



Gateway Gazette

Monthly Newsletter of the St. Louis Chapter
BUICK CLUB OF AMERICA

Volume XXX1, No.2

March 2012

Fully Restoring an Old Buick by Ted Becker

So, you want to fully restore an old Buick. Really? I mean, REALLY?? Before one is to take on such a project, there are 2 mandatory preliminary steps to take. The first is a full psychological examination to determine mental stability and determination. The second step is to seek the advice of a qualified financial advisor to assess the feasibility of being able to afford such a project.

Smart aleck, right? Well, not completely. If the restoration is a full body off restoration of a car that has deteriorated and needs parts restored and replaced, this is not for the faint of heart. It is expensive, laborious and time consuming.

These cars are not Mustangs or '57 Chevys. There is no repro shop that sells bumpers and tail light lenses and stainless molding. The restoration will involve a lot of mechanical skills and a dedication to work on a project that will take several years to complete and a lot of busted

knuckles, dirty shirts and coveralls and sweat to show for it. However, the end product is a work of art and something that not every kid on the block can possess.

Ok, where to start? Well, there are the necessary and then the luxury tools. Hand tools are, of course, mandatory. Floor jack (not a \$49 Harbor Freight special), jack stands, air compressor, power tools, MIG welder, clamps and workspace. Luxury tools are an oxyacetylene welder, drill press, sheet metal brake, hydraulic press and cutoff saw.

Let's talk about work space for a moment. I think that we all have spent many hours working on dirt floors or driveways sitting on the ground with very little elbow room. It is not fun if you have never

Continued on Page 4

Upcoming Events

Next Regular Meeting, Monday, March 19, St. Louis Sports Hall of Fame (formerly Pujols 5), 7:30 pm

Spring Oil Change, Saturday, March 31, Paul Meyer's garage, 10:00 am

Ladies Luncheon, Saturday, March 31, La Bonne Bouchee

Board of Director's Meeting, Monday, April 2, Pete Nathan's, 7:00 pm

HCCM Easter Show, Sunday, April 8, Forest Park, 9:00 am

See Page 6 for Details

Director's Letter

Hi Everyone!

Well, spring is right around the corner, and we can get those Buicks on the road. Even though this winter has been very mild, I personally don't want to de-winterize just yet. I do have to admit that I did have one or two of my cars out on those beautiful sunny days Mother Nature provided. I just couldn't help myself!

We had a good turnout for the 2012 planning calendar meeting. Some great events are being planned for the Club. We tried to keep it simple with a laid back schedule. Check out the calendar in this month's Gazette. If anyone would like to add to the schedule, please bring it up at our monthly meetings. Suggestions are always welcomed.

Two of the our upcoming events are:

1. April 2 – Board meeting at Pete Nathan's home
2. April 8 – The Easter Show on the upper Munny parking lot in Forest Park (If you plan to attend, please get the registration fee of \$15 to Pete Nathan soon to reserve your spot.)

Thanks and be safe!

Herb

Meeting Minutes, February 20, 2012

The February 2012 meeting was held on Monday, February 6th, at The STL Sports Hall of Fame Restaurant (Pujols). We had a fair turnout with 18 members and one visitor, Elliot Cytron.

Meeting Minutes, February 20, 2012(Cont')

The Club meeting was facilitated by Paul Meyer, Assistant Director.

Minutes of the January 2012 meeting were not available and thus not printed in the Gazette.

January & February Birthdays – See Gazette

January & February Anniversaries – See Gazette

Members Ill – None Noted

Treasurer's Report-

Treasurer's Report: \$2099.60 in the Club Account, \$4265.76 in the Regional Account

Upcoming Events

March

- 19 Regular Monthly Meeting, STL Sports Hall of Fame Restaurant, 7:30
31 Spring Oil Change/Paul Meyers, Ladies Luncheon at La Bonne Bouchee

April

- 2 Board of Directors Meeting, Pete Nathan's
8 HCCM Easter Show – Forest Park
16 Regular Monthly Meeting, Frankie & Johnny's (Gravois & Lindbergh)
22 Progressive Cruise/Garage Tours, ending at Chet Palumbo's House in New Melle and Lunch at Los Cabos Mexican Restaurant.

