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PRE WAR BUICKS

The E-Magazine

BUICK CAR CLUB OF
AUSTRALIA

PRE WAR DIVISION



"Give us your opinion . . ."

Editor's Comment

We made it safely into the new format and trust that you don't dislike it too much. We mentioned a while back, and certainly again in our last edition, that our format was about to change.

Our front cover is a one off for this edition, with us crashing into the new format, a success, well let's wait and see about that.

You will notice we now have a slightly new look, and the most noticeable one will be that our three-column format has now been reduced to a single column in most instances.

Some readers have suggested that this is easier to read and so we thought it was worth a try.

Give us your opinion and we'll see if it continues.

The information regarding the annual Pre War Tour of South East Queensland is finalised and our recent email to readers refers.

In summary we are having a mid-week version of the Tour this year, and it is based around the Brisbane Valley town of Esk here in SEQ over 29 – 31 July 2026.

Staying at the motel attached to the Esk Caravan Park located at 16 Hassall Street in Esk. The phone number for the motel is 07 5424 1466. If you are not already booked, I wouldn't wait too long, this is a very popular location.

We have some feedback updates to pass on.

Firstly, the February cover car was not a Master it was a 1927-25 Standard Touring, our thanks to Larry DiBarry for that one.

While we're on that cover, Allan Brosnahan was able to search the UK records for the displayed number plate that reveal that the cover car was last registered in the UK back in 1997 or perhaps just not paid any Rego since then.



Finally, Paul White wrote in to advise that the Buick Panel van featured in February was in the Timbertown Museum, not only that but that the Timbertown Museum is now closed and with no information about the fate of that unusual pre war Buick available! Hopefully not lost forever.

We will be releasing another Special Edition in Mid-May and be following the travels of the Round the World Buick from 1925. Our thanks to Larry DiBarry who provided a couple of interesting photos from this trek including this one at Left, from the Southern States of the US on the return leg of the tour.

While you are waiting for that edition, please enjoy this current monthly edition of Pre War BUICKS.

1938 Fernandez and Darrin



Gooding and Co. were the lucky auctioneers who got to sell this magnificent 1929 Buick, Limited Series 80 Opera Brougham at the 15th of August 2009 Pebble Beach event.

Designed and crafted by Fernandez and Darrin for the Paris Auto Show of that year, when it crossed the block at Pebble Beach the bidding started at US\$200,000 and went up from there.

If you have a couple of minutes to spare check out the actual auction [HERE](#) and see it go for US\$460,000, plus commissions of course!

Petrol Queuing in Inverell

I certainly remember petrol queuing back in the seventies when the first of our numerous oil crisis struck here in Australia and around the world I expect, perhaps apart from the Arab nations where most of the oil was coming from.

I recall a story on the evening news of prices reaching \$1 per litre when the normal price should have been about 12-15 cents per litre. The news item seemed to focus more on a woman filling her Mercedes and when asked about the high price said that she hadn't noticed.

Anyhow, Jeff Randell sent us this photo of the Chester Street Garage in Inverell, taken in the early 1940's we believe. The latest car in the photo appears to be a 1939 model.

Fuel rationing in Australia was introduced in late 1940 and early 1941 in an endeavour to reduce consumption by 50%. It was only loosely enforced until 1942 when the aim was to strictly reduce consumption by one third. Ration tickets had an initial currency of six months, however due to the issues associated with forgery and hoarding, they were limited to a two-month life thereafter.

This photo is no doubt, or at least in most probability, taken just before rationing came into effect and the motorists were no doubt filling their cars and trucks to the limit of their capacity prior to the rationing impact of being able to obtain only very small quantities of petrol each month.

The Chester Street Garage existed for many years; however, it was demolished following a redevelopment proposal that saw it and neighbouring properties acquired for a development that had yet to be started on site as late as December 2024.



Rationing,
perhaps



“Ecstatic about
the
achievement”

The Holy Grail of Buick Cars

The records all agree that production Buick Model B number one was sold to Doctor Herbert H Hills in 1904.

The most plausible record of the Hills' Buick goes something like this.

After Walter Marr and Thomas Buick proved the worth of the Buick prototype Model B by travelling from Flint to Detroit and return, a distance of 115 miles, taking into account a wrong turn taken by Marr at Lapeer, in a time of 217 minutes, the car was rebodied, or perhaps we should say bodied, as the intercity travel was done on little more than a chassis.

