

# The Kisselgraph

☆☆☆

The official newsletter of the KisselKar Klub,  
147 North Rural Street, Hartford, Wisconsin 53027  
Editor and Correspondent: Lynn Kissel, editor@kisselkar.net

☆☆☆

VOL. 39 NO. 2

DECEMBER 2013

10¢ A COPY

## A Big-8 White Eagle— Arguably the Peak of Kissel's Automotive Development



### **1929 Kissel White Eagle 8-126 Brougham**

**New owners, brothers Peter & Thomas Klug, Rubicon, Wisconsin**

*This car is one of only three Kissel 8-126s known to exist. It is a Full Classic™, an honor only bestowed on select models deemed to be "fine" or "distinctive" by the Classic Car Club of America. It is exciting to hear that this extraordinary vehicle in such superb condition is returning to the area of its birthplace.*



From the editor

## Happy Holidays!

By Lynn Kissel

I hope that this issue of the *Kisselgraph* finds you and your loved ones

in good health and spirits!

Thinking of holiday spirit, I expect that the Wisconsin Automotive Museum has directly or indirectly been a helpful influence and resource to every member of the KisselKar Klub at one time or another. I know it has helped me on numerous occasions. You might ask yourself, is there anything that you can do to return the favor?

It will reduce the museum's costs if you share your email address with us. Email distribution of the *Kisselgraph* is a low-cost alternative to the \$3-4 per member it costs the museum to print and mail a single hardcopy of this newsletter to you. Sending your email address to [editor@kisselkar.net](mailto:editor@kisselkar.net) is an easy and low-cost way to help save the museum money.

Just as the Wisconsin Automotive Museum is an important resource to owners of Kissel vehicles, I think that the KisselKar Klub should become an important resource to the museum. A donation of \$10/year would off-set the cost of distributing the newsletter to one member for one year; \$25 would add a little something extra for the educational mission of the museum. Many of us could afford to donate even more. Will you join me in making a monetary contribution to the museum?

In other news, Ron Hausmann (multiple Kissel owner in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan) has written to me about his recent "shed find" of Kissel parts, acquired from long-time Kissel owner Cliff Morse (Bath, New York). In addition to collecting Kissel parts

for many years, Cliff also designed an embroidered Kissel patch that was adopted as the official Klub patch in 1976. Ron gave us a brief report on his acquisition of Cliff's parts in the July, 2013 issue of the *Kisselgraph*. His treasure trove includes a 117" wb chassis, three engines and many parts from the 1917-1920 era.

This has prompted Ron to wonder and speculate on the early history of Kissel Speedsters (aka "Gold Bugs"). In turn, this has stimulated some discussion and reexamination of what we know and don't know about the development of the early Speedsters. I hope that we will hear more about the conclusions of this research in a future issue of the newsletter.

BTW, have you looked at the growing gallery of cars on *KisselKar.net* lately?



An image extracted from *Kisselgraph* Vol. 10, No. 1 (1976). This is a sketch of the patch that Cliff Morse designed for the Klub. Blue and white on a yellow background, it combines elements from an early radiator emblem (KisselKar, c1910-12) with a later one (Kissel, 1918).

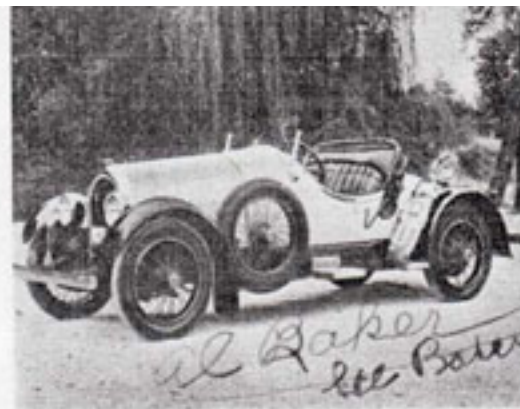
In November, 2013, Chris Bamford (a Kissel owner in Edmonton, Alberta) posted a note and some images concerning the 1954 Anglo-American Rally from Edinburgh to Goodwood in the UK. On that run was Car No. 9, a Kissel Speedster, then owned by A. C. Baker of Battle Creek, Michigan. Chris wondered if the whereabouts of that Kissel was known today.

