



It's all about the ride.

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

The weather has finally warmed up, and it's a great time to be driving our cars. I hope everyone has dusted off their big classics and are driving them about.

The Plumbo Buckley Open House was a big hit! We had 25 people show up from four different states. You can read about the event inside this newsletter, beginning on page 8. The Metro Region will be finished with their caravan by the time this letter reaches publication. They had great weather, and I'm sure a great time was had by all.

We don't have a lot of DVR Club events coming up in July or August, however, the South Jersey barrier islands have multiple car shows that attract thousands of tourists. Ocean City has their big one on June 27th; it typically draws 250-300 cars.

I'll be going to the Grand Stutz Annual Reunion at Indianapolis, Indiana in September. This is a smaller event, but the friendship and camaraderie is priceless. Stutz Collectors are more relaxed and enjoy driving their cars to different venues. We'll be touring the IMS (Indianapolis Motor Speedway) museum, which has just been renovated.

The IMS and Stutz share a lot of racing history. The first IMS race in 1911 was won by a Marmon Wasp in a controversial finish; however, Stutz placed 10th in that race, and the Stutz slogan was born: "The car that made good in a day." The Stutz factory was located near the track and sponsored the White Squadron Racing Team for seven more years, winning the IMS race in 1915. Harry Stutz was bought out of his own company in a stock manipulation scheme in 1918; however, he came back to Indy and took another first place in a 1923 HCS (Harry Clayton Stutz) Special. In 1928, the Stutz factory sponsored a Blackhawk that took second place at Le Mans in France. In 1929, Phillippe De Rothschild ran a supercharged model M Stutz speedster at Le Mans and took a 5th place. This car can be seen today at the Fred Simeone Museum in Philadelphia. Phillippe ran another supercharged DV32 car in the 1930 Le Mans, but he did not finish. And In 1931, the Stutz factory reintroduced the Stutz Bearcat with a 322 CID DV32 engine. They would drive the Bearcats to the IMS race track and certify them to do 100 mph.

So I believe it's safe to say that Stutz was the first true American Sports Car.

Robert Praetorius,
Director



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UPCOMING EVENTS

Plan now to join us for our upcoming events! See dvrcca.org for more details and additional events.

**America 250 Day Celebration
Highland Township**

20 June 2026
10:00AM-4:00PM
100 Five Points Road
Coatesville, Pennsylvania 19326
Contact Ms Kathleen Hood 484-340-8163

CLC Open House at Kelly Cadillac

27 June 2026
10:00AM-4:00PM
1986 State Road
Lancaster, Pennsylvania 17601
Contact Mike Stinson 267-251-8588

**South Jersey AACA Car Show in
O.C.N.J.**

27 June 2026
9:00AM- 3:00PM
6th & Asbury Ave,
Ocean City, New Jersey 08226
Dave Blyer 609-399-1412

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WHAT IS IT?

By Cliff Woodbury

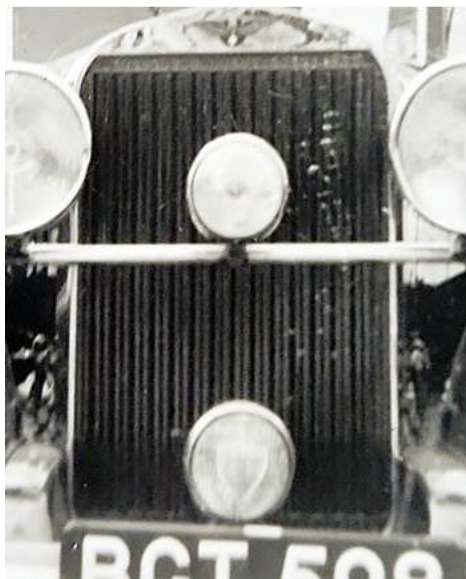
Wow us with your solution and win a valuable prize!

These three photos were taken in the mid-1950s at a used-car lot on the north side of Baltimore Ave. at the East end of Media, across from where Media Real Estate is today. It was Beam Buick then.

Can you tell us about this car? What is it? Where is it today? Please send as much information as you can about the car by email to rjpraetorius@gmail.com. After a suitable length of time, a Blue-Ribbon Panel of Classic Car enthusiasts (such as, for example, attendees at a future DVR Board meeting/luncheon or other DVR event) will choose the contest winner, and maybe a valuable prize. The Panel's decision shall be final.

Note: Please use your RI (Real Intelligence) only. Use of AI in a response will disqualify your submission. Acceptable responses must have at minimum the date of submission, contestant name, and contact information; car make, model, year, and current status, if known.

HEAR YE, HEAR YE!
IT'S A CONTEST!



MINNESOTA HOUSE FILE 3865 - A NEW BILL IN MINNESOTA COULD BAN CLASSIC CARS FROM THE ROAD MOST DAYS OF THE WEEK

By Olivia Richman

Originally published in *AutoNotion*, Apr 8, 2026, www.autonotion.com/us/classic-car-culture-state-law. Reprinted with permission.

A new law proposed in Minnesota is an attack on car culture so severe that it's one step away from banning classic cars.

Those of us with classic, vintage, and collector cars don't drive these vehicles daily. We have reduced registration requirements and cheaper insurance with the understanding that these cars aren't commuting us to work every weekday. It's understandable. And I've never really seen someone break this rule and drive their 1960s Pontiac GTO to a colonoscopy appointment or leave work in their Jaguar E-Type. But for some reason, Minnesota House File 3865 wants to strictly define when classic cars can be driven.

And it's basically never.

Minnesota HF 3865 could damage the state's car culture, but why are they doing it?

If HF 3865 passed, vintage cars, classic cars, collector vehicles, street rods, military vehicles, and classic motorcycles would only be allowed on public roads during daylight hours on Saturday and Sunday. That means nothing in the evening or during the week.

You could no longer have a late-night car meetup at the top of a garage, cruise the canyons during a weekday, or go to evening car shows. Doing these things would count as against the law.

I guess it leaves me wondering: Who hurt you? Did someone with a C2 Corvette dump you?

Proponents of HF 3865 explain that they are simply trying to clarify what constitutes a classic or collector vehicle and what owners are allowed to do with them. This protects the intent of the state's

What you need to know:

Minnesota's proposed bill to restrict classic cars to weekend daylight hours only is the most aggressive legislative attack on car culture we've seen from any state, and the kicker is that the governor himself drives a 47-year-old collector vehicle.

