



The Porthole



November/December 2016

NEWSLETTER OF THE MASON-DIXON BUICK CHAPTER

Happy Holidays!!

UPCOMING EVENTS -- MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Mason-Dixon chapter items are in red

2016

Thursday November 24 - Frostbite Run, sponsored by the Historic Car Club of Pennsylvania – on the grounds of the Massey House in Broomall, PA. A Thanksgiving morning tradition.

Sunday November 27 – Mason-Dixon Chapter Membership Meeting, 3 p.m., Hoss' Restaurant, Mechanicsburg, PA

Sunday, December 11 – Mason Dixon Chapter Christmas Party. See full details on page 3

2017

Sunday, January 22 - Mason-Dixon Chapter BCA Membership meeting, 3 pm, Hoss's Restaurant, off U.S. Route 30 and Route 74, West York PA. Come for dinner first, followed by membership meeting.

Sunday February 19 – Sundae At The Movies. Mark your calendar now for winter fun. Full details in the January Porthole.

March 1 – Final day to pay your 2017 dues. Any member which has not paid their dues by this date will be dropped. See dues renewal form on the last page of this newsletter.

Support your Buick Club events! There are many car shows, but no others that focus specifically on our favorite marque.

To my Buick Club Friends:

Here is an announcement of the new exhibit at America on Wheels Museum, in Allentown, PA, which will feature my 1960 Buick Electra 225 convertible as one of about twelve cars on display. The exhibit is called "Fender Skirts and Poodle Skirts", and will concentrate on designs of the 1950s.

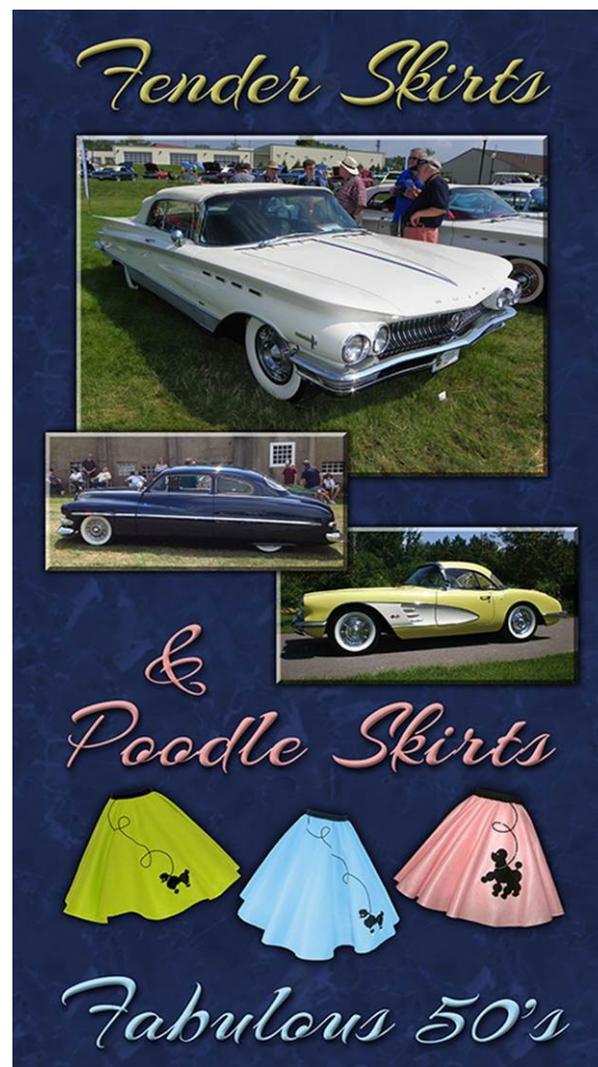
My car, although it is a 1960 model, was designed in 1958 prior to the retirement of Harlow Curtice, the President of GM for whom the car was built, and Harley Earl, the famed GM chief of styling. (Both men, who were born in 1893, retired in late 1958 due to a mandatory retirement policy when an employee reached age 65.)

I spent Tuesday evening cleaning the car and making sure everything was working properly. Yesterday morning, I had it transported to the Museum and oversaw the process of getting it placed in the exhibit. It is on the second floor of the building, and was transported up there on a heavy duty car lift. The car is positioned right in front of a large display window, so it is visible from the outside. While I was there, some of the other cars for the exhibit were arriving, so it was hard to tear myself away from the place.

As many of you know, I showed this car at the national BCA meet in Allentown in July. Some folks from the museum saw the car there, and prevailed on me to lend it to the museum for this exhibit. At first I had some conflicting thoughts, just because I would miss seeing it in my garage. But after I saw the rest of the exhibit, I was very glad I agreed to place the car there. By sharing this car with others, I hope it will encourage others to appreciate the history of Buick, including some of the great men of General Motors who created these cars.

