



FEBRUARY 2012



## **TIRE TRACKS** **THE ELECTRONIC VERSION**

The family of the late John Alton Brown, founder of the Waynesboro-Staunton Region and an AACA director, gave the Region 86 articles entitled "Down the Road A Piece" written by Brown from the late 1970's until his death in April 1991. Many of these articles were printed in our Region newsletters and all are now available on our website. Since we haven't had any winter yet this year, I thought we'd look back with John on the "good old days".

Stu Allen-Editor



The year is 1912 and it is winter. There are four inches of snow on the ground and the temperature is in the lower twenties. In the rural areas of the United States, the countryside is almost silent. The silence is broken occasionally by the sound of sleigh bells or large sleds filled with sacks of grain heading for the local mills. These sleds are pulled by a team of huge Belgians, Percherons, Clydesdales, or perhaps, Morgans glad to be outside the barn for a few hours in the snow.

In the city these same breed of horses will be pulling wagons filled with bread, department store packages, or coal. These wagons are eagerly awaited by hundreds of anxious people who are unable to shop for groceries or other goods, unless they live near the railroad or a streetcar line

which leads to the heart of the city. When the snow comes to the city or farm, the prime mover of goods is still the horse.

Where are those big, noisy, exciting automobiles that filled the streets and the dirty roads last summer? They are in the horse barns or what are now being called "garages"---sharing some of the space with Old Dubbin; their wheels up on jacks, and covered with sheets or tarpaulins. Their radiators have been drained and their cylinders filled with kerosene awaiting the return of Spring. When the tulips are once again in bloom, then their radiators will be filled with fresh water, their tanks with fresh gasoline, and the fragile tires will be filled with air from a foot pump. The dry cell batteries will be re-installed and checked for power. Then, and only then, will these family treasures be ready to once more take to the streets and country roads for a picnic, a visit, or perhaps, a trip to another city. In those days everyone faced the facts. The automobile was a warm weather vehicle to be enjoyed for a few months and then to be carefully preserved for three, four, or even six months depending on the latitude of the owner. In the late fall, winter, and early spring, the horse was still the king who shared his throne with the railroads and their steam locomotives. And why not? After all, a trip to another city on a train was exciting and often luxurious.

*Continued on Page 2*

**NEXT MEETING** :Sunday, February 19 ,2012 1:00 PM 1:00 PM — Red Lobster, 132 Lee-Jackson Highway, Staunton      **Program**—2011 Glidden Tour—Robbie Gray

The passenger cars were warm and comfortable. Then when meal time arrived, one could walk down the aisles of the swaying coaches to the dining car, which displayed white linen and gleaming silverware with waiters anxious to meet your every need. As you read your menu, you could glance out the window at small towns passing by at a comfortable pace or, at night, a blur of lights accented by swirls of steam and coal smoke. This was railroading at its best and the memories of summer trips in the family automobile faded

Now the year is 1922. The automobile has become longer and has added front doors, all controls are inside, an electric self-starter, and a lighted instrument panel, which makes night driving more pleasant. Also, the auto companies were offering more models with enclosed bodies, although the open-bodied touring car was still preferred by the buying public at a ratio of two to one. Also, the highways were being macadamized and some were even being covered with concrete as an experiment in some states. This was the decade of highway building.

The Blue Books with their detailed mileage directions about "cross the inter-urban streetcar tracks at mile 34.2 and then look for a fork in the road beside the white Methodist Church" were being referred to less and less. There were now state highway signs with route numbers on them and if a family planned a trip from the East to the Pacific, they could follow the Lincoln Highway (Rt. 30), and look for the red, white, and blue bands painted on the telephone poles every mile. How could anyone get lost now? But, just to make sure, the wise motorist visited the nearest AAA office and got maps of the area he planned to pass through and the friendly AAA man would mark with a red pencil all the detours that were in effect because of the new road building. If you didn't follow those red lines on the map, you could still get lost.

Yes, your new Maxwell, Dodge, Buick, or (if you were wealthy) Packard was quite reliable, but gas stations were still far apart and your tires would still have punctures and blow out. Then what about a thundershower? The car had to be stopped, a mad scramble to get out the rain

curtains, and then put the rods in the holes in the doors, and then fasten all the snappers. If the rain wasn't coming down too hard, Dad could drive with one hand and work the windshield wiper with the other hand. If the rain was a real "frog-choker" or a "gully-washer", the car had to be driven off the road to await the end of the storm because if you elected to keep going, the rain would come through the radiator and short out the spark plug wires and you would still have to pull over to wait until you could dry off the plugs and wires. The smart motorist stopped quickly and threw a tarpaulin or a blanket over the hood of the car to prevent this common driving hazard.

