

Gateway Chapter



the Gateway Gazette

a Publication of the Gateway Chapter of the Hudson-Essex-Terraplane Club

December, 2024



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Roger Tallent

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To contact our officers, visit our website at www.gatewayhet.com and complete the contact form.

The Gateway Chapter of the Hudson Essex Terraplane Club is dedicated to the enjoyment and preservation of the vehicles built by the Hudson Motor Car Company between 1909 and 1957. Our chapter was founded in 1974 and includes the Missouri and Illinois area surrounding St. Louis, MO, home of the celebrated Gateway Arch.

If you appreciate the cars and trucks built by Hudson, we invite you to join our club, whether you own a Hudson or not.

Readers are invited to submit articles, photos, event news and any other pertinent information to the editor.

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President's Message

Season's Greetings Gateway Chapter! With November coming to a close we find ourselves in the full swing of the Christmas Season, and with that brings our Chapter Christmas Party. It will be held at the home of Dwight and Vicki Sutterfield on December 7th from 1 to 4 PM. If you intend to go let me know how many in your party so we can plan accordingly.

The Christmas party is the only event we have in December as we traditionally don't plan events during the winter months, but if you want to do something let me know...I'm game. With that said, the Packard Club president has informed me that the orphan car games at the Art Deco Fortress will be January 19, 2025, from 1 till 4 PM, more details to follow. Also, the CCCA is planning their winter warm up at Hyman again this coming year. All vintage car clubs should be invited.

These two events are very nice. The Art Deco Fortress is a very neat place and those that didn't attend last year should really consider it this time around. Hyman is another good event and the cars they have on display are awesome. Bill Kirkwood and I went last year. We had a good time, and we got a cool picture in an old Hudson. I'll keep you updated about both events.

Dues are coming due in January, but I'm sure Brian will take your money at the Christmas party. December Birthdays are Hudson Porter 12/05, Joann Valdez 12/06, Stacy Killingsworth 12/20, and Marvin Hahn 12/31. Happy Birthday to you all and I wish you many more. Enjoy your day! Merry Christmas to all!

Hudsonly,
Vic

Gateway Chapter Christmas Party

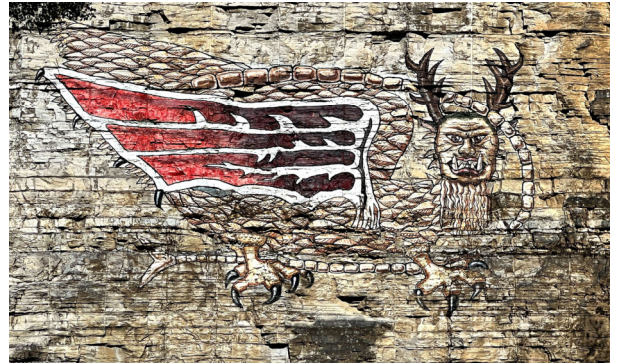
Just another reminder about the annual chapter Christmas party, which will take place from 1 to 4 PM on Saturday, December 7, at Dwight and Vicki Sutterfield's place, 8567 East Kirsch Road in Troy, IL. If you're planning to attend but haven't contacted Vic, please let him know you're coming and how many people you will be bringing with you. We need an accurate count to order the food.

The cost will be \$12.50 per adult, which will be collected at the party. The yearly chapter dues of \$15.00 is due in January, but as Vic mentioned, Brian will be delighted to accept your payment at the party. I'm confident there will be a 50/50 drawing, so bring some extra cash if you want to participate. Also, don't forget an inexpensive wrapped gift if you want to play "Rob Your Neighbor", and finally, please consider driving your Hudson if the weather cooperates!



HCCMO Great River Road Cruise

Once again this year the Horseless Carriage Club of Missouri invited the Gateway Chapter to join them for a cruise of the Great River Road on Sunday, November 10th. The group left from Piasa Park near Alton, IL about 10:15 AM. Most of the group drove their modern cars, but Bill and Jacob Kirkwood drove Bill's 1964 Corvette Sting Ray coupe, and Helen and Alan Winston enjoyed a leisurely cruise in their 1951 Pace-maker. Chapter president Vic Valdez was unable to drive his 1939 Hudson Sedan due to a problem with the brakes, but he still traveled in style in his Cadillac CTS Sport Coupe.



