

FAIRBANKS

Vernon L. Nash

ALASKA



Antique Automobile Club of America

ON THE DEMPSTER HIGHWAY
by Scott Grundy

I've toyed with the idea of a road trip up the scenic Dempster Highway to Inuvik, NWT, for several years, but envisioned doing so in our truck and camper, not an unproven 1955 Plymouth. When we learned that the Antique Auto Musers of Anchorage were planning a trip to Inuvik, three couples from our club had to participate. Bill and Joyce Chace drove their 1952 Plymouth Cranbrook, and "Squeaky" and Marion Benham drove their '60 T-Bird! We drove our newly acquired '55 Plymouth four door that I worked on for two months prior to the trip to hopefully render her

dependable.

On June 27, 2008, with some apprehension, we embarked on the planned ten day 2,500 mile trip in a vehicle with which we had only 150 miles experience. The company of the Chaces' Plymouth was appreciated and comforting. We headed toward Tok laden with two spare tires, an extra starter, other parts and many pounds of tools, all the while listening for strange noises. We heard none, and Edith (named after her first owner) seemed to relish and respond to the exercise. I frequently patted her dash and whispered accolades and encouragement. Linda smiled and our dog, Rascal, rested peacefully; for me; life at the moment had some anxiety but



Dempster Highway: The Oldest Kid Among Us



Our VLNAAC International Representatives in Canada: Scott, Lynn and Rascal Grundy, Loran and Marion Benham, and Bill and Joyce Chace.

was very good.

The two Plymouths encountered the Benhams resting at a wayside just south of Delta Junction. Bill pulled alongside and fired his trumpeting dual horns. Squeaky jumped at least six inches! Fortunately CPR was not required! We three groups arrived in Tok

simultaneously with the seven cars from Anchorage. All the latter were beautiful vehicles that included three model A's, a '36 Dodge coupe, a '56 Pontiac hard top, a '57 Ford two door, a '64 Lincoln convertible and a modern pickup truck pulling a car dolly! Backup - a first for this adventurous Anchorage group and a comfort to us.

Our route to the Dempster Highway included overnight stops in Tok, Haines Junction, and Dawson City. We returned from Dawson City to Tok via our "Top of the World" Taylor Highway and were delighted to find it paved south of Chicken!

Gasoline was readily available throughout the trip with the exception of the Dempster Highway where it was only available midway at the Eagle Plains Hotel where we spent the night both coming and going. Most of our vehicles were unable to travel the approximate 230 mile distance without additional fuel. Our picnic lunch stops included adding fuel carried for this purpose. Gasoline costs varied from \$6.36/gal. at Dawson City (what a historic and party town!), \$6.74 at Eagle Plains, \$6.25 at Inuvik, and \$6.99 at Chicken. Gasoline in Fairbanks at the time was \$4.45/ gallon .

What is the Dempster really like? Well, it's like any gravel road, it is highly variable. Conditions, of course, always depend upon past and current weather conditions and road maintenance. In general, the Canadians do a superb job of constructing and maintaining their gravel roads. The trip up was hot and dusty, and we usually moved at or near the 55 mph speed limit, although much slower on rough road for about a third of the distance.

We arrived in Inuvik on July 1, after the conclusion of their Canada Day parade. We were still greeted as celebrities! One woman rushed up to me and said this was so wonderful for the kids as most had never seen a car older than about 15 years. Later, I was approached by a group of youths who inquired if all vehicles in Alaska were so old. I had installed a silly wolf whistle in our car and the kids squealed with delight! Word spread fast and we soon were scheduled for interviews with the chamber of commerce, radio and

newspaper. The mayor was very helpful, provided memorabilia and setup a show of our cars for the community the following day that was very well attended. We lunched at the Canadian Legion Hall one day, were again treated like royalty and even provided an American flag as it was July 4! Canadians are great, eh?? Our planned two nights in Inuvik became four when heavy rains to the south washed out the Dempster in several locations. We were stranded in Inuvik but never bored.

There are free ferry crossings of the MacKenzie and Peel Rivers. Just as we arrived at the Peel River, the area experienced a flood surge and it washed out the gravel ferry landing ramps. The five hours we waited for equipment to arrive and rebuild the ramps were viewed as additional opportunity to visit, read, exercise, and/or nap. A great group!

The trip south from Eagle Plains was slightly slower than the trip north as we had to wait for pilot trucks to lead us through the repair areas. Rain most of the day did not affect the upper rough road section of exposed base rock; however, the southern half became very muddy, but never lived up to its reputation as being "very slippery" in such conditions.

The scenery along the Dempster varies from wonderful to spectacular all the way to the Peel River, but "beautiful" black spruce "sticks" predominate to the north. We also observed many species of birds and mammals. Plus there are lots of bugs in areas of no breeze to enjoy too! Fortunately the Canadians provide screened picnic pavilions in buggy areas. One should experience the Dempster for no other reason than getting your picture taken adjacent to some rather unique signs. There are only two roads in North America that cross the Arctic Circle. The other is our Dalton Highway.

