enough is a better description. I am now in a position that 6 car battery's are over 8 years old. Some still working and others don't have enough power to crank the starter. That can be a size-able expense that will face me again in about 5 years assuming that is the life expectancy. What options are there for Battery's besides going new?"

There are two real options for buying new. Conventional "wet" batteries, and newer, spiral glass mat gel cell batteries, like the "Optima" battery. If properly maintained, batteries can go strong for eight years or more, while a service life of 3-5 years is more typical. The biggest issues with the conventional "wet" batteries are:

1. They leak. Battery acid is nasty, and can do considerable damage to the body of the car it is in. Leaking near the terminals can also cause considerable corrosion at the terminals.
2. Conventional batteries lose energy, about 1% a day. This is made worse if it is a parasitic drain on an installed battery, like radio memory for example.
3. Conventional batteries do not do well in hot environments, the water in the acid solution will evaporate. Heat is one of the biggest killers of "wet" batteries. It is often said that batteries are fatally damaged in the summer, then fail when the weather gets cold in the fall.
4. Conventional batteries discharge explosive hydrogen gas, presenting the possibility of an explosion given the right situation.
5. Conventional batteries must be mounted rigidly, right side up. They can not be tipped or subjected to severe vibration or jarring impacts. If tipped, they will leak. If shaken, they will fail structurally inside and could potentially short out. If loose, in addition to being unsafe, they will jounce about causing failure internally.
6. If not properly charged, conventional batteries will freeze, and be destroyed. A charged battery has a freeze point of -95°F. A discharged battery will freeze at 20°F.



**The other option** is a glass mat spiral gel cell battery, like the Johnson Controls "Optima" battery. These batteries are significantly more expensive, about \$50 more.

Gel cell batteries do not leak. Because they do not have the acid bath construction, they can be mounted in any position, even up-side-down. There is no concern about leaking acid or corrosion on the battery terminals. These batteries also do not discharge hydrogen gas, so there is no issue with venting them. Because there is no issue with evaporation of the electrolyte, they hold up better in very hot environments.

Because of the spiral, fiberglass mat gel cell construction, these batteries hold up very well to vibration and jarring impacts. AGM batteries discharge at a much lower rate than conventional "wet" batteries. This can be a big plus for a vehicle that spends a considerable amount of time in storage.

The down side of AGM batteries is they are considerably more expensive, and their reliability is spotty. I have had three fail in less than two years. The warranty of the Optima is only a two year replacement warranty, kind of skimpy given the high purchase price in my opinion.

*See Batteries on page 10*



# VAE/AACA Monthly Meet A Pot-Luck in Waterbury



**Saturday January 25th 2014 11:00  
AM - 3:00 PM**

Installation of 2014 Officers, Business  
Meeting  
Automobilia, Memorabilia, and Collectables  
Presentation

**St. Leo's Hall behind St. Andrews  
Church  
109 S Main St (aka Route 2),  
Waterbury, VT 05676**

Gather your favorite collection or part of  
it and bring to this meeting to display. At  
the end of the business meet the  
remaining time will be divided between the  
presenters to tell why they have collected  
these items and what they have  
learned while doing so. Also bring your  
favorite covered dish to share. This is the  
favorite part for many.



Times are Approximant

11:00 AM or after to Setup displays and  
Pot Luck

11:45 AM Pot Luck

12:45 PM Installation of Officers and  
Business Meeting

1:30 PM Display Presentations

2:40 PM Clean up

3:00 PM Depart

Contact our host Lucille and Gene  
Napoliello (802) 244-7536

bhcf332@aol.com or almost 1st VP Dan  
Noyes (802) 730-7171

Dan@streambanks.org with any questions.