The bill would effectively criminalize weekday cruise nights, evening car shows, and even a retiree's Wednesday morning drive, all under the guise of preventing "abuse" of collector registration.

When you pair this with California's tightening emissions crackdowns that could sideline vintage vehicles entirely, a pattern emerges that every classic car owner in America should be watching closely.

collector vehicle registration and ensures it's not being "abused" by drivers that want to... Go on too many canyon drives?

While I understand the concept of defining what's allowed within a limited vehicle registration, I am unclear why Minnesota wants it to be so limited. Why do they want no classic cars on the road the entire week? Why can't there be car shows at night? I guess I'm unclear how this improves anything. All this will do is cancel weekday car meets and bar retired people from taking relaxing cruises on a Wednesday morning. Were people complaining about this? What harm was it doing?

The extreme restrictions feel like an attempt to redefine car culture, or may even deter people from owning a classic car to begin with. The idea of buying an entire car just to be restricted from driving it all week long seems crazy.

And unfortunately, it's not just Minnesota residents who have to deal with restrictions and backlash for owning a classic car. California has been pushing hard for stricter emissions policies, which means vehicles passing smog tests and other strict requirements that many classic cars would fail. This would essentially make some classic cars undrivable in California, a state known for its rich car culture. Jay Leno, who owns over 150 cars¹, has fought back with "Leno's Law," which argues that vehicles from certain years shouldn't need to pass a modern smog test.

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MINNESOTA HF 3865 (CONTINUED)

Again, who hurt these people? These vehicles are barely on the road as is. Why are you so obsessed with them? In all likelihood, it probably comes down to money. Minnesota wants to charge people full registration and fees if they drive their classic car more than the “acceptable” number of miles. Maybe if they only allow you to drive during very restrictive times, you’ll be forced to pay for regular registration just to bring your car out at night for a meet. And California wants money off of its smog tests.

Hagerty² recently did a study on which states are classic car-friendly and found that other states are after your hard-earned money as well. You know, the money that’s supposed to go into your car, not into politicians’ pockets. In Massachusetts, you are charged a 5.5% tax based on what you paid for the car, but the state

determines the car’s value itself, often much higher than its market value. Missouri limits you to 1,000 miles of driving a year. South Dakota has a 4.5% sales tax and an excise tax of 4%, making it one of the most tax-heavy states for registering a car. Maine requires that you have a daily driver if you want to get antique plates for your classic car. Many states have a “weekend, holidays, and special occasions” restriction for those antique plates.

Can’t say all of this is surprising. But let’s hope HF 3865 faces some opposition or car culture is in crisis.

Footnotes:

1. www.autonocion.com/us/jay-leno-law-smog-test-returns
2. www.hagerty.com/media/archived/how-classic-car-friendly-is-your-state



“LIVING THE DREAM” AT THE AMELIA ISLAND CONCOURSE D’ELEGANCE

By Joe Lucks

Amelia is becoming the Pebble Beach of the East Coast held every year in March. Joe Lucks reports on his recent participation.

This was my first visit to Amelia Island. Sometimes things just seem to come out of nowhere. On January 29th, I received a call asking me if I would consider showing our Willys-Knight in the Sleeve-valve category at The Amelia Island Concourse d’Elegance. At that time we were still shoveling snow with no signs of it stopping any time soon. The next day I received a call from Matthew Orendac, Vice-Chairman of the Amelia Concourse, assuring me the snow would melt by March 7th.

The call was on my car speaker and my wife and daughter heard Matt say “this is a once in a lifetime opportunity,” of course to encourage my decision. I said I’ll decide by Monday. I knew he was right, and I was pretty excited. That gave us about one month to detail the Willys-Knight and get the trailer out of the snow. I wanted the snow melt, but I didn’t anticipate the amount of mud it created. Eventually we cleaned the mud off and got ready for the trip. I think the drive to Florida was the easy part!

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AMELIA ISLAND (CONTINUED)

There are many events scheduled, beginning on Thursday with auctions; Friday, road tours; Saturday, the Concourse d'Elegance; and Sunday, seminars.

A wonderful mini-vacation ensued once we arrived in beautiful Amelia Island. We drove our Willys-Knight Plaid Side roadster parade-style into the well-groomed Ritz-Carlton golf course around 7:00 AM Saturday, March 7th. There are approximately 36 classes, and there were 6 cars in the Sleeve Valve Classics category:

- * 1928 Minerva AF
- * 1927 Voisin C7
- * 1913 Stearns-Knight
- * 1938 Panhard Dynamic
- * 1930 Willys-Knight Plaid Side
- * 1917 Daimler Knight (used in Pollyanna)

The Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance drew more than 17,000 attendees, with about 250 cars shown. The spectators I greeted were genuinely interested in learning about the cars. Something new to me was that each class has representatives assigned to the class. They answer any questions you have, and for a newcomer like me. Our hosts, the Malcom Brothers,



were outstanding! They will watch your car while you enjoy the show. Did I mention how magnificent the weather was? A high of 78 degrees and beautiful sunshine all day! I was not missing the 20 degree cloudy weather of Pennsylvania. The Amelia golf course lawn was brilliant green, cut short, and the dew of the morning caused a few blades of grass to stick to my shoes - proving it was indeed real. Picture perfect.

Now on to the judging, which began promptly at 7:30 AM. I'm happy to announce that our car received a red ribbon,

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AMELIA ISLAND (CONTINUED)

which is a Second-In-Class Award Winner. (*That's excellent, Joe! Congratulations! -ed.*)

Just being invited to the Amelia is wonderful, and winning an award is icing on the cake. The 1st place Award in Class was achieved by the 1928 Minerva AF owned by Jack Boyd Smith, Jr., presented by Levine Restorations for the JBS Museum.

Entrants and judges were treated to lunch in the Talbot room of the Ritz-Carlton. Following lunch at 12:30 PM, the awards ceremony began. After First-In-Class presentations, the Best of Show and Special Awards were presented. The 1969 McLaren M8B won the

Special Concourse de Sport, and the Best of Show Award went to the 1931 Duesenberg Model J.

