



Upstate Update

The Upstate New York Chapter News

JUNE 2022

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Ken Malette

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Rosemary Malette

Membership :

Chris Timber

Newsletter:

John DeFiore

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Tony D'Amelio Director

Greetings fellow Buick Club members and welcome to summer! With the warmer weather here that can only mean one thing, Time to get ready for our annual Cruise-Into Summer. Your club needs your support for this event. We need your help with: items for the Chance Auction, and assistance the day of the event. This is our annual fundraiser and, once again, all funds are split between the Boys & Girls Club, and Boy Scout Troop 278 in the village of Colonie. So please come out and help the cause. We also have our annual Buick/Cadillac show at the Saratoga Auto museum on June 4th which in part supports our club. This will be our only fund generating show we have this year, so please come out to support this event. As always, stay safe, and I look forward to seeing you all soon!

Tony

By the Way

May 4th: Lead Foot Lucy Cruise In begins. Each Wednesday at Kohls Plaza, Colonie

Announcements

HEALTH AND WELLNESS NEWS:

Greetings friends: This function is to help spread the news affecting our members. If you want us to know about these things, e-mail your announcement to me.

Thank you, Rosemary M.

June 4, 2022: Cadillac/Buick Lawn Show: at the Saratoga Auto Museum. Hours: 10 am to 2:30 pm.

June 18, 2022: Cruise-In to Summer 13. 2 pm to 7 pm. On site at Goldstein Buick GMC, Central Ave, Colonie. (See Flyer on page 5)**August ?,2022:** Our UNYBCA Annual Picnic will be hosted this year at the home of Stacey and Jim Roth. The date will be determined. Thank you Stacey and Jim!!

June 22, 2022 to June 25, 2022: The BCA National Meet- 2022 will be held in Lisle, Illinois.

June 21, 2023 to June 24, 2023: The Northeast BCA Regional Meet 2023 will be held next summer at Morgantown, PA. at the Classic Auto Mall. The car show will be on Friday, June 22nd .

Meet the Members: Geoff and RoseAnn LaCroix

By: Geoff LaCroix

My wife Rose Ann and I grew up in the Albany area but did not meet till we both attended college. I had always been in love with cars, but my family could never afford a really nice or a new car. Meanwhile, Rose Ann knew more about cars than any other girl I had known. And, we have been married for over 40 years.

My Buick story really starts in the summer of 1978 when I bought my first Buick, a 1971 Buick GS 350, dark green in color, with a custom tan vinyl top only on the back half of the roof, and a tan interior. The car also had the N-25 bumper option which was new for '71 and incorporated "through the bumper" exhaust tips. It had bucket seats, console, automatic transmission, and just over 50K miles on it. During the time I owned that 71 GS I only had the one car, so I even drove it in the winter – with a pair of studded snow tires. Briefly in 1979, I also owned a 1965 Buick Skylark 4 door. I owned the 71 GS when I met Rose Ann. Unfortunately, life has a habit of making us go in different directions. In the summer of 79, a gas crunch hit the US, and I decided to get a more economical car. I gave the Buick to my father for \$50 and he took over the remaining 24 of the 36 monthly payments of \$67 each. That Buick ended up in Virginia – but that's another story.

After I turned 50 my wife suggested that I get a collector car and added that another Buick would be nice. In October 2009, I found a 69 Buick GS 400 convertible in Milwaukee for what was a very reasonable price. All the pictures looked great, so I made a deal with the owner, bought two one-way train tickets for Rose Ann and I, and reserved a U-Haul truck and trailer to bring it home. After we looked it over in person, and drove it, I realized that it had too many problems. So we walked away from it, and were back in Utica 42 hours later sans a Buick! Disappointed but happy we made the trip.

