

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT – JEFF WATKINS

In celebration of the Gateway Chapter's 40th anniversary, this month's Member Spotlight focuses on another founding member, Jeff Watkins. Known as the club's archivist, Jeff recently was presented with the Honorary Charter Member Award at the July picnic in Love Park.



Jeff grew up in the Webster Groves area and went to Webster Groves High School. Staying single, he now lives in the Carondelet area of St. Louis. Jeff was always interested in cars as far back as he can remember. He remembers identifying models of the 50's while making road trips with his family and became quite the expert. Building models as a youngster honed his interest in automotive styling.

Jeff was a bit too young for Vietnam Era military duty. So he worked most often as a stock delivery truck driver for various companies staying the longest at the renowned Frame Factory business.

His first old Buick was a 1960 Electra. Since then he has owned about ten different Buick models including two '63 Invicta station wagons and a '67 Skylark. His favorites were a '59 Invicta and '59 Electra. Jeff's current motor pool consists of a classic '66 Lesabre 2dr HT and a 2001 Lesabre Ltd 4dr as a daily driver. For additional fun he once owned a 1965 Checker cab.

In the past, Jeff held the office of Director from 1990 to 1994. He organized the '93 Regional at the North Lindbergh Holiday Inn and was at the helm in helping the club host the '97 National at the old Henry the VIII hotel.

Being the club archivist for forty years, Jeff has preserved and collected all newsletter publications. He has total recall of any events or happenings in our history. Along with this, Jeff collects sales brochures and literature from all models as well as Buicks. He once astonished me with a pristine brochure for a 1999 Avalon in 2008. I had just purchased the car for a daily driver to reduce mileage on my '89 Lincoln Mark VII and '85 Buick Regal.

Jeff is retired now, hanging out at his house, going to swap meets and shows. He told me that, in the past, he has always been intent on keeping the club together and feels the same today. Jeff is looking forward to our 2020 Regional for a new event to be archived into our history.