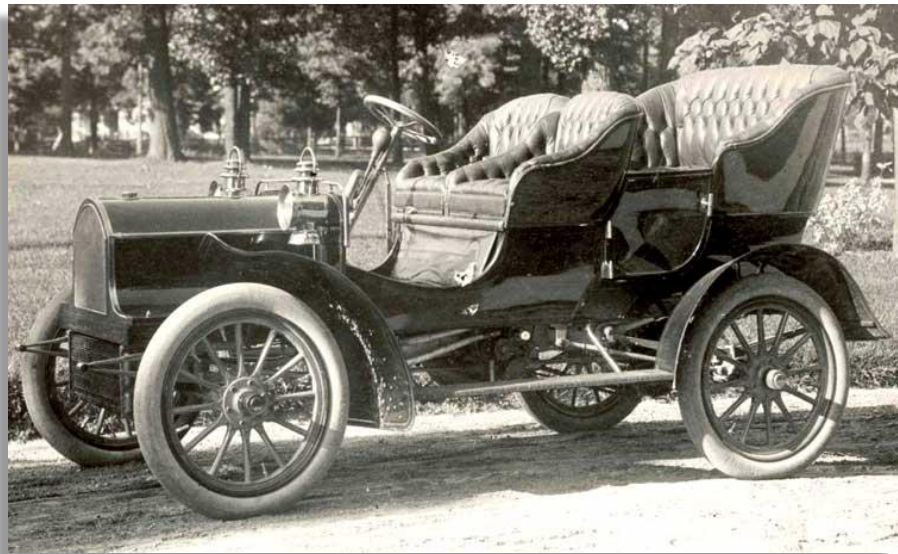
Ecstatic about the achievement, Marr drove directly to the local newspaper in main street, The Flint Journal, where local freelance photographer, Charles R Quay, captured the very well known photo of the two men and their machine. Both men splattered with mud from the journey.

Their success was reported in that local paper and having achieved the trip successfully the financiers backed Buick to commence commercial operations and very quickly seventeen orders were in hand.

It seems that Doctor Hill was actually number seventeen on the order list but was elevated to number one after agreeing that his Buick could be used for advertising purposes and as a demonstrator initially.

Dr Hills recorded in his diary that he took delivery of the Buick on 13 August 1904, and this followed him trialling the test car on a number of occasions prior to taking delivery.

Of course, this is where the mysteries surrounding this car begin.



Dr Herbert H. Hills' 1904 Model B Buick, believed to be the number one production Buick ever!

Hugh Dolnar was a reporter for the Cycle and Automobile Trade Journal who interviewed Dr Hills and wrote an article about the car. His interview was undertaken on 16 and 17 September and he quotes Hills as receiving the Buick on 27 July 1904, just fifteen days after the test drive to Detroit and return. Of course, both dates could be correct, and the first date was the date he began his ownership and the second the actual date he was allowed to keep it without encumbrance.

At that point Buick had already delivered sixteen vehicles.

Hills kept the Buick for four years before selling it to Buick superintendent, George Weber.

Weber then drove the Buick for a further three years before tearing it down to sell for parts.

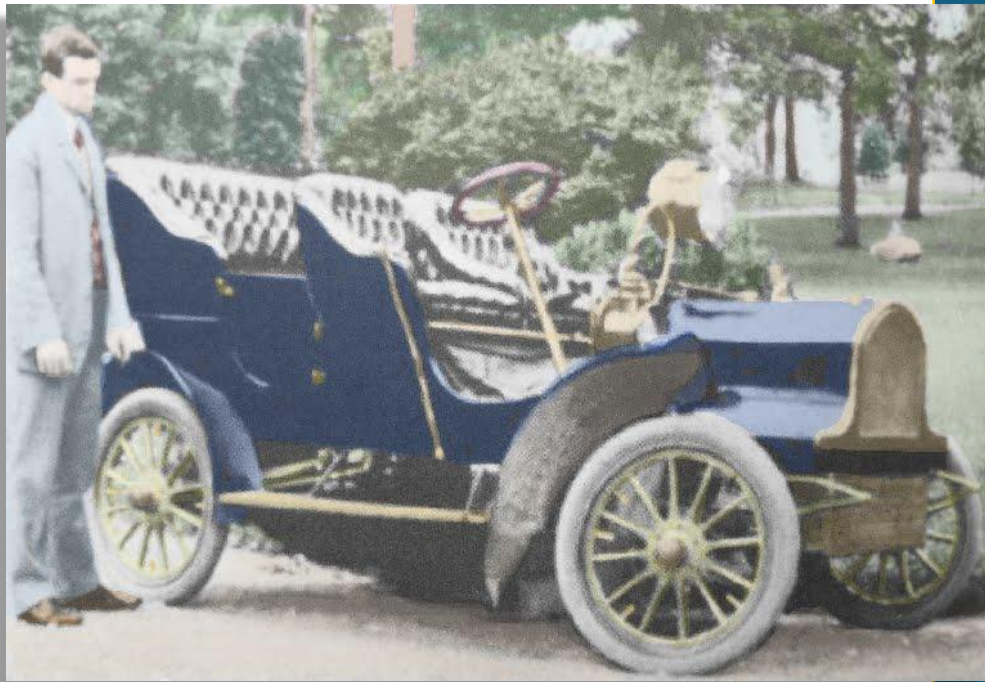
Option two suggests that the original test Model B Buick was shipped to Chicago, so it is unlikely to have been the car delivered to Dr Hills just fifteen days after the test run.

