



Exhaust Whistle



Great Southern Region AACA

August 2025 - Official publication of the AACA Great Southern Region - Serving Central Alabama

Vol. 37 No. 8

Great Southern Region Car Show August 30 at Pepper Place



Dayton Grand National

I had the opportunity to attend the Grand National Meet at the National Museum of the US Air Force in Dayton, Ohio with my newly minted teenage (13) grandson. What a treat.

This is my oldest grandson, Cameron, who lives in Lexington, KY and he loves cars, old and new. I met him in Dayton on Friday morning as he was traveling back from Bowling Green State University where he was attending a church youth camp. We first headed to the host hotel to pick up our registration packet, parked the car trailer at the

Air Force museum, then headed to the Packard Museum for the afternoon to see the Zenith Cars. As always, those cars are fabulous and fun to see. Cameron loves Dodge Chargers and Challengers and was rewarded to see a pristine Charger at this venue. We also saw a brass era Velie (never seen or heard of one before) and many more fabulous cars. Being at the Zenith display also awarded us entrance to the rest of the Packard Museum which was a great place to spend time looking at some of

Continued on page 3

A Note From The **PRESIDENT**

Enjoy Ken's story this month about his trip with his grandson to the Grand Nationals in Dayton.

YOU CAN RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP EARLY!

Dues are \$20.00 per family.
You must be a member of AACA to be a member of the Great Southern Region.
AACA Annual dues are \$45.00.



Schools are in session so please be careful on the roads, those children are our kids and grandkids.



Great Southern Region AACA

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**Dedicated to the preservation,
restoration and maintenance of
automobiles and automotive history**

Membership in the AACA is required to be a member of the Great Southern Region
Ownership of an antique car is optional

The Exhaust Whistle

Great Southern Region, Birmingham, AL
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2024 Officers

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Vice President: Bill Gardner
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Editor/Webmaster: Charlotte Dahlenburg
Activities: Bill Gardner





National Museum United States Air Force

their collection and talking to one of their employees for much more in-depth details.

Saturday morning, as usual, began with getting the car unloaded from the trailer and ready for the show. And what a show it was. Although it was hot, over 300 cars were in attendance and everyone who attended was rewarded with viewing beautiful cars from every era possible. As you might imagine from the pictures, I love the brass era cars first and the Roaring 20's and then 30's as well. Everything was there, including a late nineties Camry. Now I feel old!

On Sunday morning we headed to the Air Force Museum. As I said before, Cameron loves cars but is also fascinated with planes. I have to say, if you love planes, this place should be on your bucket list if you have never been. I was there 35 years ago when it was simply called the Wright-Patterson AFB museum and they only had 2 hangars full of planes and some outside. Now they have 4 hangars full of



Cameron with an airplane



One of the Zenith Cars at the Packard Museum



Cameron in a Great Race car



Cars on the show filed



Cars on the show filed

every plane you can imagine and we spent all day until closing, still not being able to spend enough time seeing everything. BTW, it is free to attend and the many docents are a wealth of information. For the trivia minded, we even asked one of the docents where the name Hangar came from and was given the following answer. The term “hangar” is derived from the French word “hangar,” which means a shelter or shed. Learn something every day.

The weekend was a special experience and one I will not soon forget. - Ken McClellan



What Have You Been Up To?



Grand National Winner

James Wagon showed his 1957 Cadillac convertible at the Cadillac & LaSalle Club's Grand National Meet June 2-7 in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. His car won a 1st place Senior Grand National Award.



I was told that I have the largest collection of Chrysler TC by Maserati in the world. I own 15 of them.
- John Morykwas.

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Largest Antique Car Show & Flea Market in the World

Registration information can be obtained by
submitting the activity request card that came
with this magazine to AACA Headquarters.



Cruisin' Through July with Hot Cars & Cool Ice Cream

July was a very busy month! The first stop was in Auburn Indiana for the Central Spring Nationals. The Nationals were held at the Dekalb High School which is a large facility with plenty of room for cars, trailers and motorhomes (including ours)

The weekend started off with a cruise-in on July 4th

around the Dekalb County Courthouse.

It was so hot, but a lot of people took advantage of the ice cream on the square.

Saturday was the day of the show and there were so many cars including corvettes, military vehicles, little cars, big cars and so much more. Note the parking places that





the seniors decorated for their senior year.



Check out this display of the fire extinguisher on the last car



This poor little bird was sitting on an egg in the middle of the chaos but toughed it out and never left !

After the delicious awards banquet, we enjoyed a nice quiet evening before heading out the next morning to Wauseon Ohio for the Crosley Nationals at the fairgrounds. This is an event that we always enjoy. It is a very casual week with lots of fun activities. The activities include bingo prizes, a Crosley tour to the ice cream shop and of course lots of dog walking.