Please Mark

Your Calendars



**VAE Gossip** by GCF



**My wife and I were making our way out of Maine last month** on our way home from a couple of days stay in the Portland area. When we have some extra time I like to turn our GPS on and set the travel mode to 'shortest distance' from its usual 'fastest time' mode. You wouldn't believe where it takes you, sometimes on dirt roads just wide enough for your vehicle, but still taking you toward home. That is exactly what happened and as we were driving down this narrow road there was a choice to turn left on a dead-end road....and we took it wondering how a road can get any more narrow and still lead to where someone might live. We found a few homes with folks living very close to the earth. The road led us through someone's front yard with house and buildings on one side and barn with more buildings on the other side. AND, you would not believe what these folks had parked on their homestead.....some 400 to 600 John Deere tractors. Most of them were rust brown with flat tires and they ranged in age from modern to very early, maybe the 1920s. I thought I have a "collector" problem!

I didn't have the nerve to go knock on their door unannounced so we just drove by, twice, very slowly. A friend here in Enosburg knows someone who knows the owner and I have a plan to visit there again...announced.

**A Wheel Tracks feature this month is Ernie Clerihew's 1960 Hillman Minx.** A fine little dependable car. My first car was a 1960 Minx but mine had a standard shift. I will never forget the trust the St. Albans car dealer gave me in 1963 when I spotted the car on his lot. Gage Auto Sales, I think his first name was Bernard, somehow took a look at this 17 year old high school farm kid and offered to let him take it home to show the parents and bring it back the next day. I ended up buying it and paying \$19.90 a month payment. I wonder if Ernie knows there are 25 coil springs in the rear seat? A perfect place to hide 24 snub-nose bottles of beer from Canada....

**Do any of you have a Blast Cabinet to clean up old car parts?** I need some inside info on a problem that I am having with it. Static electricity! I can be happily cleaning an old part when...zap into my elbow or hip or even my foot. I was in electronics all my career and understand grounding but this has me stumped. I have grounded and interconnected everything concerned with no change. On a dry, cold day the sparks will jump a couple of inches. Even my dog stays on the other side of the shop. Maybe because of the sparks or it might be from my 'comments' when the zaps happen.

**A VAE member family was in the local newspaper lately.** If we want to learn what "ambition" means we should follow Joanne and Terry Magnan of Sheldon, Vermont around for a day. They are VAE members because Terry is a classic car collector. He is also a founding member of the Green Mountain Cruisers, a car club in Northern Vermont with about 40 members. The family started a small limo rental service three years ago using 12 antique and classic cars, the two of them and their three son are involved in driving the cars on special occasions. The name of the business is "Country Boy Classics". Oh, and did I mention they have another business on their Sheldon farm called Diamond Hill Custom Heifers? Area farms bring the Magnans their new-born calves and Diamond Hill returns them as bred heifers 18 to 20 months later. They have 2200 head on their farm presently. They raise all their crops on 600 acres.

Oh, and did I also mention their 'compost facility'? As you might guess, all those cattle produce a lot of poop.... Also, just like human babies, young calves need to be fed warm liquid food, not cold. So, Terry decided to compost some of the tons of manure produced on the farm but differently than you would guess. A special barn where the compost is produced has man-hole type covers in the floor under the manure pile. The warm air is pulled from the compost process to warm the water used to feed the hundreds of young calves. Wow, what an idea!



*Continued from page 8... Batteries*

"How can they be stored over the winter to maximize life?

Conventional "wet" batteries do well with a battery tender hooked up to them. Battery tenders charge the battery, then provide a "float" charge to maintain a full charge. They will not overcharge the battery. When the vehicle is returned to service, simply unplug the battery tender, and you are good to go. AGM batteries can simply be unhooked and left in the vehicle, they will not discharge.

Do battery's like "Optima's" last any longer in rarely used vehicles?

In theory, yes. In reality, that depends. I have had three Optima batteries fail in under two years.

"Also, when I check my acid, I am finding particles in the fluid. Is that a sign that the plates are going bad? It actually looks dirty. I'd also guess you'd tell me to wait until spring to buy one. Otherwise it will sit on the shelf for 5 months."

When you check the acid, it should be clear. If it isn't, there are impurities in it. This could be caused by sulfate on the lead plates, or impurities suspended in the acid. Either way, the battery is no longer good. If the plates are sulfating, the battery will not provide the proper amperage. If there are impurities in the electrolyte, the battery could short internally. Proper maintenance of the battery includes checking the level of the acid in the individual cells. Only add distiller water. There is a myth that you should add acid. The level drops when the water in the solution evaporates. If you replace the water, you are keeping the concentration correct. The plates should remain under the surface of the acid.