Option three, Billy Durant used the test Buick as his personal transport for driving around Genesee County during the summer of 1904, so again unlikely that it was converted to a driving car for Dr Hills.

Also reported was that Walter Marr had sighted the original test Buick engine being used as a water pump in Chicago some years later. This would lend some credence to the second option cited above.

On the basis of any of the stories, it seems unlikely that it remains as the Buick holy grail car that many might hope to find one day!

“unlikely . . .”



A colourised version of a photograph of Dr Hills and his Model B Buick

From Chassis to Automobile



“The Model B test car on 12 July becomes the Model B production car just a few days later..”

Is this the most famous Buick photo of all time?



The first production Model B with Begole and Whiting in the rear seat with Marr and Thomas Buick in the front seat.

The First Convertible Buick

The 1916 Model Six-D-46 Coupe was the first of Buick's true convertibles.

It featured plate glass windows that could be lowered and a folding top that, when raised, provided complete weather protection.

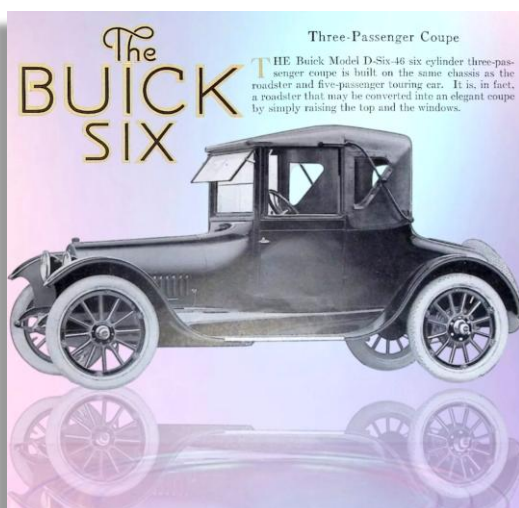
The selling price was US\$1,425 and Buick built only 1,443 examples of this car. Sales were no better next year, if anything they were worse, with only 485 examples made for 1917.

It is often suggested that this car was too advanced for its time.

By 1918 the Model 46 became a true hardtop with a non-removable top fitted and an increase in price of an additional US\$175.

In 1916 the Model Six-D-46 Coupe was powered by Buick's light six with a displacement of 224 cubic inches and it rode on a 115 inch wheelbase chassis.

Buick's first
convertible.



"The 1916 Buick Model D-46 is not merely a car; it's a rolling piece of history. Crafted during an era where automobiles began to overshadow the horse-drawn carriage, this classic Buick model stands as a testament to early 20th-century innovation. Originating from the esteemed Buick Motor Company, which was a cornerstone of the American automotive industry, the Model D-46 emerged at a time when cars were transitioning from luxury novelties to accessible transportation for the masses. A little-known fact that stirs the curiosity: amidst the turmoil of World War I, this vehicle offered a semblance of normalcy and progress on the home front."

Classic Car Guides

“having your own shovel definitely secured you work.”

1939 Caught in 1940 Storm

Here in Queensland, we are no strangers to the perils that are associated with tropical lows, cyclones. Winds of over 100 mph are common.

What we don't have to contend with is these winds combined with snow, such as was experienced in the USA across three eastern states in 1940.

In lieu of our flooding, the USA is likely to get snow drifts many feet high.

So it was that in September 1940 on Valentine's Day, cities, like Boston, were alerted to the weather forecast of rain and light snow, only to receive a sustained snow fall over many hours and with winds that reportedly hit 60 mph in some areas and over 100 mph at the top of the Empire State Building in New York.

Such a storm was always going to create chaos in Boston and many travellers found themselves unable to move around the city, let alone to get to their homes.

