

ANTIQUÉ ELECTRIC VEHICLES

A Newsletter about antique electric cars for antique electric car people.

Newsletter #3

September 2002



The LeFeber family on tour in Port Austin, Michigan

INTRODUCTION

A Newsletter for people who want to know who owns antique electric cars, who want to participate in antique electric car driving tours, or who have parts for sale or need parts; and people interested in antique electric cars in general. You don't have to own an antique electric car to get the Newsletter.

Well, the Newsletter has now grown into an Antique Electric Car Registry. I guess that was inevitable. I will list in the Registry all antique (pre-war) electric cars on which I have data, including museum cars. Such a list will make a good reference for those who are looking for information about cars they own or are restoring. Only Registry members will receive the Newsletter.

This issue is a little late because of antique (electric and gasoline) car touring and vacations. But the next issue will still come out in December.

REGISTRATION FOR THE REGISTRY AND THE NEWSLETTER

If you have not yet responded, but want to continue to receive the Newsletter, I must hear from you. This will, unfortunately, be the last Newsletter mailed to people from whom I have not yet had a response. If you don't have an R in the first column of the attached mailing list it means either you did not respond to prior Newsletters or your response got lost in the mail.

If you don't have an "R" please reply with the **Clip and Mail** below to stay on the mailing list. There are around 141 names on the mailing list - I will eventually have to stop mailings to people from whom I do not get a response, to save costs.

I estimate that 4 quarterly Newsletters will cost \$5.00 a year for copying, paper, and mailing. I can cover the cost at first, but cost sharing will be needed eventually.

TOURING

We need to establish driving tours aimed at antique electric cars at different locations around the U.S. and Canada. This will help us enjoy our cars more and show people that electric cars are fun.

MICHIGAN - 2002:

The Michigan tour is now a part of **successful and fun** history. Nine electric cars and 18 people from 5 states and Canada attended. Gregg and Martie Lange did a great job organizing the tour. Dave LeFeber wrote a story about this, his first car tour and first electric car tour. See it later in the Newsletter. Also, a second story about the tour should be in the January/February issue of the HCCA Gazette.

Attending the tour were: Jim Bannon (Texas - 1917 Detroit), Paul Carton (Missouri - 1916 Rauch & Lang), Ford and Phyllis Cauffiel (Ohio - 1917 Milburn), Eric and Eddie Edwards (Ontario, Canada - 1911 Baker), Richard and Micheline Lane (Ontario, Canada - 1915 Milburn), Gregg and Martie Lange (Michigan - 1910 Baker and 1921 Detroit), David and Marilyn LeFeber and their children Melinda, Elizabeth, and Jonathan (Wisconsin - 1929 Detroit), Chuck and Lois Murphy (Texas - 1914 Ohio), and Dan Shafarman (Michigan - attended without his car).

TEXAS - 2003:

We want to have an antique electric car tour in Texas in 2003; probably a three-day tour in the Fall in the town of Sulphur Springs in East Texas. Right now we are trying to find an acceptable date that does not conflict with other antique car activities. More on this tour in the next Newsletter.

KANSAS - 2004:

Bernie Wray has volunteered to host an electric car tour in Hutchinson, Kansas in September 2004. That is pretty far in the future, so we won't hold Bernie's feet to the fire on the tour or the date. But, do start thinking about the tour.

Who else would like to host an electric car tour? We can certainly have more than one tour in a year, if they are in different parts of the country. Not many people can travel across the US to attend a tour, so tours in different parts of the country are needed. I, or Gregg Lange, would be glad to share our tour organizational "expertise" with you.

PARTS FOR SALE/NEEDED

This could be the most valuable part of the Newsletter! Send a list of parts or literature that you have for sale, and parts or literature that you need. See the **mailing list** for addresses of people whose names appear **bolded** below. I will run **Parts For Sale/Needed** ads for two issues of the Newsletter, unless you request that I run the ad for a longer time.