When summer and fall had again come and gone, the family car could still be used if the rain curtains were kept on and blankets were provided for the passengers. You could rely on good old Weed chains when the snow came. And with denatured alcohol in the radiator and "IVFS Winterfront" or cardboard fastened to the radiator front, everyone felt secure. Of course the milk, bread, and groceries might be delivered by a horse-drawn sleigh when the snow was really deep----- but who cares about these small difficulties, folks? Automobile driving in the winter was here to stay!

by John A. Brown







# **TIRE TRACKS**

**The Official Publication of the  
Waynesboro-Staunton Region**



Volume 42, Issue 2

February 2012

## **President's Message**

I'd like to reflect a bit on the 2011 AACA Eastern Division National Fall Meet at Hershey this past October, and tell you why it ended up being a special show for me. I have long held the opinion that what makes an AACA car show a special event is the people. Oh yes, the cars are the stars, but it's the people who own them, the people who restore them, the people who vend parts for them, the people who provide services for them and the people who come out to see them that make it so special. It's in this latter group where my story begins.

Saturday, October 8<sup>th</sup>, dawned clear and crisp. I awoke early, ate breakfast, checked out of the motel and drove our 51 Studebaker Champion down to the showfield. Amid the steady flow of spectators admiring the antique cars there was one whom I'll never forget. He circled the old "Bulldog" several times...looking in the trunk, checking out the engine compartment, and then backing up to take in the entire car. Finally he stood facing the driver's side of the car, leaning over a bit, with his arms behind his back, he craned his head forward to see the interior...keeping a respectful distance so as to not touch or scratch anything. I should mention the car doors were closed and the windows rolled up. For the longest time, he just stood there staring...lost in his thoughts. Finally I said to him, "You can open the doors if you wish." My voice almost seemed to startle him. "You're sure it's okay?", he replied. "It's just a car, you can't hurt it by opening the doors.", I said. And so he swung the driver's door open to the left and rear suicide door to the right, stepped in between them and crouched down to give the interior a good look. He ran his hands across the seats, gently touched the steering wheel, and followed the contours of the headliner with his eyes. After awhile he stepped back, shut the doors and began to talk.

It seems back when he was a young enlisted man, a used 51 Studebaker was all he and his new bride could afford. The old Stude served them well...taking them from base to base, bringing the newborn babies home from the hospital, taking the family to church and shopping, and more. He and his wife, who had passed away, always had fond memories of their first car. He told me he started going to old car shows hoping to see a 51 Stude, but had no luck.

Then someone suggested he go to the Hershey Show because there would be so many cars there, he was bound to spot one. As it turned out, he did better than that, he saw several that day, but what he didn't expect to see was an exact match to his car, and mine was...make, year, model, equipment, right down to the color! So now I understood why he lingered so long with the car. He had "time travelled" over the distances and years to a time long ago. To a place where a 51 Studebaker still sat in his driveway, and where he could wander among the memories. Maybe it was my imagination, but his eyes seemed a bit misty as he shared the memories evoked by the car. After a while, he shook my hand, thanked me for preserving the car, and disappeared across the field.

At the end of that day, the old Stude was awarded a Second Junior. But the best award I received came from a spectator. His story had made my day. It had made all the hours of labor and every busted knuckle worth it. I had received his "People's Choice" award, making the 2011 Hershey show a special one for me. So, at your next meet, spend some time talking with the people who just came out to see the cars. There are plenty of awards awaiting you there.

Hope to see everyone at our February meeting on Sunday the 19<sup>th</sup> at 1 PM at the Red Lobster in Staunton. Robbie Gray will be sharing pictures and stories about the 2011 Glidden Tour. Weather permitting, let's bring out those old cars and trucks!

Bob Ridle



## January 15, 2012 Region Meeting



Jim Gregory arrived early to get the best seat in the house



Corporal Derek Almarode of the Augusta County Sheriff's Office



He was soon joined by other hungry members



Treasurer Mary Helen Ayers passed out the new rosters



### 2012 Officers

President Bob Ridle, Treasurer Mary Helen Ayers, Vice President Jack Drago and Secretary Robbie Gray

No installation was required since our officers were reelected for another year!

Corporal Almarode gave a very informative talk on Prevention of Identity Theft. Some of the main things to remember from his talk include:

What's in your wallet? Minimize what is available to a thief if you lose your wallet. Don't carry your Social Security number (or your Medicare card). Carry two credit cards and only as much cash as you can afford to lose. Leave the checkbook at home! Blank checks in the wrong hands can lead to a drained checking account (and savings account) before you realize the checks are missing.