Fearsome Piasa Bird guards the bluffs overlooking the Mississippi River near Alton, IL

Bill and Jacob met Alan and Helen on the road, and Bill decided to follow Alan, a decision he later came to regret! Alan learned that after years of relying on GPS he can no longer read a road map! After only a couple of wrong turns we all made it to Piasa Park with a few minutes to spare before the cruise started.



This sweet 1964 Corvette was the ride of Bill and Jacob Kirkwood. They elected to drive the Corvette as Jacob's '51 Hornet has been plagued by a leaking gas tank.

The weather was almost perfect for the cruise, with the river on the left and the limestone bluffs on the right. The fall colors were on display as we made our way west on Route 100. We crossed the Illinois River on the Brussels Ferry, then after a short drive we reached our destination, the Wittmond Hotel in Brussels, IL. After the doors opened we were soon seated, and the staff began to bring out the food. The **Hudson Eating Team** quickly got to work, feasting on sausage, roast beef, fried chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy, chicken and dumplings, and all the side dishes. The food at the Wittmond is served family style, and if you want more of anything you only have to ask. If you find yourself needing something sweet, desserts are also available.

The Wittmond was originally opened as a general store in 1847, and the current building was constructed in 1863. In 1885 the building was enlarged to add rooms for overnight guests. The hotel is reportedly haunted, and according to chapter member Carolyn McCann the ghosts were bothering the hotel guests so much that it was eventually decided to discontinue the hotel operation. Fortunately, the ghosts don't seem to bother the kitchen staff, and generations of diners have been able to enjoy the great food and historic building.



Gateway Chapter members pose in front of the historic Wittmond Hotel.

This cruise and lunch is an annual event for the HCCMO, and they have promised to invite us back

again next

year. If you are ever in the area the restaurant is well worth visiting, but note that they do not accept credit cards, only cash or a check.



Travel by ferry was the order of the day for Helen and Alan. We took three different ferries to travel to Alton, Brussels, and back to Missouri.

On the way home, Helen and Alan opted to head south from Brussels and take the Golden Eagle Ferry back to Missouri. Driving off the ferry, we "ran the gauntlet" of about 25 or 30 Mustangs waiting to take the ferry north to Illinois. Many of the Mustang owners were delighted to see our old Hudson, and we were pleased to get many waves, "thumbs up", and nice comments as we passed them heading south. It was a great day for the cruise and we hope to participate again next year.

My Garage Museum Tour

On Saturday, November 16th, Gateway Chapter members met in Effingham, IL to tour the My Garage Museum and retail store, an activity that was organized by our chapter treasurer, Brian Letford. The museum is connected with Mid America Motorworks, a supplier of parts and accessories for Corvettes and air-cooled Volkswagens. The company's history dates back to 1974, when founder Mike Yager traveled to car shows selling patches, emblems and manuals to Corvette enthusiasts. Within a couple of years, Yager was able to quit his day job to focus on his expanding business, which today offers a catalog containing over 300 pages of aftermarket items. In 1998, Yager continued the growth of his company by purchasing The



Museum display includes notable Corvettes and VWs, along with a collection of many other interesting and eclectic items.



1930s Mobiloil station has been recreated near the museum entrance.

Real Source, a supplier of parts and accessories for air-cooled Volkswagens, which explains the Corvette/Volkswagen connection. Today, the company sits on a 150 acre campus which includes the corporate office, order fulfillment center, manufacturing facilities and the My Garage Museum and retail store.

The retail store is a Mecca for Corvette lovers, offering hats and clothing, books, literature and posters, emblems and any number of items suitable for a garage or man-cave. The museum features several VW Beetles, including a "Herbie" Beetle, one of six used in the movie "Herbie: Fully Loaded". A notable item in the museum's collection is the last C4 Corvette, built in 1996. Other interesting items on display include the first Apple computer, which was used in the early 1980s to produce the company's catalogs.



1936 Terraplane Brougham was brought to the museum for inspection by the chapter members. The drivetrain of this car is for sale as the owner wants to replace it with a modern V8. If you are interested, chapter treasurer Brian Letford can provide you with contact information.



The Hudson Eating Team is all smiles after finishing another great meal! Thanks to Brian Letford for suggesting and organizing this event!

After the museum tour, our group made it's way to Niemerg's Steak House, an Effingham institution since the late 1970s. The food was great and the prices were very affordable. Many in the group treated themselves to a piece of home made pie for dessert. We were happy to see long time chapter members Rhonda and Aaron Ford, and we were pleased to meet our newest members David and Donna Vuichard from Pinckneyville, IL. We're looking forward to seeing them all again at the Christmas party!