Ironically, the largest single group of people who were affected by the storm were 2000 attendees at the Sonja Henie show at the Boston Garden. Trains were unable to operate once signal and switching equipment became frozen. Indeed, the train services did not resume until 10 am the next morning!

The following day the city mobilised a workforce that numbered about 17,000 to dig the city out of the problem of snow drifts.

Such was the demand for workers that any man who showed up with his own shovel was given a job. The city actually ran out of shovels to issue to workers, so having your own shovel definitely secured you work!

All this came to mind when we received this 1940 photo taken in Boston in 1941. It depicts a 1939 Buick in Boston and possibly in the aftermath of the Valentine's Day Blizzard.



1927 Model 27-24

The Model 27-24 Standard Six Sport Roadster sold for US\$1,195 when new and weighed a very light 2,990 pounds.

Unlike its sister car, the 27-25 Standard Six Sport Tourer, which sold better overseas than in the US, the roadster sold 4,985 examples domestically, outselling the tourer by a handy 1,713 cars.

The reverse applies to the export models where the tourer sold a staggering 4,222 examples overseas against the roadster total of a mere 271.

Our feature car displays a very close likeness to the original paint scheme by Buick which included a Patrol Cream lower section with Courier Brown upper and black mudguards. Indeed, it may well be the factory scheme, however with printed and display views it's hard to be conclusive.

This year standard open cars included a range of factory accessories including speedometer, ammeter, electric horn, transmission lock, automatic windshield wipers, spare tyre carrier with rim (but no tyre) and a rear-view mirror.

Our feature car has added dual spares with rear mounting kit and optional wire wheels plus front and rear bumpers to compliment what is a very attractive car indeed!

For 1927, the standard Buicks rode on a 114.5-inch wheelbase and were powered by the 207 cubic-inch six cylinder OHV motor that delivered 60 brake horsepower.

This gave the standard roadster a power to weight ratio of approximately 50 lb./hp while the much larger Master Six Sport Roadster that year achieved a ratio of 49 lb./hp. So, similar performance was available in either series, you might imagine.

Of course, in the coming era of muscle cars, it would have been an easy operation to install the larger engine in the smaller car to get some real kick-in-the-back outcomes! By 1936 Buick was indulging in such behaviour with the Century models, but that's another story.

"it's hard to be conclusive."



Copyright and Patented . . . ?

I was of the naïve belief that you couldn't patent a car design, and that theory came to me as a youngster when I saw that Toyota had misappropriated the Mustang design to create an early model Celica car.

I may have of course just got that into my mind thinking that they clearly either had permission to use the design or you just couldn't patent a car design. I went with the second option at the time.

However, recently, and courtesy of Jim Forshey of California, I came across a Patent application for a vehicle design.

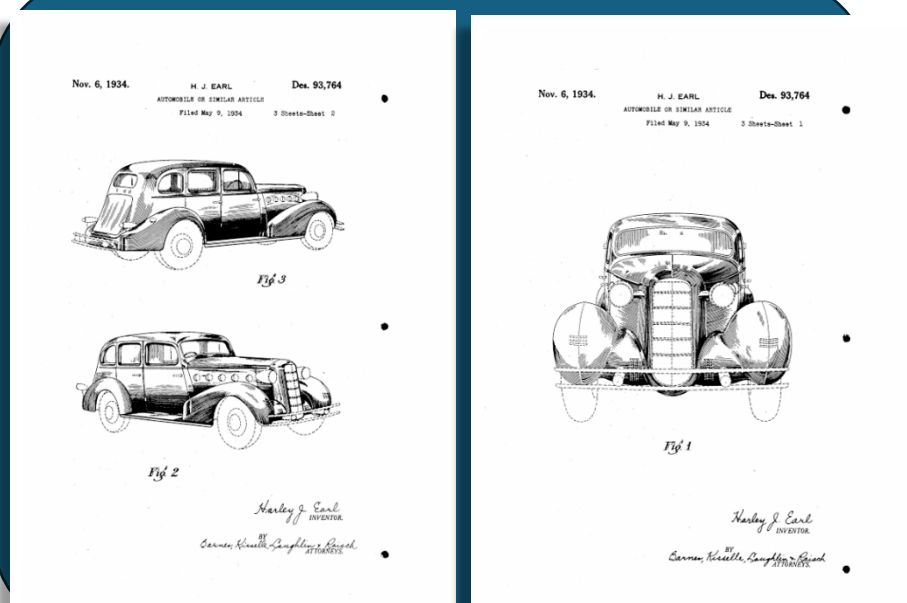
Dated May 9, 1934, and numbered Serial No. 51,731 the patent was good for 14 years and lodged on behalf of Harley J. Earl as assignor to General Motors Corporation.

