

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT – MELBA NOLAN

This month's Gazette features another new member to the Gateway Chapter, a car girl named Melba Nolan. Melba and her husband Wayne own a fabulous car collection in Fenton, MO. that is focused on the vintage models of the 20's and 30's.

Melba was born in St. Louis and has been a lifelong resident of Jefferson County, being raised in the Fenton and High Ridge areas. She graduated high school from the North West School District.

As a young teen, Melba's father got her interested in cars. He was a mechanic at the old Koenig Chevrolet dealership and then later set up his own auto repair shop. Melba was surrounded in the gear head culture. She tagged along with him to the drag races and experienced the roar of racing engines. There she met a young man named Wayne Nolan who also liked to hang out at the tracks too and lived only two miles from her home. The drag racing scene led to their destiny of a 57- year long marriage, two daughters, one son, and three granddaughters.

A lifelong resident of Jefferson County, living on Nolan Rd, Melba developed a fondness for antique cars of the 20's and 30's later in life. When she sees a contender that she likes, she is in on to the chase, consults Wayne right off and sometimes makes the deal herself. Melba is so charmed by these years, that the cars owned in the Nolan collection are only pre-1940. The few exceptions being midcentury makes such a '58 Chrysler 300, '65 Corvair and '85 Corvette. Melba especially likes the Opera body styled cars and began shopping in the 90's.

A building in Imperial keeps a stunning group of 40 vintage vehicles. The Buick inventory consists of '27, '28 '31 Sedans and the award winning 1930 Marquette. Featured at the club's Regional, the Canadian Buick took home 3<sup>rd</sup> prize in its class 1903-1942. The Marquette was only manufactured in 1930. It was the only Buick with a flat head engine and a custom engraved cylinder block with the

inscription “Marquette”. General Motors made several lines of less expensive models for their nameplates as the Depression era curtailed buyer funds. Examples are the Oldsmobile Viking and Cadillac LaSalle.

When asked which one could be her favorite, Melva replied, “There really are no favorites as I get such joy out of all of them”.

Melba says that she and Wayne offer tours of the building to clubs such as the HCC of Missouri and the Gateway Chapter is welcome as well. Just call!

A brief list of the Nolan inventory includes:

4 Moons

1 Garner

1 Traffic Truck

1 Overland

1 Studebaker (1913) her oldest antique auto

1 Maxwell

1 Dodge

1 Chevrolet

Wayne does a great job keeping these historic wheels of transportation maintained. And Melba enjoys a homespun lifestyle in Fenton with her magnificent motor pool.