FOR SALE:

1. **Walt Barker** has his 1917 Rauch & Lang for sale. Needs restoration.
2. **Walt Barker** tells me that two electric cars are advertised for sale in the March 28, 2002 issue of Old Cars Weekly.
 - 1912 Detroit, \$35,000; Wisconsin; phone **Doug Rhode**.

- 1917 Rauch & Lang; \$18,000; North Canton Ohio; phone 330-494-9129 from 7:30 to 4:00 weekdays; email: aleague1@aol.com.
3. **Art Nelson** has two Voltmeter/Ammeters by Westin Electric for sale. Price negotiable.
 4. Seen is Hemmings: 1922 Detroit Electric Model 6-97, body in good shape, new interior, new tires, new batteries, runs real great, this is a really fun car, turns heads wherever we go, \$20,000 in May Hemmings down from \$22,500 in April Hemmings. Allen Weiner in Maine, 207-985-7547. Photo of car in Hemmings Ad.
 5. Ronnie Bauman has a chassis for an Ohio Electric (no motor, bad wheels). From photos it appears that the frame, axle, and springs may be good. I became aware of this chassis as a result of a question I asked in the first Newsletter. Unfortunately, the chassis is quite different from mine – I would guess it to be a 1910 or 1911, but not 1914 like mine. The data plate on the chassis lists a 1909 patent date. Ronnie can be reached at 909-683-8060 in Riverside CA.
 6. I was given a flyer on a mostly original 1932 Detroit Electric – Model 97 for sale. Can do 30 mph on level ground with 50 miles on a charge. Asking \$25,000 including a fresh set on batteries at time of sale. The car is in Clarksville, Arkansas. Call 636-464-7281 in the evenings.
 7. As seen in HCCA Gazette: 1903 Baker Electric Stanhope #330; photo in ad; extremely authentic; \$49,000; for sale by Peter Harper in England. Stretton House, Stretton, Warrington, Cheshire, WA4 4PF. Phone: 44-1925-730411.
 8. **John Kaforski** has an antique electric car battery charger and an old Edison battery for sale.

WANTED:

1. **Les Schubert** needs a motor brake assembly for his 1921/22 Detroit model 90.
2. **Stan Paurazas** needs switches for the interior/exterior lights and the master power switch for his 1920 Milburn.
3. **Robert Johnson** would like anything for an 1898 to 1901 Waverley, for use on his 1900 car.
4. **Chuck Murphy** would like to purchase an antique electric car charger. It does not have to work – I would use it for display in my garage. But, if it does work, I would use it to charge my car.
5. **Chuck Murphy** would like to purchase an antique electric car battery for display purposes.
6. **Robert Ruf** needs:
 - Milburn Light Electric aluminum running boards (steps).
 - Set of left and right hand brass headlights painted black. There are no marks on the lamp body itself, however, the door is marked with a brass tag on the top of the door “RUSHMORE DYNAMO WORKS – PLAINFIELD. N.J., U.S.A.” And the thumbscrew is stamped “MODEL 620”. The single pole connection comes straight out of the bottom.
 - One aluminum hubcap with MILBURN across the face.
7. **Ray Adcock** needs the left rear quarter (curved) glass next to the driver and the front curved (quarter) glass between the left door and the windshield for his 1917 Detroit Model 68. (There were notes on curved glass availability in Newsletter No. 2).
8. **Steve Applebaum** called and wanted a source for the curved glass on his 1916 Detroit. Those who need glass and those who have had glass made need to set up a Conference telephone

call to compare notes. I have heard horror stories from some people about getting curved glass made for their cars. (See Newsletter No. 2 for comments on curved glass availability).

9. A number of people are looking for electric cars. Many have had electric cars in the past, sold them, and now wish they had another. So, if some of you readers are in the selling mood, please contact: **Bill Alley** (a pre-1913), **Thomas Edfors**, **Steve Gordon**, **Clarence Milburn** (a Milburn Electric), **Matt Sysak**.

Lew Miller did not authorize me to say this, so I hope it is OK with you Lew. It appears that he has leads on many electric cars for sale, so if you are looking for an electric it may be to your benefit to talk to him. Even if he can't help I bet you will find him an interesting man with whom to talk.