There is lot going on, and it was an exciting day. After the conclusion, we needed to drive back to our trailer location. I have to admit it was a bit stressful, because we were stuck in traffic for almost one hour. Thank goodness our Willys-Knight performed flawlessly. I don't remember much about the drive home to Pennsylvania, because I was still savoring the joy of the weekend. To quote a friend: that weekend, I was "living the dream".



BEARCAT AT THE SPEAKEASY

By Robert Praetorius



On April 15th, the Stutz Bearcat was brought out for a Speakeasy fund-raising event at Restaurant 1920 for the Cumberland County Education Foundation and School Counts!. (cumberlandfoundation.org). The foundation raises money for scholarships for the underprivileged students to attend Cumberland County College and go on to Rowan University.

Approximately 60 guests were greeted by the 33 Stutz, and everyone got their picture with the car. Once inside, period drinks were served, and the food was outstanding. A disc jockey played roaring twenties music, and the ladies looked pretty attractive in their flapper dresses on the dance floor. I think the people living in the roaring twenties must have known how to have a good time.



CAR-TEFACTS: ROLLS-ROYCE V-12 ENGINE

Compiled by Caroline Steinfeld, editor. All photos and information from Smithsonian Institution, Creative Commons License.

Formed in 1906 to produce automobiles, Rolls-Royce was asked to begin designing and building aircraft engines at the outbreak of World War I in 1914. Design of the Merlin began in 1933 following the similar Kestrel design. Early Merlin Mk II and Mk III engines, which produced about 7,457 kw (1,000 horsepower), powered Hawker Hurricanes and Supermarine Spitfires in the Battle of Britain. Engine improvements and progress in supercharger performance increased the Merlin's rated power to over 1,715 kW (2,300 horsepower) by the end of the war.

This engine, a developmental prototype in the Merlin 100 series, was built by Rolls-Royce in Derby, England, sometime between June and July 1944. It was a new class of engine, built to higher performance standards for power and altitude. Merlin 100s powered the de Havilland Mosquito, Avro Tudor, and de Havilland Hornet and Sea Hornet. U.S. Packard-built Merlin 100s (V-1650-9 and -11) powered later versions of the North American Mustang.

Item: Reciprocating engine, V-type, 12 cylinders, pressure liquid cooled, supercharged

Power rating: 1,227 kW (1,645 hp) at 3,000 rpm

Displacement: 27 L (1,649 cu in.)

Bore and Stroke: 137.16 x152.4 mm (5.4" x 6")

Weight: 778 kg (1,715 lb)

Country of Origin: United Kingdom

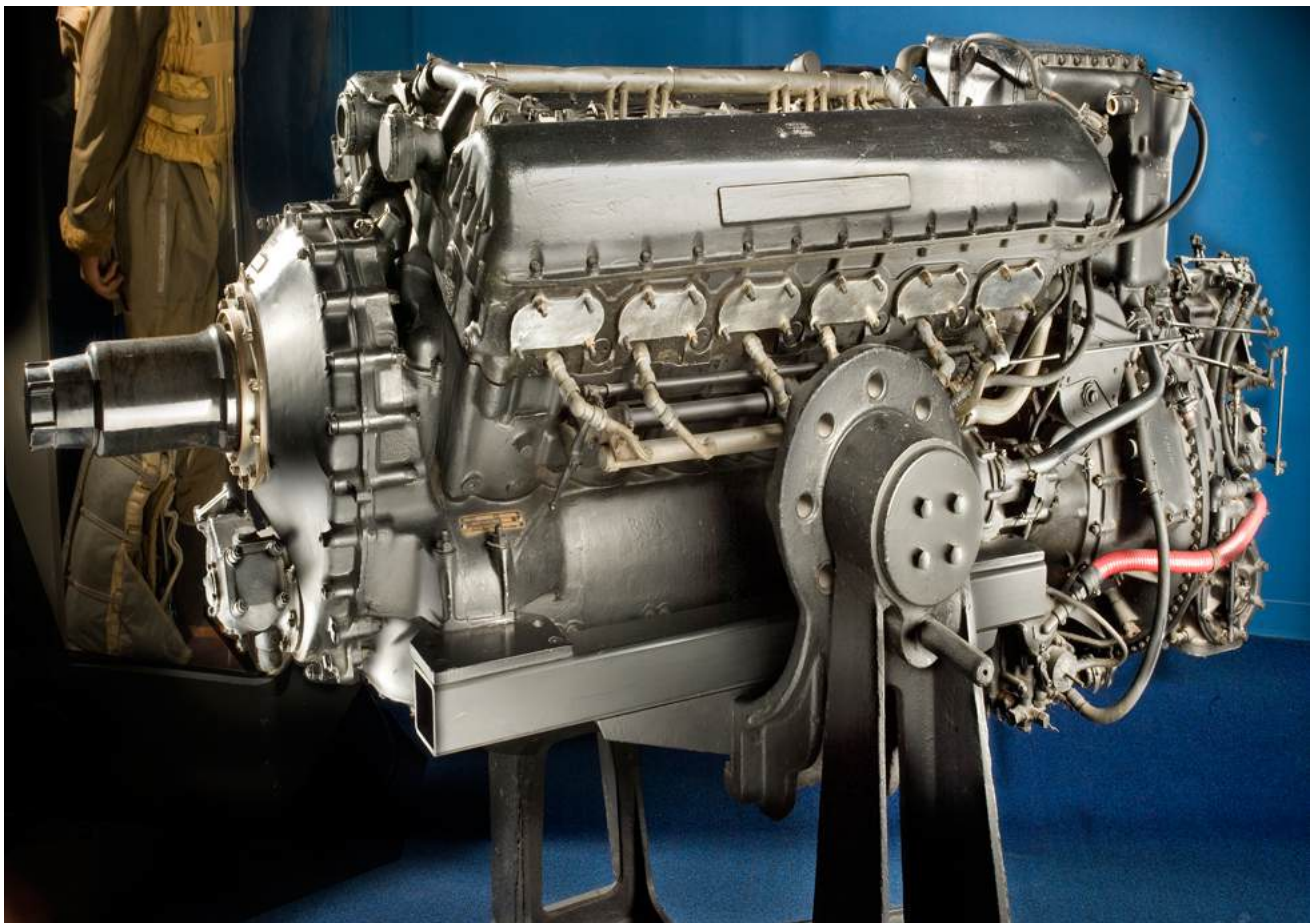
Date: 1944

Materials: Aluminum and Steel

Location: Air and Space Museum

Manufacturer: Rolls-Royce Ltd. (Derby, U.K.)

