



Northern
Virginia
Regional
Group



VALVE CLATTER



THE EARLY FORD V-8 CLUB OF AMERICA
Regional Group 96

Volume XXI, No. 9

SEPTEMBER 1998

Cliff Green, Editor

BOXED IN

By Dave Westrate

Cliff Green was right when he wrote about helping each other I have learned that this hobby would not be possible without a helping hand from others..

Cliff and Bill Selly came over one day as I neared the end of the process of stripping my frame on the 39 Standard. The first thing Cliff did was to jump under the center of the car and look at the bottom of the center of the frame. He climbed out and authoritatively declared the "box" dead. I had no idea what he was talking about (as usual).

It turns out that in this frame there is a frame number that is about 12"x 12" x 12". It sits where the x members meet at the center of the car and its function is to support the ball end of the wishbone which goes forward to each front wheel. Mine had rusted out and someone had welded in an ugly piece of steel to repair it. Cliff explained that this is usually the first thing to rust out on these frames, and that I would never have a respectable car with this condition. With my usual dumb luck, Cliff has had one of these boxes for years that he bought thinking it was for his car when it turned out to be for a 39, and he couldn't use it. I think he said he got it in Indiana.

When I got my hands on it, it still had pieces of the x frame riveted to it as they had cut the frame with a torch to get the box out. I had to remove 20 rivets to get this box clear of the x frame pieces

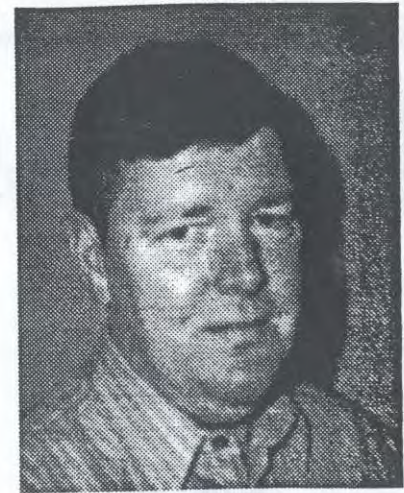
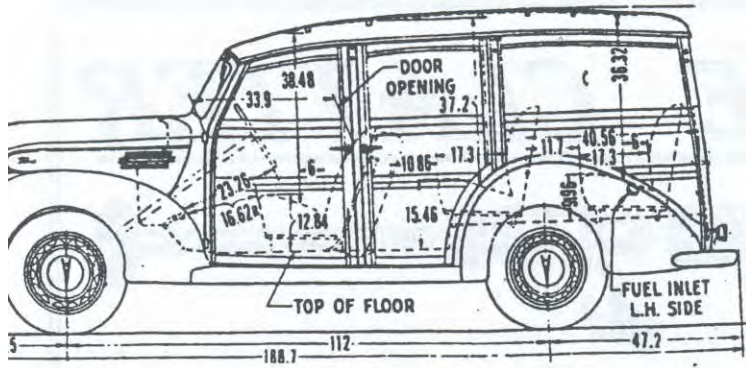
Putting the new box in turned out to be a major effort. The box itself in the 39 also had 20 rivets holding it to the x members. This was enough of a problem, but worse the shape of the box did not allow it to slide out in any direction once it was free of rivets. This was due to the shape of the box and how it sits in the x frame. Because of the concave shape of the box, it would not be moved forward or back. This required that I split and spread the frame to get the old box out and the new one in. This was accomplished by removing the rivets

from the right front of the frame at the front cross member (11 rivets here). Then remove the rivets from one side of the rear engine mount (4 rivets here). I then carefully spread the frame about 12" which allowed the removal and installation. OK so far. Now what to do to replace the rivets? There were so many of them in difficult to get at places I could never rivet it in the garage -. I found Mr. David Maher of *Precision Coachworks* in Billerica, Massachusetts who makes a "false rivet" for this purpose. These are bolts which have a head shaped like a rivet which has an allen wrench shaped hole in it. When the bolts have been tightened in place, you take body filler and fill the allen wrench hole. Sand it, paint it and you have a new rivet end!