10. **George Milburn** writes: My brother and I are looking for a Milburn Electric auto of the type with a steering wheel rather than a tiller. They made at least two body styles that had steering wheels.

CALLING ALL ANTIQUE ELECTRIC CARS

There are many more people with antique electric cars than I have on the Registry list. How about sending me the names and addresses of others that you know that own antique electric cars. Such a list will enable members to contact owners of cars similar to their own, if they need information/help/ parts. Also, keep me informed if you buy or sell an antique electric car so I can keep the list up-to-date. I want to thank all those who have already forwarded electric car owners names to add to our Registry.

READERS QUESTIONS

Successful newsletters seem to make heavy use of **member's questions/answers** – this enables people to share information. The response to the questions in Newsletter #1 was outstanding.

This issue doesn't have any new questions from readers. I am sure that some of you have questions to which you would like answers. We can publish the questions here and see if Registry members have information of value to you.

Also, if you have information that can help answer a reader's question, please send it to me for publication and/or contact the reader directly.

In response to questions in the last Newsletter:

- I did receive information on an antique battery charger for sale, but did not buy it.
- **Paul Bush** reports that he too can not find a serial number on his Columbia Electric.
- **Paul Bush** made an electric battery charger of **Jim Bannon** for use on Jim's 1917 Detroit Electric. Paul says he will be glad to make such chargers for other Registry members.

READERS COMMENTS

- **Diane Burghardt** writes that the 1922 Rauch & Lang is still in original condition, and until recently still had the original batteries. Diane is trying to maintain it in original condition rather than restore it.
- **Jack Hogg** reports that he has an original Lincoln Electric Charger in his museum.
- **Richard Lane** was on the Port Austin electric car tour. He does conversions of gasoline cars to electrics and is very knowledgeable about batteries. So I asked him to write an article on batteries. His excellent, informative article is included in this Newsletter.
- **George Milburn** has a web site devoted to Milburn Electric cars (<http://www.milburn.us>) It is a Registry for Milburn Electrics and he tries to offer a picture of each car along with basic data. If you have a Milburn you should make sure you are on George's web site and in his Registry. He has web site compartments for History, Registry, Documents, and Links. The last time I looked he had 22 Milburn Electrics in the Registry. He received some of his most recent leads from this Newsletter and Registry. He is trying to collect and understand serial number data for Milburn Electrics. George is a good source of information on Milburn Electrics and has helped many people with their questions.
- **Clarence Milburn** has been collecting information on the Milburn Wagon Company and their Milburn Electrics for years. If you have a Milburn you should be talking to Clarence. Clarence has a lot of information on Milburn Electric cars, which he is willing to share.
- I hear that **Bruce Rimmer** has information on currently available Westinghouse electric motors (for escalators??) that were used in some electric cars.
- **Charlie Mac Arthur** says that his Milburn was reportedly used on Broadway in about 1923-24 in the "Follies". It was used to drive showgirls onto the stage.
- **Jack Beatty** has a 1916 Model 60 Detroit Electric that was rebuilt at the factory in 1928 into a Model 98S. He has a good history on the car since he acquired it from the family of the original purchaser. He says that it was apparently common to rebuild these cars if they were located near the factory.
- **Jack Beatty** handles DC power in his business and warns that it is a good idea to use a ground fault interrupter (GFI) in your charging circuit. Wall outlet models are under \$10 at places like Home Depot. I checked, and all of my garage circuits are protected by GFI's.
- **George Milburn** says to look on the Internet for a comic strip featuring Grandma Duck's electric car: http://goofy313g.free.fr/calisota_online/cars/grandma.html. Some say Grandma Duck used a Milburn but others say it is a Detroit Electric. What is your "expert" opinion?
- **David Gamez** sent some pictures of his 1914/15 Detroit Electric that he bought at an auction. David had actually known the car when he was a child. He also sent a copy of a 1917 membership card for The Boss Tire Club that he found in the car. A previous lady owner evidently belonged to this club which provided free tire service while on the road.
- **Christian Duerschner** from Germany writes that he became involved in solar and electric vehicles when he joined a solar team that was racing in the Swiss Tour de Sol. He has done studies on modern EV's in Germany, but is also interested in early electric vehicles. He is obtaining his information from museums, bibliothecas, Internet, etc.