A few weeks later, I saw a GS for sale only 5 miles from my house. Turns out the guy, who has been into GSs for years, owned the car and in fact, he had sold Ken Mallette his 70 GS convertible many years earlier. The seller had two cars that he was working on, a black 71 GS tribute and an orange 72 GS. The cars would likely be for sale in the spring. Both were automatic bucket seat cars. The black tribute was originally a rust free 28.5K mile Skylark Custom from Massachusetts. It had been stripped to bare metal and painted to be a triple black color scheme. In April 2010, I got a call that the 71 was for sale. It had new paint, a new vinyl top, new seat covers and rug, re-chromed bumpers, four new rally wheels and tires, and a transplanted 455 (with aluminum intake and headers) mated to the TH350 transmission. It was with rose-colored glasses that it was purchased, but I was not disappointed.



As is often the case, it was a little rougher in some areas than I had originally noticed. There were some incorrect and possibly substandard parts. It was also missing a few things. Over the years I had the dash restored, a rally gauge package swapped for the idiot lights, a factory tach installed, as well as a correct 3.42 posi rear axle. All missing, incorrect, and substandard parts were procured, installed, or replaced. I bought a fifth rally rim and a new tire for the spare, a TH-400, with stall converter, replaced the TH350, and added a N-25 rear bumper with stainless exhaust tip. F-41 anti-sway bars were added along with a big block steering shaft. In short, I did everything to make it as close to a real GS and a true tribute car.



In 2017, I decided to have a motor built for the car by a Buick engine builder in the upper mid-West. I used TA Performance Stage 2 Street Eliminator aluminum heads and headers, the Edelbrock Performer aluminum intake, a big cam, as well as other high-performance parts. I ended up with a three-year hellish ordeal. I enlisted the help of a good friend of Ken's, and a Buick guy in the Syracuse area who runs a repair shop, for the motor exchange. The first motor was sent to me in late September 2017. It had all sorts of oil leak/consumption issues and ended up coming close to blowing up when I returned home from Cruise In To Summer 2018. This necessitated having the motor pulled and sent back to the builder. I didn't get the re-built motor until March 2019. This time it was bored .040 over. It was tested on a dynamometer and reported to be 552 hp at

the flexplate. But it still had an oil leak, which was attributed to an incorrect rear main seal installation, and it also had carburetor issues, which were eventually corrected – again another story. Finally, at the end of the 2019 season, the car ran like it should. The summer of 2020 would have been the first full season that we could enjoy the car after the three years of hell! It is a really fun car to drive, and the power is amazing.

In past years we would drive it up to 1000 miles/yr with trips to car shows as far as Montezuma Winery to the West, Canton/Alex Bay to the North, Norwich to the South, and Latham to the East. We have taken the Buick to the Syracuse Nationals several times. We all know what happened in 2020 – Covid and no car shows. Then, it rained many weekends in 2021, so I did not make many car shows or cruise ins. We hope 2022 is better, although, due to the 2 hour drive to Albany, we can't participate in as many Buick Club chapter events as we'd like.

We also own a restored 1967 Ford Galaxie 500, four door hardtop, which Rose Ann's father bought new in December 1966. It has a 390 with a two bbl carb. The car meant so much to Rose Ann's father, that he kept it until he passed away in 2009. We had it restored after he passed away. Some club members may remember seeing it at Guptill's shows in the past.

So, this concludes my Buick story. I don't know where the Buick will eventually end up but I hope to put some miles on it every summer for quite a while.



IS YOUR CAR IN SUMMER TRIM?

by Martin Bunn

*A fascinating New Series of Stories
in Which Two Veteran Auto
Men tell You
How to Save Worry and Expense.*



Good Advice from a Veteran
When Mr. Stevens drove up to the Model Garage to have his sedan looked over, Gus told him a list of the little jobs that any owner can do himself to prepare for summer tours. You will find them in the accompanying story, just as Mr. Stevens jotted them down

Early summer is the busy season for the automobile repairman. With cars to overhaul, valves to grind, ignition systems to be readjusted, and a thousand and one other jobs to be done for motorists who are preparing for a summer of touring, the average garage is likely to find itself snowed under, and Wilson & Clark's Garage was no exception.

"Seems as though every one who ever owned a car wants something done," complained Gus Wilson wearily, as he got out the creeper preparatory to sliding under another car to examine the brake rods.

