

*The*

*Dagmar*

The monthly newsletter of the Rocky Mountain Region Cadillac & LaSalle Club

October 2017

## Notes From The Director

by Bob (Cadi Man) Lyons

### The Geology Museum

Hello all. From time to time, I will submit articles that will cover subjects other than covering events. However, on this occasion I will tell you about the recent event set up by our Editor John Cullinan. Due to unforeseen circumstances John was not able to attend this event with us. This event was a tour through the Geology Museum of the Colorado School of Mines. It was much more interesting than our group anticipated. We saw displays of gems and minerals from all over the world. And most importantly was the displays of mined minerals from Colorado. Very beautiful crystalline minerals, gold, silver and copper and more. There is a safe in the minerals room that contains specimens of gold that trace the development of the Central City mining district and featured gold coins that were

privately minted before the Denver mint existed. Displays of personal mining equipment and assayers tools were all through the museum. A lot of history is there in the museum. We all learned a great deal. There were unexpected exhibits of fossils discovered from mining sites, meteorites, including a meteorite from Mars, and there's even a Moon Rock on display. Thanks John for putting this event together.

### Calls to the Director

As the director of the our club, I receive calls from from many interesting folks inquiring about our club, and from people who may need help with their collector Cadillac's. One call received was from a gentlemen who had recently purchased a 1939 LaSalle convertible coupe. He was wanting a referral for a mechanic or someone who can help him with examining the car, to be sure it is road worthy. With help from some of our club members and myself, he now has his help and is very much interested in joining our club. He has joined the National Club already; I will assist him in joining our club. A unique call just recently received, was from a young lady from a data research company, who wished to fly out from New York to interview me and a few others on the personalities of car collectors and about their hobby. She represents Red Associates, doing a study to collect marketing data for one of their clients. The questions were quite varied. Mostly, she wanted to hear stories on how I became interested in the hobby and why did I select Cadillac as my choice to collect. She inquired as to how I and others store the cars, at home, in a rented storage? How do we select storage facilities and what

was important to us in this storage places. We spent two days in interviewing and we visited the Vehicle Vault. This interview was a unique and interesting experience. This shows you the kind of calls you can get from some very interesting people, as a Director of our club. It's very enjoyable.

## Editor's Corner

by John Cullinan



At the beginning of September we came together at the Colorado Railroad Museum where we displayed our cars, viewed the indoor and outdoor exhibits. We also enjoyed seeing the Garden Railway Club run their miniature trains in their special area of the museum grounds.

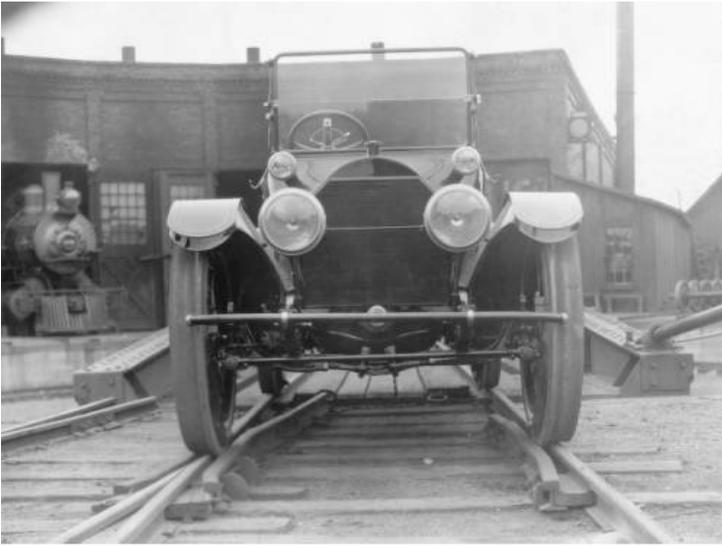
Those who attended were also part of our Union Pacific Dining Car Lunch, prepared and served by Table Mesa Inn of Golden. I believed most of all of us enjoyed the food. Our Director, Robert Lyons, gave an interesting relating of his experience as a

young railroad employee in the late 60's and early 70's. The signaling and methods of switch throwing back then were not much different than they had been in the 1870's. Bob also decoded the meaning of the whistle signals we hear when trains approach crossing.

Those of you who did not attend the October Meeting on Saturday, October 14, missed the spirited conversation we had regarding the possibility of hosting the 2002 Grand National right here in Metro Denver. We are waiting to hear from the National Leadership to learn how much of the monetary and work burden they will be handling if we were to host that event.