May

- 5 Display at Dave Sinclair Buick
20 Kemp Auto Show and Monthly Meeting/Lunch at the Press Box, 10:30

Continued on page 6

March Birthdays

Helen Becker
Avis Meyer

Marty Hughes
Mary Ann Meyer

Bill Landers
Lynda Schurwan

March Anniversaries

Chad & Barb Thomas

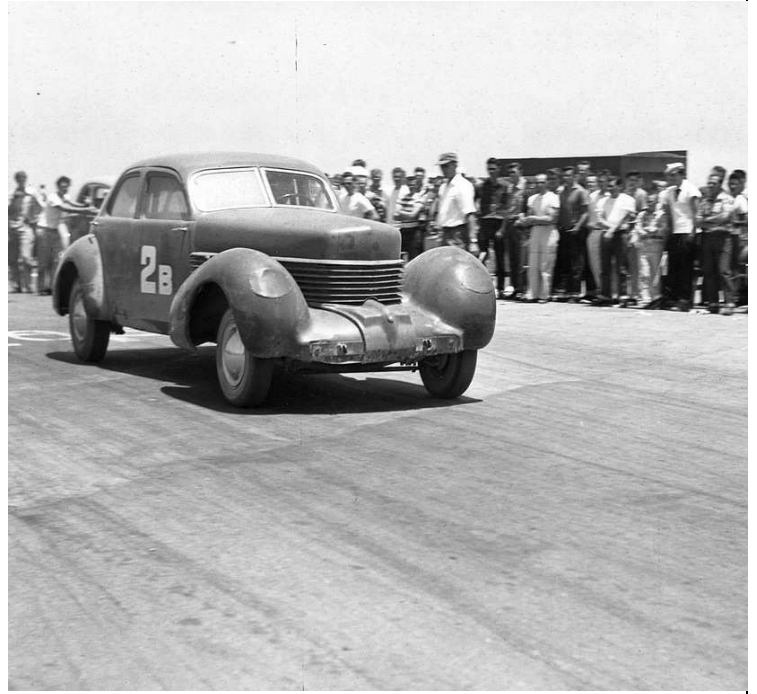
Cord with a Buick Straight-Eight

As most of you know, our member Bill Bicknell, is a Cord enthusiast as well as a Buick guy. In the 1970's a friend of Bill's, Don Montgomery, raced a Cord with a Buick Straight-eight engine in California.



The photos below show the Buick engine in the Cord and the Cord at a 1952 meet on El Mirage dry lake in southern California. The Cord set the 1952 Russetta Timing Association class B Sedan record at 137.509 mph using the Buick engine.

Contributed by Bill Bicknell



*** Attendance Incentives ***

At the recent calendar planning meeting, the members present decided that a more formal system of "points" awarded to members for attendance at meetings and events might increase member participation.

Members would be awarded one point for each meeting or event they attended plus one point for bringing a collectible Buick (a Buick eligible for BCA judging) to that meeting or event. Members would be awarded two points for organizing an event or getting a speaker for a meeting or event. Members who submit an article (one full page or longer) for the Gazette would be awarded two points.

At our annual holiday party, the member with the highest number of points would receive free meals for the member and spouse/guest and paid club dues for

the upcoming year. The member with the second highest number of points would receive a gift (TBD) and paid club dues. The third highest points total would receive paid club dues and the fourth and fifth highest point totals would receive a gift (TBD).

At some event during the year (not announced ahead of time), the members with the most and second most points would receive a gift (TBD).

Also, at one or more of our events which include a meal (the particular event not announced ahead of time), the club would contribute (\$TBD) toward the cost of each meal.