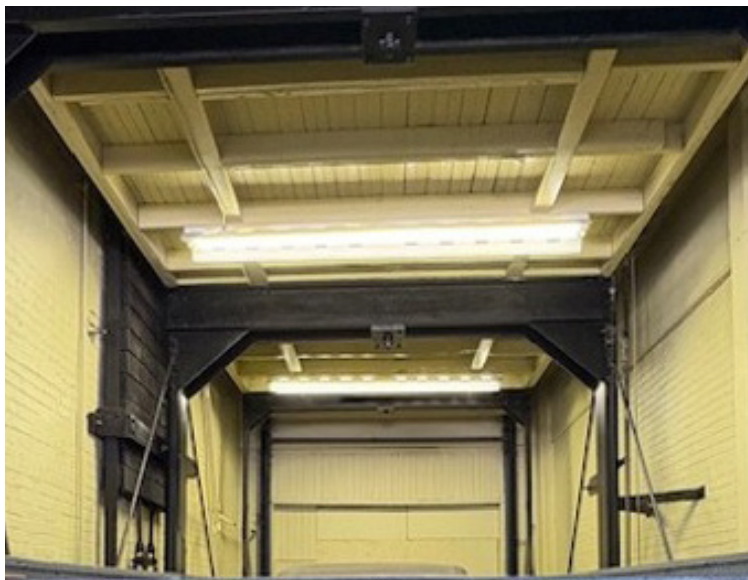
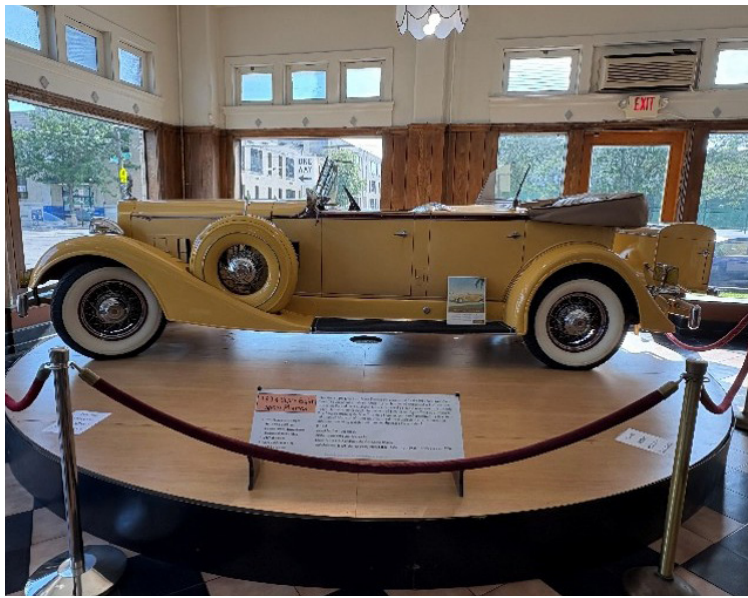


Crosley owners have one problem. It seems you can't have just one. So this 1951 Farm-O-Road one is now part of the collection:



We do not have any plans to restore it, the plan is to take it to Wauseon and have fun!!

Next on the agenda was the Grand Nationals in Dayton Ohio. The plan was to take the 1958 Cushman and the 1948 Crosley for a Senior but the Crosley had other ideas, so they both stayed home. There were some beautiful cars at the Zenith competition. The Zenith cars were displayed in a museum that was an old Packard Dealership which added a unique perspective. Here are some pictures from the museum





The cars participating in the Zenith contest are obviously the cream of the crop and the judges had a very tough job determining the winner. Unfortunately, there were too many people to get any pictures of the cars but here are a couple pictures of the awards displayed.

- Vicki Bolton



2025 Zenith Award



1970 Pontiac GTO Judge
Photo courtesy of America's Packard Museum



Photo courtesy of America's Packard Museum

AACA held its premier annual event, the Zenith Grand National Award presentation, at the historic America's Packard Museum in Dayton, Ohio. Known as the AACA's most prestigious competition, the Zenith Award celebrates the finest restored vehicles in the country.

This year's event featured 17 exceptional competitors, each representing the pinnacle of craftsmanship, authenticity, and attention to detail. After careful judging, the 2025 Zenith Grand National Award was presented to a stunning 1970 Pontiac GTO Judge—a true standout among a field of remarkable entries.

The setting inside America's Packard Museum added a fitting backdrop of automotive heritage to an evening dedicated to excellence in restoration. - Charlotte



Photo courtesy of America's Packard Museum

A Note From The EDITOR

The dog days of summer are behind us, and we're heading into our second season of car shows—and I couldn't be more excited. This is one of my favorite times of the year. The leaves begin to change, the temperatures start to cool, and some of the most beloved car events in the country kick into gear.