This month the Dagmar will have the 2nd installments of articles by David Leger and Herb Pothoff.

I am trying to get better at being an Editor. But it is hard to do if we don't have our members sending in stories or articles of interest to edit. Tells us about your early experiences with cars that got you interested in the hobby. Tells about the latest battles you are fighting in keeping your car running. Some of you may have some tech tips or know of some good sources for parts that might benefit your fellow members. Let me know about stories and articles we can reprint. Share historic photos such as this one:



**View of an Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe inspection (road master) car at an unidentified railroad roundhouse; shows an open Cadillac touring car, used by I. Hale, with wheels adapted to travel on railroad tracks. A locomotive is in the roundhouse. Possibly between 1915 and 1920.**

**Enjoy the Dagmar and help make it better.**

## **2017 Vail Automotive Classic**



**by Art Cutler**

**Showing a car at the annual Vail Automotive Classic is a unique experience. The Vail Classic usually consists of a driving tour on Friday and a two day car show, Saturday at the**

Eagle County Airport and Sunday in downtown Vail. The Saturday car show was not held this year due to construction at the airport so the tour was held on Saturday, September 9, and the all judging was done at the downtown car show held on Sunday, September 10. The tour this year was on the back roads leading to Steamboat Springs. Don Braden went on this year's tour in his 1941 Cadillac 60 Special and reported that the scenery was spectacular. The cars were parked throughout the pedestrian-only Vail streets for the Sunday car show. This may be the first car show many of the people strolling the downtown streets have seen. They had lots of questions, particularly about the older cars we drive. Don Braden and I had our 1941 Cadillacs parked next to each other at the fountain near the base of the Gondola One. Don's 60 Special took 1 st place in the 1896-1941 class with my Series 62 Coupe taking 2 nd . I'm reluctant to admit there were only four cars in this class but we'll take the ribbons and never let on. The show was a huge amount of fun. The 2018 Vail Automotive Classic will be held on September 5-7 next year. We may want to consider this as part of a group tour.

**Mr and Mrs Rosales with the  
1967 Coupe DeVille. – John H.**



## First Timer's Follies continued from last month...

By Herb Potthoff

Wash, rinse, repeat

Hi. My name is Herb and I'm a first-time vintage car owner...

We got it! The car...it arrived! Woo Hoo! It's in the garage and the basic safety inspection is done...so now what?

Right, it looks a mess...wash it.

Washing a vintage automobile is not as easy a proposition as it may sound, or so I am learning. If your television is usually tuned to the automobile channels, as is mine, then you know that there are several companies who would be very pleased to sell you a variety of products to clean and protect your car. There are, according to these 'experts', a number of critical steps I need to perform to properly prepare my car for driving and viewing by the general public. By 'critical steps', what I really mean is: stuff which was developed by teams of professional chemists over many years and at considerable expense, and which I've never heard of nor even imagined after a long night of 'camaraderie' with friends at the local watering hole. For example: clay. Yes, clay. Similar to the squishy, malleable, stick to your jeans and "leave a grease spot everywhere you used it" stuff that we used as kids to make fantastical dinosaurs and sink stoppers, is now, apparently, a mandatory step in cleaning the dirt and grime off of the paint of your car. Funny, I thought the soap did that...I guess not, silly me.

Pre-wash, wash, rinse, clay bar, wax, polish, and more (and more!) are the steps 'they' would have me take to get the dirt off the car and make it look shiny and new...and that doesn't even begin to explain the myriad of products I'm expected to use for properly preparing the tires, chrome, interior surfaces, glass, leather, fabric, plastic, carpeting, cleaning the ashtray (ha, cars with ashtrays!), yada yada yada.

I'll tell you quite honestly that I discarded most of this advice in favor of what I've always done...none of which requires more chemistry

that was learned in 6th grade and the judicious application of a little elbow grease. The result was a clean & shiny exterior, an interior I would enjoy sitting in, and reasonably clean glass to see through. The tires? Well, I will admit to breaking my self-imposed exile into the 1970s for this one instance and using a commercial whitewall tire cleaner which seemed to do the trick. The smell though, ugh.

I will also admit that I was not fully prepared for the joy that is cleaning a pontoon fender, let alone four of them. That is to say, OMG there's a lot of real estate to take care of!

So...wash, rinse, repeat: the car is clean & shiny, and smells good (except for the tires, of course). Check!

