

# The Kisselgraph

☆☆☆ The official newsletter of the KisselKar Klub ☆☆☆

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## Kissel's Last Speedster



*Kissel Motor Car Company co-founder William L. Kissel built a gasoline powered mini car for the enjoyment of his grandchildren in about 1950. That car replicated styling queues of the company's iconic Speedster model: horse-collar radiator surround; racer-cut sides; hood line straight to the windshield; bicycle-style fenders; turtle-back rear deck. At top, Klub member and William's grandson, Doug Kissel in No.2 in 1955 at age 7. At bottom, No.2 as displayed in the Wisconsin Automotive Museum today.*

**T**he *Kisselgraph* is published for the benefit of members of the KisselKar Klub through substantial support from the Wisconsin Automotive Museum.

Website: *www.wisconsinautomuseum.com*

E-mail: *info@wisconsinautomuseum.com*

Telephone: 1+262-673-7999

Address: 147 North Rural St, Hartford, WI 53027, USA

Please forward Kissel-related activities, proposed articles and other KisselKar Klub correspondence to the editor, Lynn Kissel.

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Address: 4431 Spring Meadow Rd, Cameron Park, CA 95682-9629, USA

Our website is an on-line presence for the

KisselKar Klub and features a gallery of member vehicles, back issues of *The Kisselgraph* and other information.

Website: *www.kisselkar.net*

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The KisselKar Klub Board of Directors are

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Send this form and your tax-deductible contribution to:

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



*From the editor*

## Meet the new Boss

By Lynn Kissel

At the 2016 Meet, we adopted by laws that established a

new governing structure for the Klub. It created a **board of directors** and codified the position of **executive director**. Since that meeting, we have nominated and approved our board and the board has unanimously elected it's executive director, **Dale Anderson**.

Dale assumed full responsibility for running the Klub in the 1980s and has been a sustaining force behind it since then. There are few or no Klub members alive today that have the depth of knowledge of the Kissel Motor Car Company, its vehicles, and the people who built or own the vehicles as Dale. It is particularly fitting that Dale be elected executive director under the new by laws.

These and all board actions are documented on the Klub Forum, accessible under the members-only section of the Klub's website. To access that site recall two of the Kissel co-founders (GeorgeA/WilliamL is the username/PIN).

You can browse the Klub Forum without forum login, but need one to post new information.

Why would you want to access the Forum? Here are a few things that come to mind.

- There is a listing of the prices paid for Kissels at public sales. Use this information for your own buying/selling decisions or for setting limits on your auto insurance.

- Postings of Kissel parts wanted or for sale
- Review discussions of the Board
- Dale Anderson has posted a series of 30-something Kissel-related stories

Did you notice the new list of directors and contact information on page 2 of this issue? Please feel free to contact the directors with your suggestions and comments. We all perform better with constructive feedback from the membership.

*Lynn Kissel is editor of the Kisselgraph. You can contact Lynn via email to 'editor@kisselkar.net'.*



Wisconsin Automotive Museum staff member Peter Klug (left) and Klub editor Lynn Kissel create a makeshift document capture station in June 2017 using CamScanner software running on a tablet, lamps and ladders. They are digitizing Will Kissel's scrapbook, on display at the Museum, as part of the ongoing KisselFiles Project. (Photo by Dawn Bondhus)



*From the Executive Director*

## Klub Meet in 2020

By Dale W. Anderson

I tip my hat to the Kissel-Kar Klub Board of Directors for their support and encouragement. Their unanimous vote to elect me the executive director under the new by-laws of the Klub is personally gratifying. Thank you.

Our 2016 Klub Meet was a great success! How do we follow-up on that effort? Why with another meet! I propose that we consider 2020. The Klub has met every several years around the Father's Day weekend, the third Sunday in June. Following that pattern gives us the dates of the weekend of June 19-21, 2020.

Here's my vision of how the next Klub Meet will be structured.

- On **Friday** we will have some kind of driving event, using our old (or new) cars to visit interesting destinations in the Hartford area. Maybe we could have a picnic lunch in a park, or gather in a local restaurant. We might gather for an unhosted social hour at the end of our day of touring.
- During the **day on Saturday** we will exhibit our Kissel vehicles in the parking lot outside the Museum. I think it would add quite a bit of excitement if some of us offered rides to the public in our cars. We could request a donation of \$1/person/ride as a mini fundraiser for the Museum.
- On **Saturday evening** we will have a banquet and business meeting in the Museum. A short presentation might be given and maybe some fun, semi-

serious awards could be presented to Klub members and other participants.