The project list included:

- 1 old car
- 1 car owner
- 1 club member with a 39 box
- 1 son-in-law
- 1 son-in-law's grinder and lots of disks
- 1 drill and lots of bits
- 1 punch
- 1 big hammer
- 1 big box of bandaides for knuckles
- 1 pair of safety glasses
- 35 false rivets
- 1 can body filler
- 1 can paint
- 1 wife to keep saying "you can do it, honey"
- 3 weekends

I am convinced that this box was the very first thing to be placed on the assembly line to build the 39 Ford. Because of the way it fits in the frame is the lowest common denominator in the car. It also was the 'turning point", as I was now on the way back up!



Up front
with
The President

SEPTEMBER 1998

It's hard to believe that it is back school time again. I hope each of you has had a nice summer and are looking forward to the beautiful Virginia fall season.

I want to thank **Cliff Green** for the program he presented at the last membership meeting on the 1936 "factograph" that he has acquired. Cliff made a wonderful presentation with this unusual piece of Ford history, and all of us thoroughly enjoyed it. After his high energy presentation, we would all have bought a 36 from him if he had them to sell.

We are all pleased to see so many new members at our meetings and events. We appreciate your participation and look forward to getting to know each of you better and your cars. I have received a suggestion that name tags would be helpful so new members could get to know club members more easily. This is a good point as we all know how hard it is to meet a lot of new people all at once. Let's all try to remember to wear our name tags and I will buy a few stick on ones for those who cannot remember much any more. I hope I don't forget them! By the way, **Mike Bellafaire** has kindly taken over as membership coordinator, and he can arrange for new fancy name tags if you need them. Again, welcome to all

I have to share a story that I got a grin out of. Barbara and I went to Ohio again to visit her family, and we attended the 61st running of the All American Soap Box Derby in Akron. They had a pre-race parade in which each former winner was carried in a corvette convertible and the end of the parade featured the cars, bands, etc. coming down the race hill and past the crowd in the stands.

The one old car was a 1969 Chevrolet and half way down the hill it busted a hose and left a 3" wide trail of antifreeze for 60 yards in one of the three race lanes. A FORD WOULD NOT HAVE DONE THAT! The race was delayed for an hour as volunteers used oil dry, brooms and leaf blowers to try to clean it up. They did a good job, but I think it affected the race as the young drivers in lane 2 crowded lane 1 as they tried to avoid the line of dust. It was an obvious distraction for them. Goodyear has decided to sponsor and upgrade this event. The Derby has established an interest in cars for so many youngsters. Go Goodyear! P.S. Check those hoses!

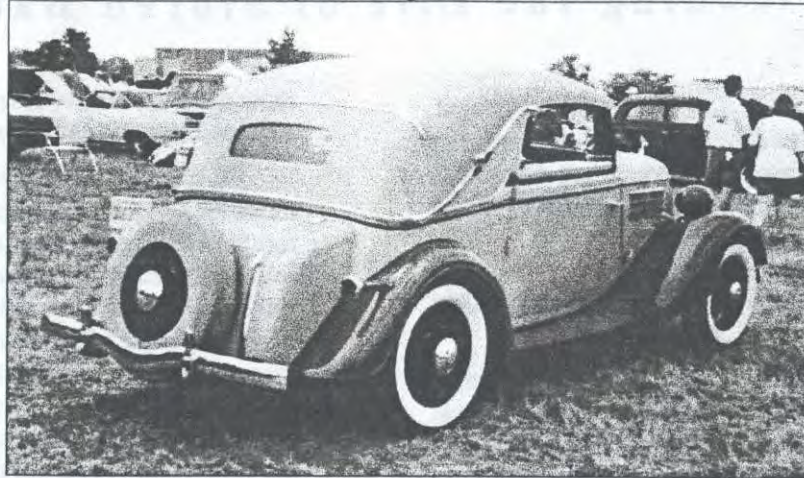
Lebkicker Tour is coming up. Remember, if we each do a little, together we can accomplish a lot.