One of the biggest is the AACA Eastern Fall Meet in Hershey, Pennsylvania—widely regarded as one of the top ten car shows in the nation. Though I haven't made it there myself (yet!), I've seen the photos, heard the stories, and it's clear this event should be on every AACA member's bucket list.

GSR Calendar

January 23	Dinner Meeting
February 27	Dinner Meeting
March 27	Dinner Meeting
April 12	Let's Drive Tour
May 24.....	Let's Drive Tour
June 14	Jenkins Place
July	Bibb's Place
August 30	Car Show at Pepper Place
September 25	Dinner Meeting
October	Let's Drive Tour
November 20.....	Dinner Meeting
December	Christmas Meeting

Closer to home, two of my personal favorites are the Veterans Car Show on Dauphin Island Parkway and the week-long Cruisin' the Coast along the Mississippi Gulf Coast. These events offer not only great cars but also great people and unforgettable memories. As the season winds down, we'll roll into the holidays with festive parades that help bring the year to a cheerful close.

See you on the road!

Charlotte

AACA Calendar

August 12-15

Eastern Divisional Tour

Location: Northern Maine Sponsor: Maine Region

September 7-12

Revival AAA Glidden Tour® (Pre-1943)

Location: Owensboro, KY Sponsor: VMCCA

October 7-10

Eastern Fall Nationals

Location: Hershey, PA Sponsor: Hershey Region

October 18-22

Central Divisional Tour

Location: San Antonio To Gonzales, TX Sponsor: Texas DFW Region

October 22-25

Central Fall Nationals

Location: Galveston, Texas Sponsor: Gulf Coast Region

Do You Know About the Mileage Award Program?

Reprinted from the Speedster

If you enjoy driving your antique vehicle, start your engine and get recognized for driving your AACA - approved vehicles throughout the calendar year with the Mileage Award Program (MAP). Participation is voluntary and tracking mileage is your responsibility.

Any time a vehicle is driven - anywhere for any reason - the mileage counts towards the award level. Once you sign up, you will receive a badge and awards at 2,000 and 5,000 and each 5,000 mile increment thereafter. The cost to become a MAP member is a one-time fee of \$25.

Go to http://www.aaca.org/images/pdf/AACA_Mileage_Award_Program_Application.pdf for a Mileage Award Program application.



Local Calendar

Cruise Ins

Cruise Ins

- 1st Tuesday - 5-8pm** Petro Bucksville 22526 Highway 216 McCalla
- Thursday Weekly - 6-9pm** VFW Post 6022, 7001 University Blvd E, Cottondale
- 1st Saturday - 8-11am** Hoovers Tactical Firearms Cruise In 1561 Montgomery Hwy. Hoover. Hosted by Dixie Vintage Antique Automobile Club
- First Saturday - 9-2pm.** Cruising on the Square. Downtown Jasper (April – Sept)
- 2nd Saturday - 5-8pm** Apr-Oct Bee Line Highway Classics & Cruisers Railroad St, Hartselle
- 2nd Saturday - 6-9pm** Apr-Oct Alabama Misfits Jack's Exit 267 off I-65 1195 Walker Chapel Rd, Flutondale
- 2nd Saturday - 8-11am** - Magic City Octane. 6200 Grand River Blvd E, Leeds, AL
- 3rd Saturday - 6pm** Tallahassee Shopping Center 400 Gilmer Ave
- 3rd Saturday - 2-5pm** Hooters Hwy 119 & Oak Mountain Park Road, Pelham
- 3rd Saturday - 3:30-8:30pm** Home Depot 41310 US Hwy 280 Sylacauga
- 3rd Saturday - 4:30-7:30pm** Home Depot 3784 US 431 Phoenix City
- 3rd Saturday – 6-9pm** Jack's Drive in Blountsville (May-Aug)
- 4th Saturday - 5-9pm** Pizza Bar 141 2nd St NW Carbon Hill
- 4th Saturday – 8-10:30am** 1110 Sparkman St. NW Hartselle American Legion Post 52
- Saturday Weekly 8:30-10:30** Shops of Colonnade 3418 Colonnade Pkwy, Birmingham
- 3rd Sunday - 1-5pm** Casual Pint, 5541 Grove Blvd, Hoover
- 3rd & 5th Sunday 3pm** 1204 Forestdale Square, Forestdale
- Last Saturday – 5pm-?** 7900 Vaughn Rd at Taylor Rd Montgomery