Credit Line: Transferred from the United States Air Force, Park Ridge Facility



PLUMBO-BUCKLEY MUSEUM OPEN HOUSE

Article and photos by Robert Praetorius

The Delaware Valley Region had an absolutely perfect day to host the open house at the Plumbo-Buckley Museum on April 11th. Joel Givner drove down from Cherry Hill with his 1935 Super Charged Auburn Coupe, and I drove up in my 1933 Stutz Bearcat. We parked the cars at the entrance of the museum to welcome our guests. A hot Italian catered buffet was served, and there were chocolate desserts to die for. A total of 25 guests came from four different states.

Once inside, our guests were presented with an eclectic collection of about 25 cars from 1903 to 2018, plus motorcycles, airplane engines, one boat, a wall of gas tanks, auto signs, radiator emblems, photos, and a display case of Brass-era antique automobile parts. The beauty of this collection is the selection of cars that highlight some of the major innovative moments over the past 125 years of automotive history.

Some of the standouts of the collection are:

1903 Rambler Model E3 Runabout with a rear door entrance. Thomas B. Jeffrey started the company in 1900 and sold it to Charles Nash in 1914. The Nash company brought the name Rambler back in 1950, and they ceased using it in 1969. The car has a 15 H.P. single cylinder engine located under the seat. This car has participated in the London-to-Brighton Veteran Car Run on four different occasions.

1907 Mercedes 60 HP Landaulet. This car was rescued from an Argentinian Glass Plant in the 1950s. It was disassembled and shipped in pieces, because at the time it was illegal to export complete cars. The 35 HP Mercedes model was started in 1901 by Gottlieb Daimler and Wilhelm Maybach. They made a four-stroke engine with four cylinders and mounted it in the front and down inside the frame rails. Then they used a planetary transmission (aka epicyclic gear train) and chains to drive the rear wheels. This design was so far ahead of its time that Emil Jellinek, an Austrian

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Top to bottom: 1. Joel Givner and Robert Praetorius out front to welcome our guests. 2. Twenty-five People came from four states to help celebrate. 3. Guests line up for the hot Italian buffet. 4. Dale Praetorius serving the desserts; Thym Smith is first in line. 5. Ralph Buckley, America's first Antique Automobile Restorer, in 1946.



PLUMBO-BUCKLEY MUSEUM OPEN HOUSE (CONTINUED)



businessman who sold cars for Daimler, invested in the company and named it after his daughter Mercedes. Many auto historians believed this car to be the start of the modern automobile era. By 1903, they were getting 45 HP out of the same engine. By 1907, Mercedes was getting 60 horse power out of the same engine block, and vehicles were able to achieve speeds up to 85 mph. This car is highly sought after today by collectors, including the Mercedes Benz Museum.

1914 Mercer Model 35C Raceabout. Ralph Buckley restored this car in 1952 and won many awards in the USA and Europe for his quality of workmanship. The Mercer Raceabout and the Stutz Bearcat were the heads-up racers back in the beginning of automotive racing history. Mercer and Stutz started the phrase "Win races on Sunday, Sell cars on Monday." Washington A. Roebling II was the mastermind of the Mercer brand; unfortunately, he died in the Titanic disaster in 1912. His main engineer Finley Robertson Porter, who designed the T-head engine, left in 1914, and by 1924 Mercer was out of business.

1915 Ford Model T Center Cab. Everyone knows that the Model T was a bare bones basic transportation vehicle that put America on wheels. However, if you look at the interior of this Center Cab Model T car, you'll be impressed. The interior is as luxurious as any Cadillac or Packard produced at that time. Victor purchased one of these in 1950 and he used it to go back and forth to school in Toledo from South Jersey. Unfortunately, it was still a Model T, and it took Victor three days to make the trip if he didn't have any breakdowns. Henry Ford's Model T was responsible for putting America on wheels.

1931 Cord Model L-29 Convertible Coupe. This is the first production car with front wheel drive, although some say it was Ruxton. Everyone knows Harry Miller race cars dominated the Indianapolis speedway from the late teens all the way though to WWII. His cars from the early twenties were equipped

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Top to bottom: 1. 1907 Mercedes. 2. 1933 Invicta. 3. Interior of the 1915 Ford model T Center Cab. 4. 1915 Ford Model T Center Cab. 5. 1934 Graham Bros Blue Streak. 6. 1931 Cord.

PLUMBO-BUCKLEY MUSEUM OPEN HOUSE (CONTINUED)

with front wheel drive. E.L. Cord was truly a motor enthusiast, and he believed that the front wheel drive was the future design of the automobile. Everyone knew the horse always goes in front of the cart, so in 1926 E.L. Cord paid Harry Miller \$60,000.00 dollars plus royalties to produce a Cord front wheel drive car. Cord was so proud of this car that he put his own name on it. The launch date was set to be November of 1927; however, race cars and production cars are two totally different animals, and they have totally different requirements. To convert the front wheel drive racing design to production, Paul Van Ranst from the ACD engineering team was assigned to help integrate the system and make it work. The final product was delayed two full years and finally launched in November of 1929. The system still had mechanical issues, and now it was the beginning of the great depression. From 1929-1932, Cord sold about 5,000 L-29 cars, but the damage was done. They did a redesign of the front wheel drive system and reintroduced it in 1936. It was much improved, but it was too little too late, and the company went out of business in 1937.

1933 Invicta 4.5-Liter Type S Speedster. Noel Macklin and Oliver Lyle created the Invicta in 1925. In 1930, they designed a 4.5-Liter overhead valve 6 cylinder Meadows motor and installed it in a heavier underslung chassis. This combination was very successful on the racetrack, and Donald Healey won a first place in Monte Carlo in 1931 in an Invicta Type S Speedster. Unfortunately, Britain was also in the middle of a massive depression, and they were out of business by 1935.

1934 Graham Brothers Blue Streak Eight. The successful Graham Brothers (Joseph, Robert, and Ray) decided to enter the automobile business in 1927. The logo depicted the three brothers in knights' helmets. The brothers offered solid value and innovation for your money. The company's motto was "To sell is to serve." In 1932, the economy had been failing for three years, and the Graham car sales were also on the decline. The brothers decided to go all in and retooled the factory to produce a totally new car. They introduced the 1932 "Blue Streak Eight." The body was totally redesigned by Amos Northup. The hood



Top to bottom: 1. Victor Plumbo, Marie Plumbo, Dennis Cowan. 2. 1903 Rambler. 3. Mercer Race About Model 35 C.