The three-speed gearbox is mounted on the rear axle. The car has a maximum speed of 80 m.p.h.

**CAR No. 9** Date 1923 Kissel Speedster  
A. C. Baker, Battle Creek, Michigan

The Kissel Motor Car Company of Hartford, Wisconsin, are said to have originated the 'Speedster' type of car in America and to have been the first firm to use that designation. In many respects this example of the make is more European than American in appearance. It is fitted with a six-cylinder side-valve 'L' head engine of 3 1/2 inches bore by 5 1/2 inches stroke which develops 61 h.p. at 2,300 r.p.m. It has a maximum speed of 70 m.p.h. and is fitted with a three-speed gearbox. When Mr Baker drove this car in a recent Milwaukee Tour he was met at Milwaukee by the builder, Mr Kissel.

**CAR No. 10** Date 1921 Mercer  
Roswell Moore, Albuquerque, New Mexico  
These L head Mercer Raceabouts were introduced



Kissel Speedster, 1923

This is the Kissel Speedster currently owned by Phil Renuart of Kalamazoo, Michigan.



## Yes! I want to help support the mission of the WISCONSIN AUTOMOTIVE MUSEUM with my donation!

My donation is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ I am paying by  Check  Visa  MasterCard

Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

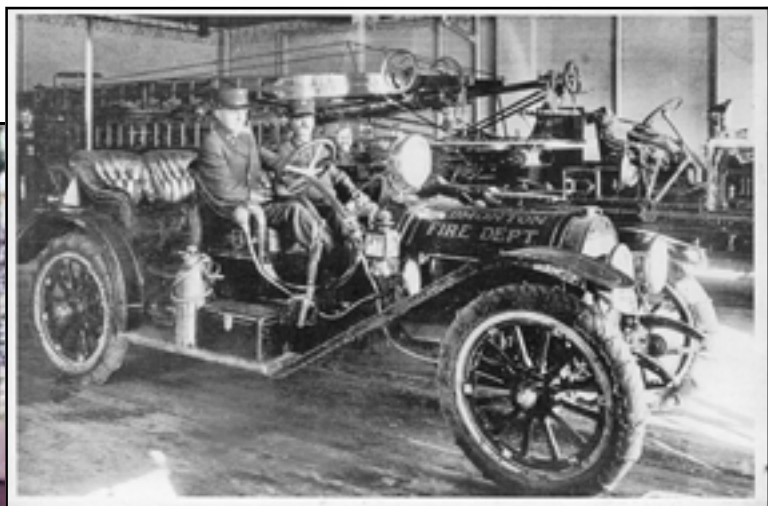
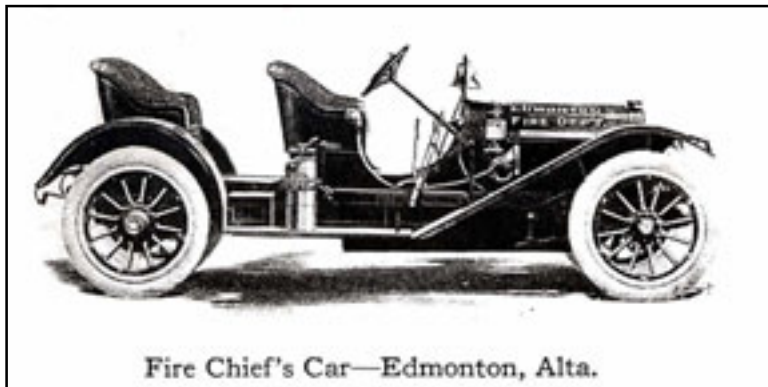
Send this form and your tax-deductible contribution to:

**Wisconsin Automotive Museum**  
**147 N. Rural Street**  
**Hartford, WI 53027**

## Chris Bamford's 1912 Kissel 4-50 Fire Chief Car

I just love seeing those photos of cars before and after their restorations, don't you? Chris Bamford (Edmonton, Alberta) has recently sent your editor these photos of his car.

Knowing what the car looks like now, I am often impressed with the vision and courage that some people have to bring a car from such ragged condition to the gleaming piece of mobile artwork that it is today. I think that I would have simply considered the task too big and passed it by.



