

Hudsonotes

Summertime Briefs

By George Schmidt

WITH HARVEST SEASON I am again reminded of the "Brand X Improvement" bumper stickers which were especially popular a few years ago reading MY OTHER CAR IS A HUDSON (or some other patrician vehicle). My own favorite—next to the Hudson version—was one printed for farmers: MY OTHER CAR IS A JOHN DEERE SELF-PROPELLED COMBINE.

SUMMER TIRE TIP: Water in tires and tubes, which causes serious problems of imbalance and pressure instability, most often enters from the tank of an air compressor which has not been drained recently, and which probably also lacks moisture traps in the outlet line. As a quick check before using any air hose, it is well to depress the center button of the tire chuck with a key tip or small tool to ascertain that at least there is no visible water spray.

Those coin-operated tire air dispensers might be expected not to present water problems, since they apparently lack reserve tanks, and only pump air while actually in use. However, your columnist was surprised recently to discover that these coin-op units, too, may occasionally spray water, especially in humid weather, and so must be used with due caution.

As for other sources, the air from an auto body shop hose is likely to be dry, since this is essential for paint spraying. And if one needs exercise, the classic hand pump is another safe source. Bear

in mind, however, that any air reserve tank, whether portable or perhaps used with a compressor in the home shop, does need to be drained occasionally.

Aerosol-type cans of compressed inert gas for emergency tire inflation have been available for some time. This is a safe source but a rather costly one.

THAT CENTERSPREAD photo in the *Hudson Triangle* issue included with the March/April WTN is quite interesting, even if not yet offering serious competition to *Playboy* or the like. Personally, however, I prefer 'em a bit older, if still in good shape...that is...I mean the car, of course.

THE OTHER CENTER pages in recent WTN issues make it very clear that most planners of our regional and national HET Club meets still have no intention whatever of trying to make these events affordable for the typical H-E-T member or family. Keep up the good work...in a few years it should be possible to weed out all but the richer (or more pretentious) members of the club. However—unless our meet planners are more interested in supporting the motel industry than they are in Hudsons, I'd say that they could at least offer a list of inexpensive fast-food sources near the meet site, rather than promoting the banquet meals which are notorious for absurd prices and mediocre quality (\$30 for "prime rib"—ugh). Also, any chapter that cannot find a better bar-

gain in lodging than \$81-plus per hotel room should leave meet sponsorship to more competent hands, I'd suggest.

BRIGHT CHROME PLASTIC tape, available in widths up to about 4 inches, is not an original component of any Hudson, but it can occasionally be helpful for covering shabby moldings and other trim parts which do not have much compound (3-dimensional) curvature, for a few years of extra use until the parts can be replaced or re-plated. At present the two halves of the lower grille bar on my '50 C8 are covered in this way, and they look quite authentic except upon very close examination. Ends of tape are concealed under the center coupling piece and the two parking light frames (which are in good condition).

ORIGINAL MUFFLER CLAMPS on Hudson stepdowns—the kind with U-bolt and saddle—where of regular-duty size (5/16" bolt diameter, not heavy-duty 3/8"), and had fine threads, so that they were often re-useable, since those are not as easily twisted off as the deeper coarse threads. Recently I was fortunate in finding two of these clamps at a rummage sale, Wohlert brand, new in their boxes. Rummage sales are occasionally also a source for good usable 15-inch bias-ply tires, various 6-volt light bulbs, and the like. I found a #4030 sealed-beam headlamp, new in its box, for 25¢ at a sale last year.

THE 12-24 THREAD SIZE for screws and nuts is no longer a common one, but it was used for many years on automobiles, including the clinch nuts inside Hudson stepdown doors which hold window regulators and inner door handles in place. Also, the

hold window regulators and inner door handles in place. Also, the replacement bodyshop-type retain-er clips for wide trim moldings (such as those on 1948-51 Commodore and Hornet rocker panels and skirts) often have 12-24 studs, which require matching nuts, perhaps sold separately (don't try to use metric ones). If the oblong hole in the panel is too large for this style of clip, add a wide flat washer along with lockwasher and nut. Use grease or anti-seize compound on the threads, and non-hardening body putty to seal around the flat washer.