DAVE

EDSEL FORD'S GERMAN CAR

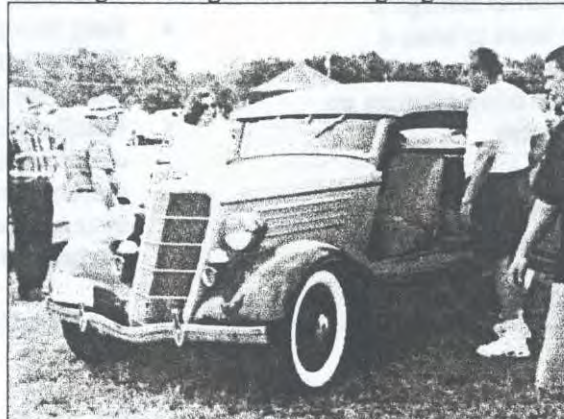
By Jason Javaras

At the AACA Spring National Show, this June, a gentleman from New Jersey drove onto the show field in what appeared to be a '35 cabriolet, green with black fenders. The closer the car got the more I realized that this was no ordinary '35. This is that car's story according to the owner, a Mr. Koch from New Jersey.



As many of us know, Edsel Ford had an eye for creative design and in the 30's was fascinated by the sweeping art deco styles utilized by the automotive designers in Europe. In particular, he liked some of the designs being produced by the Deutch automobile company in Germany. He also was partial to the custom coachwork of the American Brewsters, which of course used Ford components. Somewhere along the line he decided that he wanted a personal car that he could use on his business trips in Europe that truly reflected his own interpretation of modern "European" design yet would be based on solid American running gear. And so Mr. Ford commissioned both Deutch and Brewster to collaborate in designing a car befitting the head of Ford Motor Company. It is actually a '34 model, utilizing prototype components of the yet to be released '35 Ford model such as headlights, grill, hood, etc. The body however, is strictly custom coachwork, all hand formed from aluminum. The dash appears to be polished rosewood, with fine instrumentation. The influence of both Deutch and Brewster is subtle, being shared throughout the design. The interior is done in glove soft leather and even the garnish moldings are polished hardwood. Little things like electric windshield wipers and disappearing chrome window frames all reflect quality workmanship. This automobile no doubt influenced many later Ford products on both sides of the Atlantic.

Mr. Koch didn't say how he acquired this car, but he did say he carried the car around for over 30 years in pieces before "getting serious" about restoring it. He is a tall fellow, and just barely fits in the smallish interior, which was probably sized for Mr. Ford, who had a fairly small frame. If the President of Ford Motor Company wants a one-off personal car you can bet that every effort was made to please him. I'm sure this was a high dollar restoration, but from a historical perspective the result is priceless. After having just toured the Edsel Ford estate this summer at the Grand National it was even more appreciated. Wouldn't this car look great sitting in Mr. Ford's garage at Grosse Pointe?





TECH TIPS

Extending the Life of Stored Batteries

Batteries in collector vehicles that are stored more than they are driven typically have short lives. This tendency is avoidable. You'll get many years of life and service out of your vehicle's battery if you follow these three simple steps:

1. Keep the case clean and dry
2. Keep the electrolyte level above the plates
3. Keep the battery fully charged

Dirt and grease on the case create an electrical circuit that can cause the battery to discharge in a relatively short time. When you place your collector car or truck in storage, remove the battery and wash the case with a cloth soaked in ammonia or a baking soda and water solution. When washing the case, be careful that none of the solution gets into the cells as it will neutralize the electrolyte. Before storing the battery, be sure the case is wiped dry. Don't place the battery in a location (like a cement floor) where it will pick up condensation.

Some electrolyte is lost each time the battery is charged. Make sure the electrolyte never falls below the top of the plates. If the plates are exposed to air, permanent damage to the battery will result. Distilled water should be used to fill the battery. On most batteries, the correct electrolyte level is indicated by a ring (1/4 to 1/2 inch above the plates) under the cell cap. Batteries discharge when they're not used, so they need to be recharged at fairly frequent intervals. This is done with a battery charger.

