



Exhaust Whistle



Great Southern Region AAC

August 2026 - Official publication of the AAC Great Southern Region - Serving Central Alabama

Vol. 38 No. 8

Next Outing - Dinner Meeting September 15 - 6pm - Golden Rule Irondale - Invite a friend!



Annual Grand National at Allentown

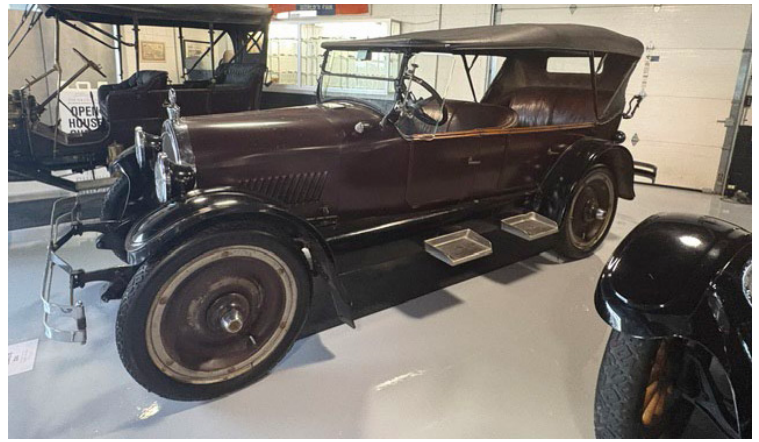
This year's Grand National was a spectacular event held at the NB Center for American Automotive Heritage. The Thursday welcome reception was held at the America on Wheels

Museum which featured several automobiles and historical displays. It also featured a train layout to which a model of the AAC Library's book mobile was added. Friday featured the Zenith Award Ceremony at the NB Visitor Center then later in the evening we visited the Mack Trucks Historical Museum. Saturday was the show day with almost 500 cars on the show field. After a rain burst on Thursday evening, the weather was spectacular for the rest of the event. It really was an incredible experience.



To the left are some of the cars on display at the Visitor Center that were being judged for the Zenith awards. And above is the final display before anyone came in on Friday morning. The

Packard that is in the lower center is the car that won the First-Place Zenith Award. It was a beautiful car!



The previous two photos show a couple of the cars that are on display in one of the garage buildings.



The NB people gave tours of their garage facilities. The first picture is of one of the engines that they are redoing. The second picture is of a very old French made machine that they use in shaping the metal for a car.



The above are pictures of some of the signs and displays that you see on the grounds of the NB Center.





The Mack Trucks Museum was a very interesting place and below is the bulldog featured at the entrance.



Just a few of the Mack trucks on display at the museum



There were obviously lots of bulldogs but this was probably my favorite!

- Vicki Bolton





Free • Open Car Show • All Makes All Models

GREAT SOUTHERN REGION CAR SHOW



MARTIN BISCUIT - JENI'S PARKING LOT
2930 3rd Ave S, Birmingham

**FREE TO ENTER
& ATTEND**

**SATURDAY
SEPTEMBER 5, 2026
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM**



A monthly publication of the Great Southern Region - AACA

August 2026



A Note From The **PRESIDENT**

I know all of you are looking forward to the end of the hot days of summer and on to some cooler days to make it comfortable to drive our cars, especially the ones without A/C. Me too.

I wanted to remind all of you about a couple of upcoming events that I hope and trust you will be involved in. First and foremost is our Pepper Place cruise-in/car show on September 5th. This is an event to showcase our club and bring attention to our hobby. Please be there by 8 and we will be gone by noon. Nothing to mess up your Saturday or your game day but it will go a long way to promoting our hobby and showing off your ride.

Secondly is the Helena Car Show for October 31st. I went out to all of you with a request for your vote on whether we have a charity for this show or not. Two thirds of the responses were in favor of a charity. So, we will proceed with that direction. It is imperative that we have volunteers for parking, judging, registration, and putting together "grab bags" Speaking of "grab bags", we need very soon to get donations from vendors for items to fill these bags.