- **Dan Shafarman** attended the Port Austin Electric Car Tour, but without his 1908 Bailey Electric. The car is still in restoration. In doing research on the car he met Mr. David Bailey (a descendant of the car company's founder) of Amesbury, Massachusetts, who kindly allowed him to examine the few pieces of literature he had in his possession. He also told him the history of the company. The company still exists as a part (no longer making autos, of course) of the American Shoe Machine Co. Unfortunately, the original records for the S. R. Bailey company were reportedly stored in a garage which burned in the 1930's.
- It was pointed out to me recently that buying the highest amp-hour battery is not always the best choice. If one battery has a higher amp-hour rating than another does, it is probably because the first battery contains more lead. However, if the two batteries have the same size battery cases, the higher amp-hour battery may not have as much void space on the bottom to collect material that falls off during the life of the battery. If this is the case, then the discarded material may build up high enough in the bottom of the case to short out the plates (and ruin the battery) in the higher amp-hour battery before it would do so in the lower amp-hour battery.
- **David Bartrop** of Great Britain would like to correspond with anyone who has or is interested in The City & Suburban Electric Carriage. This may be the British version of the Columbia Electric (i.e., a Columbia Electric chassis but with a British made body). The City & Suburban Carriage Co. were British agents for the American-built Columbia Electric.
- I received a long letter from **Robert Ebisch**, part of which I will summarize here. He has owned antique electric cars since 1947, but has always used them as transportation more than for car shows. His present car, that he uses for daily transportation, is a 1928 Detroit Model 97. In the 55 years since he has had an electric car he is now on his 6th battery. Five of these, including the present one, were true electric vehicle or motive power batteries. For regular daily use he finds that these are far more dependable and long-lived than any golf cart battery. They, like the original electric car batteries, are separate cells assembled into "trays". The trays are built to order to fit into the electric car's battery compartment and then the cells are assembled into the tray by the battery manufacturer. He is now using a 42 cell 225 amp-hour battery. Seven years ago it cost him \$4200, but it should last 10 years or more. He tried one set of golf cart batteries but they, though cheaper, failed completely after 3 years of use. Robert has worked on many different models of electric cars.

LITERATURE EXCHANGE

Readers have expressed an interest in establishing a "list of resources" that would be available to members. If you have literature that you could make available (copies OK) to others, please send me the Title, Year, Number of pages, and a few word description of the Contents.

Due to space limitations I will only be able to list the newest literature resources at this time (see earlier Newsletters for prior listings). I will consolidate all of the literature resources and publish them in one Newsletter, maybe once a year.

- **Paul Bush** tells me he has a 1917 edition of Automobile Engineering, which covers electric and steam cars. If it is the book I am thinking of, it is Volume V of a five-volume set. It is an excellent book and even gives wiring diagrams for my Ohio Electric. It covers electric car construction, operation, and batteries. It has 194 pages on electric cars. I occasionally see this set of books for sale at swap meets. Paul will lend his book to Registry members, with restrictions so that he gets it back in good shape.

- **Paul Bush** has a factory detail book on the 1914 Detroit Electric, and would be glad to share a copy with Registry members.
- **Burch Roark** sent me photos of his restored 1912 Baker Electric. It's a beautiful car and has won many judging awards. He says he has a considerable amount of literature – some original and some copies – that he would be willing to copy if someone needs it.
- **Robert Johnson** has a lot of original Waverley/Pope Waverley literature that he can copy for those who need it. He also lists some publications with special electric car issues:
 1. AACA Antique Automobile, Vol. 24 #4, Aug/Sept 1960
 2. AACA Antique Automobile, Vol. 34 #4, Jul/Aug 1970
 3. Horseless Carriage Gazette, Vol. 30 #1, Jan/Feb 1968.He has offered to copy the above articles, if you need them.
- **George Milburn** has a compartment on Documents in his Milburn Electric web site. Also check out the Links compartment.