My wife was paging through the Interwebz one fine afternoon and noticed that a local church in our little town was hosting a car show, probably the last one anywhere close to us until the weather breaks again in the Spring. Cool, let's go!

Now, I must tell you that my wife is, from time to time, prone to fits of precognition and the occasional premature "I told you so". On this occasion, amazingly enough, she got the idea in her head that she should not ride with me but rather she should meet me at the show, in her car, having constructed some reason or another to have to "run an errand" at the same time I was planning to leave for the show. So be it, 'O ye of little faith, at least I get the radio to myself. Yes, the radio works! ☐

So, off I go. The radio is reproducing the AM station with the expected pops and crackles just like those old-tyme radio shows they

replay every once in a while, the AC is cranked-up (see: the cowl vent is open and the wing windows are properly aimed) and the countryside passes by in a contented blur of rural-motoring enjoyment.

“Wave at the passers by, oh look at the horseys, aren’t the clouds nice and fluffy today!”

Everything is going along just swimmingly and it’s only about 8 miles to the show, I should be there in no tim....

Vroom, vroom, vroom...sputter...vroom...sputter...sputter...wheeze...pfffft.

OK, it’s warm outside and it’s just a vapor lock trying to ruin my day...no worries. It should be fine if I just...

Vroom...sputter...sputter...wheeze...sputter...sputter...dead.

There are times in this world of high-technology and power everything when the blessings of “armstrong” steering, manual brakes, and no column steering wheel lock are appreciated. Having a dead engine while driving at 50mph along a narrow country road is one of those times. I pulled over onto the side of the road and...after mentioning the merest suggestion of an expletive or two under my breath...I turned off the switch, set the parking brake, unbuckled my seatbelt (safety first, kids!) climbed out of the car, and proceeded to lift the hood to survey the landscape. It’s a big hood, and I must admit it makes a lovely sun shade when fully deployed.

It was at this time, at this exact time mind you, that my wife drives up in her daily driver

(reference: it used to be “my” Mercedes). Of course, that’s just perfect...timing is everything...thank you Mr. Murphy. We talk, she smirks, sigh...

And then shortly thereafter the Deputy Sheriff, seeing that the “sun shade” was deployed, pulled up. Of course...that’s just perfect...timing is everything...curse you Mr. Murphy.

I could go on about what I found under the hood, or describe the look of...let’s call it “concerned whimsy” ...that adorned my darling wife’s lovely face, or tell you something of the nice chat I had with the Deputy Sheriff, or how beautiful the weather was that day, or how at that particular moment in space-time I was really wishing for an Earth-killing asteroid to wander by. But, there must be something for the next episode...so...

Tune in next time or, perhaps, the time after that, when the answers to these and other questions will be revealed...eventually.

Wave at us as we go by. Or, if you see us parked on the side of the road awaiting the arrival of the big flatbed tow truck, stop and chat...Cheerio!

-Herb

## An Electrifying Cadillac continued from last month...

By David Leger

I took one for an extended test drive, trying it in electric mode, gas mode (some reviews said

it was noisy – I found it hard to even hear, unless you really had your foot in it drawing a lot of current), and even tested charging using the included 110v charger at home.

Everything worked well, and by the end of the day I owned a tint-coat red ELR with the cashmere interior. I was told I was the 2nd person to buy one at that dealership, and the 4th to do so in the state of Colorado. The next year I was eligible for \$7,500 in Federal tax rebates and \$6,000 in Colorado tax rebates for buying a plug-in electric. The state of Colorado has one of the most generous state tax incentives for electric vehicles (now \$5,000 but with a simplified process).

I am routinely getting 45 miles on a charge now, far exceeding the factory specification of 37, so I rarely use gasoline. With a full charge and full tank, the car can travel well over 300 miles. During the freezing days of winter, the car will use some gas. Once it gets below freezing, the ELR will fire up the gasoline engine periodically to provide heat for the batteries and the interior. Once the outside temperature is above freezing, heat is provided by an electrical heating system.

There is an active cooling system for the batteries. I was startled once in the garage when the electric water pump and fans kicked on while the car was parked and charging. The batteries were getting warm while they were charging, and the car had determined active cooling was needed. You can start the car (including remotely from the fob or the OnStar application) while it is plugged in and it will use house current to heat or cool the car before you go driving, much like a ground power unit for an aircraft. I know some

criticize electric vehicles as being coal burners since many power plants use coal to generate electricity. Denver's main power plant is in the process of converting from coal to natural gas, with 3 of 4 units now converted.