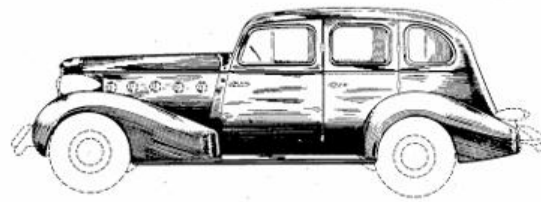
I'm not sure how good the coverage was but I can assure you that this design crept in to other brands of cars well before the 14 years expired.

The design itself depicts a 1934 LaSalle four door sedan, as evidenced by the five circular air reliefs in the bonnet side panels.

Naturally the design trickled down to the other GM Divisions over time, and it was the 1936 Model Buick that took advantage of the streamlined design and Art Deco look that Earle had patented.

Patent or not, take a look at 1936 Chrysler, 14 years means nothing I suggest.





1934 LaSalle
and 1936
Chrysler . . ?



1936 Chrysler – okay the air relief vents are different,
but is that enough to avoid the patent?

1927 27-24 Standard Six

“Sport
Roadster.”



Dunk Brothers Garage, Camden

Argyle Street is the thriving main street in Camden New South Wales, more so in the early part of the twentieth century than today perhaps given that Camden was bypassed by the main Hume Highway many years ago now.

In those days a garage saw plenty of business from passing traffic on their way to Melbourne and all places south, and north also I expect.

In that environment, garages like the one run by Dunk Brothers, did a good trade. Selling Shell petrol and repairing cars.

We have a photo of their tow truck bringing a Buick Touring in for repairs, possibly a 1925 or 1926 model, and there to greet it we can see the owners Jack and Laura Dunk standing by the tow truck.

While they are parked in front of the Clifton Brothers store, Dunk Brothers Garage is just to the left of the photo. We present a photo of the Clifton Brothers store also because it includes what appears to be a 1926 or 1927 Holden bodied Buick Deluxe Touring.

It seems there was no shortage of Buicks in Camden at the time!

"No shortage
of Buicks at
the time!"



“Apart from
the Buick
signage . . .”

A Buick Connection . . .

Charville is a town about 750 km west of Brisbane in Queensland and was gazette as a town in 1865. The population has seesawed over the years but currently sits just below 3000 inhabitants.

Sufficient folk lived there over the years for a GM dealership to be established in the form of Charville Motors Pty Ltd, as seen in our photo from the 1940-50s.

Apart from the Buick signage, we thought we would draw your attention to the Model 48-215 Holden, around which the staff are seen gathered.

Well-known here in Australia, but certainly less know overseas, the 48-215 Holden was based on a Chevrolet small car design from the late 1930s, so pre war, however it seems to have picked up the famous Buick waterfall grill first seen on the 1939 Buicks.

We thought that was enough of a connection for it to gain inclusion in this edition of Pre War BUICKS!



Annapolis Buick Company

No need to guess who the boss is in this photo of the Annapolis Buick Company located on West Street in Annapolis.

The well-dressed gentleman under the letter C in the sign, is the former Mayor and Senator, Louis N Phipps.

Phipps, born in 1896, worked as Buick salesman after returning from WWI where he served as a Private First Class.

Elected as the youngest ever Alderman in the local Ward Three Annapolis council elections, he went on to become Mayor in 1935.

In 1939 he was off to the US Senate as a Maryland state representative where he served for 16 years. He was later elected as Clerk of the Court in 1962 and remained until defeated in 1966.

Phipps passed in March 1984.

The company became Phipps Buick after it moved from this location to 1797 West Street in 1965 when the second generation became the dealer principal.

**"the youngest ever
Alderman . . ."**



“built by an
Australian.”

1918 At The Tea Gardens

The Japanese Tea Gardens in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park was originally constructed as part of the 1894 California Midwinter International Exposition displays.

These are the oldest public Japanese gardens in the US and covered 3 acres of land. They were originally conceived as a Japanese Village and Tea Garden.

Interestingly, at least to us from down under, is the fact that it was built by an Australian by the name of George Turner Marsh.

Marsh hired Japanese workers to construct the site, no doubt adding a degree of authenticity to the facility at the same time.

After the Expo ended, Marsh sold his concession to the city of San Francisco for US \$4,500 which is equivalent to about US\$170,000 today.