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PLUMBO-BUCKLEY MUSEUM OPEN HOUSE (CONTINUED)

extended over the radiator and cap and connected to a chrome grille with chrome slats sloping into a "V" shape at the base. The hood louvers repeated the slanting grille angle. The fenders were deep welled and fully skirted. The headlight shells were painted, not chrome plated. The front end appearance was totally new and very modern for 1932. Many car manufacturers followed the design in the next year. The frame rails were straight and deeply channeled, the rear frame rails "banjoed" with a giant hole stamped in the middle to house the rear end. The hangers for the front and rear axle springs were mounted on the outside of the frame rails, lowering the front and rear axles for a lower center of gravity. The wider wheelbase gave the car superior handling. The engine was a 245 C.I.D. straight eight L-head design, and they added an Aluminum cylinder head, revised cam contours, and duel valve springs for better compression. These engine upgrades produced 95 HP. Cannon Ball Baker drove a stripped down convertible up Mt. Washington in 1932 for a first place record of 13 minutes and 26 seconds. A similar Graham was entered in the 1934 Indianapolis 500 and finished in 10th place at an average speed of 95.9 mph. They also offered a supercharger in 1934 which increased output to 135 HP. Pretty impressive performance for a 3,100 pound car with a 121" wheel base! Graham sold over 15,000 supercharged cars during the great depression - 10 times more superchargers than any other car manufacturer before WWII. Unfortunately, the Depression was relentless, and Graham made their last car in 1941.

There are many more stories about the cars that are collected in the museum. You could spend a week in there and not hear them all. The cars are magnificent, but the people and their stories behind them and how they got us here are the real gold.

This museum was started in 1946 by the first true American antique automobile restorer, Ralph Thornton Buckley. Ralph was restoring antique automobiles seven years before the CCCA was founded. The quality of Ralph's workmanship was unsurpassed: he was a master at wood working, sheet metal fabrication, painting, magneto, ignition and carburation systems. He restored the 1914 Mercer back in 1952, and seventy-four years later there still is not a crack or flake in the paint job he put on this car. It's still driven monthly at 60 miles per hour.

Ralph restored cars for some of the great car collectors of the early era. Some of his major accounts were collectors like Austin Clark and Fred Simeone Sr., just to name a couple. Ralph passed away in 1993 and handed the reins over to his trusted friend Victor Plumbo. Victor has risen to the challenge, maintaining and adding many cars and automobilia to the collection. Victor's wife Marie and her brother Dennis Cowan continue to maintain and care for these cars. Keeping 25 cars in turnkey-ready condition is a full time job for a half dozen mechanics, let alone just three people. This museum is a tribute to Ralph and Victor, who had the vision to preserve the past so future generations could learn about the evolution and innovation of the Great American Automobile. 

CELEBRATING THE ROUTE 66 CENTENNIAL

By Caroline Steinfeld

Everyone loves Route 66! On April 30, 2026 as part of their celebration of Arts and Culture, Google featured a special animated doodle to celebrate the historic road's centennial with flashing neon outlining the characters. The link led to a virtual road trip across "The Mother Road," presented in collaboration with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Kansas Historic Route 66 Association, Oklahoma Route 66 Association, Preservation Texas, The Historic Route



66 Association of Arizona, and California Historic Route 66 Association. ***continued on next page >***

CELEBRATING THE ROUTE 66 CENTENNIAL (CONTINUED)



photo by Caroline Steinfeld

Truly historic, Route 66 was the first to cross the country before the highway system went in after WWII. Though April 30 has passed, your chance to visit hasn't! You can still take the virtual trip to visit 8 famous stops, learn about Route 66 in films, see natural wonders, and find Route 66 by the Numbers. It's here at artsandculture.google.com/project/route-66

Meanwhile, the US Post Office is also getting in on the fun. Their new line of Route 66 designs made the cover of the Spring 2026 Philatelic catalog. Their description reads: "Celebrate the 100th anniversary of America's legendary highway.... [T]he Route 66 Forever stamps feature 8 photographs from the states along the iconic highway that originally stretched from Chicago to Los Angeles." They have more than just stamps, too. The collection is also available on postcards, as first-day covers, in a portfolio and various collectors' sets, on field notebooks, or framed and matted.

Share the joy of Route 66! Go to store.usps.com and search "Route 66" for a full selection.



THE HILLS ARE ALIVE WITH THE SOUND OF ENGINES - PART 1 **ROLLS-ROYCE 80TH ANNIVERSARY ALPINE TOUR, 1993**

By Caroline Steinfeld. Photos and captions courtesy of Tom Heckman.

This is Part 1 of an article based on the Old Top Gear video in which viewers join hosts Jeremy Clarkson and Tony Mason at the 1993 Alpine Tour. You can view the entire video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AQcUyXRWX-Q>. Join us in our next newsletter for the thrilling conclusion!

Picture it: 1913. Automobiles were in their infancy, and to prove their cars' mettle, drivers would tackle the one of the toughest available motoring competitions, a challenging route of ups and downs and hairpin turns along scenic Alpine roads.

Enthusiasts today would agree that the best of the best was the Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost, but in 1913, it too was young and unproven. What better way to cement its reputation than to tackle one of the toughest motoring competitions of the time?

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photo by Tom Heckman

Nice shot of 1914 Silver Ghost Alpine tourer. It doesn't look quite so sharp today, but after 110,000 miles of driving what can you expect?

ROLLS ROYCE ALPINE TOUR (CONTINUED)

The Year: 1913

The Test: The Fourth Österreichische Alpenfahrt (literally, "Austrian Alpine Journey") Endurance Rally
The Route: An arduous course in which contestants would travel up and down 19 Alpine passes over a distance of 1,750 miles through four countries (Austria, Italy, Croatia, and Slovenia), reaching a maximum height of 7,382 feet (approximately 1.4 mi / 2.25 km). The counterclockwise path began in Vienna, Austria, and proceeded southwest through Salzburg and Innsbruck before heading south to the Italian Lakes at Riva del Garda. It then turned east and up over the Dolomites before heading south again through Triest. After reaching the southmost point of Opatija in Croatia by the Adriatic Sea, drivers returned northward to Vienna through today's Slovenia, crossing back into Austria over the Loibl Pass.