A great day and another opportunity for the **Hudson Eating Team** to demonstrate our dining skills!

Springtime for a Hudson

On Saturday morning a week before the River road cruise, I pulled my '39 Hudson out of the garage about 5:45 AM to let it warm up. I needed gas and intended to go to Sam's club to get it. After a couple of minutes I pushed in the clutch and brake, put it in gear, and released the brake and clutch. Suddenly, I heard a pop come from underneath the car and my brake pedal went down and would not return. As it was still dark I just pulled it back into the garage and waited for daylight, although I doubted I would be able to find the spring that had come off. After sunrise I went out to the driveway (if you want to call it that) and looked. Behold, there it was...the spring that I heard break away. After only 85 years it had broken as one of the hooks on the end was missing.



The failure of a small part like this could idle your Hudson for weeks! Consider taking some pictures of your springs and their attachment points so you will have the information available in case this ever happens to you!

Now you would think a simple spring wouldn't be hard to find, but you would be wrong (at least I was). I looked far and wide at every hardware store in the area, and also at the farm store. I even looked at auto parts stores. No dice. So I emailed "Dr. Doug" (Wildrick) and sent him a picture of the spring. He said he thought he had what I needed and he would have Terry send it to me. Great news as I was beginning to wonder if I could get one. I received the spring about the middle of November, but the next issue was to figure out where it connected. I spoke with Val Smith at Albright's Vintage Coach and he told me to hook the spring at the tab by the master cylinder and straight back to the arm of the brake just above the clevis. On a beautiful Sunday morning (a 65 degree day on November 24), I got the spring installed and the brake pedal now returns after I release it. It was a chore trying to stretch it to fit where Val said to hook it. I used a drum brake tool that I hooked onto the spring hook and pulled it into position. That was Roger's suggestion. So, between Dr. Doug, Val Smith and Roger Tallent, I got it attached and it's working! Thanks to all who helped with this. My '39 is on the road again! - Vic Valdez

My First Hudson Memory

Editor's note: Chapter VP Roger Tallent submitted this short story about his first encounter with a Hudson when he was a young lad. Perhaps this was the event that inspired him to spend so many years repairing and preserving Hudson cars to keep them on the road.

I remember back when I was about 8 years old, my father was considering buying a car from a friend of his. The car was a maroon colored Hudson, a four door as I recall. There were fog lights on the front of the car as well as a lot of chrome. I remember that it was a stepdown but I don't recall the exact year. Unfortunately, the car did not meet my dad's expectations.

We took an extended test drive that lasted for an entire day. I remember sitting on the fold down armrest in the back seat. We drove the car over to my uncle's house, which was about an hour's drive away. This was my dad's first experience driving a car with an automatic transmission. Later on, I asked him why he didn't buy the car after we had driven it around all day. He told me he wasn't too impressed with the transmission.

This is my oldest Hudson memory. - Roger Tallent

Phil Reden and his Terraplane

We recently noted an article in the November issue of the Hud-Nut News, the newsletter of the Chicago-Milwaukee Chapter of the HET. The article was about the Newport Antique Auto Hill Climb, an annual event that takes place in Newport, Indiana on the first weekend of October. A picture of a familiar looking 1937 Terraplane accompanied the article, and reading further I found that the car in the picture belongs to our own Phil Reden. You may recall that Phil was one of the founding members of the Gateway Chapter back in 1974. He moved to Indiana just recently, and according to the article he has been competing in the Newport hill climb for over ten years.



This 1937 Terraplane owned by Phil Reden

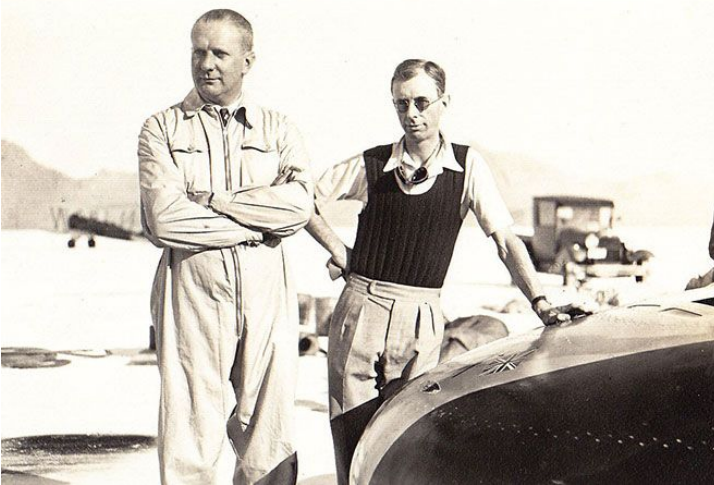
1940 Hudson Endurance Trials at Bonneville