Wilson was the mechanic of the firm, a gray-haired veteran of the automobile repair shop, who had been working on automobiles since the days when they were called "horseless carriages."

"The more the merrier, Gus," grinned Joe Clark cheerfully, as he picked a time slip from the steering-wheel of the car on which his partner had just finished working.

Clark was the "figure man," of the combination, an expert bookkeeper who did all the pencil work for the firm. He was happiest when a rush of work that meant sleepless nights for his partner permitted him to make many entries in his books and many deposits in the bank.

A fine sedan rolled in from the street. Clark's grin widened as he observed -- another car over which his tired partner would grumble while performing the best repair job of which he was capable.

"Good morning, Mr. Stevens," he greeted the driver of the car as the latter threw open the door and stepped out. "What's the trouble this morning?"

"Not a thing," responded the other. "Nothing that I know of, anyway. But I'm going on a long tour next week, and I thought, if Wilson wasn't busy, it might be well to have him look the car over, and see if there's anything that needs attention."

"Good idea, Mr. Stevens," nodded Clark. "A lot of our customers would save themselves trouble and money if they got in the habit of doing that. Hey, Gus!" he called to his invisible partner. "Take a look at Mr. Stevens' car, won't you?"

Wilson was muttering to himself as he emerged from beneath the automobile on which he was working. His grumbling ceased, though, and a smile replaced his frown as he glanced toward Stevens' car, shining in the morning sunlight, spic and span as a battleship, its motor purring quietly -- obviously a car in which the owner took great pride; a car that had not been abused.

"Humph, doesn't look as though there could be much wrong with that," observed Wilson. "What seems to be the trouble with her?"

Stevens repeated what he had previously told Clark, and Wilson, nodding his approbation, stepped into the driver's seat, followed by the owner.

He pushed down the throttle a couple of times, meanwhile listening intently to the response of the motor, then backed the car out and drove over his usual test route, which included a near-by hill. They were back in the garage in a few minutes.

"Not a blessed thing wrong with her -- now," said Gus, as he followed Mr. Stevens out of the car.

"Why 'now'?" asked the owner anxiously. "Is anything likely to --"

"Oh, no," Wilson told him; "but there are a lot of things you ought to do before you start on a long tour. If you have a piece of paper, you might jot them down. You can attend to them just as easily as I can."

"Why, I thought you garage fellows were always against an owner tinkering with his car!" exclaimed Stevens in surprise.

"Tinkering, yes," said Wilson; "just turning nuts and taking things apart without any idea of what you're doing. But things would be a lot easier for everybody -- owner and mechanic -- if owners would learn to do the little jobs themselves."

"For instance, while we were riding along, you may have heard a little rattle in front. Your license plate is loose. It will take you only a second to get a wrench and screwdriver and tighten it. And, when you have your wrench and screwdriver handy, why not go over the car from stem to stern and try every single nut and screw? If any are loose, tighten them. On a new car like yours the parts set, sort of, after you've driven it awhile, and sometimes half a turn on a nut will keep it tight and save you a big repair bill."

"From the looks of your car and what I know about you, it's safe for me to assume that you're keeping the car oiled and greased properly. But there are quite a lot of little things that a man like you, who's about to make a long trip, ought to do before he starts. Ready with the pencil?"

"Summer touring, especially through hilly country in a car full of passengers and baggage, is likely to bring out the defects in the cooling system. Better flush out your radiator to remove the dirt and rust. The easiest way to do it is to run your motor just a little bit faster than the usual idling speed and run water into the radiator filling cup from a hose while the drain cock at the bottom of the radiator is open. When the water begins to run fairly clean, you can consider the job finished."

"When I shut off your ignition just now, I noticed that the fan turned over a few times after the motor had stopped. You'd better take up the play in the fan belt. Make it just tight enough so that you can turn the fan by hand and not too easily. When you're running against the wind, plenty of air passes through your radiator to your motor. In fact, if you always could run against the wind, you wouldn't need a fan at all. Running with the wind, though, you're absolutely dependent upon your fan to suck in air and cool the motor, and, if the belt is loose, there won't be any air sucked in. If the day is hot, your motor will boil sure as shooting, particu-

larly if you have to make many traffic stops."

