



MMOCC Newsletter – February 2018

Mid Mo Old Car Club
PO Box 1594,
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Presidents comments:



LET'S MAKE HISTORY

History was one of my favorite subjects in school. Whether it was just learning how things evolved or the lasting impact of the old adage, "Those that cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it". History was something I liked.

As members of this club, we are curators of history. It could be our own experiences, family tales, or the Old Cars we love and drive, but we, too, preserve history. That calling should not be taken lightly.

Automotive history is vast, ranging from Karl Benz to Henry Ford to John Delorean to Lee Iacocca to Elon Musk. These pioneers set the stage, created cars, and made history.

Locally, we should also remember our history, be it local car dealerships or repair shops, Drive-In Theaters, or things we learned from past and current members of our Club. All of these make local history.

At the January meeting, we brainstormed some great MMOCC events. Tech sessions, tours, shows, and social activities will be abundant and will make great history. You, too, can make history by helping organize one of these events.

- Ron Clark is checking on a mystery dinner theater social.
- Ron Bogg and Roger Baugher are already planning on our own local, modified, version of "The Great Race".
- Jim Martin, Bob Peitzmeyer, and Jack Boswell have all agreed to impart some of their "history" as they lead different tech sessions.

For the February 22 MMOCC meeting at Tammy's Restaurant in Centertown (6pm at 11805 Main Street), bring your history, memories, and memorabilia about the old Capital Speedway on Industrial Drive. (*See a reprint article in this newsletter about Stock Car Racing in the Capital City.*) As you read the article, note some of the original pioneers of local racing, as several will be our guests that night, specifically Ray Kirchner and Lowell Flessa (one of the comic relief Nut Brothers), as they share their history. Both are in photos in the article.

The old Capital City Speedway has many connections to our Club as Billy Bonnot was on a pit crew, Eddie Tremain has saved and uncovered his Speedway memorabilia, and many members spent many weekends at the Speedway.

You have history. You preserve history. Let's make history!

MMOCC President Lyle Rosburg

Recorded Minutes to January 25, 2018 Mid Mo Old Car Club Meeting:

The meeting was held at Downtown Diner and called to order by Pres. Lyle Rosburg. The minutes of last month's meeting were read and approved as was the Treasurer's report. Discussion included the location and topics of 2018 meetings, and possible tech sessions, cruises, shows and social gatherings. The February 22 meeting was scheduled for Tammy's Restaurant in Centertown. Meeting was adjourned.

2017 MMOCC Officers:

President Lyle Rosburg	Vice President Dennis Smith
Secretary Gary Waggoner	Treasurer Tom Webb
Historian Roger Hager	Events Chair Ron Clark
Car Show Chairs Connie and Mike Schaefer	
Immediate Past President Nathan Fuller	

Did you know...

- That Steve Hall's First Car and his First Classic Car was a 1961 Corvair Monza? Ralph Nader would be "proud" that Steve was and is "Unsafe at Any Speed".
- Mica Baldwin's First Car was a 1990 Chevrolet Lumina?
- Bob Brandt's Favorite Car was a 1970 Monte Carlo?
- Roger Hager's Dream Car is Model T?
- Jack Boswell's Favorite Car was 1971 Chevrolet Vega Wagon with Crager Mag Wheels?
- Richard Heidbreder's First Classic Car was 1970 T/A Challenger?
- Don Weber's First Car and First Classic Car was a 1930 Model A Tudor?
- Kathy Hunt's First Car was a 1964 Plymouth Valiant Sedan?
- Leonard Rutledge's Dream Car is a 23 window VW Bus?

Name these places in Jefferson City history and the cars in front of them...



Looking ahead to future events, check out the calendar on this month's newsletter.

- In March, the annual Scholarship Auction will be held, so start cleaning off those shelves and digging in to those closets for auction items... all for a good cause.
- May 24 is the annual Bondo-B-Que Picnic at 108 Route T near St. Martins.
- August 23 is the Wes Scott Trunk Swap off Old Bass Road near Brazito.
- September 29 is Jefferson City's Oktoberfest and the 49th Annual Mid Mo Old Car Round-Up and Show.



The website has some great pictures and historical articles about MMOCC. Break that cabin fever with a trip to <https://midmooldcar.club/>



What is that?