The time: 8 days.

Scoring: Based on reliability. Points were lost for every fault, from a broken gearbox to wonky steering. The results: Out of 43 entries, only 31 finished the rally. Of those, only 9 drivers finished without penalty marks. The top car was the Rolls Royce Silver Ghost driven by pioneer aeronaut and balloonist James Radley.



photo by Tom Heckman

Katschberg Pass: 5,384 ft high. Traveling from Vienna to Salzburg, Austria on the first day. Famous LONG uphill climb where RR failed to make the grade in 1912, leading to development of the "Alpine" series Silver Ghost.

The reputation the Ghost made with that win has lasted over 113 years. To those who love Rolls-Royce, it's a win worth remembering. That's why, 80 years later, fifty of them came from all over the world to retrace the course in their own vintage vehicles.

But this isn't the original Alpine Trial. It's not just about the cars; it's about the people. Instead of a frantic 8-day pace, drivers in the Motorola Alpine 93 have a leisurely 15 days to enjoy the scenery and camaraderie along the way. Though most of the cars are Silver Ghosts (44 to be exact), there is a bit of variety. There are several Phantoms, including a Phantom II that once belonged to legendary Spanish racing driver Don Carlos of Salamanca, and also a solitary Prince Henry Vauxhall all the way from New Zealand.

Documentary host Tony Mason talked with several of the drivers about the history of their cars. Bob May, the oldest driver present, speaks of a rally a few years prior in which participants drove 14 passes in 7 days. He does admit to being "a Bentley man," having done 330,000 miles in his 1929 vehicle over 23 years.

George Milligen shows off his 1914 Rolls and describes its colorful history. ***It was delivered as a new***
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photo by Tom Heckman

Turn #1 on the Stelvio Pass crossing from Italy into Switzerland. There were 49 switchback curves that were so tight and steep I had to take up the entire roadway with the wheel locked hard over while Mary Jo was spotting for down hill traffic.

ROLLS ROYCE ALPINE TOUR (CONTINUED)

chassis the same day Britain entered World War I, August 4, 1914. It was sold in 1920, and when the second owner died, the local undertaker bought it. They cut a piece out of the back for coffins to fit through and used the car as a hearse for 15 years until George bought it in 1955. He decided to put a body on it, but he took his time. The car was finished around 1985, thirty years after he purchased it.

The time comes to begin the tour. Participants leave Vienna and drive a very long, straight road where local rival company Austro Daimler used to speed-test their cars. This is an easy beginning, but it's soon to be followed by some very challenging mountain passes.

There's one car host Tony Mason especially wants to see, one that is no stranger to the Alpine Trial: the Rolls-Royce driven by James Radley in the 1913 event. He modified it to help it cope with the demanding course. Alterations included a larger radiator with its own expansion tank, an altimeter, an extra fuel tank, toughened suspension, a four-speed gear-box, a bigger carburetor, and a more powerful engine. Because the engine compartment was sealed, the car was given an extra oil reservoir with dipstick and primer. On top of this, Radley built his own bodywork and added a personal mascot at the front: a standing silver nude with her arms stretching upward and her hair piled high.



photo by Tom Heckman

Top of the Stelvio Pass at 9,045 ft high. I was able to keep the Ghost in 2nd gear the whole way.

In this tour, John Kennedy is driving the historic vehicle. Doing his best to recreate the period atmosphere of Radley's tour, the bearded Kennedy sports a classic charcoal suit and dark fedora. The hat is an exact copy of one worn by James Radley, purchased from the same shop as the original in Bond Street, London. He has also brought a period-clothed Austrian army officer with him, because in the original rally one had to travel on board to make sure the drivers didn't cheat. The officer, relegated to the back seat, looks quite official in his gold-trimmed hat and buttoned jacket with red and gold striped trim - until he disembarks, revealing, not uniform trousers, but blue-jeans. Ah well, fifteen days is a long trip, and comfort is important! It doesn't mar the effect at all. As Derek Detoit of the American Rolls-Royce Club commented, "I think they're doing a wonderful job of really getting into the spirit of the event."

The Katschberg Pass

The first severe challenge facing the intrepid drivers is the Katschberg Pass, reaching an altitude of 5,384 feet - a climb of over a mile. Even the 1913 auto car's correspondent acknowledges the difficulty, commenting that no one who has not seen it with his own eyes can form any adequate idea as to the severity of the climb. He even suggests that few touring cars could reach the summit without radiators of the most effective kind.

continued on next page >



photo by Tom Heckman

On display in town square in Garda, Italy overlooking Lake Garda.

ROLLS ROYCE ALPINE TOUR (CONTINUED)

Mason interviews two of the drivers, requesting their impressions of the Katschberg. The Rt. Honorable Alan Clark raises his goggles and gives it due respect. His 1919 military model had been flying up most of the passes, he said, but on this one, it didn't. He used second and bottom gear, noting repeatedly the steepness of the hill. Dr. Harry Watson also used second gear for most of the climb, heating up the radiator. He describes the climb as "quite good, really."

Among the group, the Radley car easily repeats its 1913 feat, when it climbed the pass at an impressive average speed of 25 mph. There's a story behind that, though. In the 1912 rally, James Radley was driving the only Rolls-Royce in the event, and this pass defeated him. As Tony Mason describes it, Radley "failed to get up this final steep bit. He unceremoniously dumped his passengers, got to the top, and then went off home in disgust." Since Rolls-Royce was planning to open their first dealership in Vienna, they knew the performance must improve, so they sent teams of mechanics and cars to work on a solution. The result? Four-speed gear boxes were put in all Silver Ghosts. It worked, and the next year James Radley and his Rolls-Royce came back victorious.

Weather or Not

The weather doesn't always cooperate, but drivers make the best of it. Some are willing to bail out their



photo by Tom Heckman

Great group of school children admiring the cars in Opatija, Croatia.

interiors rather than putting up their tops. Only one car has issues. Stuart Evison, driver of a V.C.C. 1914 Rolls Royce, describes his car's ignition problem. There are two ignitions: a Magneto and a coil. Wiping his hands with a rag, Evison explains, "The coil is not functioning very well. Well, it's not functioning at all." This had only been discovered over the previous 40 miles, and since the Magneto wasn't functioning well either, they ran with the bonnet (hood) open to let out excess heat. At least the roof was - and still is - up to shelter the passengers.