Everyone will receive a Gateway Chapter business card and points will be notated by punches on the card with a unique punch shape at meetings and events..

Fully Restoring an Old Buick (Continued)

experienced it. It is much nicer to have a well-lit and ventilated garage/workshop with room for a car under construction and a fully equipped workshop area attached. I've done both and, believe me, the latter is far preferable. I once had the privilege of touring Roger Morrison's wonderful car collection in Salina, Kansas. Roger has about 30 cars and several have been class winners at Pebble Beach. Roger showed me a 1913 Rolls Royce Silver Phantom that was such a class winner and said that this car was restored in a single car garage with a dirt floor. So, a nice facility is a real luxury, but not a necessity.

In previous articles, I have spoken of my lifelong passion for old Buicks. My dad was a Buick owner his whole life, as were most of his friends who I knew from my childhood. I learned to drive on a '58 Roadmaster 75 4 door hardtop. (More on its Bendix Treadle Vac braking system in a later article.) Even with those fond memories, I have long been attached to '57 Buicks. Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder, but I have always thought that these cars were so graceful and such wonderful cars.

I bought a '57 Special 2 door hardtop in 1981 and fully restored that car. So, as I approached retirement with some discretionary income and time available, I decided that another '57 Buick might fit well in my plans. Back in 2002, I was looking through EBay and found a cache of 9 '57 Buicks for sale. No, no, no, even I am not nuts enough to bring home 9 cars. There was, however, in the lot, a Roadmaster convertible. I arranged a visit to see the cars and came away with a lust for this "real diamond" in the "real rough" ragtop. The owner did not initially want to part with only the convertible, but we eventually came to an agreement for the convertible and a 2 door Super parts car.

I took my trailer up to Rochelle, Illinois empty and brought it home adorned with my new prize. Not having sufficient storage at my house, I arranged with a farmer friend to store it in one of his barns. Over the next few years, I removed various parts from the car and began the laborious project of restoration. Like the Johnny Cash song, a car restoration is done "one

piece at a time". Off came the bumpers, and the headlights and the dash and, well, you get the picture.

I retired from my job as a diesel engine designer with Caterpillar in 2004 and we sought a new home in the St Louis area. Top of the list in our house search was a location where I could build my dream garage. After much searching, we found a place between Troy and Winfield, Missouri that met the necessary specifications. I contracted with Morton Buildings to build me a nice 53 x 30 foot garage for my project. When the garage was completed, I started moving all of my cars and parts and tools and equipment from our previous home in Central Illinois to my new dream garage. As a side note, this is the first garage I have ever owned with hot and cold running water, which has turned out to be a tremendous luxury.

Actually, my first project was fully disassembling the parts car. That is actually a very good place to start on such a project. I knew that there were several specific parts that I would need from the parts car, like the interior. My convertible sat outside for many years and the whole interior was rusted, rotted or removed. Although I do not know the full history of the car, it had 1964 Colorado license plates on it when I bought it. I do believe that Colorado has been known to experience snow and rain, so the rotted and rusted part should not be a surprise.

I wisely decided to disassemble the car to the last nut and bolt. This gave me the advantage of understanding how the car is constructed and how best to take it apart. As with any new project, I found I made some mistakes and ruined a few parts in the process and that lesson taught me how to do or how not to do the same job with my convertible. I also discovered that the parts car was the nesting place for a few wild rodents and other animals, but that is a story for another day.

As it turned out, the parts car was partly a cash cow. By using EBay, Craigslist and the Buick club forum (www.buickclub.org) I was able to sell many parts on the car. I paid \$300 for the parts car and I'm sure that I have sold \$1000 in parts. Scrap metal prices alone make for a pretty handsome payday when the carcass

Continued on page 5

Fully Restoring an Old Buick (Continued)

of a big heavy Buick is hauled off to the metal reclamation yard.

