Great Southern Region AACA

Exhaust Whistle

October 2026 - Official publication of the AACA Great Southern Region - Serving Central Alabama Vol. 38 No.10

Pepper Place - Great Southern Region Car Show

November 21 - 8am-12pm - Martin Biscut - Jeni's Parking Lot



Painter Supply Car Show

The Painters Supply Car Show is always a big event in the Mobile area, and this year was no exception! Held on October 10 in the large parking lot of the stores along the Beltline, the show brought out plenty of cars, car lovers, and folks ready to spend the day visiting with friends.

Now, some people take their car shows very seriously when it comes to getting a good parking spot. There were folks arriving before 6 a.m. just to claim a spot near the entrance! Darrin and I took a slightly more relaxed approach and rolled in around 9:30. Since this wasn't a judged show,



And the 55 made the painting this year!

Continued on page 3

A Note From The PRESIDENT

Fall is showing us it's colors in a beautiful way. Nothing is finer than taking a scenic drive on your favorite back road or finding a new one with surprises around every curve. Take the time to enjoy it while you can with your friends, loved one, or just by yourself.

Once again I want to remind everyone of your club opportunities for the rest of the year. First up is the Pepper Place Car Show/Cruise-in on November 21 from 8 AM to Noon. This is just a great relaxing time with fellow car enthusiasts. Please plan to attend and invite as many as you can. Let's have a fantastic turnout. Because of the timing of this event, we will not be having a regular club meeting this month.

Next will be participation in the Helena Christmas Parade, Sunday, December 5 for those interested. The website for signing up is https://www.cityofhelena.org/christmas-parade-information/ Line up starts at 11 AM with the parade starting no later than 1 PM.

Finally, our Christmas Gathering is scheduled for December 10th with lunch being served at Noon. Please note that this is a Thursday instead of a Saturday. Eddie and Suzanne have graciously agreed to host this at their historical home located in Forest Park. The address is 4348 10th Avenue South in Birmingham. You are welcome to show up a little earlier and enjoy friendships. Please reach out to me or Eddie/Suzanne so we have a general idea of how many will be attending.

As I stated at our last meeting, I will not be continuing on as President for 2027. As such, we need someone to step forward into this role and bring your ideas for growing and enjoying your club. While I won't be President, I will fully support and assist the endeavors of the one who takes up the mantle.

Enjoy and see you on the road,

Ken McClellan

We are on Facebook!

Like and follow us

gsraaca

Great Southern Region
Antique Automobile Club of America
est. 1966

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 Realracegril1@gmail.com

www.greatsouthern.aaca.com

facebook: gsraaca

The Exhaust Whistle is a monthly publication of the AACA Great Southern Region, views 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

there was no need to rush. We figured the cars would still be there when we arrived!

By about 10:30, the smell of lunch started drifting through the parking lot as the hamburgers, hot dogs, and Conecuh sausage got underway. The line moved along pretty quickly, but finding a place to sit was another story! The tables filled up almost as fast as the food was being served. Before long, most folks were carrying their plates back to their cars or gathering with whatever group of friends they could find a spot with.

Of course, a car show is about more than just the cars. The food, the conversations, and the chance to catch up with friends are all part of the fun. And then there were the door prizes!

The prizes were outstanding, and it seemed like there was something exciting being won every time we turned around. Unfortunately, Darrin and I weren't among the lucky winners. But we had just as much fun watching everyone else walk away with their prizes. Maybe next year will be our turn!



All in all, it was a great day filled with beautiful cars, good food, and plenty of fellowship. And the best part? We didn't have to get up before sunrise to enjoy it! - Charlotte



A Note From The EDITOR

And just like that, we're heading into the holiday season! Here in the South, that means plenty of opportunities to get our cars out and join in the fun. Between Veterans Day parades, Christmas parades, car shows, cruise-ins, and tours, there's always something going on. I'm especially enjoying the cooler weather, and this month I've even managed to squeeze in a few car events of my own. That doesn't happen as often as I'd like, so it's been a real treat!

As I made my way to these events, I started thinking about what I enjoy most about each one. At a car show, I love having time to wander around, look at all the cars, and catch up with people I haven't seen in a while. There's always something interesting to see, and you never know who you might run into.

Cruise-ins are a little different. I like that they're easygoing and don't take up your whole day. You can visit with friends, check out the cars, and stay as long as you like. No pressure, no big commitment, just a good time.