Despite the "rotten weather," all of the cars reach Innsbruck, where they congregate to the music of an oom-pah band. Tony Mason noted that most of the enthusiasts on the tour were men, but the wives accompanying them were "high on tolerance and understanding." He interviews two of them.

Kerry Wherry of Sydney, Australia, is wearing her hooded raincoat. She expresses her appreciation for the cars. "[It's] just a magnificent piece of machinery. It's like an antique piece of furniture. Once you're hooked on it, you can't settle for less than the best, and Rolls-Royce the old Rolls-Royces certainly were way ahead of their time."

Mary-Jo Heckman, defying the rain in her sunny cabled sweater and classic leopard-print scarf, is more interested in the experience. "So I'm really not

continued on next page >



photo by Tom Heckman

Top of Rolle Pass Italy where we discovered we had left our passports at the previous hotel... but that's another story. 6,526 ft high.

ROLLS ROYCE ALPINE TOUR (CONTINUED)

interested in the upkeep," she says. "I plan the picnics, and I pack the picnic baskets and bring the champagne, or if we're going to have cheese and crackers, and that's all I do. I think he'd like me to help him clean the cars, polish the brass. I don't think my husband cares that I don't like fixing them, but you have to enjoy riding in them or you're probably not going to have a happy marriage ... because it's a big part of our lives. A lot of our vacations are usually around car rallies."

Into Italy

On the fourth day, two changes happen: the weather improves, and the entourage leaves Austria for Italy. Some of the Austro-Hungarian historical legacy remains, including the local language being German rather than Italian. For the next challenge, however,



photo by Tom Heckman

Beautiful view - too good to pass up.

language is irrelevant. It's time to take on the Passo dello Stelvio, or Stelvio Pass.

The Stelvio Pass is the highest paved mountain pass in the Eastern Alps, and the second highest in the Alps, just 23 feet lower than France's Col de l'Iseran. It's an essential part of an Alpine tour, and it's not a drive for the faint of heart. The average gradient is around 7%, with the steepest sections 14%. Tony Mason, who has traversed it dozens of times, describes it as "one of the most spectacular series of switchbacks anywhere in the world," with 48 hairpins rising to a height of over 9,000 feet. That's nearly two miles. Though it's no longer raining, the skies are still cloudy, and the clouds hover at the top of the mountain. It must still be chilly, since coats and hats are still being worn by drivers and passengers in open vehicles.

Wanting to give viewers an authentic first impression, the experienced Mason gives up his position of narrator to a first-timer: Amanda Robins, a member of the production team. The brave woman rides with Don Meyer, who describes the route and its history as they go. The pass was originally used by Napoleon to take his gun carriages over the mountain range. Since the carriages could bend in the middle, tight turns were no problem. The road was supposed to be a part of the 1913 and 1914 Alpenfahrts, but while the Italians would have been happy to see the road used, the Swiss wouldn't allow it to be used by motorcars.



photo by Tom Heckman

Finish line in Vienna, having experienced zero problems.

continued on next page >

ROLLS ROYCE ALPINE TOUR (CONTINUED)

Amanda's ride up the Stelvio Pass is not entirely a pleasurable one. Don points out a section without a guard rail and says it looks like someone crashed right over the edge. He mentions casually that they have switched to half throttle, because the radiator is up to 201 or 202°F, which could lead to "an ever-decreasing-amount-of-water situation," which would be less than ideal. He gestures enthusiastically, pointing out features of the drive, including a spot where it's possible that gendarmes used to hide. "Keep your hands on the wheel when you're doing this!" exclaims Amanda. "Oh no, no worries. Drives itself," replies Don, purposely taking both hands off the wheel and waving them some more. "Oh no!" says Amanda. "Do you want to drive?" "No, I don't want to drive!"

It's been both educational and harrowing, but finally, they reach the top. Now, there's nowhere to go but down. That's easier said than done, since early Ghosts had an Achilles' heel: two-wheel brakes. Don explains that the brakes are nowhere near as sufficient as those of a modern car, so he controls the car's speed by using lower gears, using virtually no brakes during much of the descent. "That way if I need 'em, I got 'em. They go away very quickly, the brakes," he says. "Oh dear goodness, this is horrendous," says Amanda.

Finally, the caravan leaves the rock faces and sparse vegetation of the Stelvio Pass behind and proceeds into scenic northern Italy, with warmer temperatures and picturesque villages. Though many of the drivers have companions to help with the navigation, it can be confusing for those who don't. The organizers have determined that the tour will follow the original 1913 route, which at times means turning off the main roads. A set of switchbacks leads down to the lakeside resort of Riva del Garda.

The weather has definitely warmed a bit. We join one couple in their open vehicle for a short portion of the jaunt down to Riva. He wears a button-down shirt and floppy hat; her long hair is pulled up into a loose bun with tendrils escaping. "Can I have a reverberation?," she asks, smiling, and beeps the horn joyously. The car goes through a tunnel carved from the mountain. As they emerge, she gushes, "The view, look at that view there, isn't that magnificent! Look at it! Lovely.

There's Riva down in the bottom." They near a hairpin, and she gasps. "Ehhhh, not so fast, Forrest!"

More Than Just A Drive

The drive is a reason for the tour, but of course it's not the only one. There's entertainment and socializing as well, including up to five receptions a day in villages and towns along the way. It's an exclusive club with events in locations as diverse as Australia and New Zealand, California, and South Africa, not to mention here in the Alps. Many of the same people and the families meet up in all these locations, and planned events can be lavish. Attendees dress in outfits ranging from elegant cocktail attire to fairytale royalty. At one grand entrance, we are treated to a vision of ladies in ruffled, full-skirted satin gowns (ice blue, lilac, or bronze and burgundy, as the case may be) and men in uniforms with medals, sashes, soutache braid, side-stripe trousers and plumed hats. At least one tiara is in evidence. Glasses of sparkling rose Ferrari Trento are poured, attendees mingle and dance to a Viennese waltz, and dinner is served.