Yes, we experienced a few rock chips in our paint, but incurred no damage to our windshields or headlights. Nor were any serious mechanical difficulties experienced. We had the first of the group's total of four flat tires.

I remain very excited about this trip. It was a great adventure, and the Anchorage folks are a wonderful bunch! I would like to see our club do a similar but perhaps a shorter and more "civilized" trip next year. I must also admit that in spite of my derogatory jesting about Fords, those model A's were incredible! They

led most of the way. However, for the ultimate experience, **one must drive a Plymouth!**

JULY AND AUGUST UPDATES ON THE FOUNTAINHEAD COLLECTION

by Nancy DeWitt

JULY UPDATE: Construction of Fountainhead Development's new "antique auto barn" in Fairbanks is underway! As of mid-July, the ground-preparation for this 30,000 square-foot facility was nearly complete, and the slab should be in by the time this newsletter is published. Our goal is to be able to move the cars into the new building by November and to open the facility to the public in early 2009. VLNAAC members will no doubt get a sneak preview before the grand opening!

As of July 20, we had acquired 50 cars for the collection. Recent additions include a 1908 Rambler Model 31, 1910 Hudson Roadster Model 20 (a barn find that we plan to display in its unrestored condition), 1910 Whiting Roadster, 1911 Everitt Touring, 1927 Stutz Blackhawk and a fabulous 1933 Auburn V-12 Speedster. To view a more complete list of the collection, visit our new web page at <http://www.fountainheadhotels.com/auto/autocollection.htm>.

Due to federal regulations and definitions, we are not calling this facility a *museum*. Rather, our unofficial name is "Fountainhead Antique Auto Collection." This may eventually be shortened to "The Fountainhead Collection," as more than just cars will be on display. For example, we have acquired more than 75 vintage dresses, coats, hats, shoes and men's suits to exhibit alongside the automobiles. With assistance from the UAF Archives and Candy Waugaman, we have obtained many wonderful photos of early Alaska cars that will be enlarged and hung on the building's walls. A library of automobile books, large selection of old-time music, and Alaska transportation artifacts will round out the collection.

We are still looking for pre-1938 cars with Alaska history to purchase or exhibit. We are also seeking vintage Alaska clothing (including fur coats), photos of cars in early Alaska, and Alaska automobilia such as gas pumps, roadhouse signs and tire skis. If you have something to sell or contribute, please contact me at 458-6112 or projects@fdifairbanks.com.

AUGUST UPDATE:

August was a busy month for Fountainhead Development's Antique Auto Collection! Work on the new exhibit hall crept forward, with concrete pours, water line installations, and inspections taking up most of the month. We did get to spend one morning unloading two truckloads of cars, including our 1907 Ford Model K Roadster. We put this car through a full restoration last winter before showing it at the Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance in Florida in March. It's a very impressive car and we are looking forward to displaying it.



Fountainhead's 1922 Wills St. Clair sedan comes off the truck.

We recently added a few more cars to the collection, including:

- 1903 Toledo 12-hp rear-entry touring car – the single surviving Toledo gasoline car
- 1906 Compound Type 7 1/2 touring car – the only Compound known to exist

- 1907 Franklin Type D Landulette – the sole one of its kind left
- 1912 Peerless Model 36 7-passenger touring
- 1925 Chrysler phaeton – previously owned by Jerry and Donna Krier

We'd like to extend our sincere thanks to VLNAAC president Willy Vinton for helping us get many of our cars running in July. Hopefully you got to see him driving our 1919 Pierce Arrow at the run around on August 20.

Our Fountainhead website (referenced previous page) also includes a page about our vintage fashion collection, which we are assembling to coordinate with the eras represented by our automobiles.



Nancy DeWitt submitted the above Fairbanks Mystery photo and would appreciate comments identifying the car and the lady sitting on the running board. Nancy said she may submit more mystery photos.



Here is a closeup view of the lady on the running board above.



The VLNAAC July picnic was at Nancy Peterson's home in North Pole in honor of her late father, George Clayton.



Nancy Peterson has inherited her Dad's famous Number 16 Model T that graced our City's Golden Days Parade for 54 years with the late George Clayton at the wheel. She has recently been taking driving lessons from Roy Wilbur and has courageously driven the old rig for several events this summer. Way to go Nancy!



Gene and Terry Reed (above) showed up during the Golden Days Show and Shine in their fabulous Mercedes. Scott Grundy noticed their car and asked them to join us inside the park. However, the pressure was applied when he told them they couldn't leave without joining our club! Terry is shown above filling out the paperwork. Scott must have taken fund raising lessons from the folks running the Golden Days Jail. (ha)



Jerry Krier and Gary Nash make a handsome pair in their Golden Days attire.