Around the House. Make certain your mailbox is secure. If it can't be locked be sure to empty it promptly. Make sure the USPS holds your mail when you are away. If you don't have a shredder, get one. If you have one, use it! Be certain to shred junk mail listing your address, unsolicited credit card applications and credit card checks.

Over the Phone. Never give out personal information over the phone unless you know who is asking for it and why they need the information. Most financial institutions will not call or e-mail you asking you to update your account information. If you didn't place the call, don't participate!

On the Computer. Keep your computer secure by making certain your virus protection and firewall are up to date. Don't open e-mails or files unless you know who sent them to you. Only give personal information over secure sites that offer encryption.

At the Pump. Corporal Almarode recommends that when using a credit card at the gas pump, once your transaction is complete and you have received your receipt, push the **cancel** button to reset the computer to assure that the next person pumping gas doesn't use your credit account.

Personal identity information. Keep an inventory of your personal information in a safe place to allow you to access it in case of an emergency later.



## **Baseball, Hot Dogs and AACA**

*By Myron Smith*

*VP Central Division Regions*



My favorite brand, Chevrolet celebrated its 100th Anniversary a short time ago and I have had the opportunity to watch some of the Vintage Chevrolet commercials. In these I noticed that Chevrolet was not just selling cars, but also promoting patriotism and America. From the “See the USA in your Chevrolet” to “See America First”, to “USA-1” to the expansive commercial with a Chevrolet being perched atop Castle Rock to “Baseball, Hot Dogs, Apple Pie and Chevrolet,” this ad program instilled pride in our nation, it’s historic sites and scenery as well as promoting its products.

This brings me to promotion of AACA. AACA has much to tout, from it’s beautiful museum, library, magazine, and the wonderful friends we can make throughout the country. AACA depends on its members to be the marketing agents of the club. While it is easy to “get comfortable” with our own group in our chapter or region (especially for those like me who are not great marketers or salesmen), we need to reach out and share what a great group we are with those who either have never heard of AACA or have little knowledge of what we are about. For those of us with interest in more than one model or brand, AACA gives us a niche to find others with common interests.

I particularly agree with West’s recent editorial that AACA wants to be your second club. We aren’t trying to take people away from their marquee club, but AACA provides a new horizon for exploration in the car hobby. Grab some AACA brochures and hand them out to car enthusiasts wherever you are. I plan to do likewise.

*From AACA Rummage Box—Winter 2012*

## **Virginia House Bill HB878**

Many of you have been following the progress of HB878 that was introduced in the Virginia General Assembly earlier this month. AACA V.P. Tom Cox (who is also President Southwest Virginia Car Council) alerted us to the fact that this Bill was precedent setting in that it allowed for an ongoing tax fee with no basis in the actual value of your vehicle. Importantly, this Bill if passed would set the precedent for sidestepping the personal property tax which our antique vehicles are now exempt from. It would give localities the ability to tax our vehicles at a flat rate in the future, nullifying our current exempt status. At the very least, this Bill uses Taxation to effect de facto zoning restrictions and this would be only the beginning of our problems.

On Jan 24, Tom reported “Please note that we have negotiated an amendment to the Bill that now makes it a **positive** for the car community. Delegate Sickles will now be substituting an amended Bill in place of his original Bill. The Bill now exempts vehicles 25 years and older that were not previously exempt from the code section, and keeps the code section the same for those who are actively repairing or restoring their vehicles. This is a great benefit for obvious reasons, but it also closes a potential loophole that may have allowed municipalities to tax our vehicles outside of the personal property tax exemption.”

Tom goes on to say “We have succeeded on the front end of this with our opposition by getting an amended substitute Bill that serves our interest. Now the tough part is getting everyone to write the sub-committee supporting the substitute.” “Please ASAP get everyone you can to now write the committee asking for support of the newly amended Bill. Delegate Sickles has negotiated with us in good faith and actually lobbied Fairfax Council to accept the exemptions. Please support our mutual efforts.”

You can follow progress on this bill by checking the website: <http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?121+sum+HB878>

I’m sure Tom will keep us informed on its status.

Stu Allen

## 2012 Calendar of Events

### FEB.

- 8 W/S Board Meeting 7:00 pm
- 9-11 AACA 76th Annual Meeting—Philadelphia. PA
- 19 W/S Meeting 1:00 PM —Red Lobster, 132 Lee-Jackson Highway, Staunton  
Program—2011 Glidden Tour—Robbie Gray

### MARCH

- 14 W/S Board Meeting 7:00 pm
- 18 W/S Meeting 2:00 PM—Texas Steak House. 1344 Richmond Road, Staunton  
Program—Home-converted Electric Truck Talk & Demo.—David Waterman

### APRIL

- 11 W/S Board Meeting 7:00 pm
- 21 W/S Meeting—Saturday 1:00 PM Founders Day at Sanzone's Italian Restaurant,  
2897 Stuarts Draft Highway (Route 340), Stuarts Draft

### Please make the following addition to your roster

Mechner, Robert  
14309 Barkwood Drive  
Rockville, MD. 20853-2310  
301-871-1299—Home  
E-mail: rmechner@aol.com

Tri-County Region Meetings—Dates vary—  
Check their website.

