



## FUR RONDY AND ANTIQUE CARS

By Wilma Vinton

On February 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, Willy and I along with the Benham's and Camarata's, made the trip to Fur Rondy celebrations and the Antique Auto Musers' Car Show in Anchorage.

The day of the Fur Rondy parade in downtown Anchorage was a bit nippy and some of the vehicles had to be towed rather than driven.



A green 1956 T-bird, which was quite the hit with the crowd won 1<sup>st</sup> prize in float division.

Alaska Sales and Service sponsored the Car Musers' Car Show. They allowed the Musher's to display their cars in the shop as well as the show room all weekend.



Jan Shurman wore period clothing while showing her 1950 Ford 4-door.



There was also a military car display at the Chevy Dealer. Sherry had her picture taken in front of a very patriotic vehicle.



Not to be outdone by the Auto Musher, they also had folks in costume. The "doughboy" Don Kitchen of Eagle River posed with his 1942 M3 A1 White Scout.



Of course, Paul and Willy had to check out the restoration photo album to see how it was done!



On Saturday we were joined the Auto Musher's at Club 68 for some vittles and fiddlers. Live music was provided. The food was great, and the company superb!

## SIGNS OF THE TIMES

By Cindy Johnson

As winter is reluctantly turning into yet another spring, I find myself reminiscing about the summer vacations I enjoyed with my family as a child in the 50's. Most of us remember those days when mom and dad threw the kids into the backseat of the car (usually at some ungodly hour) and headed out for an exciting summer road trip. Gas was \$0.25 or less a gallon at gas stations where real, working mechanics actually pumped your gas. Motels were family owned then, and if you were really lucky you'd sometimes find one that had a swimming pool. All along the road, we'd see billboards proclaiming things like, "Visit Wall Drug. Free Ice Water", "See Rock City!" or "The World's Largest Ball of String Ahead!" On a very rare occasion dad would actually stop and let us waste some of that precious "gotta get there" time to see some local attraction. But, one of the fondest memories I have of those road trips didn't even require stopping the car. I remember most fondly the fun we had reading Burma Shave signs flying by as we sped down the highway. Lined up four or five in a row, the signs would impart observations about life, love or road safety with wit and humor. Even though the signs were here and gone in seconds, we couldn't wait until we saw the next one!

Burma Shave signs were a ubiquitous sight on American roads and highways until 1963. They first appeared in 1925 on two roads outside of Minneapolis, Minnesota. The Odell family was



having difficulty marketing its brushless shaving cream, because there were a lot of competing products on the market at the time. The Odell's son, Alan, was working as the company's traveling salesman. He was weary of being away from home and meeting with such limited success. So, he came up with an idea to use road signs for advertising. He presented his idea to his father who instantly said, "No!" because he thought his son was just being lazy.

But Alan persisted and his father finally gave him \$200 to give his signs a try. The investment worked and orders starting coming in for Burma Shave within a month. By 1926, the company that nearly went broke the previous year, had incorporated and raised capital from the sale of 49% of its stock. Burma Shave became so successful, that the company was virtually unaffected by the Great Depression of the 1930's.

The little signs that "worked" quickly spread throughout the Midwest and beyond, to almost every state in the U.S., proclaiming wisdom, humor and providing an interesting diversion for the road weary. How could a young man possibly succeed with the ladies without knowing, "*If you think she likes your bristles, walk bare-footed through some thistles*", or, "*A chin where barbed wire bristles stand is bound to be a no Ma'am's land*"? Burma Shaves also gave safety tips such as, "*Past school houses, take it slow to let the little shavers grow*", and "*Is he lonesome or just blind, this guy who drives too close behind?*"

Writing these slogans eventually became difficult, so an annual contest was started that allowed people to send in their verses and win a \$100 prize. Like everything else about the little signs, the contests were a tremendous success. In some years 50,000 entries were submitted!

Burma Shave signs were removed from American highways in 1963 when the company was purchased by the Phillip Morris Corporation. There was quite a stir in the media about the end of what had become an American institution. The little signs had worked beyond anyone's wildest dreams and became a nostalgic part of American automotive history. They had survived the ravages of vandals, gunshots, small animals and college students to become some of the most successful advertising ever devised.

There were 600 Burma Shave rhymes. Today one Burma Shave sign is hung in the Smithsonian Museum. To see Burma Shaves online go to: <http://www.fiftiesweb.com/burma1.htm>. And, please enjoy some of the rhymes on the next page.

*Burma Shave was*

*Such a boom*

*They skipped the bride*

*And kissed the groom*

*He tried to cross*

*As fast train neared*

*Death didn't draft him*

*He volunteered*

*She put the bullet*

*Through his hat*

*But he's had*

*Closer shades than that!*

*The hero was brave and strong*

*And villin'*

*She felt his chin --*

*And wed the villan*

*Burma Shave*

**MARCH BIRTHDAYS - BELATED**

- 03 CONNIE JEGLUM
- 05 RAY MCLEOD
- 10 GARY NASH
- 11 DONNA KRIER
- 21 ROBY MCHONE
- 28 LORAN BENHAM
- 28 JOYCE CHACE

**APRIL BIRTHDAYS**

- 01 JONI ELLSWORTH
- 03 ROY WILBER
- 04 LARRY BENNETT
- 04 DICK SLEEP
- 07 RUDY DOMKE
- 10 MARK COSSON
- 14 RON FREY
- 14 NANCY PETERSON
- 15 WILMA VINTON
- 20 KEN UZZELL
- 21 PAUL CAMARATA
- 22 GEORGE CLAYTON
- 24 DON OINES
- 26 BETTY BORG
- 26 DORIS CASEY
- 27 MARION BENHAM

**APRIL ANNIVERSARIES**

- 06 ROBY & HAZEL MCHONE
- 11 HERMAN & PENNY HAUCK



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**TR UPDATE FROM RON ALLEN:**

“The sealer coat and first primer coat are now on the car. It looks pretty good. I really needed to see a dramatic positive change to charge my batteries. Next is wet sanding and fixing all the mistakes, then more primer, more sanding and finally red paint and buffing. After that there is reassembly of various parts, interior, etc. I bought license plates for it, so the end of this project is realistically near. I am enjoying it, but if I were doing this for a living I would be starving.” Ron



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### Next Meeting-Thurs

**April 14 6pm-Dinner 7pm-Meeting**  
**PLAYERS GRILL**  
**1694 AIRPORT RD, FBKS**  
*(Across from Goldstream Theaters)*

### Newsletter Deadline

All materials for the newsletter must be in by  
 the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month for the following  
 month.

Email [chisana@yahoo.com](mailto:chisana@yahoo.com) OR  
 Mail to return address on this newsletter

*Have a story about how you got your car? A  
 favorite trip? A real repair hassle? Send it in!*

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