If you have any questions about either of these items, please contact me and let me know.

Ken McClellan



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Facebook!**
Like and follow us
gsraaca



AACA National Headquarters
P.O. Box 417 Hershey, PA 17033
Founded 1935 717.534.1910

www.aaca.org

**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

Exhaust Whistle

Great Southern Region, Birmingham, AL

Email stories and photos to Charlotte at
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www.greatsouthern.aaca.com

facebook: gsraaca

The Exhaust Whistle is a monthly publication of the AACA Great Southern Region, view expressed in the Exhaust Whistle are not necessarily those of the Region officers of AACA. Original material may be reprinted if credit is given.

2026 Officers

President: Ken McClellan
Vice President: Bill Gardner
Treasurer: Vicki Bolton
Secretary: Vicki Bolton
Editor/Webmaster: Charlotte Dahlenburg



A Note From The EDITOR

Well, it's happening again. The days are getting just a little shorter, the promise of cooler weather is in the air, and here in the South, we are beginning to see the light at the end of the summer heat.

Now, I know what you're thinking 90 degrees is not exactly cool. But after weeks of stepping outside and feeling like you've opened the door of an oven, 90 degrees can feel downright pleasant! For those of us who love old cars, this is the time of year we have been waiting for. The southern car fall season is opening back up, and there are several good months ahead to get the cars out, meet up with friends, and enjoy what we love.

Two important Great Southern Region events are coming up, and both are worth putting on your calendar. The Pepper Place Car Show is September 5, followed by the Helena Show on October 31. These aren't just shows to attend, they are our club events, and they depend on members being there, bringing their cars, and lending a hand. A successful show takes more than the cars in the field. It takes people willing to help park cars, greet visitors, assist with registration, answer questions, and do all those little things that make an event run smoothly.

So, if you can participate, please do. And if you can volunteer, even for a little while, your help is greatly appreciated.

But perhaps the best part of car season isn't the show itself. It is what happens after the cars are parked.

There is something special about pulling up a chair, sitting among the cars, and simply talking. One conversation leads to another. Someone knows the history of a particular car. Someone else remembers where they found theirs. Then comes the story about the restoration that didn't quite go as planned or the part that took three months to find or the little trick someone discovered in the garage that finally made everything work.

Those are the stories I love. We don't just preserve old automobiles; we preserve the memories that come with them. Every car has a story, and every owner seems to have a story that goes along with it. Sometimes it is a story about a family vacation, a first car, a father or grandfather who taught us how to turn a wrench, or simply the adventure of getting an old car back on the road.

And that's what makes these events special. So,

as we head into another southern car season, get the dust off the cars, check the fluids, charge the battery, and start making plans. Bring your car, bring a chair, bring a friend and most importantly, bring your stories. And when the cars are parked, I hope you'll pull up a chair and join the conversation.

The best part of the hobby may just be the stories we tell while sitting beside the cars we love.

Charlotte

QSR Calendar

January 22	Dinner Meeting
February 26	Dinner Meeting
March 26	Dinner Meeting
April 23	Drive Tour
May 18	Drive Tour
June 16	Dinner Meeting
July 21.....	Dinner Meeting
August 18	Dinner Meeting
September 15.....	Dinner Meeting
October 20	Dinner Meeting
November 17.....	Dinner Meeting
December	Christmas Gathering

Attention Life Members: NEW Pin Available



Are you proud to be an AACA Life Member? Show off your pride by wearing one of our brand-new AACA Life Member pins.

The pins are made of a hard enamel that is colorful and classy. At only \$10 (plus \$5 for shipping), these new pins are an inexpensive way to show off your status in the club. They are also sure to be a conversation starter with other members as well as people you meet at car shows and tours. You must be a paid Life Member to purchase this pin. Call 717-534-1910 to order one today!