IF A TORQUE WRENCH must be used at somewhat of an angle, requiring a U-joint at the wrench socket, note that its accuracy will be compromised to some degree. Since the universal joints on tools are not constant-velocity type, they are not constant-torque either except when held in a perfectly straight line.

EXPOSED BRAKE CABLES should not require splicing or patching, but if this becomes necessary because the correct replacement length is not available, it can usually be done provided the cable is not weakened by rust, and there is an overlap of 4 inches or more for splicing. In that case, ordinary cable splicers—in the correct size, and of the type with a small U-bolt and molded metal yoke—can be used. Grease the cable well to retard rust, and then install not one cable clamp, but two or three of them in a row for extra security. Use good lockwashers on all nuts, and tighten as much as can be done without damaging cable. Test brakes several times—hard—on an unobstructed road; and check the cable splices again after a few intervals of normal use. This of course is a try-at-your-own-risk repair

method. It has worked OK in the past, and may be especially useful in an emergency—but please do not sue me (or the H-E-T Club) if a problem should occur.

Check also the external sheaths of Bendix-type brake cables, especially the outer spiral wire wrapping. A few occasional squirts of penetrating oil will help maintain flexibility and stop rusting of sheaths.

A FRIEND IS restoring a '50 Pontiac straight-8 hardtop. I've been resisting the temptation to steal his fan belt although it is the same size as that used on Hudson stepdown 8's and 6's, 1948 and up.

SEATBELTS AND shoulder harnesses are great equalizers. They can give you practically the same claustrophobia, discomfort, and inconvenience in a big roomy Hudson-size car as you would endure inside one of today's squashable subcompacts.

THIS IS OLD-CAR show season, and as mentioned in previous columns, many local all-make shows would be much improve by the presence of a few more Hudson-built vehicles. Here is a valuable service, both to the Hudson hobby and to the general public, which you can help to provide. One problem at some of these meets has been that a few exhibitors (of Hudsons and other cars) sometimes pull out early in the afternoon, when the late showgoers are still arriving. For best effect it is important to keep your car in place until the end of the show.

ELECTRICAL ACCESSORIES, of a car's own style and era (and voltage) can add much to a collector vehicle—if they are properly installed. Note that practically all of

them can be connected without cutting into the car's wiring harness, whether an original or a careful reproduction. It is usually better to make up a short jumper wire (of a gauge no lighter than the original wiring), with bullet terminals, and either Y-style, or else to be used with a 3-way connector. Remember, too, that 6-volt devices require heavier wiring than equivalent 12-volt ones, and sometimes an added fuse (glass cartridge, in-line) for the accessory is also advisable. For those who like to get wired (!), this work should present no real problem, unless perhaps in finding enough good wire with authentic braided insulation. (See also Index, July/August '99 WTN, p. 33.)

THE HUDSON NAME has never been exclusively automotive. A town in Wisconsin is named Hudson, and there may be several more in other states. There were Hudson sprayers, keys, and other products—not to mention the Hudson department store, and famed explorer Hendrik Hudson. I've wondered whether those ships on the car's logo perhaps represented his Half Moon, but that vessel apparently had more than two masts (see May/June WTN, pg. 6). Also, according to a recent book picturing collectible gasoline-pump light globes, there was a Hudson Oil Co. in Kansas City, circa 1930's. Readers can no doubt tell us of additional interesting uses of the Hudson name over the years. We'll report later.

HOPE YOU'VE HAD a happy and bang up (but crashless) Independence Day holiday!

▼
George Schmidt can only be reached by mail; you may write him at 451 Elizabeth Street, Mishicot, WI 54228.