Speaking of the Buick forum, this will also introduce a restorer to something that money cannot buy and that is advice and knowledgeable friends. I have gotten to be good cyber and telephone friends with about a half dozen guys who have been of tremendous assistance in my project. "You help me and I'll help you" is the

name of this game. Plus, friendships are always good to have.

That's enough for this installment. Next month I will get into some of the nuts and bolts of the restoration. How to build the car, what to restore, what to do yourself and what to farm out, how to find sources of supply, etc.

Hope you enjoyed this article. See you next month.

Gearhead Ted

2012 CLUB CALENDAR

March

- 3 2012 Calendar Planning Meeting
- 19 Regular Monthly Meeting - STL Sports HOF
Steve Dodson to speak on Old Car Insurance
- 31 Spring Oil Change at Paul Meyer's & Ladies Luncheon at La Bonne Bouchee

April

- 2 Board of Directors Meeting, Pete Nathan's
- 8 HCCM Easter Show - Forest Park
- 16 Regular Monthly Meeting - Frankie & Johnny's
TBD to speak on Appraisal of Old Cars
- 22 Garage Tour & Lunch - Barb Knudsen, Adam Martin, Terry Hagan, Chet Palumbo; lunch at Mexican Restaurant in New Melle

May

- 5 Display at Sinclair
- 20 Visit Kemp Auto Show, lunch at the Press Box and Monthly meeting

June

- 1-3 Oldsmobile Club TanTarA Show
- 23 or 24 Cookout at TBD Park and meeting
- 27-30 BCA National Show - Concord, NC

July

- 14 or 15 Cruise to Brussels, IL, Dinner at the Whitman Hotel, winery visit in Grafton
- 28 Cruise to car museum in Fulton, Mo , lunch

August

- 20 Regular Monthly Meeting - ??

September

- 6-8 Heartland Regional, Holiday Inn, Airport West
- 9 Wheels in Motion Show, West Port Plaza
- 17 Regular Monthly Meeting - ??

October

- 7 Fall oil change
- 15 Regular Monthly Meeting - ??
- 20 Fall Color Tour

November

- 3 Visit a microbrewery for a tour and lunch
- 19 Regular Monthly Meeting - ??

December

- 1 Lunch, Meeting, Toys for Tots at Old Spaghetti Factory

Upcoming Events

March Regular Meeting. Monday, March 19, at St. Louis Sports Hall of Fame (formerly known as Pujols 5) in Westport Plaza. Our resident Old Car insurance expert, Steve Dodson will talk about insuring your collector car. Plan to arrive by 6:30 and enjoy dinner prior to the 7:30 meeting.

Spring Oil Change. Saturday, March 31, 10 am to 2 pm, Paul Meyer's garage at Spectra Painting, 13573 St. Charles Rock Road (1.3 miles west of I-270, on the right as you drive west). Brats, burgers and soda will be provided.

Ladies Luncheon Saturday, March 31, at La Bonne Bouchee, 12344 Olive Street Road (0.7 miles west of I-270). The Restaurant is in the Westgate Center strip mall which will be on the left as you travel west on Olive. One of the ladies of the club is asked to organize this.

Board of Director's Meeting. Monday, April 2 at Pete Nathan's house, primarily to continue work on the 2012 Heartland Regional Show hosted by Our Chapter. All members are welcome to attend. To reach Pete's house, take Manchester Road to North on Geyer Road for about ½ mile, then right on on Huntleigh Trails Lane. Pete's house is the first one on the right. Follow the drive to a parking area in back.

Horseless Carriage Club of Missouri Easter Show. Sunday, April 8. Meet at 9:00 am on Wells Avenue (where we met before Hampton was closed for the Highway 40 project) to caravan to the show field.

FOR SALE

1988 Reatta. Original owner, VIN xxxxx00425, red/saddle, 81K miles, new tires. Has the special suede/leather interior which is near perfect. Original documents, some advertising signage. Left headlight motor needs repair. Asking \$7500. Call anytime, Vic, 636-394-2735.