Best regards,

Richard



America ON WHEELS

October 29, 2016 through March 2017 -- Fender Skirts & Poodle Skirts, Cruisin' the Fabulous '50s
This exhibit will feature an array of beautiful cars in the Changing Exhibit Gallery. One of the cars that will be on display is a 1960 Buick Electra 225 convertible. It is a one-of-a-kind car, having been designed by the GM Styling studio for the use of Harlow Curtice, who was the President of General Motors.

5 N Front St, Allentown, PA

All exhibits are wheelchair and stroller accessible

Call: 610-432-4200

Children 5 & under FREE & 12 & under are FREE on Sundays

MASON-DIXON BUICK CLUB CHRISTMAS PARTY

Date: December 11th. 2016

Time: 5:00 social time. Dinner at 6:00.

Place: BOOMERANG Bar and Grill

110 Limekiln rd. New Cumberland PA 17070

Exit 40a off of route 83 next to comfort inn

This is a good opportunity to share some Christmas cheer with fellow enthusiasts. This is to include any interested B.O.O.M and CLC members as they have repeatedly invited us to their activities. Tom Busch has indicated that Boomerang needs at least 30 people to not have a room fee charged.

Buffet style: Choice of Chicken Alfredo and Prime rib.

Bread and butter. Vegetable and potato. Cash bar.

Cost per person. \$23.00 19% gratuity + Tax.

RSVP by December 5th. Tom Busch 717-938-8931

tbusch575@comcast.net

Directors Message

The leaves have turned and some of you are considering bedding down your Buick for the season. Our late summer and fall has been a busy one. Early September Joan and I were guests of fellow BCA members Larry and Joyce Shramm at the Old Car Festival at Greenfield Village, Dearborn Michigan. The account of which you will read about further in the Porthole. After returning home, then there was preparation for B.O.O.M show held on the 25th of September at Boyle Buick. (The reason for moving the M/D meeting date to October 2nd.) We were expecting to drive our 37 down but we had an early morning church commitment and could not make the 90+ miles in a timely fashion. We arrived in our modern car about the time judging started. John Kuchtiak was there with his Wildcat and Mike Lawson with his Rivera. Speaking with them, both we were very disappointed with the turn out as it was a picture perfect, 75 degree day. Only 35 cars were present. When we participated 2 years ago there was about 70 cars



Group of 1950s Buicks at the B.O.O.M show

Our October 2nd meeting brought up a few concerns about how making it more convenient for members to pay their dues. Chuck Hoffman suggested a PayPal connection to our club website. That possibility is being pursued at this time. We also voted on the removal of members for non-payment of dues. I called each person personally to check on the reason for dropping out. Some have moved, others have sold their Buicks, a few had health issues or have developed other interests. Checking in with many other Marque Clubs, the Mason-Dixon at \$10.00 a year is quite the bargain. After the Allentown 50th Anniversary meet there was quite a spike in BCA membership. I have sent invitational letters to 19 people named in last month's Bugle to possibly consider membership in our chapter. We also decided on a date and location for our Christmas party. December 11th. At Boomerangs, New Cumberland. See the notice elsewhere in the Porthole. The following week of course is Hershey. We share a space with BCA member Dave Blaufarb and met quite a few Buick Buddies. Dick Beckley stopped by needing assistance in moving a small trinket he picked up to his truck in an outer field parking lot. Glad to help, Dick.



Photo of my son Alex unloading 1937 Special sheet metal to sell.

Congratulations are in order for Karen Beckley in achieving her First Junior award for her 1991 Corvette at the Hershey car show this fall. Another congratulation to Richard Sills for having his 1960 Electra as part of the **America on Wheels** museum display event. **Fender Skirts and Poodle Skirts. Fabulous 50s.** It looks like a field trip is in order!

Best to all as the holidays approach.

Larry

IN CASE YOU DIDN'T NOTICE...there was a 1960 Buick convertible that appeared to be an Electra 225.. Upon closer inspection, it was clear it was not exactly something that was a production model. The car was brought to the show by our own Richard Sills. Here is the story of GM President Harlow Curtis and how he relates to this car.

Actually, in the summer of 1958, either *Popular Science* or *Popular Mechanics* had an article speculating about what the 1960 Buicks would look like. The article featured a picture of what appeared to be a full-size styling buck of a 1960 Electra 225 4-door hardtop – and the car in the picture had taillights similar to my car. So that design was clearly one of the alternatives considered when the 1960 Buick was on the drawing boards.