As the 1993 photo immediately above shows, the results of Chris' efforts are well beyond what I would have thought might be possible. His 8-year restoration effort meticulously recreated the car that was custom built by Kissel in the fall of 1911 for Edmonton.

Nice job, Chris. Thanks for bringing this rolling piece of history back for us to enjoy.



## 1928 Kissel 8-80S Brougham Recovered from a Barn in Wisconsin

In May, 2013, David Neu and Bruce Fredrick recover the pieces of a 1928 Kissel that they bought. The pictures show a scene that reminds one of something from the History Channel show "American Pickers." David and Bruce appear to be taking the whole effort seriously, but I'm sure that it was also quite exciting for everyone involved. Word is that they have gotten the vehicle reassembled, running, and have exhibited it at a local show. Congratulations on the acquisition and rapid progress!





## Kissels on the Wreck of the Lakeland

By Dawn Bondhus Mueller

The steamship **Lakeland** was built by Globe Iron Works, Cleveland,

Ohio in 1887 as the *Cambria* and was reportedly just the second steel ship built on the Great Lakes. Renamed the *Lakeland* in 1910, the 280 foot freighter had seen many years of service by the time of its last voyage. In 1919 the ship was modified to also serve as an automobile carrier with a capacity of 250 cars, though it carried around 20 when it sank. On that final trip it stopped in Kenosha and Milwaukee, Wisconsin, presumably to take on Nash and Kissel automobiles, respectively. Bound for Detroit, Michigan the *Lakeland* ran into bad weather off Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin. After waiting out the storm there, it headed out only to quickly founder on December 3, 1924. None of the 27 crew perished, but the entire cargo was lost in around 200 feet of water. Insurance fraud was suspected but never proven.

Late this past summer, videographers who work with National Geographic shot many hours of new video footage of the wreck. The new footage is much clearer than what had been shot previously due in part to the presence of zebra mussels. Although they are an invasive species in the Great Lakes, water clarity has dramatically improved as these filter-feeding organisms remove particles from the water. In November a few museum staff members and volunteers met with Tamara Thomsen, maritime archaeologist for the Wisconsin Historical Society, to view the new footage. The group was able to identify six Kissels and eleven Nashes with a good de-

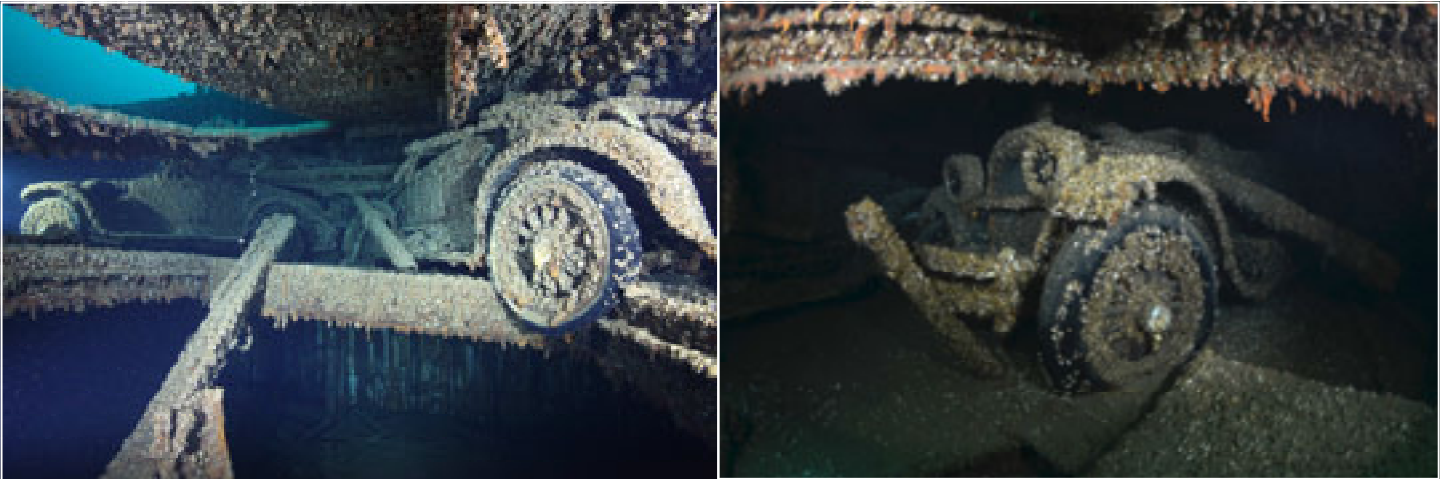
gree of certainty. Both open and closed body cars of each make were on the ship.