I have learned that buying a new battery that may be "special" and some are, does not mean your getting a fresh battery. It may well have been left on the shelf waiting for me."

The first thing you should check when purchasing a battery is the manufacture date on the battery. It will give the month and the year of manufacture. The battery should only be a month or two old. Any older, and I would ask for a newer one.

I always load check a battery to check it. I have a carbon pile load tester. It will put a load on the battery, and maintain the load for about ten seconds. There is both an amperage and a voltage gauge on the meter. If either the amperage of the voltage falls during the load test, an alarm sounds, and the needles on the gauges sweep down. If the battery is good, the needles on the gauges hold. Snap-on sells such a tester for about \$600. I got mine at Harbor Freight for \$50. I'm sure the Snap-on is a much better unit, but mine has worked fine for many years and I have no complaints. The Harbor Freight unit is well made and has good reviews.



*Harbor Freight carbon pile load tester*

"Hi Dave,

I read your "Dave's Garage" article about LED's. I have had mixed results.

First the good news: I bought an LED brake light strip, maybe 5 years ago, (\$50 at Hershey) to put in the bottom edge of my rear window and it has worked wonderfully.

Then the not-so-good news: I bought a red LED tail / brake light bulb (\$28 at Hershey). It had 2 intensities of red, dimmer for the tail light and brighter for the brake, and a ring of white LED's to shine down on the number plate. It worked fine when I installed it, but some short time after I found that the brake light and the ring of white lights no longer operated. I emailed the seller who promptly sent a replacement at no charge. Again it worked initially and failed shortly after in the same way. Any thoughts on why? I had to switch back to regular bulbs.

I also bought 2 white LED's for my cowl lights. These worked when installed, but both failed shortly after. Again, why? Although bright, I didn't like them much because they displayed a bright 1 inch spot in the center of the 3 inch lens.

I greatly improved the brightness of both tail light and cowl lights by installing aluminum foil reflectors behind the conventional bulbs. I formed the foil on the inside of the parabolic reflector of a large flashlight, cut holes to fit over the sockets of the tail and cowl lights, and gently pushed it inside the light buckets. It's a very inexpensive and effective improvement. Charlie"

*Charlie Thompson owns a 1930 Whippet Sedan and has traveled thousands of miles throughout the United States in it.*



## Small story about a small car from David And Christine Stone



From time to time (okay - weekly), I cruise through Craigslist to see what's out there for sale, I am not really looking for a car or truck to purchase, just checking out vehicles for fun. My wife, Christine, says I'm obsessed with automobiles. I've always disagreed, stating that family, home, and work are always my first priority, but as I look around - I see her point. Hemming's and part catalogs in the bedroom, die cast collection in the study, more car magazines hidden in the bathroom vanity, and two spare parts for every car I own: a 200, 302, 351, 390, 429 here, 350 there, a 230 around the corner, and a few cute little parts for a four cylinder engine. All the comforts of home in my shop and a plethora of friends with automotive connections

across the state. Guess I might be a little into this hobby.

**So how's this tie in with a 1971 MG Midget, and the VAE restoration award?** Well, rewind twelve months; I came across a classified in Craigslist and recognized an MG for sale belonging to my uncle. It was a project that never came to fruition, because my cousin moved away for a job and family. So there it sat, for many years in the old wood shed. My uncle wanted to make room for farm equipment and did not believe the car was desirable. Rough, a term I use for lumber, could definitely be applied to the old girl. The Car crusher appeared to be her destiny. A few years ago my wife came up with this crazy policy "one in - one out" when it comes to cars. Yes, ludicrous, I know, but stock rotation works. Still wish I had my 71 Mach 1, but that's another story for another day. Not a muscle car fan, she likes two seat British sport cars. I have found her weakness, the little car was in the making. Fast forward three months -rockers, floor, lower fenders and door jams replaced. Months four five & six - mechanical work, brakes, rims blasted, primed/painted, and parts located. The family helped along the way with block sanding, cleaning of parts, google searches, and reassembly. As you know interests and hobbies can be quite self-absorbing, but problem solving together was time well spent. Granted there were times I had to curb the use of less desirable words one may use in a stressful circumstance, but that's a good thing. My daughter learned her fractions, power of magnetism, and about pesky mud wasps that build nests in the most inconvenient locations. The goal was to register our MG in the British car show last September. Embarking out on the first trip of considerable distance can be unnerving, so I thought it best to bring a chase vehicle, walkie-talkies, tools and a tow rope. **WE MADE IT!**