Then there are tours, which offer a whole different kind of fun. I enjoy the drive, seeing places I've never been, and discovering something new along the way. Of course, there's also the challenge of following the directions and figuring out where you're going! Sometimes that's half the adventure.

This past month, I got to enjoy all three, and each one gave me something different to remember.

The month started with Cruisin' the Coast, but Mother Nature decided to add a little excitement of her own. With a hurricane on the horizon, our plans had to change. Instead of spreading our visits to all the stamping sites over three days, we had to get them all done in one day. Thankfully, we picked a beautiful day to go, and the traffic was light. We made the most of it and were glad everything worked out.

Next up was the Painters Supply Car Show, with more than 300 cars! It was great to see so many familiar faces I hadn't seen all year, meet some new people, and check out cars I hadn't seen before. We have some pretty interesting cars right here in our own backyard. And I have to say, a car show that feeds you lunch is always a winner in my book!

The following weekend, we headed to a cruise-in with about 130 cars coming through over the two-hour event. They also had a trunk-or-treat afterward, and just before 6 p.m., another 100 or so cars showed up. It was wonderful to see so many people come out to enjoy the evening. Events like these remind me that our hobby is about more than the cars. It's about the people, the friendships, and the fun we have along the way.

That's what I love about having so many different kinds of events to choose from. Whether you enjoy spending an afternoon looking at cars, dropping by a cruise-in for a couple of hours, or taking a drive to somewhere new, there's something for everyone. You just have to find what you enjoy most!

Now, here's where I need your help.

As you head out to car shows, cruise-ins, tours, and holiday parades, take a few pictures and send them my way for the Great Southern Region Newsletter. You don't have to write a big article or spend hours putting something together. Just send a few photos and tell me a little about your day:

- What was the event?
- Where was it held?
- Did you bring home an award?
- What did you enjoy most?

That's it! A few pictures and a little information are all it takes. Maybe you met someone new, saw an unusual car, visited a place you'd never been, or had something funny happen along the way. Those are the kinds of stories that make a newsletter interesting and give the rest of us a glimpse of what everyone is doing.

As we head into the holidays, I hope you'll take advantage of the cooler weather, get those cars out of the garage, and enjoy a parade or two. Make some memories, spend time with friends, and don't forget to share a little of the fun with the rest of us.

After all, this newsletter is about our members, our cars, and the adventures we share. I'd love to see more of what's happening throughout the Great Southern Region, so keep those pictures and stories coming!

Happy motoring, and I hope to see you out on the road!

Charlotte

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 21 st Haleycille 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 3pm1204 Forestdale Square, Forestdale
Last Saturday – 5pm-? 7900 Vaugh Rd at Taylor Rd Montgomery

Shows

November

14 Oasis of White Plains 3rd Annual Classic Car Show & Arts & Craft Festival. 9-2pm. 23153 US Hwy 431 Lafayette. Reg $20. Info 334-757-0170
14 40th Annual Ho! Ho! Ho! Christmas Show. 9-2pm. 402 Arnold St NE, Cullman. $20 Entry or toy with a $20 or more value. Info 256-200-4548
21 Great Southern Region Car Show. 8-12pm. 2930 3rd Ave S, Birmingham. Free to enter & Attend

GSR 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 21 ..... Car Show at Pepper Place
December 10 ..... Christmas Gathering

AACA Calendar

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
September 8-11
Special Fall Nationals
Location: Vernon, NY
September 19-24
AAA Glidden Tour
Location: Branson, MO
October 5-8
Eastern Fall Meet
Location: Hershey, PA Host: Hershey Region
October 25-29
Eastern Divisional Tour
Location: Swedesboro, NJ



The GMC Sprint shared exterior and interior elements with the Chevelle Malibu and El Camino. A 1971 Sprint is shown. (GM media archives)

Badge-engineered from the Chevrolet El Camino, 1971-1987

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.

I have walked among thousands of vintage vehicles at dozens of car shows, but I learned something new today while researching a 1960 GMC pickup. Trolling the GM media archives I came upon an image for a 1971 GMC Sprint.

How had I never heard of this badge-engineered version of the Chevrolet El Camino. Maybe I had just overlooked it in the years of enjoying car shows, but in my defense, surely its production numbers were a sliver of the very popular El Camino.

According to its page in Wikipedia, the GMC Sprint (a coupe utility-pickup) was produced for the 1971-1977 model years. It was renamed Caballero for the 1978 model year and produced through 1987.