Shows

September

- 5-6 Hall of Fame Super Show.** 3199 Speedway Blvd, Lincoln, AL Info 205-200-0339
- 6 Riffs & Rides.** 8-12pm Munford High School, 300 Ceadars Rd. Munsford, AL, 50/50, Door prizes, Food, Music. Info amber.conway@fcboe.org
- 6 23rd Annual Cars by the Creek.** 9 am start Orr Park Montevallo. register on line at carsbythecreek.com
- 13 Silver Lakes Senior Living Grease is the Word Car Show.** 10-2pm 509 Pineview Ave Glencoe, AL Info 256-492-0955/ Classic Cars, 50's Attire, Free hamburger, and ice cream, Grease musical performance, 50/50 \$25 Reg.
- 13 Car Show & Sock Hop.** 3-6:30 pm. 2747 Logan Martin Dam Road, Vincent, AL & 20 Reg. Food, Music, 50/50 Info Charley Pope - 205-240-4674.
- 13 1st Annual Motors for Missions.** 10-2pm. Dalraida Baptist Church, 3838 Wares Ferry Rd, Montgomery,

AL. \$20 Reg. Trophies, food and more

- 13 2nd Annual Bubba Lewis Memorial Cruise/Car Show.** 9-2pm. 23415 AL Hwy195 Double Springs, AL
- 13 1st Annual Motors for Missions.** 10-2pm Dalraida Baptist Church, 3638 Wares Ferry Rd, Montgomery
- 14 Classic Car Show.** 2:30-6pm. Antioch Baptist, 2650 McIntosh Road, Oxford, AL Door Prizes, Crawfish and Shrimp Boil, Ice Cream
- 20 5th Annual Lakeside Motorfest.** 10-3pm Lakeside Park, Pell City \$20 reg. www.lakesideliveshow.com Reg \$20. Live music, top 50 and more, food/crafts.
- 20 Iron Works Car Show.** 8-3pm, Brierfield Ironworks Historica Site 240 Furnce Pkwy. Brierfield
- 20 Wheels - Cars - ATV Extracarganza.** 5-9pm. 105 Michelle St. NW, Hanceville, AL Raffle, Live Music, Food Truck
- 27 12th Annual Cruising for Christ Car & Motorcycle Show.** 8-12pm. 2024 Redemption Way Odenville. Info 205-962-5584
- 27 Blountsville Harvest Festival Covered Bridge Auto Club.** 39th Annual Car Show 8-Noon. Jack's Drive In Blountsville. \$20 entry. Info 205-625-8506.
- 27 Harpersville Day Car Show.** 8-3pm Harpersville Municipal Park, 2957 Sunvalley Rd, Harpersville, AL. Food, vendors, live entertainment
- 27 German AutoFest 2.** 11-5pm Wetumpka, AL, All German cars welcome

October

- 4 The Wheelz/Re-Vamped Carshow 8-2pm. 9474 County Rd 55 Harpersville, AL \$20 entry. Food trucks, door prizes.**
- 4 8th Annual Daniel Ray Willis Memorial Car Show.** 11-3. Free Tannehill State Park 12632 Confederate Parkway, McCalla, AL Info 205-243-2667
- 4 15th Annual Cruisin' For A Miricle Car Show.** 8-3pm Moddy City Park, 685 Park Ave Moody, AL 35004 Contact Fhris 205-365-7412
- 5 The Brian Colburn Memorial Cruise-In. 2-5pm 734 Hwy 78, Jasper Open to all Vehicles**
- 5 American Legion Post #5 Antique Cars, Tractors and Motorcycles Show.** 8-5pm. Southside Community Center 2142 Hwy 77, Southside, AL. \$10 entry
- 11 Thorsby Swedish Festival Auto Show.** 9-2pm. 54 Opportunity Dr, Thorsby, AL 35171. Pre-reg. \$20. Day of Show \$25. Contact thorsbyswedishfestivalautoshow@gmail.com
- 16-18 Etowah County Swap Meet & Car Show.** 201 Griffin St Attalla, AL. Info 256-490-5432.





CORVAIR CONVERTIBLE HISTORIC DEBUT...

Written by Eva "Corvair Lady" McGuire, Corvair Historian/Creator, reprinted with permission

March of 1962 brought new and exciting changes to the Corvair model line. Although the 1962 Chevrolet Corvair was introduced to the public in September of 1961, the BIG NEWS came at the end of March (March 27, 1962) with the announcement of the convertible and turbocharger option package (which was added to the Monza line).

To celebrate these new additions, a special gathering

of newly made 1962 Corvair Monza convertibles took place at the local Willow Run Assembly Plant in Ypsilanti, Michigan (most likely in April when these cars debuted). We're fortunate to have two photos to commemorate the occasion and they were both taken in front of the Chevrolet Division side of the plant near the famed Rotunda (affectionately known as the "Fishbowl"). If you look closely at the black and white photo...you'll see a new 1962 Chevy II convertible on display inside the Rotunda (round glass building) as this was the first year of its introduction to Willow

Run's production model line. We're pretty sure there was also a new 1962 Corvair convertible next to it on display. Willow Run would often place a couple of cars they were currently producing at the plant and display them in the Fishbowl as a means to entice the public to purchase one of their cars. When the Corvair was first introduced in 1959, there were two 1960 Corvairs in the Rotunda (see cover photo for this page). The Rotunda was used as the reception area entrance to the Executive Offices at Chevrolet and it had a lovely lady receptionist at a desk to welcome guests when visiting for a plant tour or seeing office personnel.

