

HUDSONOTES

Column of Mechanical Miscellany
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HOT TIMES

IT WAS A LONG, hot summer, but I did manage to attend a number of interesting old-car (and old-tractor) shows in our area this year. The big annual event at Iola, Wisconsin in mid-July found me barely able to breathe in the intense heat that day, let alone walk around and look at vehicles or parts. Needless to say, this did not stop me nor the many hundreds of other old-car devotees, although it may have slowed us a trifle. As planned, I even took a few notes:

Special efforts were made to have both the first and the last years of Hudson production represented at Iola '95. The oldest model, '09, belonged to Eldon Hostetler, Indiana, and was displayed by him. Very impressive with its polished brass trim and two-tone green paint with striping, this car featured right-hand drive (as did many other early U. S. models), and a tall two-piece folding windshield. Ignition coil box was mounted on the dashboard, and held four coils—one for each individual cylinder. Also, the engine had twin ignition, with one set of spark plugs fired by battery power, and the other by the car's magneto. Evidently this system contributed to the well-known reliability of early Hudsons.

The car's equipment included acetylene headlights (with gas generator) and kerosene sidelamps; also a big bulb horn and the optional single "mother-in-law" rear seat.

Jan Appenzeller, who has done much of the restoration work on Eldon's cars, showed me another gem from the collection: a beautiful '46 Hudson convertible

(see September/October *White Triangle News*, page 6), bright red with matching leather upholstery. New red carpeting reminds us that original floor mats (which had carpet inserts on these models) may be practically impossible to find today. Underhood, the flathead Eight looked friendly and familiar. No Drive-Master, but a pair of foglights mounted neatly in the grille cavity. Sure wish I could have had a ride in this car, but it is in showpiece condition and probably hauls few passengers.

STANDING BESIDE THE old '09 was a model from Hudson's final year: a well-preserved red-and-white '57 Hornet 4-door owned by Sam Roth, Ohio. The car appeared original, including the "continental" rear spare-tire mount (real, not phony), although the owner stated that the front-wheel brakes have been replaced by later disc units which he says are more reliable (!). Also noted were the radial-ply tires; it is said that the car was "all over the road" with standard bias-ply. This is the first time your columnist has heard either of these complaints about any Hudson (except in cases of bad suspension wear or misalignment, or defective tires)—but the owner deserves credit for preserving, and driving, an interesting rare model often neglected by Hudson enthusiasts.

Displayed in the same tent at Iola was a spectacular cream-colored '29 Hudson roadster belonging to Edward Davies, Wisconsin. It looked highly authentic to me, though Ed pointed out the '28 radiator cap ornament. Accessories include a Jay Lubricator top oiler (used with Marvel/Oil); and the engine of course is Hudson's big F-head Six, complete with vacuum feed tank (no substitute fuel pump!). Headlights are Parabeam, used along with harmonizing Trippe accessory driving lamps. This

is another of those vehicles at which one stares round-eyed and wishes he could ride in or take for a drive.

The meet at Iola is famous for its sheer (and ever-growing) size, and for its many parts vendors, but unfortunately not many Hudson parts have been seen there in recent years.

IN SUMMER 1994 I made the acquaintance of Robert Plummer, Wisconsin, and his car collection including a very neat dark-blue '29 Essex sedan. The car was lively and also rode surprisingly well, though of course with typical Essex gearing it was not built for top speed. There was also slight leakage from a cracked carburetor. This year I was happy to meet Bob and the Essex once more, at the 1995 Appleton, Wisconsin old-car show in late July, and to note that a replacement carburetor had been found (not easy, since this apparently was a one-year part).

The annual Appleton show is held in a handsome park, features free spectator admission, and is one of our state's best—except for one real flaw: a dearth of other Hudson-built vehicles, especially noticeable this year. One classic Brand X present was a silver-gray '36 Cord. This model is of special interest since its Bendix vacuum/electric gearshift system is nearly the same as Hudson/Terraplane's Electric Hand. The owner told me that he has had little or no trouble with this system except for needing to make up one substitute electric switch. (Making up a replacement for the cracked supercharger housing was a far more costly problem.)

Temperatures were fairly moderate at the 1995 Kiwanis-sponsored Mantowoc, Wisconsin car show in August. Several dozen beautiful old vehicles (including the Cord) were again on hand,

along with some good unrestored specimens and an acre or so of the usual Big Three...but here too, Hudsons and Hudson parts were scarce indeed. An all-out downpour in late afternoon put the watertightness of collector cars and convertible tops to a severe test.

How well are Hudsons represented at the "all-make" old-car shows in your area? We're always interested in hearing what HET members and local chapters can accomplish in this direction.

CHILTON, Wisconsin's annual steam-engine and old-tractor show is one of several held in this area of the state. Except for the big steamers (which are older), most of the equipment displayed at these shows belongs to an era of farming in Wisconsin very similar to that found by Ken Poynter (September/October *White Triangle News*) at his family's "old Kentucky home." Ken does not tell us whether he ever drove a team of draft horses—I last did in the late '50's—and the shows usually include a few teams and various horsedrawn machines. Then too, the row of 1-cylinder "hit-and-miss" gasoline engines on display reminded me of the one (Economy, from Sears) which pumped our water at home for years; and since my grandfather was first in our neighborhood to buy a milking machine, c. '23 (Perfection), and the farm had no electric power until 1931, this engine was also used to operate the vacuum pump.

As with old cars, the appeal of these shows is partly historical and partly nostalgic. Most of us from farms remember the old tractors very well, especially the ones on which we first learned to drive (in my case a McCormick-Deering 10-20, about a '34). I did look doubtfully at the exhaust system on

one 10-20 at the show, but the owner assured me that it was stock on later production.

IT WAS GOOD to receive the new HET Club Roster this summer, even though the editors gave me a telephone number, despite my specific request (I have no telephone). One suggestion which would help to make future Rosters much

easier to use would be to include a "guide word" or syllable at the top of each page, as is done in telephone books and dictionaries.

TO ALL FAITHFUL Hudson (and even Brand X) old-car enthusiasts: best wishes for a happy holiday season and a good 1996!