

# The Kisselgraph

July 2005

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## 100 YEAR KISSEL ANNIVERSARY

Just another reminder that the 100 Anniversaries of Kissel and the 20-year celebration for this Museum is in 2006. Plans have begun and will include several special activities. The main event for Kissel will be the "Home Coming". We really want to have every Kissel car here along with family members. Since there already is a huge balloon rally/aircraft show. We may add on a car show to that event at the airport grounds August 19<sup>th</sup> or June when Kissel first incorporated. So far the grand re-opening and Kissel event at the museum in June is winning! Any comments from the membership?

## KISSELS BOUGHT AND SOLD

Fred Koller of Switzerland, a long time Kissel Kar Klub member has recently sold his Kissel "1920 Gold Bug". His car has been in the museum for many years and was a very welcome addition. He bought it when he was at the Swiss

Embassy in Washington D. C., The car has been in Wisconsin for a very long time. Previous owner wanted to run it around the world but never got the cash backing to do it. He sold the very old restored car to Fred. Fred then proceeded to do a re-restoration by himself. Eventually he was transferred to Paris, France. He shipped the car to a professional restoration shop out east and had the job completed and judged. Fred then was transferred back to Switzerland and shipped the car here to the Museum. Tom Harrington from Paris and Atlanta saw it here on a visit and just wanted to own it. Took time, but he got it. It's still here, but I do not know for how long. Tom now owns (2) Speedsters and (1) Sedan. The one Speedster is at this Paris home.

Mark Kissel (not related) recently picked up a 1923 Kissel touring car to be restored and presently he has his recently purchased 1927 Kissel Speedster and a Sedan here at the Museum.

Don't forget that if you have a Kissel for sale to let me know. People do inquire about availability. Also if you

are tired of looking at your Kissel you can place it here at the Museum for display. I'm always looking for more of them.

### REMODELING FINISHED-WELL NOT QUITE

All of the roof work is done along with the tuck-pointing, new windows, doors, showroom, flooring, and more. We did have complications however, with the structural part of the wall at the parapet. The brick was pulling away the wall and could not be left that way, the fix has added a bit of character to the building, but the cost ran \$50,000 over the planned budget! Because of the extra cost we had to cancel the plan for a staircase in middle of the museum. The staircase would have cost about \$20,000 and would have been a great asset. We still want to build it, but it will have to wait.

### KISSEL KAR KLUB MEMBER VISIT

Wednesday May 10<sup>th</sup> Gary LeMasters and his wife visited the museum. The last time Gary was here, was in 1984 before Museum was a museum. The place was a mess after the former occupants vacated it. They were quite impressed with it now. One reason they came was to go through our files of Kissel information to help in their restoration of two Kissel's. Anyone of the members does receive free access to the files and of course the copy machine. So feel free to come when you need help. In addition Gary has volunteered to be the "Keeper of the Roster". This is a tough job to keep up with especially

when we aren't notified of new owners or of sales. He will have a new list sometime in late Fall. It will be more comprehensive and will list all the Kissel cars that are owned by an individual. Letters will be sent out to make sure the present list is correct and up to date, please respond to them.

### NEED OLDER KISSEL

The Museum is looking again for some older cars. Most of the Kissels we have are from the 20-25 era. We need to cover earlier times. The arrangement for a loan to the museum is easy. Just bring/ship the car and we will keep it on display, clean and identified as your car. We request that you keep storage insurance on it. We will not operate the car unless you request that we run it.

Easy, so how about one or two Pre 1920 Kissel's.

### FRED WERNER, BODY BUILDER FOR THE KISSEL MOTOR CAR COMPANY

Fred Werner arrived in America from Germany in 1905. By 1908 he was in Hartford, Wisconsin in the employ of the Kissel Motor Car Company. This company was then in its second year. He came from a long line of family carriage makers in Germany. These were for horse drawn carriages, and then replaced by automobile carriages in the last decade of the last century. From 1901 to 1905 Werner worked for the Opel Company at Russelsheim, Germany. It was here that he designed the first automobile for the German

Kaiser Wilhelm II, and one for the Czar Nicholas of Russia.

Fred's twenty-five years with the Kissel Motor Car Company spanned the entire existence of this auto company. He was responsible for the Kissel body, was generally considered to be years ahead of its time in auto body fashion.

Highlights of his professional career at Kissel included the development and patenting, together with Will Kissel, of the All Year Top. This came out in 1914 and consisted of a metal and glass top for winter use, to be removed and replaced with a soft top for the warm months.

Then in 1918 Kissel and Fred Werner had their greatest success and acclaim with their speedster, a roadster which in the color of chrome yellow was called the "Gold Bug."