Mr. Curtice retired on August 31, 1958, but the design of the '60 Buick was probably finalized by then. And, even though Mr. Curtice was clearly retired when he received the car (or the use of the car, if GM retained ownership), GM would have considered that to be a well-earned “perk”. Under his leadership, Buick began an expansion that brought its sales to record levels. Buick production increased from 40,000 in 1933 to 377,000 for the 1941 model year. And as we all know, Buick offered prestige models that were well into Cadillac territory, while at the same time offering models that cost just a little more than the “low priced three”. Buick regularly, for many years, sold more cars than any U.S. brand except for the “low priced three”, and occasionally Buick even outsold Plymouth to come in right below Chevy and Ford on the sales chart.

After his great success with Buick, Mr. Curtice was promoted to Executive Vice President of General Motors in 1948, and then President in 1953. When he retired in 1958, GM was selling about 60% of all cars and trucks purchased by Americans. (Today the comparable figure is around 17%.)

Also, under Mr. Curtice’s leadership, GM became enormously profitable. In 1955, it was the first U.S. company to record over \$1 billion in annual net profits. For this and other accomplishments, Mr. Curtice was recognized as *Time Magazine’s* “Man of the Year” for 1955. *Time* explained its choice for the award by saying, "in a job that required it, he has assumed the responsibility of leadership for American business. In his words 'General Motors must always lead.'"

So, no one would have questioned his entitlement to drive whatever he wanted to drive, even if much of it had to be hand-built.

Mr. Curtice died in 1962, and General Motors sold the car that year for \$2,500 – I have the bill of sale. So in all likelihood, this was his last personal car.



Richard

P.S.: Two interesting post-scripts to this story:

1. Some years ago I made contact with one of Harlow Curtice's nephews. The nephew was from a branch of the family that lived in Texas, so he couldn't shed any light on "Uncle Red's" personal cars. But he did tell me that after "Uncle Red" died, whenever "Aunt Dot" (Curtice's widow, Dorothy) travelled around the United States to visit friends or relatives, the Buick zone office would have someone meet her at the airport, and give her a brand new Riviera to use at her disposal for so long as she was in that city.
2. Mr. Curtice named Buick's top-of-the-line model after his sister-in-law. Dorothy Curtice's maiden name was Dorothy Biggs, and one of her brothers was married to a prominent Texas socialite named Electra Waggoner Biggs.

Please Note....if you'd like to submit any information, articles, cars for sale...whatever....contact newsletter editor John Hess at (717) 757-7666 or via email at: hocusfocus@verizon.net or via snail mail at 1285 Christensen Rd., York, Pa. 17402.

Dues are due now!! Please be sure to pay your dues for 2017 now, in order to continue your membership and to continue receiving this "Porthole". See renewal form at the end of this newsletter. Send the form and your check for \$10.00 to John Kuchtiak, Treasurer. Thanks!

What our members are up to...

Mike and Mari Crookham representing The Mason Dixon Chapter of the BCA - Executive Runway, Leesburg , VA Airport Saturday Sept. 24. Planes, Trains and Automobiles !!! Their Electra is on the left, in front.



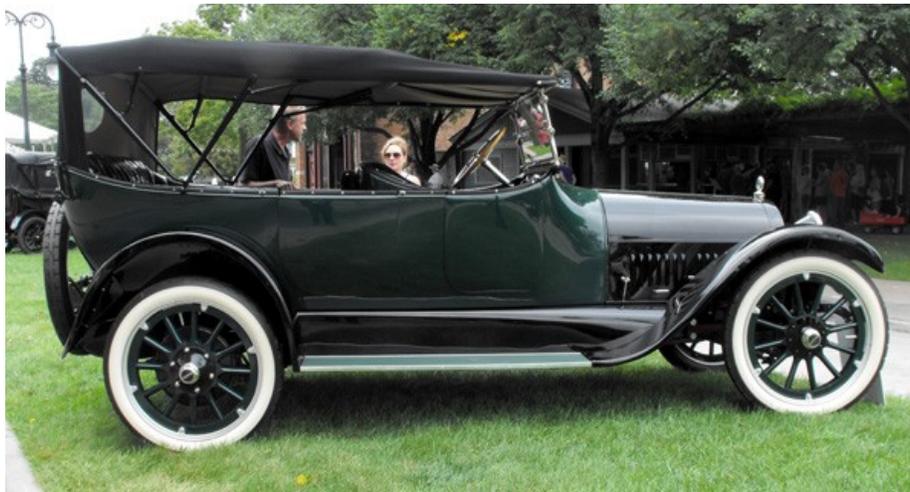
66th Old Car Festival

It has been a busy fall so far for Joan and I. One of the activities my “Buick Buddy” Larry Shramm said we had to include in our “Bucket List” is the Old Car Festival at The Henry Ford. The Museum complex at Dearborn Michigan. This is a meet by invitation of the earliest (pre 1900) to 1932 automobiles. Larry and Joyce Shramm invited us up as their guests. As my interest is mainly toward the earlier Buicks, Larry felt I should have my fill. I was definitely overwhelmed by the venue and how the cars were not only displayed but participated in driving the grounds. We were set up with Larry’s 1915 Buick truck across from the recreated Edison Menlo Park complex and had a great vantage point to see all the cars go by.