"It was identical to the El Camino except for the name. The chassis for both variants was based on the Chevrolet Chevelle station wagon and four-door sedan.

"The vehicles were built on the GM A platform through 1981; for 1982, it was re-designated the G platform as the A platform switched to front-wheel drive.

Difficult Time To Debut

The Sprint's debut in the early 1970s was not a happy time for performance cars in the United States. It was the first year for mandated lower-octane unleaded fuel, which necessitated a reduction in engine compression. GM's A.I.R. system, a "smog pump," was added to control tailpipe emissions.

The GMC Sprint was sold with several engine choices for 1971-72. The base engine was a 145-hp, 250-cubic-inch OHV inline-six. Optional engines included small-block V-8s of 307 and 350 cubic inches and big-block V-8s of 402- and 454-cubic-inch displacements.

"For 1972, horsepower measurements were switched to the 'net' figures as installed in a vehicle with all accessories and emission controllers hooked



The 1979 GMC Caballero.

up," according to the Wiki report. "This change brought the horsepower ratings for 1972 down to a range from 110 horsepower for the six to 270 for the 454 V8."

The Sprint, sold in trim levels of Standard or Custom, shared exterior and interior trims with the Chevelle Malibu and El Camino. Both years featured rear-end styling taken from the Chevelle station wagon (and were shared with El Camino). The interiors featured cloth and vinyl or all-vinyl bench seats and deep twist carpeting. All-vinyl Strato bucket seats and center console were optional.

The GMC Sprint Diablo package was added in 1978 as an equivalent to the El Camino's Black Knight (1978) and then the Royal Knight, post-1978, which was an upgrade from the long-running Super Sport package.

The Royal Knight and the Diablo carried a hood graphic in a symmetrical flame pattern that resembled a demon. Diablo also came with lower-body accent paint, body-color mirrors, black-trimmed window frames. Exterior separators also included a front air dam, color-matched steel "Rally" wheels and a large "Diablo" decal on the tailgate.

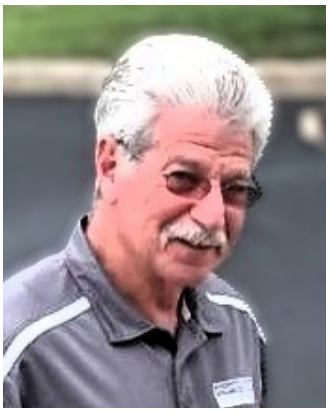
Sprint SP

The GMC Sprint SP package, only offered on the Sprint Custom, was GMC's equivalent of the Chevrolet SS package. It was designated as option package, RPO YE7, rather than a distinct model. Engines were an L48 350 four-barrel, LS3 400 (402) big block and the LS5 454 365-hp big block.

On The Auction Block

A 1972 GMC Sprint, in orange paint and black interior, will be among the vehicles slated to auctioned by Mecum at its 34th annual Indy Spring Classic, May 14-22, 2021. It will be Lot T104 and is a "Star" car.
According to the seller's description:
•This Sprint is one of 749 SP models produced in 1972 and has the original build sheet;
•454-cubic-inch V-8, automatic transmission, disc brakes and power steering;
•Air conditioning;
•Built at Leeds plant in Kansas City, Mo.;
•Sold new at Burnett Buick

RummageBox
An Official Publication of the Antique Automobile Club of America Publications Committee



Grouper, NOT the fish!

By Steve Moskowitz, CEO, Antique Automobile Club of America

AACA is always looking to increase benefits to our members, regions and/or affiliates. As such, you may remember our friends at Grouper, who have supported AACA members in the past and share our commitment to building strong, connected communities. Due to circumstances beyond Grouper or AACA's control the original programs offered to our members are no longer available. So, over the past few months we've explored different ways to work together, and we believe we've now found a model that truly fits our members and adds lasting value to the AACA experience.

That next step is Hello by Grouper, a national healthy-living platform now available to AACA members as a new member benefit. Designed to support healthy habits, meaningful connection, and lifelong learning, Hello offers practical tools and engaging experiences you can access anytime — from fitness and arts classes to puzzles, educational talks, wellness trackers, and interest-based communities. The platform helps members stay active, engaged, and inspired between AACA events.

You'll also find our dedicated AACA Community Space — a place to connect with fellow members — along-side a broader national community already enjoyed by thousands across many organizations.