BATTERY BASICS

By **Rick Lane**

The deep cycle battery most people use in their electric car is the standard golf cart 6-volt unit. It is a very durable and forgiving type of battery, but it does need some respect if you are to get the best performance and life out of it. The battery can suffer from either over-charging or from not being properly charged. Here is some basic information taken from some TROJAN BATTERY COMPANY publications to be used as a guide to maintaining a good set of batteries.

- A 6-volt battery contains 3 cells. Your battery pack contains many batteries. Multiply the number of batteries you have in your pack by 3 to obtain the number of cells you have in your battery pack. Use this number to calculate the total voltage you should see when reviewing your battery condition.
- All connections must be clean and tight.
- The top of the battery should be washed regularly to remove corrosive and conductive acid mist, which you can not see.
- Never over-discharge your battery. It is considered fully discharged when the voltage falls to 1.75 volts per cell (5.25 volts per battery) when it is loaded at 75 amps. (This does not apply during accelerations where high current draw can cause the battery voltage to temporarily drop lower than 1.75 volts per cell.)

CHARGING:

In all charging regimes, the batteries should be given an equalizing charge at least once every 10 cycles. If the battery is in storage then it should have an equalizing charge at least once a month. An equalizing charge causes the battery to gas and mixes up the acid, preventing acid stratification. To perform an equalizing charge, raise the voltage of the cell to between 2.5 to 2.6 volts per cell (7.5 to 7.8 volts per battery) and hold for a period of 2 hours. You will observe gassing from the cells. It is best to open the battery boxes to allow the gas to escape from the car when doing an equalizing charge.

For normal charging use a charger with enough power to properly charge the batteries. It should be able to produce a starting current of C/10. C (capacity in AH) for a standard golf cart battery is around 220 AH. So your charger should be able to put out around 22 amps to the batteries. You can use less, but the batteries will respond better to the higher current. More is better up to C/5 if voltage control is applied.

The best charging method is to apply a constant current charge until the cell voltage is about 2.37 volts per cell, followed by holding this voltage until the charge current falls to C/50 (4 to 5 amps) and then hold this current until the voltage rises to 2.5 volts per cell.

Important! If the battery temperature reaches 125 degrees F, turn off the charger and allow the batteries to cool.

WATERING:

Always add distilled water to a fully charged and gassing battery. Fill to 1/8 inch below the bottom of the chamber in the vent hole well in the battery cover. The gassing will properly mix the new water with the acid. Wear safety glasses to protect your eyes!

OPEN CIRCUIT VOLTAGE TEST:

Let the battery stand at rest for at least 5 minutes before testing with a voltmeter. Test each battery. A variation of 30 points on hygrometer (Ex. 1.250 – 1.220) indicates trouble in low cells. A variation of .05 volts per cell on open circuit voltage also indicates trouble. Open circuit voltage in relation to specific gravity and percentage charge is as follows:

Specific Gravity	Open Circuit Volts	% Charge
1.277	2.12	100
1.227	2.07	75
1.172	2.02	50
1.111	1.96	25

Always correct hygrometer Specific Gravity readings to 80 degrees F. For each ten–degrees of temperature above 80 degrees F, add 4 points to the hygrometer reading. Example: 90 degrees F 1.250 = 1.254. For each ten degrees below 80 degrees F, subtract 4 points from the hygrometer reading. Example: 70 degrees F 1.250 = 1.246.

If you find your batteries are not showing equal values then try placing the batteries on an equalizing charge and check all of the water levels. If only one battery is testing low then you can try to charge it using a 6-volt charger directly on the low battery. Follow up by running the pack down and then fully recharge the pack.