For the 1918 model year the Buick coupe came with a fixed top rather than the convertible top of the previous year. This change dramatically impacted sales, with an increase from 485 in 1917 to 2,965 this year.

These coupes were certainly not for the poor, having an asking price of US\$1,695 making the coupe Buick's third most expensive model behind the E-50 and E-47 enclosed sedans.

For 1918 the Buick six-cylinder line of cars rode on a newly designed 118-inch wheelbase chassis powered by the newly introduced 242 cubic-inch motor and using the equally newly introduced multi-plate clutch which replaced the previous cone clutch arrangement. Later that year another new and larger chassis was introduced for the E-49 Touring and E-50 Sedan models, which was a 124-inch chassis.



Just US\$50 Down!

The Howard Motor Company dominated Buick sales in California with branches all over the state of California and indeed the entire west coast of the US where they held the rights to sell Buick cars.

Their efforts to sell Buick cars also saw Buick inserted into many, many Hollywood films during the first half of the twentieth century, all to their sales advantage of course!

So, it comes as no surprise that just eleven miles north-west of Los Angeles, in Pasadena, the Howard Motor Company had yet another one of their many dealer outlets packed with desirable, film-friendly Buick cars, plus some other notables too, of course.

This used car lot features a number of Buick cars, some with prices marked on their windscreens. How about a 1928 sedan for just US\$50 deposit.

Where's that time machine, I'm off to Howards!

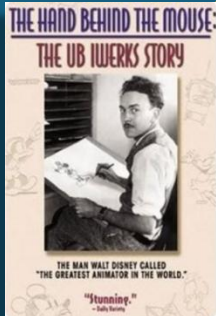
You might like to look through the range on display to select your next pre war Buick.

The year is 1931 and the lot is at 1231 East Colorado, Pasadena CA.

**“Where’s my
time machine . . .”**



Famously Unknown



“The Hand Behind The Mouse.”

What could be more impressive than a 1941 Buick convertible with a ciniphotograhers on board?

This photo was taken at the Naval Air Station at North Island, San Diego CA around 1943 and apart from featuring planes, and of course that wonderful Buick, it also features possibly the most famous unknown cartoonist in the entire USA. No it's not Walt Disney, but you almost got it.

It's Ubbe Ert “Ub” Iwerks.

I hear you ask, who??

Ub was working with Walt Disney at the start of their careers and it was Ub who assisted Walt Disney in developing the design for the famous Mickey Mouse image and hand drew the first few Disney cartoons, on his own!

A prodigious cartoonist he could turn out hundreds of images in a day, every day. In fact he completed the Steam Boat Willie cartoon in just two weeks.

Ub was born in Kansas City, Missouri on 24th March 1901 and was only 27 when Steam Boat Willie hit the screens.

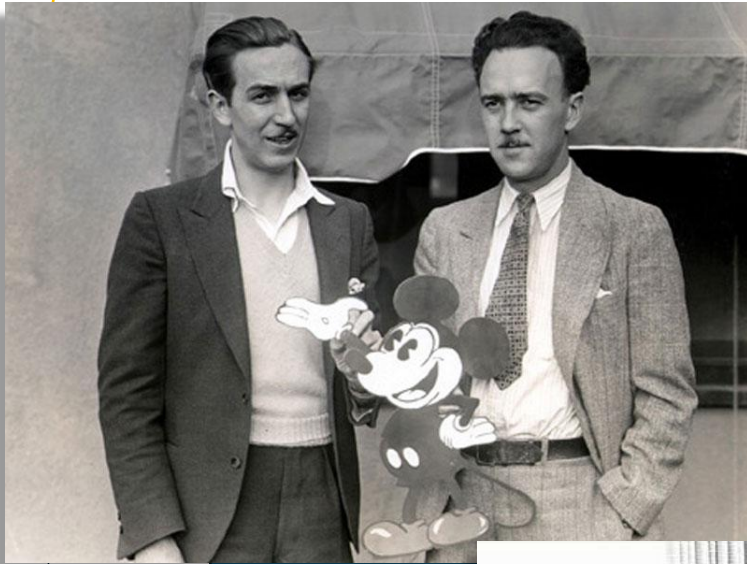
His life is recorded in a biography titled, unsurprisingly, *The Hand Behind The Mouse: The Ub Iwerks Story*.

Ub was inducted into the Disney Hall of Fame in 1986 and lived to the age of 70 years, passing on 7 July 1971.

The Buick on the other hand has suffered an unknown fate, hopefully it is still going strong, somewhere in the US, or even beyond!



