

The Kisselgraph

★ ★ ★ The official newsletter of the KisselKar Klub ★ ★ ★

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John Noel's 1924 Kissel Speedster circa 1925



Inside this issue, we visit with John M. Noel and his 1924 Kissel Speedster (car# 55-4323). This early photograph of the car was captured at Fairy Bower, Gracemere, QLD, Australia, a popular picnic location outside of Rockhampton. This and other early photos of the car, and a complete ownership history of the car, was collected by Kissel owner and Klub Director John Lewis. ([Kissel Cars Down Under: A Brief History of Kissel Cars in Australia](#), John H. Lewis, Brisbane, Australia, 2006, 66pp).

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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.

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147 N. Rural Street
Hartford, WI 53027**

2020 KisselKar Klub Meet

June 12-14 at the
Wisconsin Automotive Museum
Hartford, Wisconsin

Plans are underway for the next Klub Meet. Please reserve space on your calendar as the meet is now less than one year away. Here is a general outline of our plans.

Your editor would like to know of other members who hope to attend, especially if you will be bringing a Kissel vehicle. Your

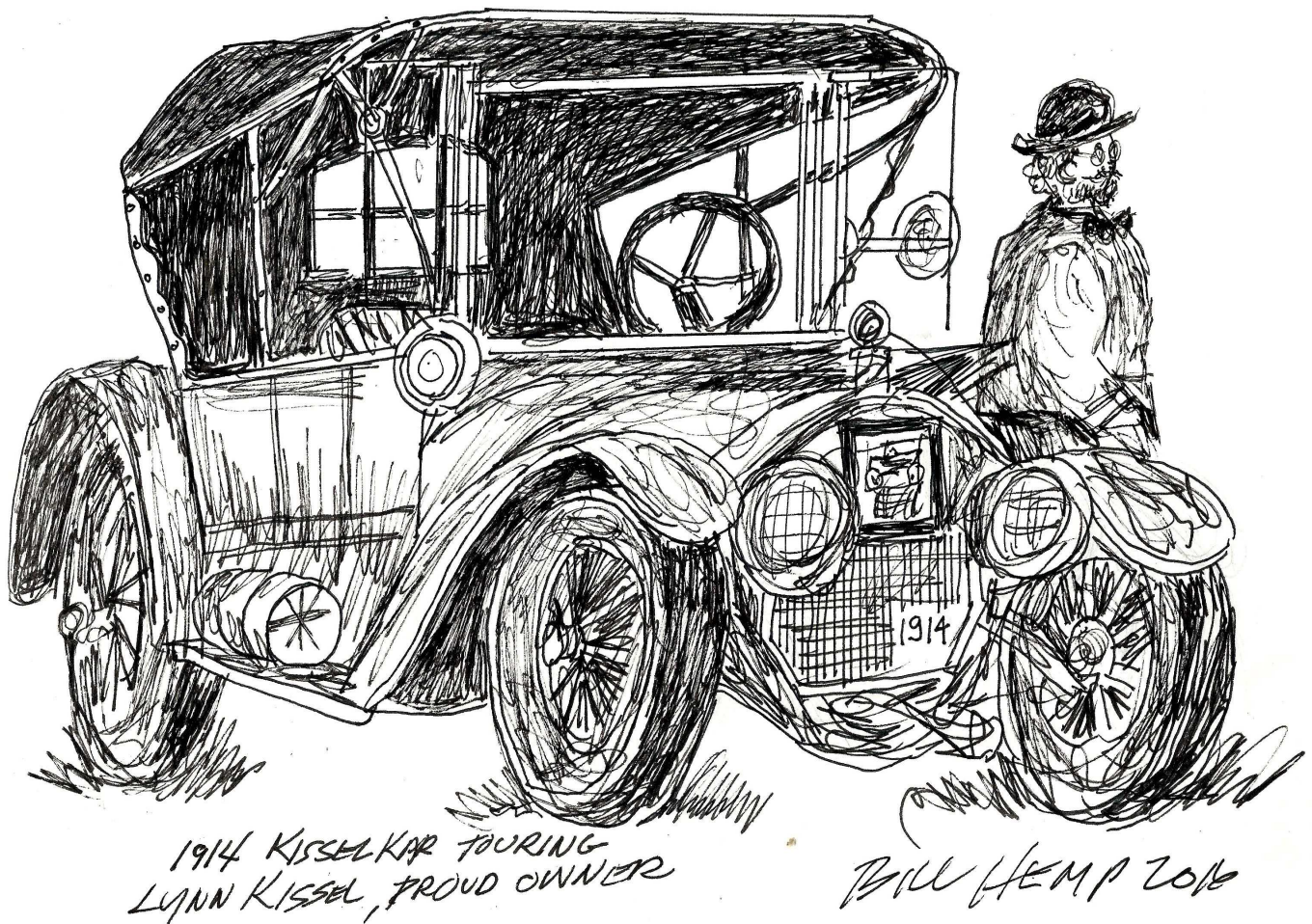
editor expects to have his 1914 KisselKar Touring at the meet.

Thu, June 11—early bird cruise-in to Mickey's Frozen Custard, 5 PM

Fri, June 12—AM registration and driving tour, PM technical session, discussions and social

Sat, June 13—Car exhibit and demos AM through early PM; social hour, banquet and awards in the PM

Sun, June 14—AM pastries and coffee, parting discussions



Bill Hemp created this sketch of your editor and his 1914 KisselKar Touring (car# 40-15471) at a local car show on Bainbridge Island, WA, in 2016.