Golden Days: The Barney Party Animals



An open hood draws men, especially if it is on a really classy car. This is a Pierce Arrow, a newly arrived car in the Fountainhead Museum collection that made an August Runaround.



Rochelle, Bub, Nancy, Ron, Willy and Wilma enjoy watching a cruise at Hot August Nights in Reno.



Ron is checking out a tricked-out 1936 Chevy Coupe for sale in Reno that is similar to his. Asking price is \$62k. Hmmmmm.

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Birthdays

Dane	Karine	9/21
Ditch	Alva	9/18
Franklin	Ron	9/28
Hume	Hal	9/24
Jurgens	Charles	9/27
Larrick	Jill	9/3
Lavalley	Brent	9/18
Reid	Celeste	9/30
Ronken	Connie	9/5
Ronken	Don	9/21
Sullivan	Larry	9/28
Vredenburgh	Peter	9/12
Wright	Bill	9/22
Yarnell	Tanna	9/6

Anniversaries

DeWitt	Nancy	9/22
Larson	Bub	9/23
Rule	Joshua	9/28
Lounsbury	James and Lorna	9/29
Rixie	Howard	9/30

CLASSIFIED ADS

Model "A" Repairs: Bill Wright, an active VLNAACF club member, does re-babbitt work on A's, B's, and T's, complete engine rebuilds, and carburetor, oil pump and water pump rebuilds. Call him at 479-8506 or his cell phone 388-2118.

Welding, Repair and Fabrication! Need it done? I can do it! Tom (Blue) Hinchsliff 479-0478.

Automotive and Diesel Machining: Serving Fairbanks since 1974. R&S Machine, Ric Smoyer, Proprietor, 515 Noyes Street in Fairbanks. 456-6496

64 Checker Cab: No engine, great body, Jane A. Mills, 488-8840, 347-3812, jerkygirl@acsalaska.net

Vehicle Storage Needed: Looking for an enclosed (preferably heated) place to store one of our cars for the winter. *Katy & David Karpik, Cell 614-477-0742*
Work 907-458-7768 ext. 104

Very nice 1962 Chev. Impala Two Door Hard Top Sport Coup: 283 V8, AT, no rust thru, one small dent, beautiful interior & 131,344 total miles. \$ 8,500 OBO. Wouldn't take much to render her a beauty queen once again. Call Scott Grundy for photos or Mike Cotton at 456-2587 to see the car.

Looking for an older truck for fun and occasional hauling. Mostly town use and occasional drives to Harding Lake. Must be in fair to good condition. Call Barb at 488-5216

For the following vehicles call Erick Byrd after 6:00 PM @ 490-5983:
'69-'79 Ford trucks - parts
'66 Cad. Deville sedan - fair cond.
'67 Ford Fairlane - fair cond., no engine
'67 Cad. Eldorado - complete but rough
'64 Morris Austin Minis - one complete & one parts
'39 Pontiac 4 door Sedan - complete

For the following vehicles call Dick Austin in Delta Jct. @ 895-4449
'48? Ford coupe
'59 Buick 4 door sedan

Over 100 vehicles of all types dating from 1939 to the 1970's: Call Duke Marshall of Iron Age Reclamation in Tok @ 883-5311
(Scott Grundy @ 457-3526 has a partial list)