A slow charging rate of 4 to 6 amps is best for the battery. Many batteries are replaced needlessly simply because they are allowed to discharge and stay that way long enough for internal damage to occur. It takes more than a few hours to bring a discharged battery up to full charge. Using an inexpensive home-shop charger to bring a battery up to full charge may take a day or more.

The simplest and most accurate way to tell when a battery is fully charged is to take a reading with a hydrometer (a rubber device that looks like a thermometer and is available for a few dollars from an auto supply store). Most battery chargers also

show when the battery is reaching full charge by cutting back the amp output.

Be sure that the battery can "breathe" when recharging. This means that you want to make sure that the hydrogen gas that is created during the recharging process can escape from the cells. The vent caps contain small holes for this purpose. But sometimes these holes become plugged. If this happens, pressure can build up inside the battery and an explosion can result. To make sure the gas can escape, but also to avoid any risk that the hydrogen gas collect and be ignited, remove the cell caps and place a damp cloth over the top of the cells. The cloth will absorb the hydrogen gas and allow it to combine harmlessly with the water molecules. After recharging, remove the damp cloth, dry the top of the battery case, and replace the cell caps.

Before replacing the battery, be sure to clean the posts and cable clamps. An easy way to prevent corrosion at these contact points is to give the battery posts and cable clamps a coating of Plastidip. This rubberizing product is available at discount marts. The Plastidip coating will seal out moisture and corrosive vapors that are given off during the discharge and recharging process and preserve a good contact between the cable clamps and posts. You can also give the hold down frame and bolts a coating of Plastidip to prevent corrosion.

Tips for maintaining batteries while vehicles are in storage:

- Charge the battery every two weeks
- Store in as cool a place as possible - batteries don't self discharge as rapidly when cold
- Keep the case clean and dry
- Make sure the electrolyte stays above the tops of the plates.
- Install a shut-off switch or remove battery cables while the vehicle is in storage to prevent possible shorts in the electrical system from discharging the battery or starting a fire.

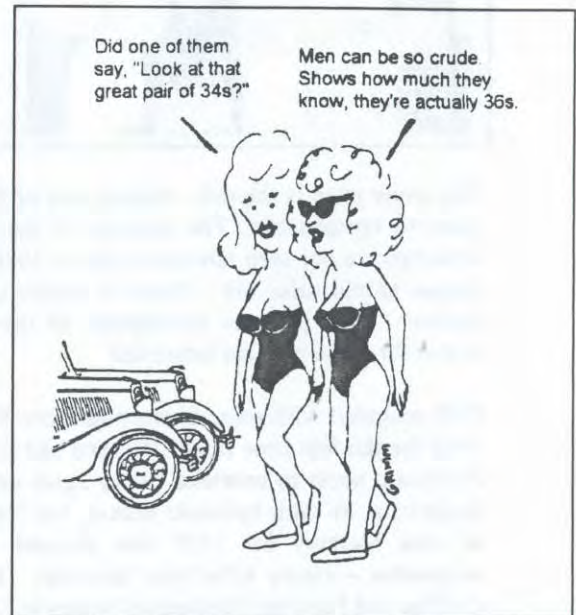
From Uncle Henry's Bull Sheet, July 1994



Virginia State Police, (count 'em, about 30) already to zoom onto Route 1 with their new 1946 patrol cars!



Roy Rogers, "King of the Cowboys" at the 1940 Ford Exhibit at the New York World's Fair. He is riding on a new Mercury on the "Road of Tomorrow"
 Credit to Jerry Wendel and the "Fountain News" - News of the Early Ford V8 Foundation.



RARE 1936 "FACTOGRAPH" FEATURED AT AUGUST MEETING

by Hank Amster

Our meeting at Nottaway Park in August was a real "barn burner". We had one of the largest number of attendees in years. New member **Wayne Handy** drove all the way up from the Richmond area and brought with him rare '36 Ford literature. It was the first meeting for new member **Tim Foltz** from Fredericksburg, also. He brought along for sale four rebuilt shocks for a '41 that were quickly snatched up by **Ken Burns**.