Piedmont Region Meetings are the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday  
at the Doubletree Hotel on Route 29  
North in Charlottesville at 7pm.

### **BOB LANG AUTO REPAIR** ASE CERTIFIED MASTER TECHNICIAN

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on behalf of the owner. Jack Drago (540)337-2120

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## ***Tire Tracks***

The official monthly publication of  
the Waynesboro-Staunton Region of  
the Antique Automobile Club of  
America

### **2011 Executive Board**

**President:** Bob Ridle  
1010 Ridgemont Drive  
Staunton, VA 24401  
(540)-886-6181

**Vice President:** Jack Drago  
412 University Farm Road  
Stuarts Draft, VA 24477  
(540)-337-2120

**Secretary:** Robbie Gray  
1430 Red Top Orchard Road  
Waynesboro, VA 22980  
(540)-943-3171

**Treasurer:** Mary Helen Ayers  
16 Ashleigh Drive  
Waynesboro, VA 22980  
(540) 942-4033

**Corporate Agent:** Stuart Allen  
265 Stayman Ln.  
Staunton, VA 24401  
(540) 886-8056

**Directors:**  
Ken Farley (540) 248-0635  
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Jim Gregory (540) 942-2457  
Class of 2013  
Nelson Driver (540) 942-3570  
Class of 2014  
Mel Redmond (540) 949-7075  
Past President

### **From the Editor's Desk**

Please submit any articles,  
pictures, or ideas for publication  
to me at the following:

**Stuart Allen**

**265 Stayman Lane**

**Staunton, VA 24401**

**Phone: 540-886-8056 (Home)**

**540-290-0329 (Cell)**

**email: stuscar@aol.com**

### **Minutes of the January 15, 2012 W/S Region Meeting**

The January, 2012 meeting of the Waynesboro-Staunton Region of the AACA was held on the 15<sup>th</sup> at the Ming Garden in Waynesboro at 1 pm, where there were 39 members and a guest present. President Bob Ridle opened the meeting and welcomed all present. Nelson Driver gave the blessing and we proceeded to eat lunch. After which, Bob asked Mary Helen for the treasurer's report and Robbie for the secretary's report. Then VP President Jack Drago gave the activities report. The February meeting will be at the Red Lobster in Staunton on the 19<sup>th</sup> at 1 pm.

Nelson Driver stated the ODMA meeting will be in Roanoke in February with the meet to be on May 3-5 at Virginia Western Community College.

Mel Redmond reported on the Motor City Car Show which is scheduled for May in Waynesboro's Constitution Park.

Stu Allen and Doris Stone reported on the Sentimental Tour. Doris stated that 98 cars and 202 drivers and passengers had registered for the tour. It was also stated that there would a special registration form for the Waynesboro-Staunton members.

Bob then stated there were still three new free memberships available. A brief discussion about the meeting time was held with the conclusion being that meetings would start at 1:30 pm whenever possible.

Bob stated he had received a resignation letter from Owen Harner to remove him from the board of directors. Bob said he had accepted the resignation and he appointed Jim Gregory to serve out his term. Nelson Driver was appointed as director for Class of 2014.

Mary Helen Ayers won the 50/50 drawing.

The meeting was then adjourned and Derrick Almarode of Augusta County Sheriff's Department presented an informative program on ID Theft.

Respectfully submitted

Robbie Gray, Sec.

### **2012 SENTIMENTAL TOUR Update**

The Sentimental Team is pleased with the number of registrations in January. The host hotel, Holiday Inn, is full and our alternate hotels are now taking reservations. We have a booth reserved in the Trade Show at the AACA National Meeting in Philadelphia to answer questions, pass out information and take additional reservations. Doris Stone, our Registrar, continues to get requests for information so we anticipate that registrations will continue to come in.

Since many of you will be helping with some of the events, we wanted to give you an opportunity to be part of the tour as well. We plan on having W/S Region member registration forms available for our February meeting. We'll explain the process then. We'll mail those forms to those unable to attend that meeting.

Stu Allen



### **FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS**

**Rish Capps**

**Ron Capps**

**Shirley Farley**

**William Melton**

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