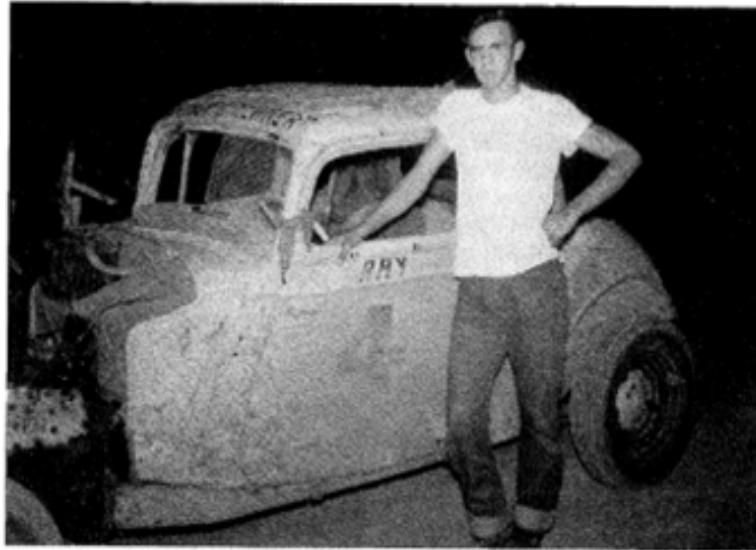
MID MO OLD CAR CLUB - 2018 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- February 18 Cape Girardeau Mo** Swap Meet at Arena Park
- February 22 MMOCC Meeting** Tammies Resturant Centertown (Capital Speedway History)
- March 3 Eureka,Mo** Annual Outdoor Garage Sale & Swap Meet at Six Flags Parking Lot (8-2pm)
- March 15-17 Norman,OK** Swap Meet
- March 16-17 Chickasha,OK** 28th Annual Pre-War Swap Meet 1895-1945
- March 16-17 Wichita,Ks** 43rd Sunflower (prev.=Model A) Swap Meet 225 W. Douglas Ave
- March 16-17 Kansas City** Mecum Auction
- * **March 16-17 Salem/ Steelville - Rally in the 100 Acre Wood** (www.100aw.org)
- March 22 MMOCC Meeting** Scholarship Benefit Auction ..Location-Amer.Legion
- * **March 24 Linn ,MO** Tracklap Dyno Day - HP Testing \$60 Linn State Tech Campus
- * **April 5- 8 Versailles Jacobs Cave** Swapping Days MMOCC tour ?
- April 6-7 Lathrop** Good Times Swap Meet
- April 8 Saget, IL** April Fools Swap Meet I-255 CCS Ball Park Exit 18 618 887-4492
- April 13-15 Oklahoma City** Southwest Street Rod Nationals
- April 26- 29 Ft. Worth,TX** Annual Pate Spring Swap Meet at Texas Motor Speedway
- May 4 - 6** Jefferson City Shelbyfest
- May 4 - 6** Lawrence,Ks Swap Meet (first full weekend in May)
- May 4 - 6** Lake Ozark Magic Dragon Street Meet
- May 11-12** Capital City Corvette Classic
- May 22 MMOCC Meeting - BONDO-B-QUE ?**
- May 25-27 Springfield** Mid-America Street Rod Nationals
- June 1-2 Rolla** Springfest - Saturday Car Show

Capital Racing Association Brought Stock Car Racing to Jefferson City in 1950s

Ray Kirchner was typical, in many ways, of the stock car race drivers who gathered at the old Capital Speedway off of Industrial Drive (where Florsheim Shoes Factory now stands) during the 1950s; he was young, he had little money, he built his own car without any formal training on how to do so, and he raced because he loved doing it. There were dozens like him in and around Jefferson City a half century ago.

Ray Kirchner was about seven years old when he saw his first car race. It was on a Saturday in the middle 1940s, and he had gone with his parents to the state fair in Sedalia. He wanted to take a seat in the bleachers to watch the races, but his dad didn't have the fifty cents required for admission. So Ray watched the races all day through a fence and was transfixed by the spectacle. The cheering of the crowd, the roaring of the engines, the flying dust, even the smell of the exhaust from the burning fuel, all combined to capture his imagination and make him want to race.