The black and white photo in this post showcases the front of the convertibles, and the color photo has the rear line-up of vehicles selected to be in this image. It appears they included cars with two shades of red (Roman Red, Honduras Maroon), Ermine White, Satin Silver, blue (not sure if it's Nassau Blue, Silver Blue, or Twilight Blue), and Tuxedo Black in color. It would be nice to know the total number of Corvairs who participated in this special gathering...



Color photo of newly made 1962 Corvair Monza convertibles taken at the Willow Run Assembly Plant to celebrate the introduction of GM's "sporty compact car." (Photo courtesy of Willow Run/Chevrolet/GM)

It would be cool if they had a total of "62" cars but I don't see that many. You can kind of figure out how many there are based on the two photos. (maybe around 33). In the black & white photo...The way the gentlemen are dressed in their trench coats and fedora hats indicates they were probably Willow Run management personnel from the plant (and maybe even a sprinkled Chevrolet employee).

1962 also brought new ways on how General Motors would market the Corvair to the public. Instead of being the basic "economy compact car" as originally introduced; Chevrolet would now call the new 1962 Corvair a "sporting compact car" as they geared their ad campaigns to aim this air-cooled wonder to sportier (rally & racing) crowds...and it worked! You would often see 1962 Corvair sales promotion ads featuring the car in action shots or a photo of a nearby Corvette to emphasize the on par sportiness of the Corvair. This trend would continue in the following years promoting Corvair. Sales figures for 1962 rewarded their efforts. Total production figures for 1962 Corvairs was 328,500 units (broken down to 292,531 cars and 35,969 FC trucks). There were a total of 16,569 Monza convertibles made.

Other Information...The Monza "Spyder" option was only available on the Monza coupes and convertibles with 4 speed transmissions. The addition of 150hp plus available options of chrome engine accents, special emblems, "Spyder" wheel cover inserts, and special dash truly made this one sporty car. There were other upgrades and cosmetic changes made to the 1962 model line. High performance engine,

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heavy duty suspension, metallic brakes, positraction rear axle, and return to automatic chokes. The 1962 Corvair had a fantastic year in sales figures despite the addition of the Chevy II to the Chevrolet line.

DEBUT INFORMATION: The Corvair Monza Spyder turbo was first shown at the Chicago Auto Show in 1962 which opened on Feb. 17, 1962. The other turbo (Oldsmobile F-85 Jetfire) debuted at the New York Auto Show in April of 1962.

FIRST MADE CONVERTIBLE...The first Monza Spyder convertible (photo in post) debuted at the Greenbrier Resort in White Sulphur Springs, WV before a gathering a GM Executives which probably occurred before the Chicago show. (info. and photo courtesy of Bill Stanley)

P.S. Conley ("Alabama") Phillips was the Willow Run auto worker who was asked to work on the first made convertible. He put the welds on it.

Happy 63rd Anniversary to the 1962 Corvair convertibles. If you happen to own one of these cars, please post a photo of it in our comment section.



This is the first made 1962 Monza Spyder convertible that was unveiled at the Greenbrier Resort in White Sulphur Springs, WV before a group of GM Executives... which probably pre-dated the 1962 Chicago Auto Show. This photo was taken when Corvair owner, Allen Bistrow, owned this little gem. (Info and photo courtesy of Bill Stanley)

Donate
before it's lost

A collage of various vintage car magazines. Visible titles include 'Motor Age', 'Winton', 'The Auto Era', 'American', and 'Winton'. There are also small images of classic cars interspersed among the magazine covers.

Your donation will help support the AACA Library & Research Center's goals and to aid hobbyists in restoration and preservation efforts. For information on planned giving call 717-534-2082

AACA Library & Research Center

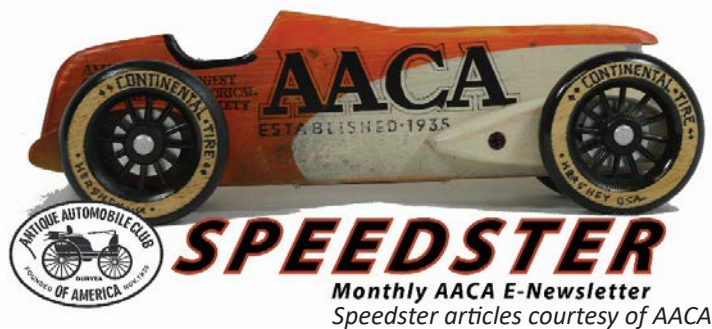
*Save
the Date
& Reserve
Your Room
NOW!*

A circular logo for the 'Central Division Fall Nationals' of the 'Antique Automobile Club of America'. It features a steering wheel in the center, a cowboy hat on top, and a red banner at the bottom that says 'GULF COAST REGION'. Text around the circle includes 'FOUNDED OF AMERICA NOV 1931' and 'Galveston, TX ★ Oct. 23-25, 2023'.