In the November issue of the Gateway Gazette, we featured an article about the 1935 and 1937 Hudson record runs, which were supervised by the AAA and sponsored by the Gilmore Oil Company. These record runs involved Hudsons which were chosen at random from the assembly line by AAA Contest Officials, who verified that the cars conformed to stock factory specifications. The cars were then used to break existing stock car records for performance and endurance. The 1937 record runs were associated with a successful attempt by Sir Malcolm Campbell to break the land speed record (LSR), which was also sponsored by the Gilmore Oil Company.

In August of 1939, Hudson again attempted to break existing stock car records with their new 1940 models. Four sedans were chosen from the assembly line by AAA officials, and once again were disassembled and verified to conform to factory specifications. After reassembly, the four cars were driven to the Bonneville Salt Flats in Utah to face the punishing endurance trials. These trials were again associated with a LSR attempt, this time by English racing driver John Cobb.



1940 Hudsons arriving at the Bonneville Salt Flats for endurance trials.

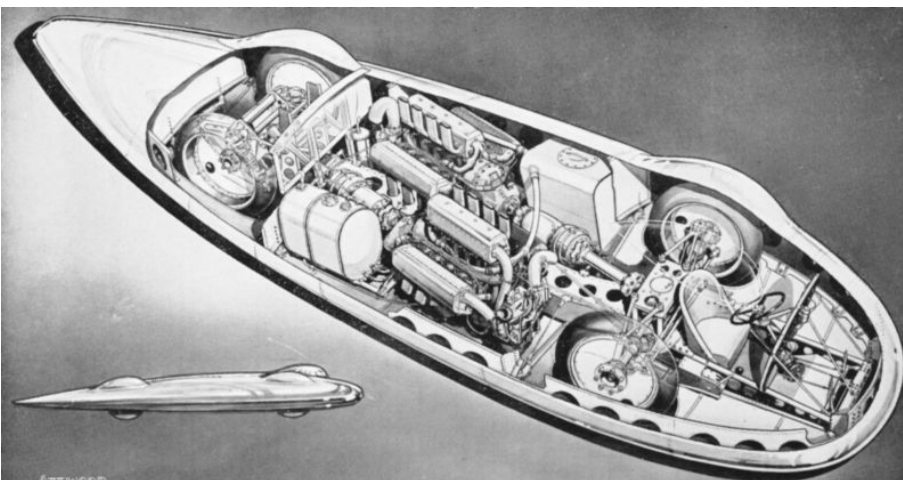


English racing legend John Cobb (left) with LSR car designer Reid Railton.

John Rhodes Cobb was born in 1899 in Surrey, England, near the Brooklands motor racing track where he spent much of his time as a boy. His father was a wealthy furs broker, and after college Cobb joined the family business, where he became quite successful. He used his personal fortune to fund his passion for high speed racing, and eventually became interested in capturing the land speed record. He commissioned Reid Railton, a noted race car designer and namesake of the Railton automobile, to design and build a suitable car for his LSR attempt.

The car Railton came up with was a remarkable example of raw power and streamlined grace. The compact design featured two supercharged Napier Lion W-12 aircraft engines mounted side by side in the chassis, one engine driving the front wheels and the other

sending power to the rear wheels. The two engines created a combined total of 2700 horsepower. Wind tunnel testing was used to perfect the design of the one piece aluminum body, which had to be completely removed to allow access to the engine and drivetrain. Cooling was handled by a 75 gallon tank of ice water. The used cooling water was expelled from the car during the run, which eliminated the need for a radiator.



Cutaway drawing of Railton's masterpiece, the twin-engine LSR record car designed and built for John Cobb.