Ray Kirchner.

Ray dropped out of school after the eighth grade and worked a number of poorly paid jobs, including a stint of "running parts," greasing cars, and changing oil at Harry Blackwell's garage on Jefferson Street. When he was sixteen, he started going to car races at Kenny

Bias's racetrack east of Holts Summit. Eager to watch a race from the pit, Ray persuaded the ambulance driver ("Fat Boy" Williams) to sneak him into the pit area in the back of the ambulance, beneath a stretcher. Soon after, he went out to find a race car of his own.

He found a 1934 Ford coupe that had once been owned by Zing Zang Motors, minus its engine, at a salvage yard and purchased it for five dollars. Next, he found an engine lying in his friend Tommy Thompson's backyard and talked Tommy into giving it to him. He hauled the engine and towed the car to a garage owned by other friends of his ("the Fluegel brothers") in Lohman. There, he readied his car for racing. The preparations included rebuilding the flathead



Capital Racing Association action at the Bias Racetrack near Holts Summit in the early 50s.

Dean and Jean Moor

Dean and Jean Moor

Ford engine, using many of the same old parts, including the valve cover gaskets, which he covered with a heavy layer of shellac. He had no training as an auto mechanic. The skills he possessed, he recalls, he "picked up by myself."

Ray also learned a lot from a race car driver named Dean Marr, who was eleven years his senior. Ray and other racers often hung out at a small garage owned by Dean near Waverly Street, in an alley off of modern-day Missouri Boulevard. Born in 1926 in Eldon, Dean moved to Jefferson City with his parents when he was two years old. The family took up residence at 1215 Monroe Street, where they operated a grocery store. Dean's father also had a garage in his basement where he worked on cars, boats, and small engines. It was there that Dean learned to work on and love automobiles.

After graduating from Jefferson City High School in 1944, Dean joined the navy and returned to the capital city in 1946 after completing his tour of duty. He went to work for the Missouri Pacific Railroad soon after returning from the service and continued to work there for four decades. Like all of the other racers in those early years,



Dean and Jean Marr

Dean Marr, a local racing legend, receiving an award.

Dean Marr engaged in racing only as a hobby.

In the early 1950s, Dean recalls, "the racing fever got ahold of us." The earliest racetrack he remembers was "an old figure-eight track" just off of U.S. Highway 50, near Syracuse. That track was built by Glenn Jones in 1950. A slightly later track was built and operated by George Klug on the "Sloughfoot" Robinett farm off of Highway 179 near Elston.

Early in 1952, a group of racing buffs met in the basement of Henry Williams's home in the 1000 block of Jefferson Street to form a racing club. They registered their corporation, the Capital Racing Association, with the Missouri Secretary of State's Office on February 25, 1952.

The association's first racetrack was the one on Kenny Bias's property east of Holts Summit

that Ray Kirchner remembered being snuck into in the back of an ambulance. Bias owned a salvage yard nearby and was also a racing supporter. In fact, Dean Marr got his first race car (a 1937 Ford Tudor sedan) from Bias. Dean readied the car for racing in his garage, although he lacked one important piece of equipment needed to complete the job: an electric welder. He arranged to use a welder at Joe DeLong's steel business, which was then located at the northwest corner of Jefferson and Atchison streets, on the city's South Side. In exchange for the use of the welder, Dean Marr added DeLong's name to his car.

The racetrack at Bias's was primitive in many ways, certainly by today's standards. Makeshift bleachers lined one side of the track. Racing fans lined a ridge above the other side and watched the action from the hoods of their cars and from blankets stretched on the ground. No barricade separated fans from runaway race cars, which then reached top speeds of seventy miles per hour. It was, as Dean Marr



Dean and Jean Marr

Award ceremony at the Bias Racetrack. Left to right, Wyman Buysinger, Dean Marr, and two unidentified men.



Dean and Jean Marr

The wives of the racers formed a group called the Capital Speedettes, shown in this group photo in 1953. They sold concessions during the races.

remembers it, "strictly old jalopy racing." But it was fun.