"Your ignition system is working fine now, but it would be a good idea to clean all your spark plugs -- just on general principles. Don't forget, either, to put a couple of spare plugs in your toolkit before you start. Also, you might clean the breaker contacts in the timer -- file them square -- and reset them according to the thickness gage in your toolkit. If you don't do this, they may get pitted badly enough to make the motor miss and make starting difficult."

"That will be about all for the ignition," went on Wilson after pausing to permit the other to catch up in his notes. "Of course, you'll make sure that all wires are tight? Now, let's see what ought to be done about the gas line."

He "tickled" the carburetor, and noted the time it took for that gasoline to overflow.

"Humph," he commented. "I thought so. Remember that the car slowed down just a little near the top of that hill we climbed? Your gasoline pipe is clogged up just enough to cut down the supply a little when the throttle is wide open. Better clean it out, or it will get worse and worse until your motor may not run at all. And while you're about it, you might as well clean out the little filter in the top of the vacuum tank. In fact, you'd be much better off if you had two filters -- one between the main tank and the vacuum tank, and the other between the main tank and the vacuum tank and the carburetor. If you don't want to tackle the job of installing them yourself --"

"No, I'll let you do it for me," interrupted the other. "But I don't see why two filters are necessary. Why isn't one enough?"

"Well," said the garage man, "every now and then the gasoline flows from the main tank into the vacuum tank with a rush -- not in a steady, slow stream as it does from the vacuum tank into the carburetor. When this happens, the movement of the gas is so fast that there isn't time for the tiny particles of dirt to be filtered out. They won't pass through your second filter, though. Also, a second filter in the gas line will remove the larger particles that otherwise would clog the valves in the vacuum tank."

"That sounds reasonable," admitted Stevens. "I'll run the car in about Thursday, and let you put the filter in. How about taking up the brakes?"

"Won't do any harm," said Wilson. "They hold now, but they may not after a few hundred miles more of driving."

"And how about removing carbon and grinding the valves?" asked Stevens.

"Well, those jobs really aren't necessary just now," said Wilson. "Still, if you think this is the only chance you'll have to lay up the car for a day or two, you'd better have them done. And we might adjust the generator at the same time. Just now it's pushing too much current through the battery. It's all right to have 15 amperes going into the battery during the winter when you don't use the car so much and must use plenty of juice every morning when you start the motor. In the summer, though, when the motor starts on the first turn and you're taking long trips and consequently charging the battery almost constantly, it's advisable to cut the charging rate down to six or seven amperes. You'd be astonished to know how many batteries are ruined by too much charging."

"That's something I never thought about," said Stevens.

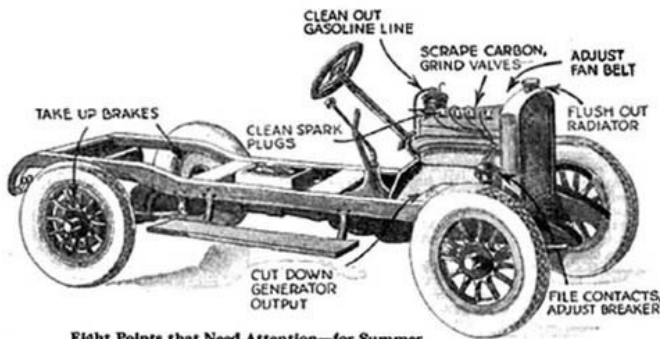
"It's just another one of the little points about a car that are neglected by the average owner until they lead to serious trouble and a big repair bill."

Stevens smiled. "I've found out that it pays," he said.

"You bet it pays," agreed Wilson. "All those little things that you're jotting down in your note book pay a car-owner in real money. And lest you forget anything in your hurry to get away you'd better put these down as things that must be attended to before you start:"

"Add water to the storage battery. Grease everything in sight. Pump up the tires -- including the spare -- to the proper pressure. Drain the crankcase and fill it with new oil. See that the radiator is filled with clean water and the gasoline tank filled with gas. Put a couple of spare light bulbs under the seat. And, of course, make sure that all of your tools are in the car."