Not all of the guests are flamboyant in their attire. Tony Mason speaks again with Mary-Jo Heckman, who has donned a sleek, elegant peach ensemble and a chunky gold link necklace for this occasion. "You're all looking very nice tonight in all this wardrobe and so on, and it all seems to be bundled in suitcases in the back of the car. Is that a problem?" he asks. No, she answers, she and her husband have designed their car with a very large body, giving them plenty of room for luggage. "I wish I had known there were going to be more evenings like this," **continued on next page >**

Further Reading:

- www.detour-roadtrips.com/home/vintage-rolls-royces-re-enact-110-year-old-alpine-adventure
- www.press.rolls-roycemotorcars.com/rolls-royce-motorcars-pressclub/photo/detail/P90509549/VICTORY-IN-THE-1913-ALPENFAHRT-ESTABLISHED-ROLLS-ROYCE-S-TITLE-THE-WORLD-S-BEST-CAR
- www.ewrc-results.com/events/1491-osterreichische-alpenfahrt
- www.epikdrives.com/best-drives/stelvio-pass
- en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Loibl_Pass
- en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alan_Clark

ROLLS ROYCE ALPINE TOUR (CONTINUED)

she says. "I would have brought more clothes, actually. It's been pretty fancy parties."

Other diners also get a chance to tell their stories. One gentleman says the car they're in actually belongs his father-in-law Tom, who signed up for this trip some three years ago. "He's not allowed to drive on the wrong side of the road." Across the table, Tom laughs and says, "I put his name down because I thought that might not here by then." Happily, he is, and both seem to be enjoying the trip.

At another table bedecked with candles and vivid orange gerbera daisies, a mustached man with classic wire-rim aviator glasses tells Tony, "Many of the public get the impression from the inflated prices that are made at auction sales that we are all multi-millionaires driving around in bloated luxury, but we're not, many of us. I mean, I bought my first car in 1958; it cost me £50. I made the body, I restored the car and have been driving these cars ever since. So some of us have a lot of money, others don't. How much in a tour like this? I don't know I, I really don't know, maybe about £12,000? I'm really not sure." The kicker? Tony laughs and comments to the audience: "He should know; he's an accountant!"

Mid-Tour TLC

After a full week, it's time for a day by Lake Garda. The participants can use a rest, and the cars can use some TLC. The enthusiastic owners set about servicing the vehicles and making repairs, especially to the tires. Removing an inner tube, one owner laments that the quality of modern tires is not the same as in the past. "Originally, they didn't have very many tire problems at all, and of course they had somewhat

rougher roads than we've got." In fact, on the 1913 Alpenfahrt, James Radley had no punctures, nor any of the other Rolls-Royce teams.

Owners wash their vehicles to bring back to the shine and take time to do routine maintenance. One driver rolls up the sleeves of his mechanic's whites to perform his thousand-mile tasks. It's time, he says, since he's driven two and a half thousand miles since he started from home. How long does it normally take? "If I play around and clean things - which I probably won't - it would take me about 3 hours. But today," he declares while sliding under his car and readying his grease gun, "I'm only going to do the things which matter."

Two more days, and the tour continues into the Italian Dolomites and even more scenic Pordoi and Rolle Passes. Tires continue to be an issue, so much that there's talk of shipping in new supplies. Tony Mason assists Colin Crabbe in changing a wheel on his vehicle. Crabbe, in his blue polo shirt and Rolls-Royce Alpine 93 hat, points out where rubber pulling away from the bead has created a bulge. That's not a problem; he has a spanner (wrench) that will fit. However, he says in his George Sanders voice, "I've run out of tires. So I hope that we can borrow one from somebody. These are faults that just shouldn't happen with modern tire manufacturing." The two men lock the tire on. It's an important step, but as Crabbe observes, "It stops the wheels coming off, but it won't stop the punctures."

Dear readers, we will take a mid-tour break here as well. Stay tuned for the conclusion of the story in our next newsletter. To be continued!



WOULD YOU LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE?

We welcome articles and photos from our members! Do you have a personal car story, an event you would like featured in an upcoming newsletter, a service to advertise, or anything else you'd like to share with your fellow car enthusiasts? Please send it by email to rjpraetorius@gmail.com.

SHARE WITH A FRIEND!

Do you know someone who loves classic cars? Do you have a friend who would like to become part of the DVRCCCA? Share this newsletter with them!

CAR JOKE OF THE DAY

Q: What does a car put on its toast?

A: Traffic Jam

???

EVENTS (CONTINUED FROM P. 1)

12-16 July 2026
59th Packard National Meet
Crowne Plaza Motel
801 Greenwich Ave
Warwick, Rhode Island 01990
Contact Steve Christy 913-217-0569
July 18th the Packard Club continues on to Paris Maine
to tour the Bob Bahre collection

Das Awkscht Fescht
7 July - 2 August 2026
Mecungie Memorial Park
50 North Poplar Street
Mecungie, Pennsylvania 18062
awkscht.com

New Hope Car Show
9-10 August 2026
9:00AM-4:00 PM
180 West Bridge Street
New Hope, Pennsylvania 18938
Info 215-862-5665

2026 Annual Grand Stutz at Indianapolis
14-29 September 2026
Hilton Garden Inn
13090 North Pennsylvania Ave
Carmel Indiana 46032
Dan 614-832-0066

CLC at Peddlers Village
27 September 2026
Rt 202 & Street Road
Lahaska, Bucks County, PA. 18931
Mike Stinson 267-251-8588

DVR Black Friday Event at Tom & Jill Lee's Open House
27 November 2026
Newtown Square, PA
RSVP to Tom Lee, 610-212-5047

If you know of any local events of interest, please send a list to Robert Praetorius at rjpraetorius@gmail.com. If you have photos or commentary on an event, send them too, so we can include them in upcoming newsletters and on our website. Thank you!



NEVER MISS AN UPDATE!

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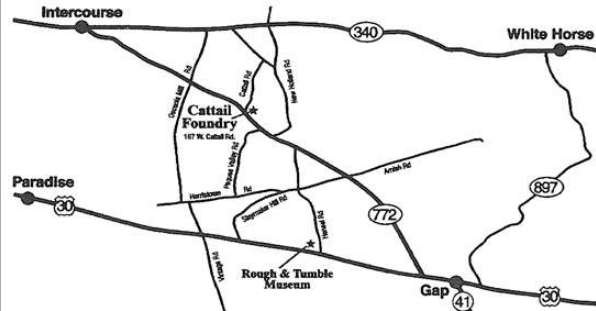
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