It wasn't long before the Capital Racing Association decided to move the racetrack to Jefferson City. The site chosen was the old Jaycee Fairgrounds off of Industrial Drive. Race car owners and racing fans turned the fairgrounds racetrack into a major site of local entertainment for more than a decade. Races were held every Saturday night during the racing season, and entire families came to enjoy the night out. Initially there was only one class of race, called Hobby Stock. Gimmicks were contrived to hold the interest of viewers who were less-than-die-hard racing fans. One popular activity was the "pie race." Participants had to race around the quarter-mile track five times before stopping to eat an entire pie. After eating the pie, a driver was allowed to continue in the race. Another crowd-pleaser was the "watermelon race," which followed the same general idea. Children always looked forward to being entertained by the self-styled "Nut Brothers" ("Buster" and "Peanut"—Bernie Eiken and Lowell Flessa), who performed in clown costumes during intermission.

Wives of the racers formed a club called the Speedettes to work the concession stand.

Automobile racing in those early days of the 1950s was far different than what we experience in the early twenty-first century. First of all, as virtually all of the men who raced then remember, "no one had any money." And there were no large amounts of money awarded for winning a race. Ray Kirchner remembers that in his best year of racing cars, he won a total of six hundred dollars. He and others raced because they loved the sport.

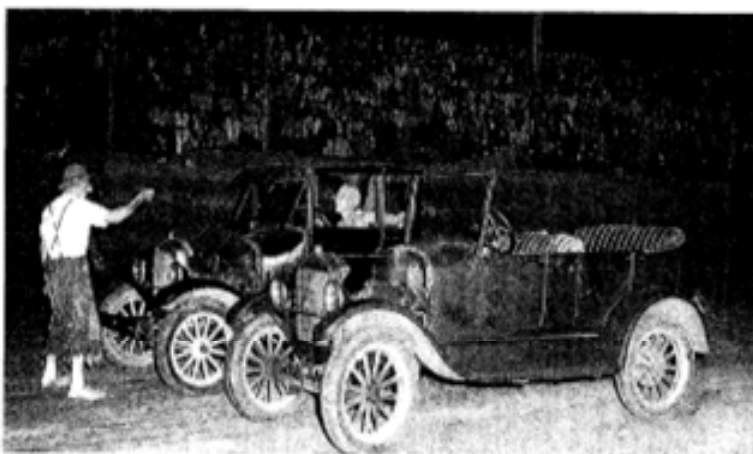
There was also a camaraderie among racers that would be difficult to find today. Racers helped each other to prepare for a race, loaning equipment to each other, offering a tow, or making suggestions about how to increase a car's performance. Likewise, in those early years, race car drivers had tre-

mendous local followings. Ray Kirchner remembers that when he and his brother-in-law Jim Tambke and others left Russellville to race in Marshall or somewhere else, a procession of forty to fifty cars would follow them.

Capital Speedway moved to a site near Holts Summit in 1967. By that time, many of the early drivers had dropped out of the sport because it had become too expensive and too competitive. Dean Marr never raced at the new Capital Speedway, although he was one of its owners. He stopped racing in 1959, after he and his wife, Jean, decided to adopt two children. Ray Kirchner raced only a couple of times at the new facility. As he remembers it, "you had to keep stepping up—if you didn't, you just as well quit." Ray couldn't afford to spend the large amounts of money that racers were spending on cars and engines. By that time, he had a wife and five children to support.

Ray Kirchner, Dean Marr, and dozens of other race car drivers from the 1950s are still racing fans, but they look back wistfully on a time when racing was a hobby and a part-time sport rather than a profession. Something, they believe, has been lost. ■

The Nut Brothers entertained the crowd at races.



Bernie Eiken

“Something Old” Classifieds

(The car is for sale, not the guy next to it.)

For Sale: 1948 Lincoln Continental. Contact Jim Martin at 573-864-4048.



Problems? We have an opinion, but probably not a solution!

On most Saturday mornings at Jim Martin's garage in Elston, an informal group of MMOCC members gather to solve some of the world's problems (or maybe just talk about them). From *about* 7:52am to 9:30am-ish, stop by 6709 Elston Second Street and enjoy a cup and camaraderie. Jim is retired, so the start time fluctuates. Sometimes, Jim can't host, but Bondo leaves a note to meet up at his house at 108 Route T.



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