- On **Sunday morning** we will have a light farewell breakfast and parting conversations in the Museum.

I'd like to hear your thoughts about this concept for a next Klub Meet. Do you have any ideas that will help make the meet even more special? Please contact me or any of the Klub Directors with your ideas and suggestions for our next gathering.

*Dale Anderson is Executive Director of the KisselKar Klub. You can contact Dale via email to 'Dale.Anderson@kisselkar.net'.*



*New at the Museum Store*

## A New "Kissel" Doodad

Proudly display your support for Kissel with a shiny new item that has been added to the gift shop of the Wisconsin Automotive Museum. It is a 3.25"x1.75"x0.25" plexiglass magnet in the style of an older (not current) Wisconsin license plate; \$5 plus shipping and handling.

This new item joins many other Kissel-themed keepsakes on sale at the Museum's store including art posters, logoed shirts, KisselFiles Project DVDs and more.

Why not contact the museum to place your order today?

## My Grandmother and Great Grandmother's Speedster

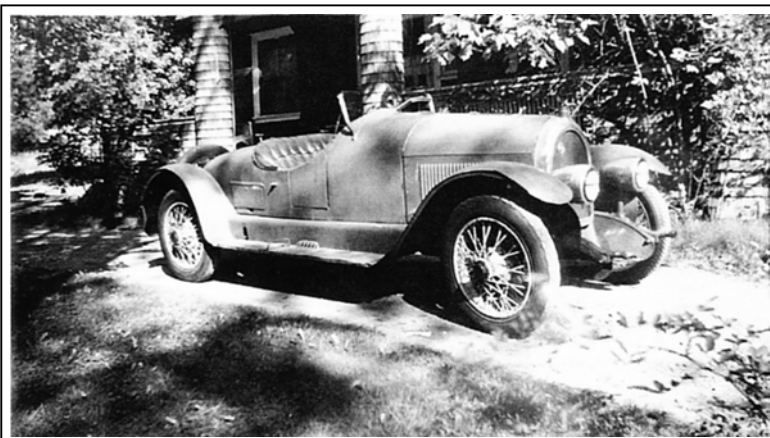
In 2014, Richard Stephens acquired a 1920 Kissel Speedster (car #45-1964) to join the Automobile Museum of the Academy of Art University (San Francisco, CA). Your editor has learned of an interesting communication received by the collection's coordinator, Paul Borgwardt.

This 1920 "Gold Bug" was originally owned by Charles and Beatrice Bent. Apparently Charles, a Rhode Island resident, bought the sports car to take his newlywed wife, Beatrice, on a honeymoon to Niagara Falls. Owned by the Bent family for 37 years, the car has subsequently passed through more than a dozen owners on its journey to Mr. Stephens. The former owners included such notables as Gene Husting (1950s, Klub founder, Gene's 2nd Speedster) and Bill Harrah (1960s, the Harrah Collection, the remnants of which are the current National Automobile Museum in Reno, NV).

Granddaughter Louise Flanagan Ullman and great granddaughter Patricia Devine-Harms caught up with the Bent family car at the Bonhams auction at Greenwich, CT, on June 1, 2014. It was at this auction that Stephens bought the car. Louise has fond memories of riding in the outrigger seats of the Speedster as a child, an experience she reenacted at the auction as demonstrated in the photos

accompanying this note.

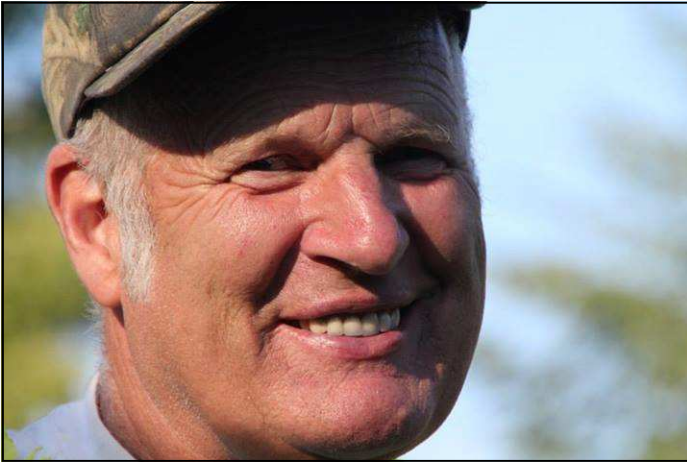
Great granddaughter Devine-Harms told Borgwardt "I'm so glad to hear the Academy of Art University has my Great-Grandmother's Kissel Gold Bug." She has told other members of the family about the car's new home and that "the Kissel Gold Bug is in good hands and in a museum again; I think it was at the Hartford, WI museum several years ago. Thanks again and I look forward to visiting the Academy of Art University Automobile Museum!"