**However**, because of a logistical error we were banished to the parking lot. Not all was lost, we met my uncle and extended family for lunch in the parking lot, he was thrilled to see the little MG rolling again. My wife shared her experiences and showed the Midget off to anyone and everyone who stopped to look at her. It was a great experience, my wife has a new appreciation for the restoration process. I can't wait for summer to enjoy some topless driving. By the way the car is not white, its moonstone, sort of a periwinkle. I was skeptical at first over her color selection, but I must admit - it's spot on!



### GEORGE "SPIN" MANSFIELD RICHARDSON

Dr. Spin Richardson, 68, died on Nov. 15, 2013, at his home with his family in Charlotte. He was born on June 25, 1945, in Syracuse, N.Y., the son of George L. and Margaret Richardson. A graduate of the University of Notre Dame and Georgetown University Dental School, he did his residency in pediatric dentistry at Boston Children's Hospital. Spin

spent his entire professional career at Timberlane Dental Group where he was one of the founding partners. Thursday cribbage, Sunday Harley rides and deer camp were some the best times of his life. Spin was a collector of antique vehicles and could be seen in holiday parades driving his 1926 American LaFrance fire engine.

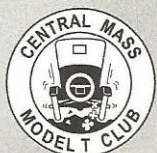
*From VAE President, Jim Sears.... You probably never met Spin, he was a past member of the VAE and helped out at the Shelburne show, setting up and registration. He always brought his fire truck. He also had a Model A pickup that was original.*

*His complete obituary can be found at.... <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/burlingtonfreepress/obituary.aspx?pid=168018311>.*



Tung in his cheek.....Fred Cook brought this **"Bus Recommendation"** to us...for our museum bus when he found it along side the road. For you paper readers, The color is ugly lime green and bright yellow! Thanks, but no thanks Frederick.





# Tri-Pedal News



Central Mass Model T Club, Inc. Upton,

December 2013 Volume 28, #10

The TRI-PEDAL NEWS is a publication of the Central Mass Model T Club of the central Massachusetts area, a chapter of the Model T Ford Club of America.

We encourage our members to also join the MTFCA. In order to have the added insurance benefits of the National Club's Insurance for our club we need to have at least 50% of our members also members of the MTFCA.

CMMTC dues \$15/yr., includes the TRI-PEDAL NEWS.. Send your check to CMMTC, 90 Belknap Rd., Framingham, MA 01701

MTFCA membership dues is \$35/yr which includes 6 bi-monthly issues of the Vintage Ford Magazine. Send your check to the MTFCA, PO Box 126, Centerville, IN 47330-0126. Phone number is 765-855-5248

## Classified T Market

**1924 Huckster Wagon.** Runs when crank started... flywheel missing a few teeth. Owner has a starter for it and he just purchased two tires and rims. Body in good shape. Needs TLC. \$9,000 or best reasonable offer. Harry Salvo at [hsjr69@yahoo.com](mailto:hsjr69@yahoo.com) or 781-706-0529.

**1915 Model T, Canadian** 4 door touring car. New paint, good tires. \$23,000. Gene Bunce at [joyce-bunce@aol.com](mailto:joyce-bunce@aol.com) or 928-857-9130.

**Model T Speedster**, good condition, low mileage, professionally restored engine and transmission. Asking \$19,500.00. Call Procy Kebabian @ 508-358-6352 or email at [drprk@aol.com](mailto:drprk@aol.com)

**1923 Model T Touring.** Distributor, new over sized back tires, rust free, Painted 2 years ago, two carriage lights in front and one in back. New floors front and back, two brass mirrors and some extra parts. The car is in Wilmington, MA.