Kissel made trucks from as early as 1911. These varied in size from one-ton to five-tons. Kissel contributed to the First World War Effort by producing their three-ton ammunition carrying truck. Also in 1915 Werner teamed with Kissel to produce and patent in 1918 a cab enclosure for the truck driver.

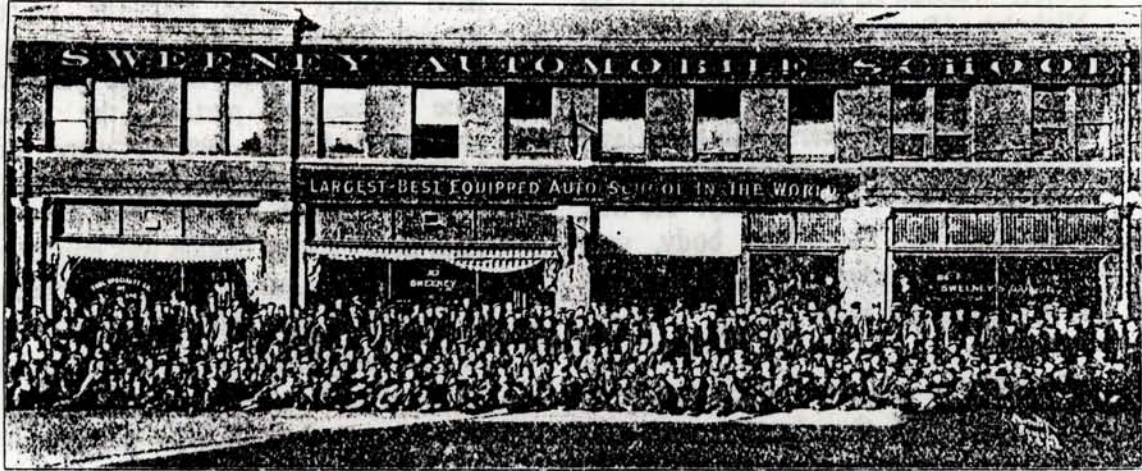
**HISTORY OF HARTFORD PLOW & CULTIVATOR FACTORY PRIOR TO KISSEL PURCHASE**

This firm consists of E. G. Rowell, S. M. Seeley, A. D. Rowell, and J. Ross Rice. The business was started on a small scale in 1862, by L. F. Rowell and S. M. Seeley under the firm name of Rowell & Company, which name has been retained throughout the different partnerships that

have existed since someone of the Rowell family always having been a member of the firm. In 1866 when Mr. Rice became a partner, the annual products of the factory were only \$4,700.00; the power employed was a two-horse tread power. In 1867 an eight-horse power engine was employed, and by 1869, the business had increased to \$8,600.00; in 1874 to \$11,200.00. In 1877, a thirty-horse power engine, with a boiler capable of supplying fifty-horse power was substituted for the first. In 1878 the products increased to \$15,000.00 and for the year ending May 1881, the business amounted to \$28,000.00. The usual working force is sixteen. All styles of plows, cultivators and corn tools used in the Northwest are manufactured. About nine thousand plows and two thousand cultivators, besides are large number of other tools were turned out the past year. In addition to this a general foundry, machine and repairing business is done. Among the various-kinds of cultivators made by the firm are the "Horse-hoe and Cultivator", double and single shovel, and "Five-tooth cultivator". So popular are the corn tools of this manufacture, that without soliciting any trade, the house is in receipt of more orders than is can fill, though constantly increasing the capacity of the works.

Note: We have two plows in the museum, one with Rowell label and one with Hartford Plow label from Kissel. Later Kissel used the plow company buildings for some Automobile part production, including a new aluminum and brass foundry and a drop forge.

(See collection of Museum Pictures Attached)



February, 1915. Class of 467 students of the Sweeney Automobile School, Kansas City, Mo.

### Movie Star Drives Across Continent Alone.

**M**ISS ANITA KING, leading woman of the Jesse L. Lasky Feature Play Company, left the Exposition grounds at San Francisco for a cross-continental tour in a KisselKar 12-Six, carrying messages from the Mayors of Los Angeles and San Francisco to Mayor Mitchell, of New York.

Many things can happen out there in the big silent stretches of the desert, and there were changing and difficult road conditions along the line, but Miss King tried to discount the possibility of every inconvenience in advance, and drove up Broadway, New York.

The Kissel Company arranged to have one of their cars meet her on arrival at principal points and escort her part of the way East from each of these stops, so, though she would drive alone and make her own repairs, if any were necessary, she was not so lonesome after all. She had a full equipment for desert and camp, and a rifle which she knew how to use.

The tour was arranged in one-day stretches, first to Sacramento, then to Lake Tahoe, Fallon, Austin, Ely, Fish Springs, Rawlins, Laramie, Cheyenne, Kimball, North Platte, Grand Island, and into Omaha.



ANITA KING.



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