Subsequent to **Buzzy Potter** winning the 50/50 drawing for the umpteenth time, we listened to an outstanding presentation by **Cliff Green**. He talked about, and exhibited a rare piece of Ford memorabilia—a 1936 Ford sales aid consisting of 45 flip chart pages mounted on an easel highlighting the many mechanical, styling and safety advantages of that auto. Cliff further researched the Chevy and Plymouth competition of

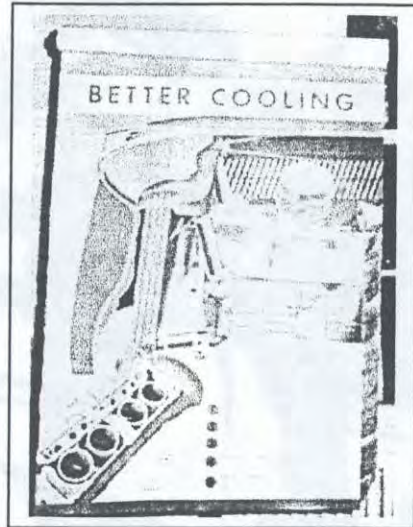


that year in order to illustrate the "hard sell" techniques Ford indoctrinated their salesmen with to overcome obvious advantages of those other makes. Among those were Ford's mechanical brakes versus hydraulics, fabric insert top vs. all steel, "buggy springs vs. coils and longitudinal leaf, and cooling problems.

Cliff explained that the "Factograph" was available to Ford Dealers starting in 1934 for \$2.50 with the stand an additional \$1.00. The charts are attached at the top by a piece of wood with wing nuts so that when a new year came along the old ones were thrown away – thus no 1934s are known to exist. 1935 are scarce and the 1936 additions are few and far between.

The cover page is the only missing part of Cliff's example and he plans to reproduce it. The majority of the photographs and line drawings are not seen anywhere else in 1936 literature. They are unique to this sales aid. There is wealth of information for the restorer. Cliff plans to photograph all the pages and print up copies for those who are interested

Cliff enlightened with some interesting facts: Ford outsold Chevy in 1935 for the first time since 1930 and slid to third in 1936 behind Plymouth, never to overtake Chevy again until 1957! Edsel Ford equipped a '36 with hydraulic brakes, but Henry squashed it. The all new Mercury for 1939 was planned with an independent suspension – Henry killed that idea also. Only Willys, the V16 Cadillac and Ford had Mechanical brakes in '36.



The "Factograph" illustrated the improvements of the 1936 over the 1935 such as: 40% reduction in steering effort, insert main bearings, increased capacity radiator with larger cooling louvers, solid wheels providing lower unsprung weight, new styling, to name a few. It was the salesman's job to convey customers that this was a better car. If a potential buyer had just come over from the Chevy dealer he would be armed with tough questions about the Ford that the "Factograph" could explain. Of course the customer would not be patient enough to sit through all 45 pages, so page labels identified the material.

Our thanks to Cliff for such a thorough and interesting presentation in his usual exhilarating manner to which he has accustomed us. And also a flip of the gearshift to **Mike Bellafaire** for proving the evening's refreshments.

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE ALERT

Help the Hobby: Support a Tax Cut On the Sale of Collector Cars

On June 24, 1998, Speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich introduced H.R. 4125, *The Economic Growth Act of 1998*. Among other provisions, this Bill seeks to reduce the capital gains tax rate from 28% to 15% for collectibles, including collector automobiles, held for at least one year before sale.

In 1997, the *Taxpayer Relief Act* cut the capital gains tax rate on the sale of investments from 28% to 20%. However, proceeds from the sale of collectibles were specifically excluded from this law and continue to be taxed at 28%. *The Economic Growth Act of 1998* seeks to treat and tax all investments the same whether they are stocks and bonds or valuable collector cars.

This effort will be an uphill fight, but we need to let Congress know that this potential change in law could have far-reaching positive effects on the economy and the automobile hobby. Write, call, or fax your Representative and Senators in support of H.R. 4125 and its companion Bill in the Senate, S. 2214, using the following points.