Host Hotel: Moody Gardens Resort and Spa
 One Hope Boulevard, Galveston, Texas 77554
 Call 409-683-1299 Monday-Friday between 7AM-8PM to make reservation for the Antique Car Club room block. Group rate is \$182. **Hotel Reservation Deadline: September 30**

Texas Rangers Presentation • Welcoming Day Party Activities
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<p>Chairman: Jim Johnston telcpressure@att.net 832-693-4008</p>	<p>Registration: Sandra Johnston & Thomas Kidd Sandra-jim@att.net tak@citizenkidd.com 713-542-9481</p>
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My First Grand Nationals

By Stacy Zimmerman, Speedster Editor, szimmerman@aacaa.org

So, the title of my article is a tiny bit misleading because I have in fact attended one other Grand Nationals show prior to the one this past weekend. It was the one we held in Gettysburg during the first year of the pandemic. Technically, yes, that was a Grand Nationals, but it wasn't even close to what I got to experience in Dayton.

The Grand Nationals held in Gettysburg was just a one-day thing that included the Zenith competition, car show and awards. Everything was outside – even the awards ceremony was in a tent on the grounds. No meals, no extra activities. That was a different time, and we were just trying to host a few specific events for our members and basically did what we could do following the safety guidelines put in place by the government.

Fast forward to this past weekend in Dayton, Ohio... Everything about the whole show was top-notch! We spent Thursday evening at America's Packard Museum oohing and aahing over not just the Packards on display but also the Zenith competition cars. They all looked beautiful and pristine and ready to take their time in the spotlight. The Welcome Reception/Zenith Preview was a big hit with attendees who especially enjoyed the ice cream sundae station.



The Zenith judges went to work on Friday carefully looking over each car in order to choose a winner and runner-up. Both registration and merchandise sales were super busy back at the host hotel with most car owners coming to town that day. Everyone had done their homework and came fully prepared for the evening luau. The banquet room was literally a sea of Hawaiian shirts, and everyone entering was welcomed with a lei from our AACAA National President and his wife, Dave and Deb Anspach. Delicious food, themed decorations and a little island-inspired background music from the band brought the whole event together.

Everyone was up bright and early for Saturday morning and the big show. The grounds where the show was held at the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force were spectacular. I mean where else are you going to be able to park your car on the show field (which is actually an old runway) next to a Boeing C-17 Globemaster III or a Boeing EC-135E ARIA!? These are some BIG planes people with some equally impressive back stories! Even though it was a super-hot day, nothing stopped our members from filling up the show field with about 300 awesome antiques. The awards banquet inside the museum was held in a great space with planes and exhibits all around us. It was wonderful watching everyone go up to get their awards, especially because we know how much time and effort goes into getting your cars to a Grand Nationals level.

The best part of any of our events for me is always all of YOU! Your enthusiasm and excitement are always contagious, and I just love all of your happy smiles. Yes, I get to work for this great club every day and I get to talk to and email with members constantly but getting to see the pure joy on your faces and hear stories firsthand at an event like this reminds me why I love this job and this club. I know for some people it's all about the cars, but for me it has always been and will continue to be all about the people. You all make the hard work worth it!





*Battered taxicab with 20 CENTS 1ST QUARTER MILE 5 CENTS EACH ADDITIONAL QUARTER MILE emblazoned on its door
New York NY. December 1944 William C. Shrout*

When Steel Ruled the Streets: The Cars of NYC's Taxi Golden Age

Written by Charlotte Dahlenburg

Photos by William C. Shrout, December 1944 - Time & Life Pictures/Getty Images

Source: <http://vintag.es/2013/06/taxis-cabs-in-new-york-city-1944.html>; <https://seeoldnyc.com/taxi-cabs-of-new-york-city-1940s/> : <https://www.scribd.com/document/625998673/TAXI-a-Social-History-of-the-New-York-City-Cabdriver-GRAHAM-RUSSELL-GAO-HODGES-Z-lib-org>: https://www.nyc.gov/html/media/totweb/taxioftomorrow_history.html

Editors Note: William Shrout was my grandfather. He was a notable photographer from 1920 till 1980. He worked for The New York Times, Washington Post, Life

Magazine, Saturday Evening Post, a World War II War Correspondent and freelance photographer during his lifetime. All these photos were featured in Life Magazine in 1945.