Local Calendar

Cruise Ins

- 1st & 3rd Tuesday - 5-8pm** Petro Bucksville 22526 Highway 216 McCalla
Thursday Weekly - 6-9pm VFW Post 6022, 7001 University Blvd E, Cottondale
1st Friday - 6-8 pm Sonic, 1713 2nd Ave SW, Cullman, AL. (Mar - Oct)
1st Saturday - 8-11am Hoovers Tactical Firearms Cruise In 1561 Montgomery Hwy. Hoover. Hosted by Dixie Vintage Antique Automobile Club
1st Saturday - 9-12 pm MOB Inc Monthly Car Show 40 Inverness Pkwy, Hoover
1st Saturday - 9-2pm Cruising on the Square. Downtown Jasper (Apr-Sept)
1st Saturday - 8:30-11:30. Warrior Tire 30 Lester Doss Rd, Warrior
2nd Friday - 5:30-9pm Christian Street Rodders 8512 21st St Haleyville in the City Hall Lower Parking lot
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 Friday 5-8pm Downtown Leeds (Apr - Oct)
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 Great Southern Region Car Show at Pepper Place.** 8-12pm. 2930 3rd Ave S. Birmingham. Free Open Car Show
5 2nd Annual Red Only Car Show. 590 Morris Majestic Road, Morris displaying only red vehicles, bounce houses and food trucks.
10 Vette Spectacular. 9-2pm Classic Car Motoring 3900 Grants Mill Rd. Irondale
11 Cruise-In Cinema & Car Show. 5pm Movie at dusk. 2000 Crestwood Blvd, Irondale. Bring your lawn chairs. Free popcorn, Food & Beverage Vendors

12 24th Annual Cars by the Creek Registration 9 am.

Best of Decades awards, Best of Show Awards Cars & Truck. All Years, Makes and Models Welcome. Register online at carsbythecreek.com

October

- 3 Jayden Day 2026 Car Show.** 9-2pm Hayden Town Hall. Registration \$10. Info 205-913-8932
3 Jeepin for a Cure - Alabama Car Show. 12-4pm. McSweeney Auto Sales, Clanton, AL, All vehicles welcome
17 Ronald Griffith Memorial Car & Truck Show. 8-1pm. Cross Creek Community Church 4825 US Hwy 278 E, Hokes Bluff. Info at 256-613-0096
24 40th Annual Blountsville Harvest Festival Car Show. 8-2pm. Jacks Drive-In Blountsville. \$20 entry. Door prizes, 50/50, Money Tree. Info 205-625-8506
31 Car Show at Helena Old Town. 9-1pm in Helena. \$20 Entry.

AACA Calendar

September 9-14

Founders Tour (1932-2001)

Location: Williamsburg, VA Host: Historic VA Peninsula Region

September 21-26

Revival AAA Glidden Tour (Pre-1943)

Location: Dover, DE

October 6-9

Eastern Fall Nationals

Location: Hershey, PA Host: Hershey Region

2027

February 4-6

Annual Convention/National Awards

Location: King of Prussia, PA Host: AACA

February 18-20

Winter Nationals

Location: Melbourne, FL

April 8-10

Annual Grand Nationals/Zenith/Southeastern Spring Nationals

Location: Charlotte, NC

June 3-5

Eastern Spring Nationals

Location: Fredericksburg, VA

June 6-11

Founders Tour

Location: Winchester, VA

July 22-24

Central Spring Nationals

Location: New Ulm, MN

August 25-28

Central Fall Nationals

Location: Crystal Lake, IL





CHRYSLER WINDSOR 4-DOOR SEDAN IN AZTEC TURQUOISE AND SPRUCE METALLIC

This year...you can easily afford a Chrysler!

In 1959, Chrysler advertised the Windsor's new wedge-head "B" engines as 'Golden Lions' and the cars as 'Lion Hearted'

1960 Chrysler Windsor

By Mark Maynard - Mark Maynard has written about cars, their people, and products for 30 years. You can email him at MaynardsGarage@gmail.com or visit his website, MaynardsGarage.com.