H.R. 4125/S.2214 would:

- Reduce the capital gains tax from 28% to 15% on collector cars purchased after June 24, 1998 and held for at least one year before sale.
- Allow automobile enthusiasts the benefit of treating collector cars as an investment on par with more traditional investments.
- Spur further economic growth by adding to the multi-billion dollar collector vehicle industry.

For assistance in finding out who your Representative and Senators are and how to reach them, visit SEMA's website at www.sema.org/fedleg/legislatorrequest/. If you do not have web access, contact SEMA Fax-on-Demand at (909) 396-0281. Dial 750 and follow the voice prompts and request document number 1119.

For more information, please contact Brian Caudill at the SEMA Washington, DC office at (202) 783-6007. Feel free to distribute, publish and copy this alert as necessary.

VAPOR LOCK CURE

Vapor lock, the formation of air bubbles when gasoline gets warm, occurs more often today because modern gasolines are more volatile than they used to be. This is because today's fuels include a small amount of alcohol, supposedly to make them burn cleaner and pollute less. Fuel pumps, carburetors and fuel lines that run close to the engine get hot and can become blocked with the air bubbles-vapor lock.

Installing a electric fuel pump may solve the immediate problem, but does not address the issue of highly volatile gasoline. Some fuel engineers from Mobil Oil Corporation suggest the following: Add 4 ounces of diesel fuel to each 10 gallons of gas. This neat trick should completely solve vapor locking problems and will not foul spark plugs. If you have vapor lock problems, try this simple solution.

V8 Vibrations, Cent III RG EFV8

(Who wants to go first? Ed.)

GLASS CLEANER

Glass cleaning product like *Windex* do a good job because they contain ammonia. But, I found they seem to cause a film to develop on the glass that is not from the interior plastics, etc. You can make your own glass cleaner that is as good as the best commercial products, and only costs a few cents per batch:

- ½ cup "sudsy" ammonia
- 1 pint 70% isopropyl rubbing alcohol
- 1 teaspoon liquid dish detergent
- 1 gallon water

If the windows are not very dirty, just use a clean cloth dampened with plain water. In any case, always finish by using a dry cloth to wipe the glass until completely dry.

John Grimm NCRG "The Headliner"

FIXING THE '48

Jason Javaras

Here's a follow-up on two problems I reported earlier in the Valve Clatter: First, I was able to replace the transmission in our '48, but it's kind of like boot camp – you really don't want to do it again very soon. I only needed help taking the old unit out and then putting the new one in. Everything else was tricky, but the job can be done by one person (and a whole bunch of jacks and stands). I won't dwell on the jack that slipped. The biggest pain, I found, was all the cotter pins and bolts that were placed in ridiculous places. After spending one whole evening on one bolt, on the universal joint cover, I ended up grinding down a deep socket to allow it to fit in the tight space between bolt and cover plate, and drilling a hole through the shaft so I could turn the socket with a ten penny nail. I'm sure Ford made a special tool for just such a bolt. Not content to just start rightup without some problem, though, I first had to deal with first a burst flexible fuel line and then a new

fuel pump before the old girl let me have a victory over the battle of the transmission. Anyway the new transmission works fine. One thing, though, Bill Clatterbaugh, who rebuilt the transmission I installed, he cautioned me that I should only use 140 weight gear oil in it. I finally found some, but I wonder if the more common 90 weight would work just as well – comments?

One more item: the overheating problem I've had for some time on our '40 coupe. I last reported that most of the problem had been overcome by changes in timing, new 180 degree thermostat, etc. Well this month one of the water pumps froze up and had to be replaced. Luckily, it went bad sitting in the garage rather than on the road. When I looked at the old pump, the pencil-size water inlet hole was completely plugged with gasket goop. This was undoubtedly part of the reason for the overheating as well as the pump failure. Good case for not using gasket cement, at least on water pump gaskets. A new condenser also went the same day and had to be replaced. Amazing how these cars self-destruct just sitting in the garage, isn't? *I have been using Amsoil 75W-90 in my transmissions and Columbia rears – run quiet, shift easy. Old cars are like airplanes, they work better if exercised. ED.*

HOT TIME AT WINE FESTIVAL TOUR

Five member cars caravanned out to the Virginia Wine Festival on a very hot Sunday. The **Dawkins, Simons, Dubois's, Burns** and a **Blum** survived. Bill Simons brought a candy thermometer and registered a cool 190 degrees using only water in his '34, Dubois '35 pushed 208 using 50/50 and Dawkins was gurgling!