A photo from August, 1946 of the 1920 Kissel Speedster while still owned by the Bent Family.



Louise Flanagan Ullman (seated) in 2014 relives her childhood adventure of riding in the outrigger seat of her grandparents Kissel "Gold Bug". Great granddaughter Patricia Devine-Harms stands next to her.



## Caveat Emptor – Let the Buyer Beware

By SSSsteamer (a.k.a. Pat Farrell)

**M**y first Horseless Carriage Club of America scam experience was when I advertised on HCCA's website for a 1914 Stanley roadster windshield frame. I quickly received a reply that the seller in England had a windshield frame that would fit my car, and he was taking it off of a 1914 Stanley that he was parting out. It would cost me only \$350 (I would have paid anyone \$3,000 for the correct one) and that I could send him payment by Western Union. I told him that I wanted to see the windshield frame first before I would send him any money. The next day, he sent me a photo of the Stanley roadster that he was parting out. It was a blue 1914 Stanley roadster just like mine, and after a closer look, I seen that it was my roadster, and that was me sitting in the driver's seat.

He had gleaned my photo off of the internet. In my email reply to him, I used many unkind words that are not suitable for publication in this newsletter.

Next, I had advertised on the HCCA website for just a couple of transmission gears for our 50 HP 1910 KisselKar model D10, or possibly a whole transmission. A fellow with a phone number of 1-916-214-8029 (Sacramento area) called and he said that he has for sale a recently rebuilt transmission that would fit our 50 HP KisselKar model D10. He said that his deceased Reno, Nevada grandfather, Bob Johnson, had spent \$175 for its new gears that he had made for it. Tom Roberts of Los Angeles made the gears for his grandpa. He said that after liquidating his grandfather's \$275,000 Reno home, he and his wife were leaving in the morning for his grandfather's other home in New Mexico. The 1910 KisselKar transmission was already mounted on a pallet and it was ready to be shipped. The seller said that his wife was out checking on rates for shipping the transmission onto a potential New York buyer.



Pat in his 1914 Stanley roadster, sent to him as evidence by a fraudulent seller.



Pat's 1910 KisselKar D-10 (50hp) Toy Tonneau (eng #1219).

He said that his grandfather once had two KisselKars. Both Kissels were 1911 50 HP tourings. His grandfather had left him everything including millions of dollars in bank accounts. The grandfather had sold one of the Kissels ten years ago for \$130,000. Then he sold the last KisselKar last year for \$80,000.

I told the seller that if the 1911 transmission is what he says it was, that I would pay him \$6,000 for it and I would pick it up tomorrow. He was ready to ship it to any buyer, and he was surprised that I would be willing to pick it up. He told me to hold off, because the New York buyer, whom he had talked to first, still had first grabs on it, and that if that buyer didn't go for it for a reasonable price, of say like \$400, then he would call me back in about an hour. He said that because he was so flush with money, money was no problem to him and that he was willing to sell it cheap, just like the rest of his grandfathers spare parts that he had sold for only scrap prices. If I didn't take him up on this transmission, he would also sell this transmission to the scrap dealer, just like he did

with the rest of his grandfather's car parts.

The seller called back an hour later and he said that the New York buyer was a no sale, and that before he could sell it to me, he had to clear our sale with his wife. The seller never called me back the third time.

I didn't find Bob Johnson's name anywhere in the Klub Roster. In the KisselKar registry, there are only three D 11s left in the world and a Bob Johnson

had not owned any of them. No listing for an HCCA member of Bob Johnson in Reno could be found. Only \$175 for new transmission gear? I wish... Ten years ago, KisselKars were selling for only half of the \$130,000 he claimed that he got for it. He sold his millionaire grandfather's Reno home for \$275,000? For Reno, it must have not have been that spectacular. He is now a millionaire and he would rather turn down my \$6,000 and sell the transmission for scrap? I do not personally know of any millionaires that are that rich to throw away \$6,000.

This whole thing looked like a scam. Looks like I might have been walking into a hit job and if I had met up with him on a remote Reno street with \$6,000 cash in my pocket, I may have never been seen again.

Here are some suggestions that you might to consider to avoid becoming a scan victim yourself.

- If it sounds too good to be true, then it is probably isn't true.,

- See the item first before you pay for it. If you know of someone that can physically inspect the item before your purchase, then have them do it.
- If the selling correspondence to you has errors in the spelling, grammar, or in actual facts, avoid the purchase.
- Avoid sending payment to a post office box or to third world countries.
- Anyone asking in advance for pre-payment by Western Union is questionable and they should be avoided.
- If the price is far below market value,

then extra caution should be used.