If you haven't signed up yet, now is a great time to explore. It's already included in your membership — why not make the most of it?

Join Hello by Grouper: [join.hellogrouper.com/aaca]

Once you've signed up, download the iOS or Android Hello by Grouper mobile app to access Hello on the go!

Mileage Award Program

Touring is not a spectator sport, so for those who enjoy driving their vintage vehicle, the AACA Mileage Award Program (MAP) has been set up. So, as the old saying goes, "Ladies and Gentlemen, start your engines" and prepare to enjoy AACA touring.

Anytime a vehicle is driven - anywhere for any reason - the mileage counts towards the award level.

The vehicle owner must register the vehicle in the MAP. Registration included completing the MAP form and returning it with $25 to AACA Headquarters.

When the vehicle is driven 2,000 miles it is eligible for the MAP award. The badge has places for each award: 1st Award - 2,000 mile; 2nd Award - 5,000 mile; Subsequent Award(s) at each 5,000 mile increment.

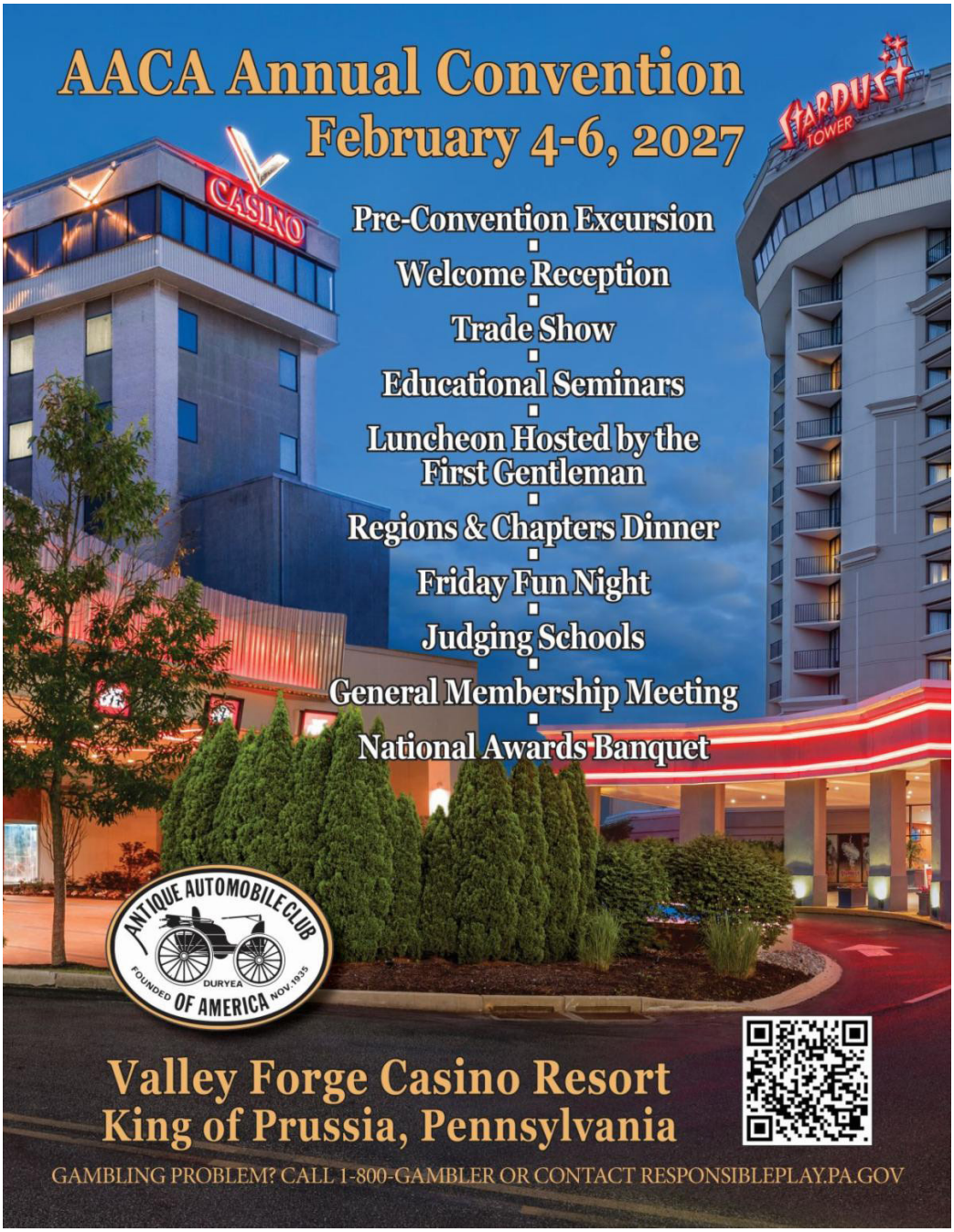
Mail your copy 2 at each increment for National Headquarters to approve and you award will be mailed to you.