TREAT YOUR BATTERIES WITH RESPECT:

- Your batteries contain a huge amount of energy and dangerous sulfuric acid.
- Clean any acid spills with a mixture of 1 tablespoon of baking soda in 1 gallon of water. Follow with lots of clean rinse water.
- Remove all jewelry when working around batteries.
- Do not place wrenches on top of the batteries.
- Make sure that all wire and insulation is in good condition.
- Do not smoke near batteries.
- Charge batteries in a well-ventilated area.

SERIAL NUMBERS

Registry members have asked for Serial Number information. I will reprint serial number information that people send to me. BUT, I WILL STATE RIGHT NOW, I DO NOT KNOW THE ACCURACY OF ANY OF THIS INFORMATION!

I have a book that some of you may or may not have. It is called "*The Serial Number Book For U.S. Cars 1900-1975*". I got my copy several years ago from one of the major auto literature dealers – it may or may not still be available from them. In future issues of the Newsletter, as space permits, I will reprint some of the serial number information from the book to help members who do not have access to the book.

As noted in the last Newsletter, **Robert Ruf** sent me serial number data that he has collected on Milburn Electrics – I will reprint it here. It is similar to the material in the *Serial Number Book* I referenced above, but does have some differences.

Milburn Electric Serial Number Information from Robert Ruf

The serial number for the Milburn Electric was located on the end of the left front frame in 1915 and 1916. On the 1917 and later models it is located on the rear cross member under the rear hood.

Year	Model	W.B.	Body Type	Pass Cap.	Battery Spec.	Final Drive	List Price	Range of Serial Numbers	Driving Pos.
1915	15	100"	Coupe	4	20c 15p	Wm	\$1,485	15101 - 15702	R.D.
1915	151	100"	Rds.	2	20c 17p	Wm	\$1,285	151101 - 151130	R.D.
1915	?	90"	Deliv.	2	20c 15p	Wm	\$985*	?	?
1916	22	100"	Coupe	4		Wm	\$1,585	21012 -	R.D.
1916	151	100"	Rds.	2		Wm	\$1,285	-25902	R.D.
1916	?	90"	Deliv.	2		Wm	\$985*	?	?
1917	27	105"	Brgm.	4	40c 11p	Wm	\$1,485	21017 - 28997	R.D.
1917	26	105"	T. Car	6	40c	Wm	\$1,795	31010 - 31390	F.D.
1918	27	105"	Coupe	4	40c 11p	Wm	\$1,885	(Included with	R.D.
1918	?	105"	Sedan	6		Wm	?	Model 27 numbers	?
1918	?	105"	Limo.	6		Wm	?	from 1917)	?
1919	27-L	105"	Brgm.	4-5	40c 13p	Wm	\$2,485	(Serial numbers	R.D.
1920	27-L	105"	Brgm.	4-5	40c 13p	Wm	\$2,685	29907 and up	R.D.
1921	27-L	105"	Brgm.	4-5	40c 13p	Wm	\$2,685	were used during	R.D.
1921	?	111"	Taxi	6		Wm	?	the years	?
1922	27-L	105"	Brgm.	5	42c 13p	Wm	\$2,375	1919 - 1922)	R.D.
1923	27-L	105"	Brgm.	5	42c 13p	Wm	\$2,385	(Jan 1, 1923	R.D.
1923	27-F	105"	Brgm.	4	42c 13p	Wm	\$2,485	number	R.D.
1924	27-L	105"	Brgm.	5	42c 13p	Wm	\$2,485	231007 and up	R.D.
1924	27-F	105"	Brgm.	4	42c 13p	Wm	\$2,585	were used)	R.D.
								(Continuation of	R.D.
								1923 numbers	R.D.
								were used)	R.D.

* For chassis only. Body's ranged from \$100 and up.

Milburn Electric Serial Number Information from Serial Number Book.