However four vehicles could not be identified- they were neither Kissel nor Nash. In the early 1980s a car was retrieved off the ship, but was essentially destroyed in the process. At the time it was said to be a Rollin, a car briefly manufactured in Cleveland, Ohio. Following this lead, Tamara showed the footage to the transportation curator at the Western Reserve Historical Society in Cleveland. That museum has an intact Rollin as a reference, and the curator was able to positively identify all four vehicles as Rollins.

Viewing the footage was fascinating, and the group that met at the museum did not see all of it, just the best shots of the cars. The following is a theory the group came up with after seeing the cars on the ship. Most of the Kissels have double whitewall tires, which is a feature typically seen on cars at auto shows. Detroit's auto show was coming in January, so it seems likely



The SS *Lakeland* in better days, above, and on Dec. 3, 1924. (NordicDiver.com)



An images of Kissels in the wreck. (Tamara Thomsen, marine archaeologist and diver)

that the cars were headed there. It was also interesting that many of the tires had the appearance of holding air under water.

A grant had been procured for the diving on and filming of the Lakeland. The plan is to nominate the Lakeland site to be placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

It is interesting that Wisconsin has more shipwrecks on the National Register than any other state, with perhaps another to be added in the near future.

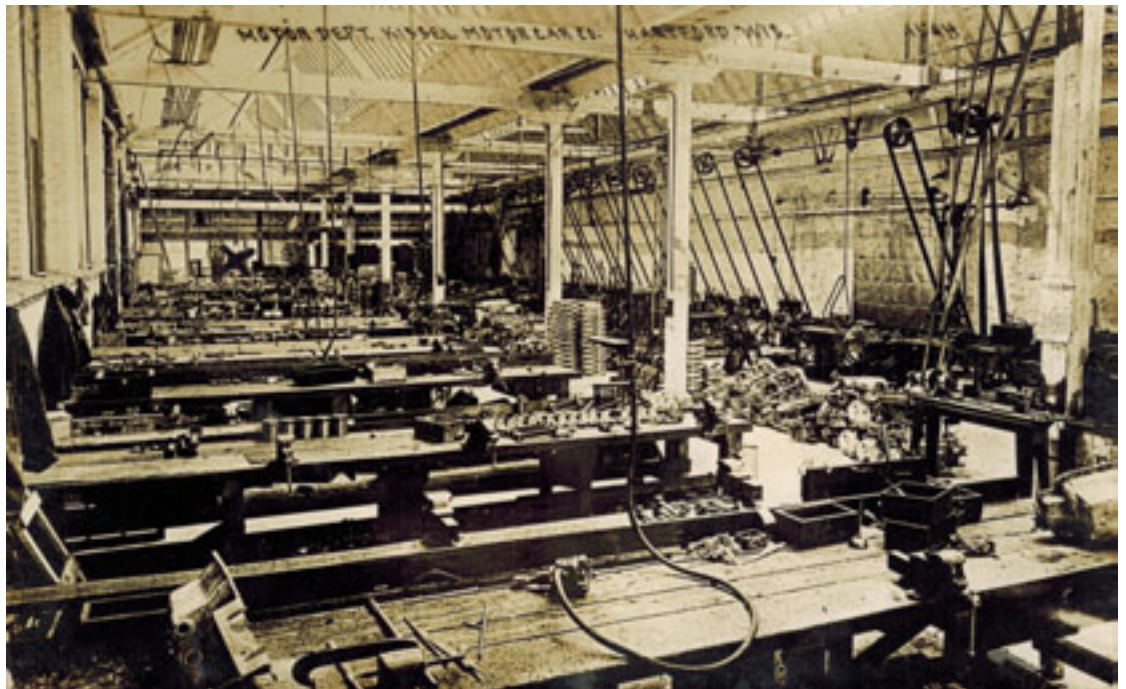
*Dawn Bondhaus Mueller is director of the Wisconsin Automotive Museum in Hartford Wisconsin.*

## Kissel Motor Department, 1912

This image is from a picture postcard recently sent to the editor by Ove Dürre Jensen, editor of a Danish moped hobbyist newsletter.