Direct questions to general@aaca.org or 717-534-1910.





Speedster articles courtesy of AACA



2027 AACA Annual Convention Call for Speakers

February 4-6 King of Prussia, Pennsylvania

Have you ever thought about speaking or putting on a seminar at the Annual Convention? Well, now's your chance! If you would like to be a possible speaker, please fill out this form and send it in no later than September 15.

Have an idea for a workshop? What topics would you like to hear a panel of experts discuss? This is YOUR Annual Convention, and we want to know what you want to learn about. Please email Stacy szimmerman@aaca.org with your seminar ideas and/or speaker suggestions (membership, leadership, chapters/regions, marketing, cars, technical, fun, historical, ladies-focused, etc.).



The 1909 Sears Model H Motor Buggy – basic, reliable transportation.

When You Could Order a Car from a Catalog

The curious story of America's early mail-order automobiles

Can you imagine ordering a brand-new car without ever seeing it in person? Today, most of us want to walk around a car, sit behind the wheel, take it for a test drive and make sure everything feels just right before signing on the dotted line. But more than 100 years ago, buying a car was a very different experience.

If you lived in a small town or out in the country, the nearest automobile dealer might be a long ways away. You might not even have a decent road to get there. But chances are, you had something almost as exciting sitting in your house: a Sears, Roebuck & Co. catalog. Those big catalogs sold just about everything imaginable, from clothes and kitchenware to tools, furniture, farm equipment and even entire houses. And for a short time, you could order something truly remarkable right from its pages. An automobile!

Picture yourself sitting at the kitchen table in 1909, flipping through the Sears catalog. You pass the clothing, household goods and farm supplies when



suddenly you come across an automobile. The price? Just $395.

Meet the Sears Motor Buggy, a little machine that looked something like a horse-drawn buggy after the horse had decided to retire. It had tall wheels, a simple body and a small gasoline engine. Designed by engineer Alvaro S. Krotz, the Motor Buggy was introduced through the Sears catalog in 1909 as a practical way to get around.

Those tall wheels weren't just for looks. Back then, roads were often little more than dirt paths. After a good rain, they could turn into muddy messes filled with ruts and holes. The Motor Buggy's high clearance and solid rubber tires helped it handle the rough conditions.

Its two-cylinder engine produced about 14 horsepower and could reach speeds of around 25 miles per hour. Twenty-five miles per hour might seem pretty tame today, but imagine flying down a country road at that speed in 1909. It must have felt downright adventurous!

Of course, Sears couldn't exactly send your new



Sears Model "M" Coupe

Price, $485.00

FOR wet and wintry weather, for professional and business men, for any condition that is more conveniently met with a car that encloses the passengers, the Sears Model "M" Coupe is recommended. Equipped with cushion tires and the cozy coupe top, the Sears Model "M" is ready for work always, regardless of weather and road conditions. The top is warm and comfortable in winter, and at all times affords complete protection against wind or rain. It takes but a moment to convert the closed top into an open one for bright fine weather.

No. 21D888 Price, $485.00

Page Ten *Sears, Roebuck and Co., Chicago, Ill.*



Sears Model "N" Light Delivery Car

Price, $425.00

FARMERS and business men alike will find in the Sears Model "N" a commercial car strictly adapted to their immediate needs. For rapid delivery purposes of merchandise weighing up to 600 pounds, for a cheap and economic delivery service that will replace three horse and wagon outfits and save the wages of two of the drivers, the Model "N" will pay for itself in a comparatively short time. A horse must eat even when idle. There is no expense attached to an idle motor car. The cost of oil and gasoline is less than half the cost of feed for one horse. For the farmer going to market with a load of fruit, for the dairyman with his big cans of milk, for the salesman with his line of samples, for the grocer, butcher, baker, florist, plumber, carpenter, painter, billposter, laundryman or dry goods merchant, the Model "N" Light Delivery Car is an absolute necessity. With the owner's name painted on the panels it is a good advertisement.