The full-size Chrysler Windsor sedan was in production from 1939 through to 1961 in the U.S. and in Canada until 1966.

In 1959, Chrysler started to advertise the Windsor's new wedge-head "B" engines as "Golden Lions" and the cars as "Lion Hearted," according to Wikipedia.

"The RB 383-cubic-inch V8 produced 305 hp with a twin-barrel carburetor. Lions were used in the advertising, and the cars had lion emblems on the

front doors and on the cylinder heads.

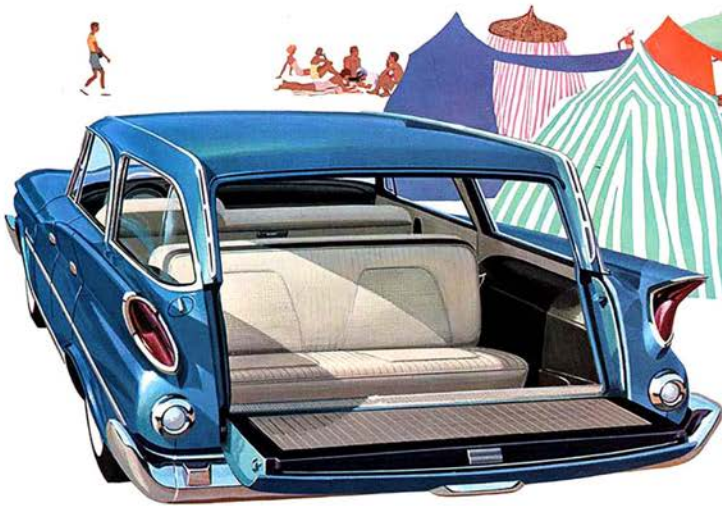
"In 1960, all Chrysler cars got a unibody frame. A new parking brake was also used, and the brakes on the Windsor were 11-inch drums. Air conditioning was a \$510 option.

At nearly 18 feet long and 79.4 inches wide, the Windsor rode on a long wheelbase of 122 inches.

Windsor By the Numbers

In a report by ConceptCarz.com, the "Golden Lions" was part of Chrysler's advertising campaign for the new wedge-head "B" engines. Introduced the previous year, the cars were known as "Lion Hearted."

"The RB 383 cubic-inch V8 had five main bearings, hydraulic valve lifters, a Carter two-barrel carburetor,



The Windsor Town & Country 3-Seat Wagon in cool Polar Blue. All-vinyl Alaskan White interior withstands abuse of cargo or kids.



The fun-loving Windsor Convertible, above in Sheffield Silver, features sun-proof vinyl interiors in colorful choices of blue, black, white and the red shown here. Tops are matched to body colors—fold into place in seconds.

a cast-iron block, and delivered just over 300 horsepower.

"The Canadian-built Windsors were powered by the 'Low Block' 361 cubic-inch engines from the U.S.-built DeSotos and Dodges. Instead of the 'Golden Lion' medallion, they received three golden crests on the front doors.

Dual headlamps were standard, and the Flitesweep deck lid, stone shields, and sill moldings were optional equipment.