On the back is written “Meine Arbeitsplatz”, my workplace, likely referring to the handwritten “X” in the upper left. This card was likely sent by a German worker employed at that time by Kissel.

On closer examination at higher resolution, one can see a calendar open to July, 1912, engine blocks, pistons, connecting rods and lots of other parts associated with engine building.





Silence is golden; duct tape is silver.

## What Do Apollo Space Missions and a 1914 KisselKar Have In Common? —or— Duct Tape, Don't Leave Home Without It!

By Lynn Kissel

A search of the internet will reveal many innovative uses of duct tape, a cloth-backed pressure-sensitive tape that is familiar to most of us. Did you know that it was used for an emergency repair of the Apollo 13 CO<sub>2</sub> scrubbers (helping to save the astronauts lives), the repair of the Apollo 17 lunar rover and balancing helicopter fan blades in Vietnam? Some people use duct tape to treat warts and to fashion articles of clothing. It's been jokingly said, if the problem couldn't be fixed with duct tape then not enough duct tape was used.

Duct tape was used for an emergency road-side repair of the drive train of *Annie*, Lynn and Jeanne Kissel's 1914 KisselKar, during a tour in Portland, Oregon. In

addition to saving the Kissels from being stranded on the road, the repair was so successful that it allowed them to complete the remaining days of the tour, but more on that later.

The 2011 National-Horseless-Carriage-Club Tour was memorable for Jeanne and Lynn for a number of reasons. Of course the Portland/Mount Hood area is a gorgeous backdrop for any car tour. This was also the third time that the Portland Group had hosted the tour, each offering separated by 20 years. There were multiple three-generation families on the tour, many participants were beautifully dressed in period clothing, and some attendees had used the same car on all three tours.

But for Lynn, the most remarkable feature of the tour was that, not one, nor two, but



A grandson enjoys an ice cream with his grandfather, Keith Thousand (Portland HCCA), part of one of the three-generation families on the tour.





Many of the tour members regularly dressed in beautiful period clothing, greatly enhancing the enjoyment for both participants and spectators. Here, Jan Mills talks with Laura Hurley (in the pink, Portland HCCA).

three pre-1916 KisselKars were on this excursion. Jeanne and Lynn's 1914 Model 4-40 5-passenger Touring was joined by Bob Ullrick and his 1910 KisselKar 4-50 Toy Tonneau, and Glenn and Shirley Slack (principal organizers of the tour) in their 1915 KisselKar 6-42 7-passenger Touring. This represents about 2% of all of the Kissel vehicles known to still exist.

It was interesting to see the similarities and differences that existed between the three KisselKars, separated by only 5 years. The 1910 is a brass car, while the 1914 and 1915 feature nickel-plated bright work. The 1910 and 1914 have engines with cylinders cast in pairs, while the 1915 has an en-bloc engine with a



Horseless carriages at the 6000' level on Mount Hood, our lunch stop at the historic Timberline Lodge, built in the late 1930s.

removable head (cylinder block cast as a single unit). The 1910 has acetylene headlights with kerosene side lights, while the 1914 and 1915 have electric lights. The 1910 is right-hand drive with hand-crank start and shift/park-brake controls outside the passenger compartment, while the 1914 and 1915 are left-hand drive with electric starters and shift/park-brake controls in the middle of the front seat.

Jeanne and Lynn were fortunate to have Jeanne and Wade Smith as passengers on all three days of the tour. Hailing from San Antonio, Texas, they were great companions. Witty and entertaining, Wade was soon sitting in the front with Lynn and the two Jeanes shared the rear seat so that the boys and girls could easily engage in their separate conversations.



John Ullrich's 1910 KisselKar 4-50 Toy Tonneau is parked in the lot of the tour hotel.



Lynn Kissel driving *Annie*, his 1914 KisselKar 4-40 Touring with San Antonio passengers Wade and Jeanne Smith in the back seat.