The last generator should be converted by the end of this year. One article stated that electric vehicles charged from natural gas generated electricity have net emissions 1/3 that of a comparable gasoline vehicle.

Charging time on 110v for a completely drained battery is around 12 hours. I installed a 240v level 2 charger in my garage, which will charge the car in 4 ½ hours. Since my house was built in 1949, that took some substantial re-wiring, with an electrician here for two full days.

The car has 4 modes of operation. Tour (normal) where the electric range is used, then the ELR switches to gasoline, Sport (the same as Tour only with a stiffer suspension, more steering effort, and faster accelerator mapping), Mountain (which runs the gas engine as needed to maintain more charge in the battery to assist better on steep grades, and Hold (which uses the gas engine and lets you save electricity for later). On a few longer trips, I did use Hold mode once I was on the highway, saving my electric range for in-town driving.

When the car is coasting the generator spins, putting some juice back in the batteries. This is called regenerative braking. You can set the 'gear' selector to L and increase the rate of regeneration. Some people like to do that all the time and largely drive by one peddle, with the car slowing as you let off the gas. When you touch the brakes, first the generator kicks

in to put some power back into the batteries, slowing the car. As you push further, the mechanical brakes gradually engage. The ELR has a fantastic 112 foot stopping distance from 60 mph. The ELR also has paddles on the steering wheel to manually cut in regenerative braking. I find these very useful. I have gotten to love my 'hand brakes' for slowing down as a light is changing, slowing on a hill, etc. The ELR drives the wheels directly from the electric driveline and reduction gears. While there is a shifter in the ELR, there is no actual transmission. It is nice not to feel shifting going on.

Many of the ELR (and other Cadillac reviews) complained about the CUE Infotainment system. I have to say, it took a while to get used to, but I now quite like it. The system integrated seamlessly with my phone, my iPod, the satellite radio (including weather and traffic). The ELR has one unique additional screen for energy displays and management, where you can set charging times, charging rate (when on a 110v outlet), and see how energy is flowing. Now that I know where the touch sensitive parts are, and have an idea of how all the screens are formatted, I have become quite fond of the system. A co-worker who uses the iDrive system on his BMW says he prefers my CUE system. I am sure it will improve as Cadillac refines it, but I think some of the bad press has been unwarranted.

The car has been in for service. I did have one squeak in the car and a problem with the adaptive suspension (which caused a warning message). These were quickly dealt with by the dealer's service department, as well as

handling a re-call on the emissions canister for the fuel system. Other than that brief time back at the dealer, the car has been trouble free and fun to drive. My electric bill went up about \$40 a month, but I was spending \$120 a month for gasoline, so overall I am saving on fuel costs, even with gas as cheap as it is right now.

Cadillac updated the ELR in 2016. The price was lowered, some items that were optional on my car will were made standard, and the car will have a 25% power increase and cut 0-60 times to around 6.5 seconds. ELR sales were still light and GM stopped production early. I have seen estimates that total production was around 2,800 cars. It is sad so few know about the car, it deserves some recognition. I have attended several electric car drive-in events. The first event I attended, I had pre-registered. I drove into the display area. One of the organizers came up and said 'I am sorry Sir, but this area is for electric cars only'. I pointed out the charge port on the front left fender, and he said 'Oh wow, I didn't know Cadillac made an electric'. When I told the guys at the dealership, they groaned. I have been to three events now, and each time I have been the first ELR to ever attend and get the same comment about not knowing Cadillac made an electric car.

For me, it is hard to beat having a unique, limited production Cadillac, which after rebates cost me less than \$50k, and lowers emissions as well. I have had the car for two years now. I have averaged about 14 gallons of gas PER YEAR, which is hard to beat. My MPGE is 79.83 (Miles Per Gallon Equivalent measures miles per equivalent BTU content,

so you can compare gas, electric, etc.). That will go up again once the summer hits, as the electric system is more efficient when it isn't cold. You can say I am sold on electric vehicles. Cadillac will bring out a plug-in version of the CT6 this year, their next step in electric vehicles.



## **Business Meetings**

Regular Business meetings of the Rocky Mountain Region Cadillac & LaSalle Club are held on the second Saturday of each month. We meet at El Aguascalientes, 4105 Wadsworth Blvd, Wheat Ridge. The meetings begin at 9 AM with lunch or breakfast. The meetings are open to the entire membership.

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