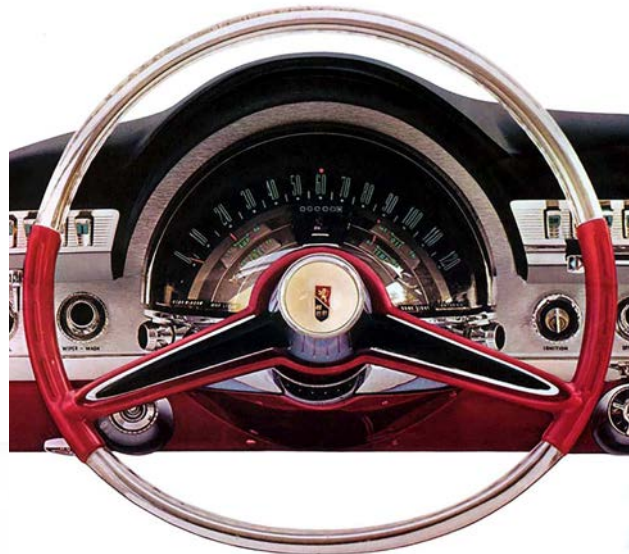
1960 Windsor Pricing

"Windsor body styles included a hardtop coupe priced at \$3,280, a hardtop sedan at \$3,345, a sedan at \$3,195, and a convertible at \$3,625. A six-passenger station wagon was \$3,735, and the nine-passenger version listed for \$3,815.

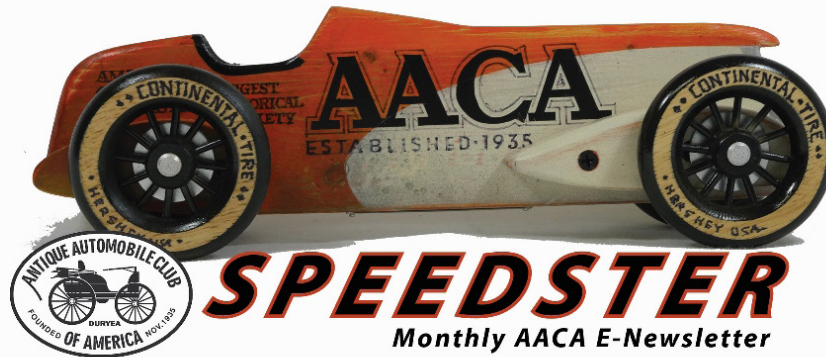
"The most popular body style was the sedan with

25,152 examples built, followed by 6,496 of the hardtop coupe, and 5,897 of the hardtop sedan.

"The convertibles and station wagons were exclusive, with 1,467 of the convertible, 1,120 of the six-passenger wagon, and 1,026 of the nine-passenger wagon constructed."



The Windsor 4-Door Hardtop, here in Iris, brings new solidity and quietness to the hardtop field with its new Unibody construction.



Speedster articles courtesy of AACA

SHOP AACA GEAR

New AACA Store Experience!

We're excited to introduce AACA's new and improved online store at store.aaca.org.

The store features a growing selection of apparel, accessories, and gift items designed to celebrate the collector car hobby and the AACA community. Whether you're looking for a hat to wear at your next event, a gift for a fellow enthusiast, or a new way to show your AACA pride, our new online store makes shopping easier than ever.

This launch is part of our ongoing commitment to enhancing the member experience. We will continue to expand our product offerings throughout the year, so be sure to check back often for new arrivals.

Featured Items



2026 Holiday Cards - 1965 Mustang

Pack of 12 (5" x 9") Holiday Cards featuring a 1965 Ford Mustang.

Inside verse reads: "Merry Christmas & Happy New Year"



2026 Holiday Cards - 1948 Town and Country

Pack of 12 (5" x 9") Holiday Cards featuring a 1948 Ford Mustang.

Inside verse reads: "Happy Holidays"



2027 AACA Calendar

AACA's Official 2027 Event Calendar featuring 2026 AACA President Vicki Bolton. All AACA Nationals & Tours are highlighted.

store.aaca.org.



When the Neon Lights Called You Off the Highway

By Charlotte Dahlenburg

The story of the American family vacation, the automobile, and the motels that made the journey part of the adventure.

There was a time when a family vacation began the moment the car left the driveway.

It wasn't necessary to reach the beach, the mountains, Disneyland, or Grandma's house before the vacation started. The vacation began with the sound of the engine turning over in the driveway, the slam of the trunk, and the familiar question from the back seat: "Are we there yet?"