"With the few little things I'm going to do for you, I'm willing to bet you that, unless you get a puncture, you won't have to do a single thing to this car all summer -- except drive it!" boasted the capable garage



Eight Points that Need Attention—for Summer

These eight points may mean the difference between pleasant riding for the whole summer, and constant trouble—with a big repair bill from the garage staring you in the face in the fall

Editor's Note: For a nostalgic view of American Automotive Literature, presented here is the very first "Gus Wilson Garage Story". The Gus Wilson Garage series was included in the Popular Science Monthly Magazines beginning with this story in July 1925. And apparently there were several authors contributing to the series each writing under the pseudo name of Martin Bunn. They are very interesting stories in hindsight because they depict automobile problems and solutions in a time when you could not drive a car 100,000 miles on a set of spark plugs, nor go 5,000 miles on an oil change. These show the commitment needed just for daily transportation. I hope you enjoy this lookback at a bygone era, and perhaps find this material educational for the next time you see one of these early mechanical marvels at your next car show.

These stories will be included in our Newsletter on occasion. I have tried to get copy-right permission to include them but, so far, those I have asked do not own the copy-right. I do not know how to proceed so for the record, this story was copied from the Internet website: <https://gus-stories.org/index1.htm>

Gus and Joe Have a Lot of Valuable Tips for You

WITH this article we introduce to the readers of POPULAR SCIENCE MONTHLY two most interesting characters—Gus Wilson and Joe Clark, proprietors of the "Model Garage."

Gus is a veteran automobile mechanic; Joe, his partner, the "figure man" of the combination. Both of them know the automobile game thoroughly from their respective angles. Both of them, in consequence, have a wealth of valuable suggestions to make to the automobile owner who wants to get the most out of his car.

Each month in future you will meet Gus and Joe in these pages. Gus will disclose to you all the little mechanical kinks and dodges he has learned in his experience; priceless "tips" on how to keep your car running efficiently at all times. Joe, on the other hand, will tell you how to keep your motoring costs down—how to buy tires, how to cut your gas and oil bills; things of that sort.

Mr. Bunn has written a fascinating series of these articles. We hope you will find them, as we have, not only the most interesting reading you have encountered in months, but the very best articles from a standpoint of practical use to the automobile owner that ever have been printed anywhere.—THE EDITOR.



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Homeward Bound 2014 Day 17 Conclusion: In the morning Ed parted ways with us. Ed returned home and we stayed in Rochester to visit with our son and daughter in law. We enjoyed our time with them and headed home the next day. On the way, I noted that the beauty of the Mohawk Valley cannot be understated!



And, in what felt like a snap of the fingers, we were home! The trip was a whirlwind adventure. One I would gladly do over if it were possible. There is not one favorite memory except being with Linda on this trip. Yet there were so many special moments each time we turned a corner and saw this beautiful country splayed out beyond the horizon. We were awestruck by the beautiful views we encountered. Every scenic vista and national monument we encountered became a memory that we continuously relive today. One side effect continues to this day, when we watch commercial TV and feel like we can relate to the various towns and locations spoken about because we were there, or passed close by. And, enough cannot be said for our friend, Dan Cook, who sold us this car. Due to his generosity we purchased a car that was 42 years old yet, completely reliable. And we also can't thank Ed enough for his generosity in providing a way to retrieve it while taking the trip of our life. I hope you enjoyed this series. John D



I JUST LOVE THIS PHOTOGRAPH! Courtesy of Ed Marcy, Ed says: It is of my late brother, Joe and I. We were getting ready to head out to the 2011 Rhinebeck Car show. It has me with my 54 Buick Roadmaster and Joe with his 78 C10 short box pickup.

He passed a little over a year later, just a few days after the 2012 Rhinebeck show. We attended Rhinebeck many times over the prior couple of decades.

Some great "car and brother memories" wrapped up in this one picture!

NOTE: We need YOUR favorite pictures too!



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