Milburn Carriage & Wagon Co., Milburn Wagon Co., of Toledo, Ohio

YEAR	MODEL	DRIVER SEAT	SERIAL NUMBERS	BATTERY
1915	15 Coupe	Rear	15,101--15,702	Worm drive
1915	151 Roadster	Rear	151,101--151,139	
1916	22 Brougham	Rear	21,012--25,902	GE motor
1916	151 Roadster	Rear	21,012--25,902	
1917	27 Coupe	Rear	21,017--28,997	40 cell, 11 plate
1917	30 Touring	Front	31,010--31,390	40 cell
1918	27 Coupe	Rear	(Included with Model 27, 1917 no.'s)	40 cell, 11 plate
1919	27L Brougham	Rear	29,007 & up	40 cell, 13 plate
1920	27L Brougham	Rear	29,007 & up	40 cell, 13 plate
1921	27L Brougham	Rear	29,007 & up	40 cell, 13 plate
1922	27L Brougham	Rear	29,007 & up	42 cell, 13 plate

MEMBERS CARS

Dave LeFeber and his family attended the August 2002 Electric Car Tour sponsored by Gregg and Martie Lange in Port Austin, Michigan. This was the first antique car tour for Dave and his family and, of course, their first with an electric car. Dave wrote of his experiences on the tour and the trip to and from Michigan. Don't be afraid to take your electric on a tour. Dave and his family weren't afraid, and they had a great time!

MY FIRST TOUR

by Dave LeFeber

This was to be no ordinary tour. This tour was for Electric cars only. Gregg and Martie Lange from Saginaw, MI were the hosts. They promised a "quiet" tour of the Lake Huron shoreline. The tour was August 16th-18th in Port Austin, Michigan.

We sent in our registration fee and started preparations for the trip. As this was my first tour, I was not exactly sure what was required. I was still working on installing a new set of batteries in the 1929 Detroit Electric that we were going on tour with. Marilyn, my wife, was preparing the motor home and I was taking care of the mechanical end of things. The kids wanted to take their bikes. Oh yes, I forgot to mention, the whole family (except the cat) was going - Melinda (16), Elizabeth (14), and Jonathan (11). Into the enclosed trailer went: the car, 5 bikes, portable charger, air compressor, towrope, fire extinguisher, floor jack, assorted tools, and work clothes. We were prepared.

On Thursday 8/15, we left Hartford, Wisconsin. Around 2:00 pm, we went around Chicago, got stuck in a four hour traffic jam, and stayed at a KOA campground in Riverside, just north of Benton Harbor, MI. We had an AAA Trip-Tik to help us. We followed part of it. As a result of the traffic jam, and the time zone change, we did not get in until 11:30 pm.

Friday, we started for Port Austin around noon. No problems, we arrived at a closed school parking lot which was to be our campground for the next two nights on the edge of Port Austin around 4:00 pm.

Registration was 3:00 to 7:00 pm, so we were right on time. We parked and unloaded the electric. I threw in the towrope and the fire extinguisher. All five of us piled into the electric and drove the ½ mile to the motel where everyone was gathered. It was here that I learned that our kids were the only ones on the trip, and our 1929 electric was the newest auto registered.

There were 9 electric's in the small town of Port Austin. The town residents were happy to see us and really made us feel at home. There was a lot of interest in the electrics and a lot of questions. This was probably the largest gathering of electric vehicles, at one time, in one place, in modern times. There were: 1910 Baker from Saginaw, MI; 1911 Baker from Baxter, Ontario; 1914 Ohio from Carrollton, TX; 1915 Milburn from Ottawa, Ontario; 1916 Rauch & Lang from St. Louis, MO; 1917 Milburn from Toledo, OH; 1917 Detroit from Arlington, TX; 1921 Detroit from Saginaw, MI; and the 1929 Detroit from Hartford, WI. The electrics ranged from show room quality to needs a lot of work. All were running under their own power. As we found out on the road, the speed of the electric's varied from around 18 mph to around 35 mph. This spread us out on longer road trips.

After registering, all the men spent time comparing the drive trains, batteries used, and electric motors used in the autos. There were a lot of variations between the electrics. The one similarity, other than being electric, was all had tiller steering.