Model "N" Light Delivery Car, With Top Price, $440.00

No. 21D999 Price, $425.00

Page Eighteen *Sears, Roebuck and Co., Chicago, Ill.*

automobile through the mail with the rest of your order. Instead, the car was shipped by railroad in a large wooden crate to the nearest freight depot.

Imagine getting the news that your automobile had arrived. You head down to the depot, and there it sits—a big wooden box with your name on it. Somewhere inside is your brand-new horseless carriage! There was no salesman waiting to walk you through the features. No service department to call with questions. You had the instructions supplied by Sears, a few tools and whatever mechanical know-how you could muster.

The car arrived partially assembled, so some work was still needed before you could hit the road. Once everything was put together and the engine was ready to run, it was time for the big moment. You climbed aboard, started the engine and headed home.

I can just imagine the neighbors coming out to see what all the commotion was about. Someone would holler "Where in the world did you get that thing?" Quickly you would reply "I ordered it from Sears!"



1150 SEARS, ROEBUCK & CO., CHICAGO, ILL. FOR READY MADE PORTA... S GARAGES SEE BUILDING MATERIAL AND MILL WORK PAGES.

SEARS MOTOR BUGGY

SPEEDY, ECONOMICAL, NOISELESS, DURABLE AND SAFE
A CHILD CAN RUN IT

$395.00

FOR CAR COMPLETE WITH RUBBER TIRES, TIMKEN ROLLER BEARING AXLES, TOP, STORM FRONT, 3-WICK OIL-BURNING LAMPS, HORN AND ONE GALLON LUBRICATING OIL. NOTHING TO BUY BUT GASOLINE.

ALL SPEEDS FROM 1 TO 25 MILES

BUGGY, complete as described below. Price $395.00
Runabout, without top and fenders, but otherwise as described below. Price 370.00
EXTRAS IF WANTED—Acetylene Lamps with Generator in place of the two irons oil burning lamps 12.98

WHY WE BUILD IT AS WE DO

TERMS

Wouldn't that have been a fun conversation!

Sears may be the best-known name in mail-order motoring, but it wasn't alone in helping Americans get behind the wheel. A.L. Dyke Auto Supplies, based in St. Louis, sold automobile parts, tools, equipment and instructional books through catalogs. His publications helped early motorists understand how their new machines worked.

Remember, automobiles were still a new invention for most people. If something broke, you couldn't always drive down the road to a repair shop. You might have to figure it out yourself. That meant learning how engines worked, understanding the parts and getting comfortable with a wrench. For people who were already repairing farm equipment, wagons and machinery, working on an automobile was simply another challenge.

Some folks didn't look at an automobile and think that's too complicated! They thought, "I bet I could fix that!" That do-it-yourself attitude became an important part of America's early car culture.

Then there was the Metz automobile, which offered another interesting approach to car ownership. Under the Metz Plan, customers could purchase an automobile in packages rather than paying for the entire car all at once. Instead of coming up with the full price on day one, you could buy the components as your budget allowed. Before long, you might have boxes of automobile parts stacked in the barn or garage, waiting for the next piece of the puzzle.

It might take weeks or even months, but eventually, all those parts could come together to make a car. It was a clever idea for people who wanted an automobile but couldn't afford to buy one outright. Of course, it also required a little patience and enough room to store all those parts!