There was a steady stream of traffic with cars from Henry Ford’s 1896 Quadracycle reproduction, many Model Ts, Stanley Steamers, single cylinder Cadillacs, fire trucks, Auburn speedsters, Locomobiles and many cars I had only seen in books and museums. All driving around under their own power for both Saturday and Sunday. One of the high points was meeting a couple from Ontario who had a beautiful 1913 Model 31 touring car similar to one I had offered on. The owners Gary and Bev said if I was interested in a car like this that we should get the feel for one. So he had me crank start the car and we were off for a ½ hour drive around the Greenfield Village and the Henry Ford Museum complex. Going down every street and road for 2 cycles. What fun!

Another treat was to be able to meet Paul Marr. The great grandson of Buick's legendary engineer. He was showing (to me) the most spectacular piece of Buick engineering history. The only 1915 Buick V 12 prototype. The car has been in the family since new.



If you were tired you could catch a ride with just about any one. Larry giving people rides in his truck, which was also at Allentown. This is the way to experience these cars. I was in heaven!!!



Wanted

old signs, automobilia, petroliana, old gas pumps, barber shop collectables, etc.
Contact Dick Beckley at dbeckley@epix.net , phone 717-395-7128. PO Box 128, Lewisberry, PA 17339.

For Sale

Parts For Sale

Set of 1969 Electra tail lights. Used condition. \$50.00

1969 Electra 4 dr. Rocker stainless. \$20.00

1949 Buick radio with nice chrome grill. \$100.00

1969 Le Sabre Convertible deck lid. \$50

1937 series 40 fenders, hood, headlight pods and misc. pieces from Jack Frank's estate.
If someone needs it I may have it.

Larry DiBarry 717-263-3804

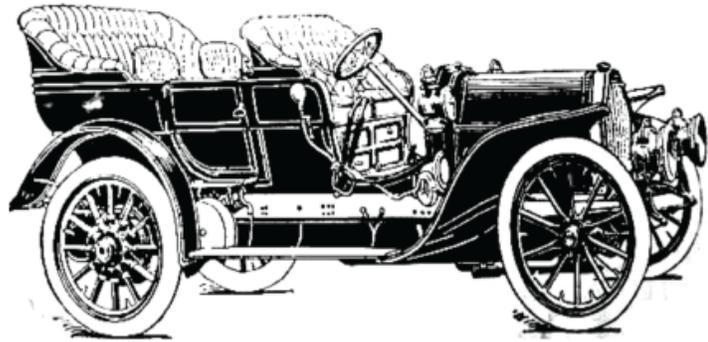
For Sale



1982 Buick Regal Limited, automatic transmission, 2-door, V-6, one owner, non-smoker, no accidents. Charcoal exterior, light gray landau top, poor bumpers (resulting in failed inspection), minimal rust spots. Air conditioning, tilt steering wheel, rear window defroster, light gray velour upholstery. Mileage: 153,844. Does not start. Would make an ideal restoration piece.. Asking price: \$2,500.00, Contact Deb Prentice 717-712-1220 (work, 8:30am-5pm, M-F), 717-737-1597 (home, after 6pm)

POLLOCK AUTO RESTORATION

Classic Motorcar Preservation & Restoration



Fall Open House & Shop Tour Sunday November 20, 2016 10 AM - 3 PM

Please join us for our 2016 Fall Open House & Shop Tour. All Antique, Classic, Specialty Car Enthusiasts and Friends are invited to tour our shop located at 70 South Franklin St. Pottstown, PA 19464. Refreshments will be served throughout the day and our staff will be on hand to answer any of your questions.

Like us on Facebook!



610.323.7108 inquiry@pollockauto.com
70 South Franklin Street, Pottstown, PA 19464

www.pollockauto.com

Mason-Dixon Chapter of the Buick Club of America

Dues Reminder Notice!

Dues are \$10.00 per year
Must be a member of the BCA to be a member of Mason-Dixon

This is the only notice you will receive!

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____ BCA# _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Buicks owned: Please list year, model, body style, etc.

Dues are \$10 per year, due no later than March 1 of each calendar year. You must be a member of BCA national to be a member of our Chapter.

Mail check payable to Mason-Dixon Chapter BCA to:

John M. Kuchtiak, Treasurer
453 Clearview Road
Hanover, PA 17331

Meetings are bi-monthly, last Sunday of the month, 3PM
6 Newsletters, by e-mail or snail mail if no e-mail
Annual show
Other Events as planned

Contact:

Larry DiBarry, Director dibarjo@hotmail.com

Phone 717-263-3804

Tim Spigelmyer, Assistant Director tlpsu@aol.com

Phone 717-514-5728