- If the seller can't re-tell the story and give matching details each time, then he probably is lying.
- Using a bank card or PayPal for the purchase may give you some protection if a problem occurs.

Be careful out there.

*Pat Farrell lives in Sedro-Woolley, WA, and owns a 1910 KisselKar D-10 (50hp) Toy Tonneau. You can contact Pat via email to 'Pat.Farrell@kisselkar.net'.*

## New Klub Roster Available

At the June 2016 meet in Hartford, WI, the KisselKar Klub distributed a new, printed roster to the attendees. An updated version of that roster is now available for sale to all Klub members.

The roster has a cover design that mimics a 1920s Kissel instruction book (owners manual), printed on simulated aged parchment, heavy card stock.

A foreword contains a thumbnail history of the Kissel Motor Car Company and the KisselKar Klub. The main body of the roster is divided into four sections.

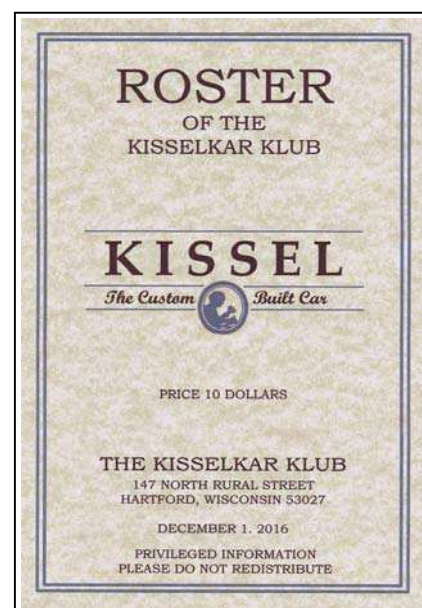
- 1) Owners, contact information and vehicles, sorted by the owners last name
- 2) Kissel vehicles, sorted by year of manufacture
- 3) Members who are either direct descendants of the company founders, or special friends of the Klub
- 4) Kissel vehicles that are missing in action—vehicles that were known by the Klub to exist, but whose current location and owner have been lost through

the passage of time

Many owners use a car-club roster for making contact with owners of similar vehicles. This can be useful to inquire about parts or for details of the correct restoration of their vehicle.

***The roster is only available to members of the Klub.*** The price reflects the costs of printing and mailing.

To obtain your copy, send a letter with your name, address and US\$10 to Lynn Kissel, 4431 Spring Meadow Road, Cameron Park, CA 95682-9620, USA.





This 1924 ode to Kissel was found by museum Executive Director Dawn Bondhus-Mueller in the files of the Wisconsin Automotive Museum. Does it put a smile on you face? It made your editor smile.

I'm driving a Kissel that's seven years old,  
But the twenty-four model, so I have been told,  
Is a marvel of beauty, with wonderful lines,  
So I know that my sixteen is behind the times.

But what do I care for new models or styles,  
When my car that has given me thousands of miles,  
Will to-day perform as it did, when it came  
From the factory of KISSEL, that honors the name,

Of the man who built this car, honest and square,  
As for quality and service, it certainly is there.  
I never attempted this car to exploit,  
But feel it would make a hit, here in DETROIT.

The city is large, and the agencies many,  
But for some of the cars I would not pay a penny.  
As the Scotchman is fond of his own native Thistle,  
Believe me I'll swear by my old fashioned KISSEL.

And were it my fortune to have cash in the banks,  
I would send you the money and likewise my thanks,  
For the exchange you have offered me, please get me right,  
That for this amount I am ready to fight.

Not like Dempsey, who fights in a big canvass ring,  
But with salesmanship keen, my products I sing,  
That is of their merits and this you may note,  
When my prospects refuse me, they sure get my goat.