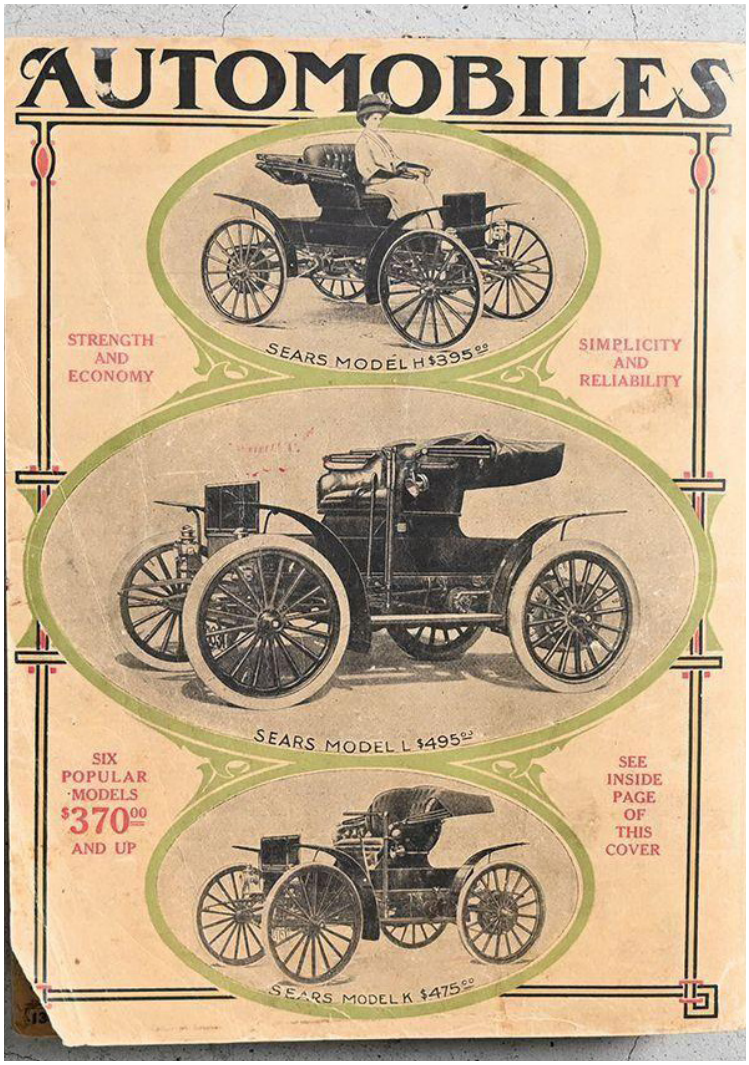
Looking back, it's easy to wonder why anyone would buy a car without seeing it first or knowing where to take it for repairs. But we have to remember what life was like in those days. Automobiles were still a novelty. Dealerships weren't found in every town, service stations were not on every corner, and finding the right replacement part could be a challenge. If your automobile broke down, you might have to become your own mechanic.

For many people, that wasn't such a strange idea. Farmers repaired their own equipment, families fixed things around the house, and handy folks were used to solving problems with a few tools and some determination. The automobile was simply the next machine to learn. And for the adventurous owner, figuring it all out was probably half the fun.

Sears eventually offered several automobile models, including the Model P Surrey. Buyers could choose from different body styles and equipment options. But the automobile business was changing quickly.

Henry Ford's Model T was gaining popularity, and Ford was finding ways to build cars in much larger numbers. Mass production was making automobiles more practical and affordable for a growing number of Americans. The future was beginning to look different. Instead of ordering a car from a catalog and assembling it at home, people would increasingly buy from automobile dealers, visit repair shops and purchase replacement parts from local suppliers.

Sears produced only a few thousand automobiles before leaving the manufacturing business in 1912. The Motor Buggy had been an interesting experiment,



but the automobile industry was moving toward a whole new way of doing business.

What makes the Sears Motor Buggy so interesting isn't just the little automobile itself. It's what the idea represented. Imagine living on a farm or in a small rural community in 1909. You might be miles from the nearest automobile showroom, yet you could open a catalog, place an order and take your first step into the motoring age.

You didn't need to live in a big city or know a wealthy automobile dealer. You didn't even have to see the car before buying it. You just placed your order and waited for the railroad to bring it to town.

That Sears catalog was more than a shopping book. It connected people in small communities with a world of new possibilities. And tucked among the everyday necessities was something that represented the future: a gasoline-powered automobile.

The Sears Motor Buggy didn't become the car that put America on wheels. Ford's Model T would play that role. But the Motor Buggy deserves its place in automotive history because it came from a time when nobody knew exactly what the automobile business would become.

Would people buy cars through catalogs? Build their own? Order them in pieces? Buy them from a dealer? As it turned out, early motorists experimented with all sorts of possibilities before the industry settled into the system we know today.

That's what makes this little chapter of automotive history so much fun. Before owning a car became an everyday part of life, it was an adventure. And for a brief time, that adventure could begin with a catalog, a railroad depot and a very large wooden crate.

Sources:

• The Henry Ford, "Mail-Order Motoring: The Sears Motor Buggy."

• The Henry Ford Collections, 1911 Sears Motor Car Works Sales Catalog.

• Smithsonian National Museum of American History, Sears Model P Light Delivery Car, 1911.

• Andrew Lee Dyke, The Anatomy of the Automobile



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