Call Neil Woodside (Woody) at 978-658-6764,



Who does this spiffy white, 1911 Torpedo belong to?

The 26th Annual 'Chicken Run'



These T's and a few A's toured from Upton for a feast at Wrights "Chicken" Restaurant.





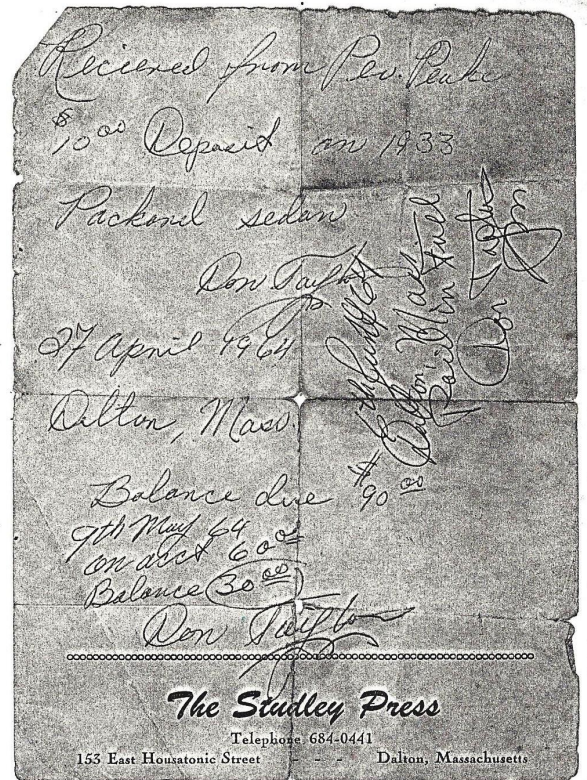
## Things aren't like they used to be.....

by Gael Boardman

An understatement especially for us slightly older auto enthusiasts. Recently VAE founding member Lloyd Davis sent me memento reminding me of how things "were". I don't know how it came into his possession but it certainly is a time capsule. As recently as 1964, (50ish years ago), the old car hobby was pretty informal and quite inexpensive.

Pev Peake, another God-Father of the VAE, managed in his long car career to own and drive hundreds of super old cars. This Don Taylor Packard (note the picture right) was no exception. I remember all the players well; Peake, Packard and Don Taylor. For verities sake Pev usually had several cars at a time and often his romance would cool to some degree and some other enthusiast would benefit. My '28 Willys Knight was one of these as was Steve Dana's Daniels (2 of them actually), Bryce Howell's '27 Packard, Ray Unsworth's Jordan and dozens and dozens more.

If memory serves, Amos Roleau and Steve Dana both somehow got involved in the \$100.00 Packard covered in this "easy-pay" plan. \$100.00 was bigger in 1964 but would you have stepped up and bought? I bet you would have, especially on these terms. Oh for a time machine!



## The Stirling Engine.....Could a VAEer figure a way to re-power his old car?

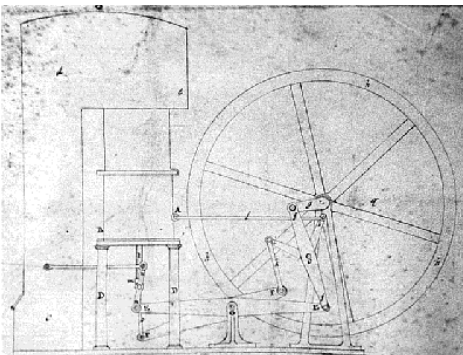
It is truly amazing what folks were doing way back in 1816. The steam engine was in use but Robert Stirling was looking for an engine that "was not so messy". Stirling was the Scottish inventor of the first practical example of a closed cycle air engine in 1816.

Pictured to the left is a toy example of the engine that runs from the candle flame you can see on the left. The cylinders have simply the air that we breath

inside. Stirling's idea was to use the heating and cooling of a gas sealed inside the engine to do the piston-driving. Over the years the invention has been used a little differently than originally planned called the free-piston engine where it runs backwards by using mechanical energy as the input rather than the output, to pump heat away from where is not wanted. It is called a refrigerator. These specialized fridges are used in orbiting telescopes.