For like you and your product, each one in his zone,  
We're both of us sure in a class of our own,  
The statement just made, is a statement of facts,  
When I gather the sheckels, I sure will make tracks,

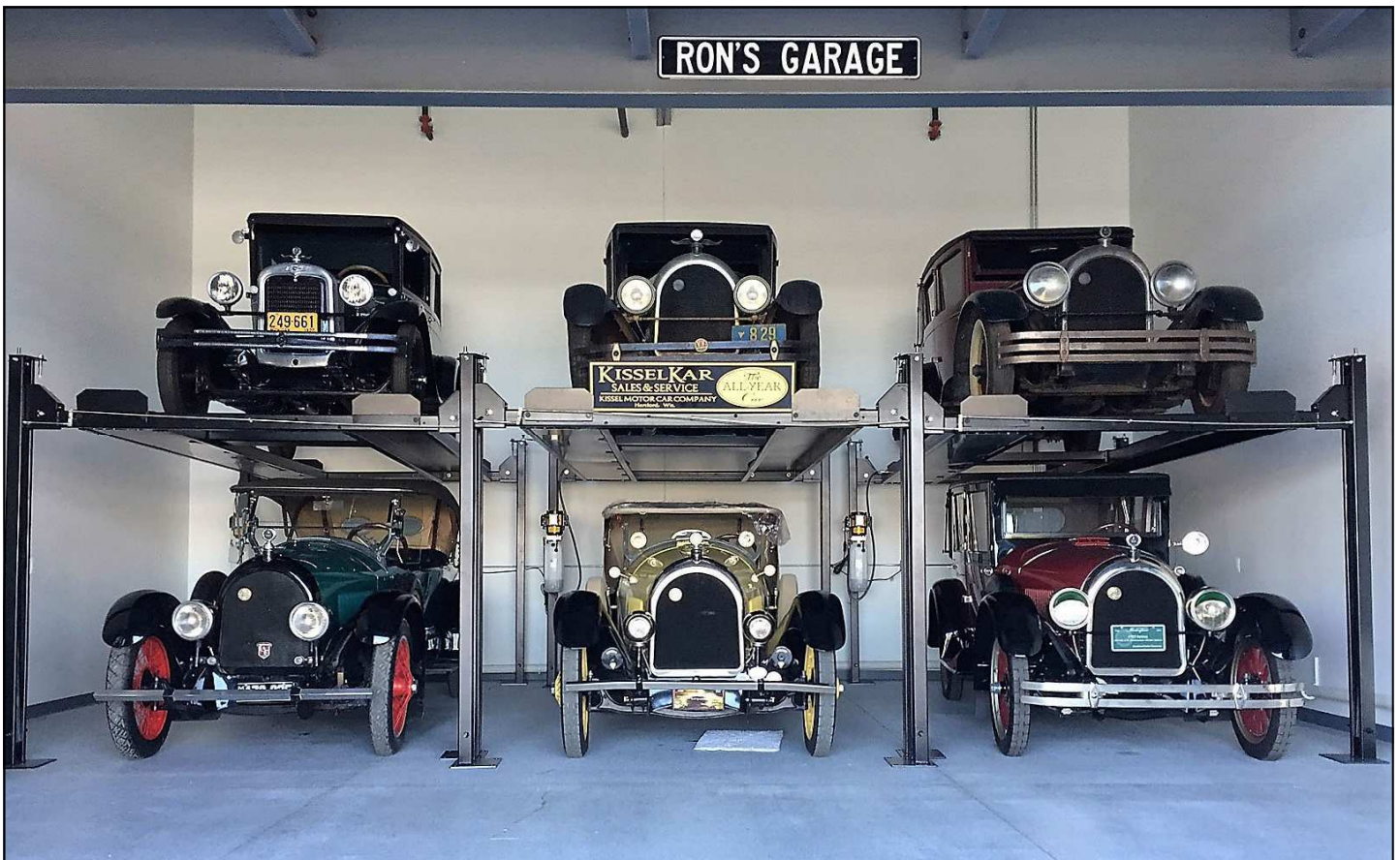
To Hartford Wisconsin, My old KISSEL'S home,  
And my wife's health permitting, I'll not go alone.  
And when that time cometh, with joy, we will whistle,  
For we'll both drive back home, in a SPORT MODEL KISSEL.

C. G. Gaffney  
10226 Woodward Ave.  
Detroit, Mich.

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

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

## There be Kissels in the M1 Concourse “Car Condominium”



*Klub member and board director Ronald Hausmann tells your editor about his car space at M1 Concourse, an 87-acre development for auto enthusiasts in Pontiac, MI. The facility features 250+ private garages and a 1.5-mile road track. Ron stores part of his stunning collection of cars in this climate controlled space that has a rest room, mezzanine level, refrigerator and bar. Seen here are (top from left) 1927 Chevrolet, 1924 Kissel 6-55 Coupe, 1927 Kissel 8-65 Brougham, (bottom) 1921 Kissel 6-45 Tourster, 1923 Kissel 6-45 Speedster, and 1923 Kissel 6-55 Brougham. Nearby Ron maintains another shop for the messy work.*

*(For details, see Ron's posting on the Klub Forum and M1's website, 'm1concours.com'.)*