In the 1940s, while the world was at war and ration books were as common as bus schedules, another kind of battle rumbled through the streets of New York City—a mechanical symphony of honking horns, sputtering engines, and shouted directions. This was the Golden Age of the Taxi, and at the heart of it all were the cars themselves: big, bold, and built to last.

Before the age of hybrids and touchscreen meters,



Auto mechanics at work checking and repairing taxicabs at company's maintenance garage

New York's taxis were forged from thick steel and fired by American ingenuity. These machines weren't just transportation, they were tools of the city's rhythm, part of the daily soundtrack of life between the rivers. They moved businesspeople to meetings, soldiers to train stations, and night-shift workers home before dawn. They carried arguments, laughter, secrets, and everything in between. They were the city's pulse, rolling through the



Auto mechanics using hoist to drop in motor of taxicab under repair at company's maintenance garage

boroughs one fare at a time.

If one name defined the era, it was Checker. Built in Kalamazoo, Michigan, Checker Motors didn't just adapt passenger cars for taxi use, they built their cabs from the ground up with passengers and city streets in mind. The A-series, including the A2 and A3 models, were instantly



Fifth Ave. doorman flagging down a taxi for one of the residents of his bldg



Lineup behind doorman waiting to take taxicab on 8th Ave. near. 35th St.

recognizable for their boxy profiles, high ceilings, and suicide doors. They were roomy, rugged, and made to survive endless hours of potholes, stoplights, and backseat chatter. Inside, some models even featured folding jump seats that allowed drivers to squeeze in extra passengers, especially useful during the crowded wartime years when every ride counted.

But Checker didn't have the streets to itself. New York's fleet was also full of Fords, Chevrolets, and Plymouths. The 1939–1941 Ford sedans, in particular, were a favorite, simple and tough, with flathead V8s that were relatively easy to repair. Chevrolet's Master Deluxe and Special Deluxe models offered comfort and dependability, and Plymouth's P11s and P12s gained traction with their smooth six-cylinder engines and no-nonsense design. These cars were plentiful before World War II and proved invaluable when car production ceased after 1942.

With Detroit focused on tanks and bombers, taxi companies had to make do with what they had. That meant stretching the life out of aging cars, scavenging for spare parts, and relying on skilled mechanics to keep engines humming. Wartime shortages of gas, rubber, and even drivers, many of whom were drafted, turned maintenance into a kind of mechanical triage. Still, the taxis kept running. The city depended on them, and they



SkyView taxi driver assisting passenger w. her luggage

delivered.

Hailing a cab in 1940s New York was its own kind of ritual. Imagine yourself on a busy Manhattan sidewalk, overcoat collar turned up against the wind, arm outstretched as you scanned the traffic. The streets buzzed with trolleys, trucks, and the echo of shoe leather on concrete. You



Midtown doorman waiting to flag down taxi passing the Latin Quarter nightclub at dusk



Fifth Ave. doorman using whistle to flag down a taxi for one of the residents of his bldg.

weren't alone, someone else always seemed to be waving just ahead of you. But when that glowing roof light came into view, signaling an empty cab, you stepped off the curb with hope. The cab screeched to a stop, and you climbed in, settling into a worn leather seat that had carried thousands before you. Maybe there was a "Buy War Bonds" sticker on the window, or the muffled hum of a big band tune on the radio. The smell of engine oil and yesterday's cigarette smoke lingered in the air as the driver dropped the flag and the meter ticked up, 10 cents to start, a few more for each mile.

These drivers didn't have GPS. They had intuition, experience, and opinions. They wore flat caps, wool jackets, and sometimes a tie if they were feeling formal. Many were immigrants or war veterans, making their living behind the wheel, knowing every shortcut from the Bowery to the Bronx. Their cabs weren't just jobs, they were extensions of themselves.

Hollywood noticed. Films like *The Naked City*, *Dark Passage*, and *The Clock* brought the taxi's hum into theaters across America. Whether it was a detective tailing a suspect or a couple falling in love over the roar of a cab ride through Times Square, the taxi became a stage on wheels, central to the story of New York.

Looking back, it's easy to see why this was the Golden Age. The cars were strong and dependable, full of character and built for the city's pace. They weren't luxuries they were necessities. Their designs, from Checker's squared-off body to Ford's long fenders, became part of the urban landscape and set the template for what a taxi should look like for generations to come.