It might have been 1962. Dad had spent the evening before checking the oil, filling the tank and making sure the tires were ready for the miles ahead. Mom had packed the suitcases, a cooler and enough sandwiches to feed the family several times over. The children had been assigned their places in the back seat, where they would spend the next several hours negotiating over who was sitting where.

There was no GPS. There was no smartphone. There wasn't even a voice coming from the dashboard telling you where to turn. There was a paper map. And Dad knew how to read it. The highway stretched ahead, and for the next several hundred miles, the family was on its own.

The road was part of the vacation. Americans had always traveled, but the automobile changed the experience completely. The car didn't run on a schedule. It didn't leave when the railroad timetable said it should leave. A family could stop when they wanted, eat when they wanted and change their destination simply because something interesting appeared beside the road. The automobile offered something that had never been quite so accessible before: freedom.

After World War II, that freedom became an important part of American life. More families owned automobiles, highways improved, and Americans increasingly traveled for pleasure. The family vacation was becoming a distinctly American tradition. And somebody had to give all those travelers a place to stop. That is where the motel came in.

The earliest roadside accommodations had developed from auto camps and tourist cabins. Travelers wanted something different from the traditional downtown hotel. They wanted to pull off the highway, park their automobile close to their room and get back on the road the next morning.

The name itself eventually captured the idea. Motor +



hotel = motel.

By the years after World War II, thousands of these small roadside businesses were scattered across the country. The National Park Service estimates that by 1948 there were approximately 30,000 motor courts and motels operating along America's highways. They were built for people like the family in our station wagon. And they were about to become one of the most recognizable sights in America.

Then came the sign. The sun is beginning to sink. The children have stopped asking how much farther because they have fallen asleep. Dad's hands are still on the steering wheel, Mom is looking out the window, and the road seems to stretch endlessly ahead.

Then, in the distance, something begins to glow. At first it is only a few colored lights. Then the shape becomes clear. A tall sign rises above the roadside. Perhaps it is an arrow. Perhaps it is a cowboy. Perhaps it is a star.

But there is one word that catches Dad's attention: VACANCY. Underneath it, another sign promises: SWIMMING POOL. And then: AIR CONDITIONING.

The children suddenly wake up. "Dad! Look!" That was the magic of the roadside motel. You didn't necessarily choose it from a travel website weeks before leaving



home. Sometimes you chose it because the sign looked interesting.

Neon was advertising, certainly, but it was also part of the theater of the American highway. Motel owners knew that a tired family traveling at highway speed needed something big and bright enough to catch their attention. The National Park Service's research into historic Route 66 documents the importance of these neon signs, including distinctive signs at places such as the Blue Swallow Motel, Boots Court and the Skylark Motel.

The signs promised more than a room. They promised relief. They promised dinner. They promised a shower. They promised a swimming pool. And, in the days before everyone carried a television in their pocket, the words TV IN ROOM could be enough to convince the family that this was the place.

Pulling into the motor court. Dad makes the turn. The tires crunch across the gravel or pavement as the station wagon rolls beneath the motel sign. There are perhaps a dozen rooms arranged around a courtyard. No giant parking garage. No lobby towering five stories above the car. Just a row of little rooms, each with its own door opening toward the parking area. The automobile is right outside. That was the whole point.

You didn't park half a block away and carry your luggage through a hotel lobby. You opened the trunk, gathered the suitcases and walked a few steps to the room. The motel was designed around the automobile. And for a country that had fallen in love with the automobile, it made perfect sense. Some motels even placed individual garages between or beside the rooms.

At the Blue Swallow Motel in Tucumcari, New Mexico, the rooms were specifically designed with motorists in mind, including garages that allowed travelers to protect their cars overnight. The motel opened in 1942 and became one of the best-known surviving examples of the classic roadside motor court. For today's car enthusiast, there is something almost irresistible about that idea.

Your automobile wasn't something you left somewhere in a distant parking lot. It was part of the room.