Huge Quantity of 1964 Buick Riviera parts For Sale. Donated to our chapter by a Buick enthusiast, proceeds will be used to fund chapter activities, including the 2012 Heartland Regional Show. Call Paul Meyer, 314-574-9853, ASAP for the Rivi parts you need.

EgisureSM
INSURANCE
Formerly Affiliated Insurance Specialists

Steve Dodson
Account Executive

#12 Municipal Drive – Suite D
Arnold, MO 63010
steve@egisure.com

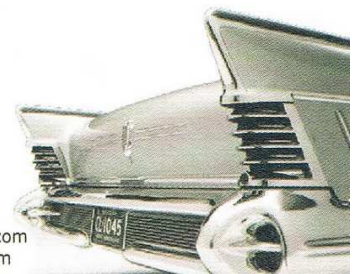
Phone: (636) 296-2949
Toll Free: (877) 713-8228
Fax: (636) 282-4280

Antique Automotive Service

- Stainless Trim Polishing
- Mechanical Work
- Detailing
- Paint Restoration

Adam Martin

(636) 244-1935
adam@antiqueautomotiveservice.com
www.antiqueautomotiveservice.com



Meeting Minutes, February 20, 2012(Cont')

Old Business

Magnetic Club Signs - \$18.00 ea.

Belt Buckles

New Business

The Board meeting February 6 regarding the 2012 Midwest Regional was very productive. Volunteers are needed to assist with the regional. **Please consider volunteering.**

There will be a follow-up Board meeting April 2 at 7 p.m. at Pete Nathan's home. Everyone is welcome to attend.

There will be an incentive program announced for participation in meetings and events. Stay tuned for details!

Registration fees of \$15.00 for the April 8 Easter Show in Forest Park are now being taken by Pete Nathan.

Also, 2012 Club dues of \$ 15.00 can be paid now. Please get to Pete Nathan.

50/50 drawing – Won by Scott Keller

Next Regular Meeting:

March 19, STL Sports Hall of Fame Restaurant (Pujols), 7:30 p.m.



Postcard with 1969 GS 400. From Jeff Watkin's collection.

The *GATEWAY GAZETTE* is a monthly newsletter, free to paid members of the St. Louis Gateway Chapter of the Buick Club of America. Articles, technical information, For Sale and Want Ads, photos, restoration sagas and coming events are welcomed, but must be submitted by the first Monday of the month to assure inclusion in the next issue.

Our membership year runs from May 1 to April 30. Membership is renewable on May 1. Members joining between January 1 and April 30 are paid up through the next April. Dues are \$15 per year for the local chapter. Contact Pete Nathan, Treasurer. See address below. Current dues for the national club are \$50 per year, payable to: Buick Club of America, P.O. Box 360775, Columbus, OH 43236-0775.

The Gateway Chapter meets monthly on the THIRD MONDAY of the month. Meetings begin at 7:30 PM and guests are welcome to attend. We meet at various restaurants around St. Louis and most members and guests try to arrive by 6:30 or earlier to have dinner before the meeting.

For more information, our local mailing addresses are as follows:

Director:	Herb Morris (314)221-8138	2005 Dohack Dr Arnold, MO 63010	reatta90@sbcglobal.net
Asst. Director:	Paul Meyer (314) 574-9853	11694 Mark Twain Lane Bridgeton, MO 63044	42buickman@gmail.com
Treasurer:	Pete Nathan (314) 413-2966	#1 Huntleigh Trails Lane St. Louis, MO 63131	phnauto@aol.com
Secretary:	John Lasinski (636) 225-9850	440 Avalon View Ct. Fenton, MO 63026	jlasinski@yahoo.com
Newsletter Editor:	Bill Landers (636)916-3310	66 Summit Pointe Ct St. Charles, MO 63301	walanders@hotmail.com

Web Site:	www.gatewaybca.org		
Webmaster:	Adam Martin (314) 713-1262	1212 Cloverbrook St. Charles, MO 63304	adamm@buickpartsdirectory.com