Today, if you see a vintage Checker cab at a car show or

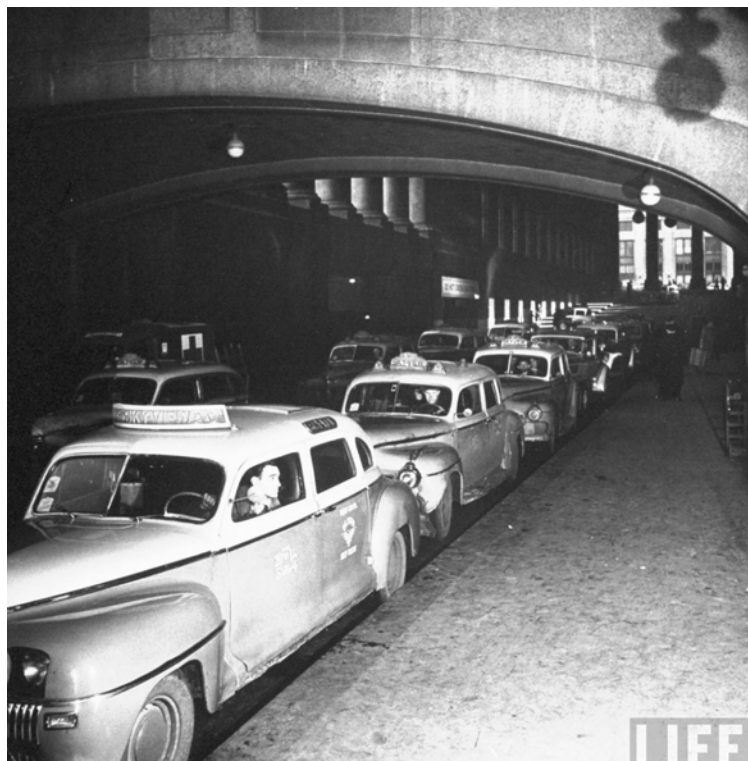


NT City Traffic 1945 6th ave on 51st

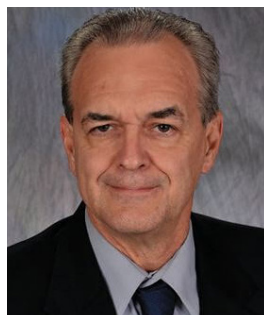
museum, stop and take a closer look. That thick chrome grille and wide bench seat once carried everything from love stories to late-night arguments. These machines didn't just survive the city they helped build its legacy, one fare at a time.



NY taxi cab driver



Taxicabs lined up waiting for arriving train passengers at Pennsylvania Station



GROW YOUR CLUB- IT'S EVERYONE'S JOB

By Dave Anspach
**2025 AACA President/
2024 EVP**

At the risk of sounding like a broken record (yes, I know, you have to be in our age group to know what that is and how it sounds), we all have a responsibility to help to grow OUR club. We have a lot of stuff Nationally to help. Things like the Veteran's memberships, free memberships, half year memberships offered in July and others, all make it pretty easy for you to sign up a new member, but the first step is you have to ask.

I watched past president Jim Elliott at Hershey working at the membership tent. He signed up numerous new members in a short 2 hour shift. How did he do it?? HE ASKED THEM!! A simple question. "Are you a member of AACA?" started the conversation. A large percentage that answered NO, followed with... "I've been meaning to but just never got around to it". From there it was an easy transition to the sign up!! Now I hear you saying that Hershey is an easy spot to start from, but I don't have a Hershey. You are right, but you have lots of opportunities to work with. Remember to ALWAYS have information and membership materials with you. Keep them in your regular driver and in your show cars. You never know when and where you will meet the next new AACA member. I've signed up members at gas stations, convenience stores, along highways, and everywhere else. I've even followed people home and talked with them on becoming members.

Create opportunities by bringing info to car shows. What better place than a place where people are already interested in cars? Take a small card table and set up next to your beautiful AACA car. Talk to everyone who will listen about your club and the opportunities it presents.

Don't forget tours!! People like the idea of driving them

as much as showing them!! Make sure you have the AACA event schedule with you and talk about the opportunities. One other talking point is AACA Judging. Our system is the most respected multi car system in the hobby. Talk about it!! Also, talk to your local region (if you are part of one, if not...join!!) about going to shows as a group. There is no more powerful recruiting tool than seeing a group of AACA cars taking awards at a local show!! Don't be afraid to ask. The worst answer you can get is NO!! And if you get a maybe or an "I'll think about it" try to get at least an e-mail or a phone number and FOLLOW UP!! Get your local region to send them a newsletter, invite them to a meeting, Include them in your events. As soon as they feel part of things - they will join. As Past President Jack Harris says - you may even have to pick them up and bring them to a meeting with you!! Remember that every new member has the potential to multiply!!

We just signed up a new young man at our last cruise-in we attended. He came to his first meeting this month. He said he had so much fun he is "twisting arms" among his friends to get them to come next month!! Please!!! Get at least one new member!!! Grow our club!! You will be glad you did!!



Rummage Box articles courtesy of AACA