And Then Someone Says, "Let's Go Swimming!" Of course, no family vacation was complete without at least one child asking the most important question of all: "Does the motel have a pool?" If the answer was yes, everyone suddenly felt better about stopping for the night. The swimming pool became one of the great attractions of the postwar motel.

After sitting in a hot car for hours, the water looked like paradise. The children could swim. Dad could finally stretch his legs. Mom could sit beside the pool with a magazine. For a few hours, the miles disappeared.

The motel industry understood exactly what families wanted. As roadside accommodations evolved, swimming pools, restaurants, lounges and other amenities became increasingly common. The motel was becoming less like a collection of rooms and more like a small vacation destination. Sometimes the family vacation memory wasn't the Grand Canyon or the amusement park. Sometimes it was simply the night everybody jumped into a motel swimming pool after a long day on the road.

Dinner was part of the experience. Soon another question had to be answered. "Where are we going to eat?" The answer might be right next door.

Roadside motels and motor courts often existed alongside restaurants, cafés and gas stations. Some were complete little roadside complexes where a traveler could fill the tank, eat dinner and spend the night without ever leaving the property.

The Wagon Wheel Motel, Cafe and Station in Cuba, Missouri, is a wonderful surviving example. It began in 1936 and combined lodging with a café and gasoline service, creating the kind of convenient roadside stop that automobile travelers needed.

And what could be better after a day in the car than walking into a little roadside café? The door opens. A



bell rings. Inside are red vinyl booths, chrome trim and the smell of hamburgers and coffee. The children slide into a booth. Dad orders coffee. Mom studies the menu. Someone feeds a quarter into the jukebox. For a few minutes, the highway doesn't exist. There is only dinner. And then, inevitably, someone orders a milkshake.

The motels became attractions. Some motel owners realized that travelers didn't just need a place to sleep. They wanted something to remember. So the roadside became a place where imagination competed with practicality.

There were motels shaped like castles. Motels with tropical themes. Motels with giant signs. Motels with swimming pools shaped like unusual objects. And then there were the teepees.

In Holbrook, Arizona, the Wigwam Village offered travelers something they certainly wouldn't forget. Built in 1950, the motel consisted of 15 individual concrete-and-steel rooms shaped like teepees and arranged around a central courtyard.

Imagine arriving there after six hours in the family car. The children are tired. Dad is tired. Mom is tired. Then someone looks out the window. "Dad! We're staying in a teepee!" Suddenly everybody is wide awake. That was the genius of the roadside motel. It gave travelers a story to take home.

Every mile seemed to offer another temptation. A giant ice cream cone. A roadside fruit stand.

A souvenir shop. A restaurant with a giant sign. A gas station with an attendant who actually came out to pump your gasoline. And always, somewhere in the distance, another motel sign. The road had a personality of its own.

The family wasn't simply traveling from Point A to Point B. They were seeing America. They passed through small towns where the courthouse stood in the center of town. They crossed rivers and climbed hills. They stopped for



photographs. They ate at places they had never heard of before.

And if something looked interesting, Dad could pull the car over. There was no need to make a reservation. There was no need to explain to an app why you were five minutes late. You simply stopped.

The great motel era could not last forever. The same automobile culture that created the roadside motel eventually changed it. The Interstate Highway System brought faster, more direct travel. Instead of passing through the center of small towns, travelers could bypass them altogether.

For motorists, this was progress. For roadside businesses, it could be devastating.

The Blue Swallow Motel provides a perfect example. When Interstate 40 diverted traffic away from the old Route 66 through Tucumcari, the motel lost much of the passing traffic on which it had depended. The little neon signs that had once been impossible to miss were suddenly sitting beside a road that fewer travelers used.

And competition was changing too. Large national motel chains were expanding. Travelers could now recognize a familiar brand hundreds of miles from home and expect a similar room and similar amenities. The little independent motor court was beginning to disappear.

The last glow of the neon. One by one, the signs went dark. Some motels were torn down.