NVRG was the oldest group of cars with the T-Birds being the largest with 25 or so. Simon's '34 was tied with a '34 Plymouth for the very oldest to show. Most of the other cars were of the '60's vintage (with A/C).

It was reported that our group spent most of the time watching the cooking demo's under a tent to avoid the heat!

SEPTEMBER MEETING PROGRAM

Ken Burns will give a presentation on clutch and brake pedal repair and adjustment. **Dave Westrare** will provide refreshments.

E-MAIL ADDRESS

If you have an E-mail address please drop me a line at dgreen@erols.com so that I can include you in the mailings.

NOTHING FOR SALE THIS MONTH
NO NEW MEMBERS



CALENDAR

September

- 8 *NVRG Monthly Meeting* Ken Burns presentation on clutch and brake adjustments
Refreshments – Dave Westrate
- 13 Mt Airy - 29 th annual Sugarloaf Region AACA meet
- 12-13 **Annual Lebkicker Tour**
- 13 Out of the Past Review - Vern Parker's "Times
- 20 7th Annual Cobweb Classic, Luray, Va
- 20 Bull Run Region AACA, Manassas, Va
- 20 Piedmont Region AACA, Charlottesville, Va.
Dick McIninch 804-361-2568
- 27 Strasburg Rotary Club, Belle Grove Plantation, Middletown, Va
- 29 *NVRG Directors Meeting*

October

- 1-4 Fall Carisle
- 7-10 Hershey
- 13 *NVRG Monthly Meeting* Hershey slide show.
Refreshments – Bill Simons
- 17 Rockville
- 27 *NVRG Directors Meeting*

November

- 10 *NVRG Monthly Meeting* Refreshments – Jason Javaras
- 24 *NVRG Directors Meeting*

December

- 5 *NVRG Annual Christmas Party* Fairfax Country Club, Fairfax, Virginia

MORE PICNIC PEOPLE – Jim McDaniel photos





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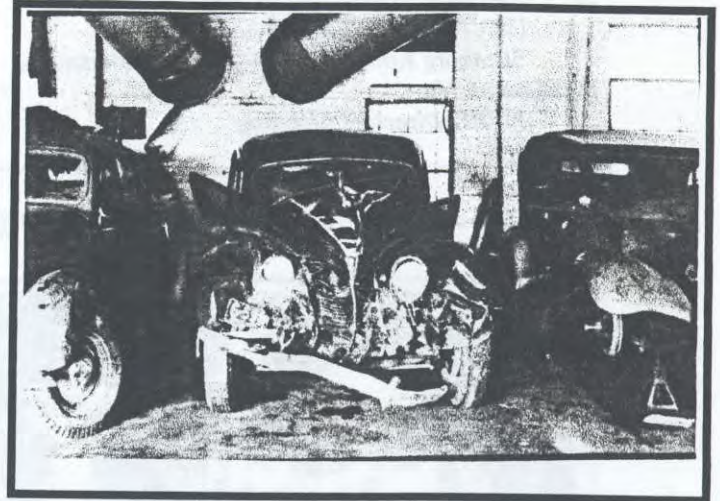


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 Newsletter: **Cliff Green** 426-2662

Monthly general membership meetings are usually held at 7:30, the *second Tuesday* of each month, in historic Hunter House, located adjacent to the tennis courts, Nottoway Park, Court House Road, Vienna, Virginia. Check the newsletter for occasional alternates sites. **SEE YOU THERE**



FIRST CLASS MAIL

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