The engine lately has started to see a reemergence in new ideas. One use is in tropical villages to produce electricity. The huge advantage is the Stirling engine uses 'external-combustion' and can be powered by anything from wood to dry cow manure. The other big advantage is the free-piston engine has very little wear and tear and can run for

many years maintenance free. Wikipedia notes some of these Stirling engines have run for 15 years in space with no maintenance. There are present plans to simply use sunshine to run the engines to produce electric power. Three major companies are racing to perfect the design.



Left.....Robert Stirling's 1816 patent application of the air engine design which later came to be known as the Stirling Engine



A typical late nineteenth/early twentieth century water pumping engine by the Rider-Ericsson Engine Company



# Hello...Here's My Card

**Guest Card**



**Mountain View**  
*Autobody & Sign Design*

2430 Duffy Hill Rd. Tel.: 802-933-6428  
 Enosburg Falls, VT 05450 Fax: 802-933-9428  
 mountainviewrepair@yahoo.com

Automotive & Truck Clutches  
 OEM Replacement • Antique • High Performance  
 Flywheels & Hydraulics

**FALCON**  
*Clutch Specialist*

135 Brook Avenue Tel: [631] 667-7788  
 Deer Park, NY 11729 Fax: [631] 667-7789  
 www.falconclutch.com Marc Carl: President

**CHAMPLAIN BLASTING SOLUTIONS**

Randy Kruml Owner

(800) 995-3257 Mobile: (802) 923-6072 Fax: (866) 508-1529  
 randy@champlainblastingolutions.com  
 17 Lexington Green, S Burlington, VT 05403  
 www.champlainblastingolutions.com

Restoring First Prize Winners Since 1968

**Waitsfield Motor Car Company**  
 Restoration of Fine Motor cars

David G. Steinman  
 Waitsfield, Vt. 05673 802-496-4277

**Shoreham**  
**Upholstery**

JIM ORTUNO

Route 74 West 802-897-5711  
 Shoreham, VT 05770 info@shorehamupholstery.com

**This Spot Reserved  
 For Your  
 Business Card.....**

**OLD SCHOOL 4-SPEEDS**  
 "I Rebuild and Sell Collector Car 4-Speeds  
 and Hurst Shifters"

GM Muncie • Borg Warner • Hurst  
 BUY • SELL • TRADE

DAVE MARTEL  
 22 Taylor Drive 603-440-9035  
 Springfield, VT 05156 E-Mail: letramllc@yahoo.com

**GRAINGER**

W.W. Grainger, Inc.  
 20 Gregory Drive  
 South Burlington, VT 05403-9797

Tel: 802.658.4988  
 Fax: 802.658.2560  
 www.grainger.com

## Become a Member Of VAE For Only \$30.00



**Contact:**



**Christina McCaffrey (Member Secretary)**  
 89 Ledge Road  
 Burlington, Vermont  
 05401-4140



**Or:**

**www.vtauto.com**





# Wheel Tracks Classified

**Tour Banners  
For Sale**  
Sturdy cotton  
With ties.  
\$20.00

"Your Car Will  
Wear it Softly"

Gene Fodor 802-372-9146  
crownwheelwheel@comcast.net.



**January  
Bumper Sticker...**

**I got a gun for my  
wife, best trade I  
ever made.**

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

**For Sale....**1931 Cadillac  
parts car (or ambitious resto-  
ration). Fleetwood V8 roll-  
ing chassis, dual side-  
mounts, 6 wire wheels, origi-  
nally a dual cowl phaeton.  
No wood and missing  
top and most tinwork.  
\$3000. 802-862-6374

**Free...** 7 tires, 33x5, all are  
useable, some with good  
tread, some with tubes. You  
pick up, must take all. Also  
2 bundles of 24"x3.5" insula-  
tion, new but a little dusty,  
take all only.  
Call Roy Martin  
802-862-6374

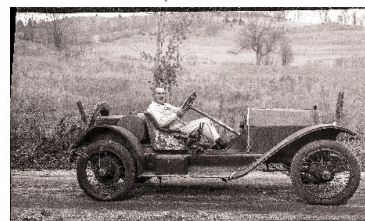


**For Sale....** One story  
elevator. Great for taking  
that engine to the 2nd floor.  
\$700.00  
Call Gary Fiske  
802-933-7780

## "Editor Drive-byes"

Items for sale found along the highway that VAE  
members might be interested in. Join us....send a  
picture and the details for  
Wheel Tracks Classified.