On day two we traveled over 140 miles and climbed to the 6000' level on Mount Hood, an 11,239' snow-capped peak that is the tallest in Oregon. At the destination awaited a great lunch at the Timberline Lodge, built in the 1930s as a Works Progress Administration (WPA) project on the south side of the stratovolcano. (Also known as a composite volcano, it is a tall cone built up of many layers of hardened lava, pumice and ash. Unlike shield volcanoes, stratovolcanoes have a steep profile and periodic explosive eruptions – think Mount St. Helens.)

Many of the cars had trouble with the climb up Mount Hood and *Annie* was not immune. Although Lynn had relocated and insulated the fuel line a week before the tour, *Annie* suffered mild to moderate symptoms of vapor lock as witnessed by the boiling fuel seen in the glass bowl of her Stromberg carburetor. Letting things cool down by sitting at the side of the road for 5 minutes was enough to allow the Kissels and Smiths to complete the journey up the mountain.

As they near Portland on the return trip, Lynn heard a distinct metallic “tink” from under the car reflected off a guard rail that the car was passing. Noting a sudden loss of drive power to the rear wheels, he coasted to a stop on the shoulder of the road and

discovered that the right rear hubcap (which retains the drive shaft in *Annie*'s full floating



Glenn Slack with his 1915 KisselKar 6-42 Touring.



Duct tape was used to hold the drive axle in the hub of one of Annie's rear wheels. This photo was taken after driving the car about 10 miles back to the hotel. The tape showed little stress from the drive.

rear axle) had gone missing; the axle had disengaged and was protruding a couple of inches out from the wheel. The "tink" was likely the disengagement of the interlocking axle/wheel cogs. Although they spent hours on two days looking, they can not find the hubcap. Perhaps it jumped ship many miles before the axle disengaged or was simply hiding under a bush somewhere.

There were many disabled horseless carriages along the route, keeping the three trouble trucks very busy. Lynn called over the next few hours for a trouble truck but none was available. The Kissel/Wade party was stranded by the side of the road.

It was late in the day and would be getting dark, soon. All the trucks were still engaged helping other stranded motorists.

In desperation Lynn searched through the materials he had on hand and decided to try using duct tape from his emergency kit to reconnected the axle, but he's not confident that the temporary repair will hold. As darkness falls, Lynn drove the

duct-taped car and successfully returned to the tour hotel. Much to his surprise and delight the duct tape held. Further the tape showed no evidence of failing, neither stretching nor tearing.

Lynn spent a restless night, and he frequently awakened to consider if he should try to complete the remaining days of the tour with the compromised KisselKar. Sometime after midnight he concluded that he should err on the side of caution and not tempt fate further. Lynn and Jeanne would ask to ride with others the next.

Yet, when he awakened in the morning Lynn felt brave and had a change of heart. Locating a nearby Home Depot, Lynn drove Annie to the store and buys fresh duct tape (two rolls, one in silver and one in black, plus a roll of tie wire in case something stronger was needed). Several employees pour out of the store into the parking lot to inspect the car and discuss and laugh about the duct-tape repair. After returning to the tour hotel, Lynn retaped the axle, using the two color tapes to mimic the black hub and silver cap, appealing to his warped sense of being clever.

Although Lynn was concerned, Annie completes the tour with no further difficulties. The repair was so successful, that Lynn went on to complete another one-day tour with the duct-taped car a week later.

With all the amazing uses that have been found for duct tape, isn't it remarkable that it turns out that duct tape is not that well suited for wrapping heating ducts?

*Lynn Kissel owns two Kissels and lives in Cameron Park, California.*

The KisselKar Klub  
c/o Wisconsin Automotive Museum  
147 North Rural Street  
Hartford, WI 53027

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

### Hartford, Wisconsin (circa 1908-1909)



This view of daily commerce shows that the principal mode of transportation in 1909 Hartford still involves horses. The primary image has been flipped horizontally so that the banner over the unpaved street reads correctly, but a closer inspection shows that all the shop signs are reversed. The sole vehicle in the picture appears to be a 1909 Kissel Touring, as evidenced by the radiator, fenders and the square-cornered firewall. As the Kissel model year started in July, this picture could have been taken as early as 1908.