September, 2008 Membership Roster

Allen, Ron & Nancy	2002	Graham, David & Laura	2008	Nash, Gary & Jill	1970
Angulo, Saulo & Bryana	2006	Gresham, Richard	2000	Ness, Michael & Linda	2008
Antique Auto Mushers of Alaska		Grundy, Scott & Linda	2005	Newman, Johnie	2008
Basarab, Richard	2008	Gullickson, Dan & LaVonne	1981	Ninmer, Marshall & Kathryn	2007
Benham, Loran & Marion	1993	Hansen, Gene & Mebble	1989	Oines, Don & Angie	1994
Bennett, Larry & Margaret	2001	Hansen, Howard & Barbara	2007	Oslund, Gred & Lois	1998
Blankenship, John & Mary	2004	Hanson, Nancy		Page, Merle	1970
Borg, John & Betty	1999	Hauck, Herman & Penny	1998	Peterson, Doug & Nancy	2001
Boschert, Ken & Sandy	2008	Herzog, Martin	2001	Price, Derik	2007
Brabham, Mel & Jan	2006	Hinchsliff, Tom & Lori	2006	Reed, Eugene & Terry	2008
Camerata, Sherry	1992	Holmes, Robert	2007	Richards, Jerod	2008
Cameron, Don & Ray	2006	Hume, Hal & Jeanne	2003	Rixie, Howard	2008
Carlson, Karl & Betty	2000	Johnson, Don "Dusty" & Dawn	2006	Rockney, Dave & Deborah	2006
Carpenter, Benjamin & Stella	2007	Jurgens, Charles & Carrie	2005	Ronken, Don & Connie	1987
Casey, Robbie & Doris	2000	Karpik, David & Katy Rice	2008	Rotroff, Loren & Victoria	2005
Cerny, Timothy	2007	Kingry, Ryan	2008	Saupe, Bernie & Judy	1985
Chace, Bill & Joyce	1982	Kirschner, Chuck & Linda	2008	Shoemaker, Greg & Karmen	2003
Chace, Klinton	2004	Krier, Jerry & Donna	1971	Simmons, Samuel & Melody	2004
Chase, Will & Theresa	2008	Larrick, Rick & Jill	2007	Stevenson, Ron	2005
Cook, Jeffry & Susan	2008	Larson, Kirk & Kathy	2006	Stone, David	2006
Corkran, L.D. "Corky"	2004	Larson, Bub & Rochelle	2006	Sullivan, Larry	2000
Cornell, Jim	2007	Lavalley, Brent	1997	Tovar, Samuel	2008
Cosson, Mark & Jude Baldwin	1998	Leaming, Gary	2007	Taylor, Craig	2006
Cromer, Jr., George & Patricia	2003	Long, Daniel & Linda	2006	Uzzell, Ken & Wendy	1993
Culbertson, Scott & Donna	2007	Lounsbury, James & Lorna	1974	Vinton, Willy & Wilma	2000
Dane, Ron & Karine	1999	Lundquist, Peter	2007	Vredenburgh, Peter & Cindy	2008
DeWitt, Nancy	2008	Lyle, George & Nila	2002	Wagner, Beau	2008
Ditch, Alva	1989	Markey, Dennis & Rielle	2007	Warwick, Andy	2008
Domke, Rudy & Ruth Ann	1991	Maxwell, Kenny & Tammy	2004	Walton, Charley	2007
Dotson, Furman	2000	McCarthy, John & Pranee Nakprasit	2004	Wescott, Eugene	1977
Durdik, Greg	2007	McDonald, John	2006	Whitledge, Terry & Sharon	2001
Dussman, Dennis	2003	McHone, Roby	1994	Wilbur, Roy & Brenda	2001
Eddy, James & Karen	2001	McLaughlin, Ed & Laurel	1990	Wright, Marvin	2004
Ellsworth, Dick & Joni	2002	McLeod, Ray	2002	Wright, Bill	2004
Farnham, Garry	2002	McPherson, Don	2006	Yamamoto, Stuart & Leslie	2006
Franklin, Ron & Shirley	1997	Merced, Julio & Marilyn Naquin	2007	Yurkovich, Gene & Tenna	1970
Frey, Ron	2001	Middleton, John & Jeanne	2008		
Fuller, Gary & Joe	2007	Monsma, Alan & Beccy	1993		
Gile, Jack & Nancy	2008	Murphy, JoAnn	1997		
		Muth, Sterling	2008		

September Events

There is only one event planned for September, which is the Chatanika Run. The details of that run are not firmed up yet as of this newsletter printing, but the date will be tentatively set for either the 6th or 13th. You can call Rochelle on her cell phone at 590-8591 for information.

OFFICERS:

VLNAAC Website: oldcarsfairbanks.org

President	Willy Vinton	wvinton@acsalaska.net	907-456-2261
Vice President	Bill Wright	tong@mosquitonet.com	907-479-8505
Acting Secretary	Nancy Allen	ronandnancy@gci.net	907-488-3965
Treasurer	Don Oines	doines1@gci.net	907-452-4601
Director	Gary Nash		907-456-2103
Director	Ray Mcleod	rmcleod@gci.net	907-456-7877
Director	Scott Grundy	grundy@mosquitonet.com	907-457-3526
Newsletter	Ron Allen	ronandnancy@gci.net	907-488-3965
Webmaster	Wilma Vinton	wvinton@acsalaska.net	907-456-2261
Events Coordinator	Rochelle Larson	Rochelle1987@hotmail.com	907-456-6736
Acting Membership Chair	Rick Larrick	rlarrick@alaska.net	907-457-4344

NEXT MEETINGS

The next general club meeting is **Thursday, September 11** at the **Mayflower**. Dinner starts at 6:00 PM and the meeting is at 7:00.

The Board Meeting is at 6:30 PM at the **Food Factory** on **Tuesday September 9**. Everyone is also welcome to attend Board Meetings.

Newsletter Deadline

All materials for the newsletter should be in by the 20th of the month to be considered for the next newsletter. Email ronandnancy@gci.net or call 907-488-3965. Items can be mailed to Ron at his home address; 1288 Rangeview Dr, North Pole, AK 99705.

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