The STUTZ STASH of A. K. MILLER  
Photographs by Nicholas Whitman  
Text by Dave Brownell



## "The Stutz Stash"

A new book about A.K. Miller. 112 page softcover  
for \$57.00. The story is about the Vermont  
hermit/gentleman who when he died left 2.2  
million dollars in 1963 in old cars and gold.

**For Sale...**1994 Mustang GT.  
8cyl, standard shift. Color silver, stored for 8 years.  
\$2500.00

**For Sale...** 1968 MGB Roadster. Restored 25 years  
ago with only 500 miles driven since. Color red, it  
has been stored for 25 years. \$3500.00  
Call Al Ward at 802-524-2466 1/14

**For Sale or Interesting Trade....** Seven 15 inch  
alloy wheels for Mercedes mounted with 4 pretty  
good summer tires, 2 good winter tires and a pretty  
scrubby spare.  
Gael Boardman 802-899-2260 2/14

**PARTS FOR SALE....** 1970 Dodge Charger /  
Coronet 14" wheel covers. Dodge logo and "Dodge  
Division" imprinted in center. Excellent condition,  
matched set of four, \$100.

**LITERATURE FOR SALE.....**1961 Chrysler 300  
H fold out brochure. Black and white showing de-  
tailed info on the 300 H. \$20. 1976 Chrysler/Dodge/  
Plymouth Service manual, two volumes, excellent  
original condition, \$35. Plymouth 1960 Plymouth  
complete accessories brochure, lots of interesting  
stuff. 16 pages, \$20. 1946 Vermont license plate,  
good condition \$15. Lots of early highway maps. Let  
me know your year of interest.

Chris Barbieri, 802-223-3104,  
cgeeb99@gmail.com

3/14

**Hello,  
We are an Automotive Program** working on a  
restoration project. Our students often read your  
publication, and it provides a nice connection to  
community stories.  
Would you mind advertising?  
Parts needed for a 1949 Plymouth  
DeLuxe with a P-17.  
Front Brake Shoes  
Rear Brake Shoes  
GAs Tank/ Sending Unit  
Heater Box w/ Core Assembly  
Karen Chitamber  
North Country Career Center, Newport, VT  
802 334 7921 ext 3356 Thanks!

**For Sale....** Mud and Snow tires, newly new on  
5-hole 205/70R/15 96T Buick rims ready to go.  
Asking \$375.00 Call Ellie 801-425-3529

**For Sale...** BF Goodrich  
banner, 7 X 2.25 ft.  
Good condition, \$65.00



Elgin Auto clock  
#29578088 from 26 Cady,  
\$125.00

1929 Mobil Oil Co.  
Award to Ernest's  
Garage Inc.  
\$45.00



1965 Prestone Anti-freeze Chart,  
\$35.00

Framed awards to Ernest's Gar-  
age, \$25.00, both for \$40.00.  
Call Hayden Janes 1/14



**VERMONT AUTOMOBILE ENTHUSIASTS**  
Please Send Dues or Address Changes to:  
**Christina McCaffrey**  
Membership Secretary  
89 Ledge Road  
Burlington, VT 05401-4140



**Rick Hamilton and Company on Lake Willoughby  
when the 2013 temps where nicer.**

**January 2014**



PRSRT STD  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Montpelier, VT  
Permit No. 61



**The 2013 VAE President's  
Restoration Award**

*Pictured to the right, from the right is, David Stone  
of Essex, VT, VAE President, Jim Sears, David's  
daughter Grace and wife Christine  
receiving the award.  
Above left is a 'before' picture of the MG Midget  
and an 'after' picture on the right.*