Cobb's first attempt to break the LSR took place on September 15, 1938, when he became the first to break the 350 MPH barrier, achieving a speed of 353.30 MPH. Cobb's rival, Captain George Eyston, retook the record less than 24 hours later at 357.50 MPH. Eyston's record was still standing when

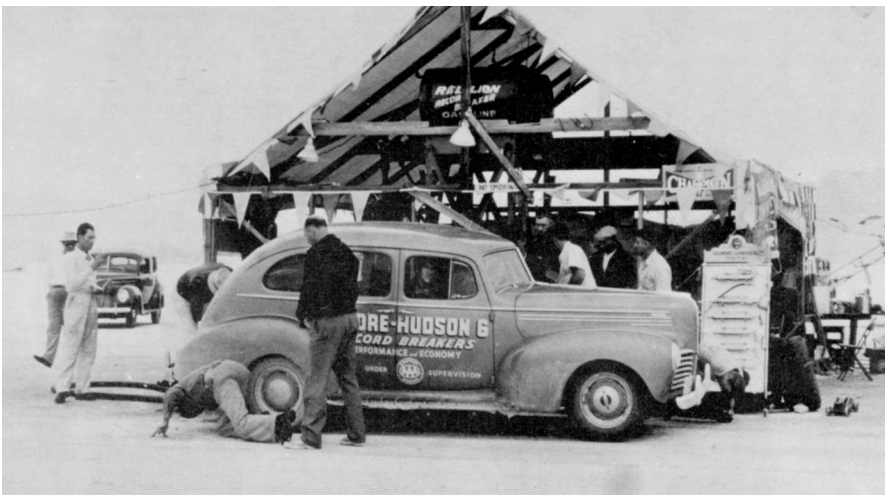
Cobb returned to Bonneville a year later.

Sponsored by Gilmore Oil and supervised by the AAA, Cobb's LSR run was the first order of business on the morning of August 23, 1939. After reclaiming the LSR record at 367.91 MPH, Cobb took the wheel of a Hudson Eight sedan, achieving a new stock car record for the flying mile with an average speed of 93.89 MPH. Cobb went on to achieve additional records with the Hudson Eight and Six sedans. After Cobb's departure the Hudson crew got busy attempting to break records for endurance and economy.

Using Gilmore Red Lion gasoline both the Hudson Eight and Six took part in a 1000 mile economy run. The overdrive equipped cars kept to an average speed of under 30 MPH, resulting in figures of



1940 HUDSON Eight--John R. Cobb, English speed king, with the 1940 Hudson he drove to AAA Class C speed record of 93.9 mph on the Bonneville Salt Flats in Utah in August, 1939. He is shown with his famous Red Lion racer, the first land vehicle to be driven at speeds in excess of 400 mph.



1940 Hudson Six during the grueling 20,000 mile endurance run at the Bonneville Salt Flats. It was estimated that as much as 250 pounds of salt was clinging to the car's undercarriage at times during the trial.

27.12 MPG for the Eight and 32.66 MPG for the Six. The Six went on to set records during the endurance tests, which took place on a circular course with a measured distance of 10 miles. The car was driven continuously over a total of 12 days and nights for a total distance of 20,327 miles, at an average speed of 70.58 MPH. No tires were changed during the run, and the time spent in the pits was not deducted from the total time. A total of 38 crew members supported this record run.

After their triumphant achievements the Hudsons were driven back to Detroit, where they were the centerpiece of a

celebration at the factory. The cars were later displayed at Hudson dealerships throughout the country, and customers were assured that the Hudsons on the showroom floor were capable of the same results achieved by the cars used at Bonneville.

After the war, John Cobb returned to Bonneville in 1947, using the same car (now called the Railton Mobil Special) to break his own standing LSR record achieved in 1939. He unofficially became the first man to travel over 400 MPH, with a single pass at 402 MPH. His new official record of 394.19 MPH stood until it was broken in 1963 by Craig Breedlove with the jet-powered Spirit of America.

After his 1947 achievement, Cobb became enchanted by the idea that he could simultaneously hold both the LSR and the World Water Speed Record. A jet-powered boat called the Crusader was designed by Reid Railton and taken to Loch Ness in Scotland for the speed trial. Unfortunately, Cobb was killed in 1952 when the speedboat became unstable during a record attempt. A memorial to Cobb was erected along the lake shore near the site of the accident. The remains of the speedboat were located on the bed of Loch Ness at a depth of 656 feet, and the site was designated as a national monument in 2005.

Search YouTube for "1940 Hudson 6 and 8 AAA record runs" for more information.