Some were remodeled until there was little left of the original building. Some became apartments or other businesses. Others simply sat empty beside the old highways. But a few survived. And today, those survivors have become something very special.

They are pieces of the automobile age. The Blue Swallow still operates in Tucumcari. The Wagon Wheel continues its connection with Route 66 in Missouri. The Wigwam Village in Holbrook still welcomes travelers who want to spend the night in a room unlike any modern





hotel room. They remind us of a time when the journey itself was part of the vacation.

Maybe that's what we miss.

Perhaps that is why old photographs of these motels have such a powerful pull. It isn't really the buildings we miss. It is what they represent. A family gathered around a station wagon. A paper map spread across the dashboard. A cooler in the back seat. A mother looking for a clean motel. A father watching the gas gauge. Children counting license plates from different states. A diner where everyone orders something different. A swimming pool at the end of a long day. And a giant neon sign glowing against the darkness. VACANCY.

There was something wonderfully uncomplicated about it. You got in the car. You drove. You stopped when you were ready. And you never quite knew what you were going to find around the next bend. For those of us who love old automobiles, perhaps that is part of what makes these old motels so fascinating.

They were built for our cars. They were advertised from the highway. They welcomed families who were exploring the country one mile at a time. And they became landmarks in a uniquely American story of the family road trip.

So the next time you see an old photograph of a 1960s station wagon parked beneath a glowing motel sign, take a moment to imagine what happened next. The suitcases came out of the trunk. The children ran toward the swimming pool. Mom found the diner. Dad finally took off his driving shoes. And somewhere above them, the neon sign continued to glow into the night.

Tomorrow morning, the family would pack the station wagon again. There were more miles to travel. More towns to see. More roadside signs to follow. Because back then, getting there wasn't the whole point. The road was

part of the vacation.

Sources & Further Reading

The article above is written in original language. Historical facts were researched from the following sources:

- National Park Service — "Postwar Years: 1945–1960," Travel Route 66 Essay Series. This provides background on the development of auto camps, tourist courts, motels, diners, swimming pools and the postwar growth of automobile travel.
- National Park Service — Blue Swallow Motel, Tucumcari, New Mexico. Information on the motel's construction, automobile-oriented design, garages, owners and the effect of Interstate 40.
- National Park Service — Wigwam Village Motel #6, Holbrook, Arizona. Information on the 1950 motel, teepee-shaped rooms, original gas pumps and later preservation.
- National Park Service — Wagon Wheel Motel, Cafe and Station, Cuba, Missouri. Information on the motel/café/gas station combination and its neon sign.
- National Park Service — Route 66 Neon Sign Restoration in Missouri. Information on historic motel neon and examples such as the Skylark Motel and Boots Court.
- National Park Service — Luna Lodge, Albuquerque, New Mexico. Information on the challenges faced by independent motels during the 1960s and 1970s.
- National Park Service — Wigwam Village #7, San Bernardino/Rialto, California. Additional history of the Wigwam Village concept and surviving examples.
- National Park Service — Route 66 Cost-Share Grant Awards. Includes examples of historic roadside businesses and preservation of neon signs and cafés.



GREAT SOUTHERN REGION - ANTIQUE AUTOMOBILE CLUB OF AMERICA

Application for Membership

Applicant Name_____

Spouse/Partner Name_____

Street Address_____

Telephone Number_____

EMAIL Address_____

Current or past AACA membership Number_____

Current antique cars owned_____

Applicant's Signature_____

Membership and Dues

Great Southern Region members will receive the monthly newsletter, club news and invitations via email

Please check out the website: GreatSouthern.aaca.com

Note: Region members must also be members of AACA. If new to AACA, please complete separate AACA application.

Send both applications and one check for all dues, payable to Great Southern Region AACA to:
Vicki Bolton, Secretary/Treasurer
2056 Shebia Dr
Hoover AL 35216

Annual Dues for Great Southern Region 20.00 per family

Annual Dues for AACA 45.00