Here's a couple pf Ub Iwerks memories for you to enjoy . . .



Left: Walt Disney and Ub Iwerks early in their careers.

Below: Walt Disney, Ub Iwerks, and Les Clark



Right: draft drawing for Steam Boat Willie



An unusual
windscreen
stanchion.

Any Takers?

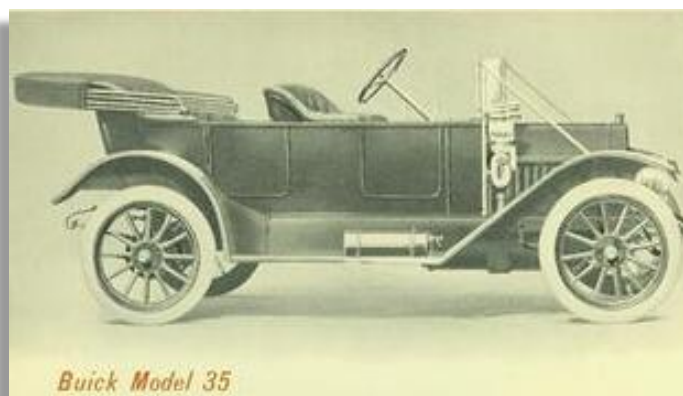
At the risk of confusing our Models again, we are calling this 1912 Touring a Model 35.

In any event, what we are interested in, in this case, is the windscreen stanchion.

Keen enthusiasts will recall that all early model Buicks braced the available windscreen by tying the top of the lower half of the windscreen to the front chassis rails.

You will of course note that the windscreen on the photographed Buick is baced in the opposite direction, and to the body.

We are going to make the bold assumption that this could be an aftermarket screen, however we seek any input that you may have that would explain this seemingly odd windscreen brace. Any takers?



How the factory saw it.

Hawaiian Buick Dealership

These interesting photos were taken in Hawaii, and possibly in 1927 as the advertising poster in the window, just behind the gentleman's left shoulder, states that the 24th year Buick is coming. So, if the Silver Anniversary year was the 1929 model, we can assume that the 24th year model must be the 1928 Buicks, which were released in the latter half of 1927.



Coming!

“Grandpa was a
blacksmith . . . “

Grandpa's Buick 1910 Model 10

We came across an account of a Model 10 Buick owned by the Siebler family which came with an informative story of the history of that car from purchase, second hand as a doctor's trade in at the local Buick dealership where the new owner worked, through until the 2004 Buick Nationals.

We've included both the story and some of the photos for your information and enjoyment.

My grandfather's very first car was a used 1910 Buick Model 10, Toy Tonneau. Grandpa was a blacksmith who had gone to work as a mechanic for the Buick Dealership in Aurora, Nebraska. In 1917, while working at the dealership, he bought the vehicle from the doctor who would later deliver my dad. However, the car did not come with a top, and Grandpa did not want to mess with "irons." So, he removed the Tonneau body and fastened a Ford Model T body onto the Buick chassis. He also removed the original planetary transmission and replaced it with a Buick 3 speed selective so the shifter would be inside. Then, in the late twenties, Grandpa bought his second car, a 1927 Buick, and the Model 10 was retired to the Barn.



Grandma holding my Dad on the 1910 Buick with "T" body. Taken on family farm north of Boelus, Nebraska August 1920.

In the mid-thirties, my dad decided it would be fun to start driving the Model 10. He removed the Ford body, installed a runabout seat for the driver (no back seat), moved the steering wheel to the left side, and drove the car around town like any normal, responsible, teenage boy. It wasn't long before the Sherman County Sheriff told Dad to either make the car street legal or park it. Dad didn't have the necessary money, so the "buggy" was put back on blocks in the garage behind their house in Loup City, Nebraska.

Following WWII, Grandpa decided he would restore the car back to what he remembered to be its "factory" condition. By now many of the original parts were missing, so he made new ones, such as the front and back fenders. He moved the steering wheel back to right. He built the body box and firewall. He fabricated a new radiator coving. He found some period seats and mounted them to the chassis along with some acetylene headlights. After he finished his restoration of the Buick, Grandpa enjoyed driving the car until his death in 1954.



Grandpa with the "restored" Buick.
Loup City, Nebraska. Summer, 1951.

"Dad put the
car up on
blocks . . "

After Grandpa died, Dad put the car up on blocks in the garage behind the Loup City house where it stayed for another 43 years. Only on rare occasions, when my dad, mom, sister and I would travel to Nebraska from Texas for family vacations, we would take it out of the garage for a spin around the block or to drive in a parade.