At 6:30 pm Gregg and Martie had grilled a BBQ for everyone. I should note that our registration fee included all the meals. That evening there were 2 trips planned in town. The first was to Don Binkleys Village Auto Sales. His showroom was packed with vintage automobilia, jukeboxes, and a spark plug collection. Out back was full of old cars. You could tell where his heart was. The next stop was at the home of Don Youngblood. He collects jukeboxes. There were over 20 ranging from one of the first ones that played 78's to one of the last ones built. Most were restored and fully operational.

Saturday was tour day. We were awoken early by the sound of sirens. I just figured someone had partied a little too late. 8:00 am was a continental breakfast. We arrived only to find that a block from the motel 2 restaurants and 2 stores were in flames. This was a true loss to the city.

At 9:00 am we were to head for Huron City. My son, Jonathan, had brought along a GPS with a portable antenna attached to the fender. They are very accurate for speed, distance, and mapping the course. On the way to Huron City, we passed a gated resort where at one time Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, Harvey Firestone, and Wm. Lyons Phelps had homes.

We made a short stop in Grindstone City. About 6 cars pulled in by the waterfront and were waiting for the last 2. We were standing talking when the last 2 went right on by. My son ran after them. After about 5 minutes we all piled back into the electrics and tried to catch them. We picked up an exhausted son about a mile down the road. He said they just kept going.

After about 10 miles on the roads, we arrived at the Huron City museum. Along the way one electric had lost a hubcap. The staff of the museum had a painted sign welcoming us and an area all roped off for us to park. The fees for touring the buildings and the grounds were included in the registration fee. They had a steam tractor running a portable saw mill making rough sawed planks and another saw mill set up making cedar shakes. All were belt driven. It was very interesting and a fun time was had by all.

At noon we departed for the home of Ron and Judy Burkhardt which was on the shores of Lake Huron. Both are divers and had interesting stories of the shipwrecks in the area. They had prepared a nice lunch for us, which was ready waiting for our arrival. At 1:30 pm we departed for Lighthouse Park. The Burkhardts went with us to talk about the history of the lighthouse. When we got there, there was a banner welcoming us from the AACA Saginaw Valley region. They also had

drinks and snacks for us to enjoy, along with their vintage autos. There again, lots of questions and pictures.

At around 3:00 pm, we headed back to Grindstone City for a stop at the general store, home of the Thumb's largest ice cream cone. When I saw what a double scoop looked like, I opted for the single scoop and could hardly finish that. With our bellies full we headed back to Port Austin for some local shopping before dinner. At 6:15 pm we headed to the Buccaneer Den for a relaxing meal. We conversed with the other members of the group and were sorry to hear that the missing hubcap, though looked for, was no where to be found.

It was dark as we headed back. The electric with the brightest taillight brought up the rear. Part way back one of the cars quit. It was too dark to diagnose the problem, so out came the towrope. We towed the car back to where the trailers were parked, which was also where the motor home was. There were 4 of us at that point along with a modern car bringing up the rear. That turned out to be the Sheriff. Someone had called and said there were some slow moving silent cars on the road without taillights. Lucky for us, he was more interested in all the electrics. No one was ticketed. We went to bed.

Sunday was a short day. At 8:30 am we met for juice down by the shore. Before we could leave one of the cars had a flat tire. We went back for the portable compressor and in no time had that problem rectified. We again talked, posed for a group picture, and took a walk down the pier at the marina.

At 11:30 am we went for brunch at the Garfield House. This was an old house turned into a restaurant. There was a mob of people, but we were all able to sit and enjoy our last meal as a group. Afterwards, we said our good-byes and everyone headed in a different direction. After the meal when we were outside talking, a gentleman was looking at the cars and asking questions. He was out walking Saturday and had picked up a hubcap that he had found alongside the road. It turned out to be the missing hubcap, which he was happy to present back to the rightful owner. Talk about a happy ending.

Throughout the entire tour everyone was happy to see us and made us feel welcome. I guess in a way we were the ones on display. After all, where else will you find 9 running electric cars in one place at one time. Our log recorded 1189 miles with the motor home and 47 miles on the electric with an average speed of 18 mph. The batteries held up well.

We took two more days going home with stops at the Henry Ford Museum and Lansing to visit some friends. It was a great tour for the whole family.