In 1997, I trailered the Buick from Nebraska to Texas. For the last several years, I have been about the business of acquiring original parts for a more authentic restoration. But I'm not sure I will ever completely undo all the work my grandpa did. My dad and I kinda like driving the Buick just the way it is.



Me behind the wheel . Taken in front of my grand-parents' house
in Loup City Nebraska. August 1957

Grandpa's Buick in 2004

1910 Model 10



The Model 10 at the Buick Club National. June 2004.



Taking the "buggy" for a Sunday afternoon drive.

Miss Buick in a 1928 Model 54

Here's one for the researchers amongst us.

This 1928 Buick Master Six Sport Roadster displaying a pair of **Miss Buick** pennants and carrying two very attractive ladies must be holding onto a very interesting story.

We can't figure it out however!

The inscription in the lower left-hand corner in part seems to read:

*To Our Old Pal Do(ris?)
From
The Tor???*

We guessed at the *Doris* name, but do you know more? Let us know here at Pre War BUICKS.



What a ride!

What Next in the E-Magazine

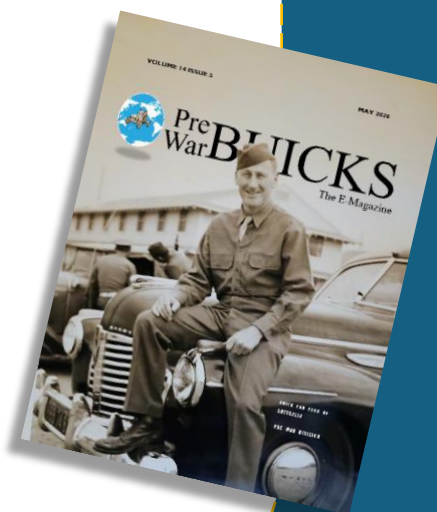
Next month we kick off a military focused edition with Monty's tour of New Zealand and his apparent liking for Buicks, big ones at that.

We double up on the military feel when we uncover the matter of the Germans also having a liking for Buicks. Once again, the big ones!

A quick peek back to 1907, and a clutch of Model Gs, before again darting across the Tasman to a well-known wrecking yard that we will feature in a coming Special Edition of Pre War BUICKS.

More military follows, firstly the US Navy then off to China.

We're all over the place in next month's Pre War BUICKS, see you then.



The Buick Car Club of Australia Qld Inc.

Web:

<https://www.buickcarclubqld.com.au/>

When Better Automobiles Were Built
Buick Will Built Them, Pre War

This e-magazine is produced under the auspices of the Buick Car Club of Australia Qld Inc. to cater for the needs of car enthusiasts with an interest in Pre War Buicks.

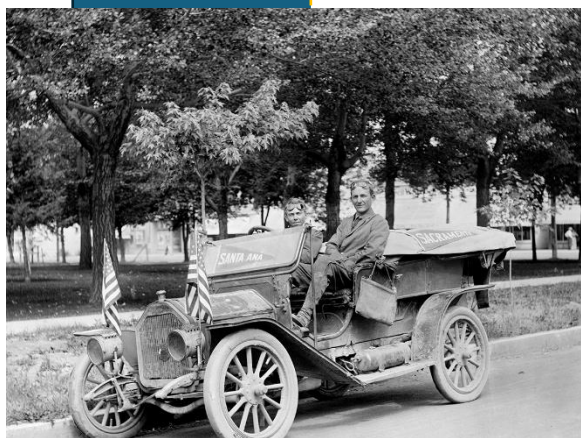
It is a medium created for the exchange of stories and ideas. Its aim is to support enthusiasts in the preservation and use of the Buick Automobiles built between 1903 and the end of 1941.

The editors welcome contributions at prewarbuicks@gmail.com

The editors reserve the right to include submitted articles or not at their discretion.

Previous editions of the eMagazine are available here: [On Line Magazine](#)

The Last Word in Where to Now?



This mud-splattered 1910 Model 10 Toy Tonneau Buick looks more like a utility than a touring car in this photo.

Laden with all manner of who-knows-what, it proudly bears pennants for Santa Ana and Sacramento and thus we assume it to be a California photo around the time of when this Buick would have been fairly new.

The flags suggest a level of patriotism and may even indicate that it was taken on or near the 4th July, or perhaps just undertaking a perilous journey across some unknown track from hither to yonder. I'm for the latter in this case, just not sure where to or from. Perhaps you know?

Importantly, the driver and passenger can still smile, well a grimace perhaps, so it's all good in the Model 10 this time 'round!