A Visit with John M. Noel and My Reunion with Bugsby

By Lynn Kissel

On June 11, 2019, a group closely associated with the Wisconsin Automotive Museum made a day trip to the Stevens Point area, WI, to visit John and Patty Noel and view their automobile collection. The impetus for the trip was a certain 1924 Kissel Speedster (car# 55-4323) formerly owned by Lynn and Jeanne Kissel, that they had affectionately named *Bugsby*.

In late 2017, John Noel acquired Bugsby to become a focal point of his private collection. The car now resides at the center of a newly constructed 22,000 sq.ft. car barn.

In the shape of a large “X”, the barn has a number of remarkable features. At the center is a motorized turntable on which Bugsby sits, beneath a massive skylight and 1923 chandelier. The main guest entry is designed to resemble a vintage Mobile gas station. (John said he’s still working on signage.)

The huge wall-sized doors at the ends of two opposite legs do not fold, but rather are rigid moving walls. Constructed using 2”x6” framing, covered in drywall, they raise into the attic without folding. There is touchless entry and exit from the restrooms. (It’s not just convenient, but good hygiene in high-traffic areas.) A banked ring road around the barn serves as a private speed track. Everything showed great attention to elegance, design and detail. It is an awesome property, and I don’t use that word lightly.



NOT ALL of our merry band, from the left: Lynn and Jeanne Kissel; Doug and Sheila Kissel; Thomas Klug; Dawn Bondhus Mueller; Peter Rasmussen; Patty and John Noel; Peter Klug. Not shown here are Mark and Pam Thomas who departed before this picture was taken, and Mark, the man behind the camera and who helps John maintain his property including the cars.



Bugsby on display. The car sits upon a motorized turn table at the center of John Noel's car barn.

Jeanne told Lynn that she almost cried when she first saw Bugsby on this visit. The car sparkled in the lights of John's stunning display area. Its fenders and bright work had been recently professionally polished and the car is highlighted in natural light from a massive cupola, with artificial light from a large, theater chandelier.

The Kissel Speedster is surrounded by a number of impressive displays. Each of the score of collector cars is beautifully restored and meticulously manicured. Two prominent entertaining areas are Mima's

Ice Cream Parlour and Peep's Bar. (John tells Lynn that the names are derived from the names the grandchildren called Patty and John.) Vintage pinball machines, pedal cars and automobilia abound.

The 60+ acre property has a stunningly handsome and large home built on the shores of the Wisconsin River. A resident eagle has a nest on the shoreline. (The Noels have built a taller, sturdier platform for the eagles and are hoping that the eagles will move to it soon.) Entering the property we passed through a covered bridge (new construction with designed rattly floor



A glimpse through the trees of two wings of John Noel's remarkable car barn.



John Noel proudly stands next his 1924 Kissel Speedster, with Sheila Kissel inside.

Kissel Speedster. We enjoyed that he enjoyed the moment.

At their home, our 10 visitors were hosted to a delicious pulled-pork luncheon with cole slaw, pasta salad and dessert. We stopped to enjoy the great view of the Wisconsin River from the rear patio.

It came up in our conversations, and I have read

boards, marvelous), and over a curving bridge before we passed a large log cabin. Each feature must have a story of its own.

John tells Lynn that when the Noels pass on, they intend to leave the property to the boys and girls club with the expectation that it will be used for fund raising activities.

The Kissel Speedster had not run since it was delivered in 2016. After a few minutes of diagnostics, it was found that the fuel pump was off. With fuel restored, Bugsby quickly sprang to life.

With Lynn driving and John as passenger, we drove the car outside to the ring track. After one lap with Lynn at the wheel, Lynn got out and John slid over to take solo control of the car. John then completed a series of laps of steadily increasing speed—peaking at 35-40 MPH by my estimate. From the expression on his face, John was clearly enjoying this energetic run in his

elsewhere, that philanthropy plays an important part in the lives of John and Patty. Knowing about his long term plans to use the property to benefit children made this day's visit all the more special.

Of John's visitors: Doug Kissel is the grandson of William L. Kissel, company founder; Dawn Bondhus Mueller is executive director of the Wisconsin Automotive Museum; Peter Rasmussen and Doug Kissel are museum board members; Peter Klug is museum staff; Brothers Peter and Thomas Klug, Doug and Sheila Kissel, Mark and Pam Thomas, and Lynn and Jeanne Kissel are current owners of Kissel vehicles; Mark Thomas works with the FWD-Seagrave Museum in Clintonville, WI.

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

A (more than 90 year old) Kissel Fan Letter..

C. E. HYDE, M.D.
240 STOCKTON STREET,
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.

December 17, 1928.

Mr. J. L. Blakemore,
1910 Van Ness Avenue,
San Francisco, California.

My dear Sir:-

I have used my Kissel Brougham for twenty-six months, doing service in a general practice over the streets and hills of San Francisco. It has been the most comfortable and enjoyable period of my sixteen years of work here.

From the time I put my foot upon the starter until I lock the doors, everything is comfort with freedom from annoyance, and this is just what I have been looking for in an auto, since this feature adds years to one's hard, over-worked nerves.

Prior to my Kissel, I had an auto which cost two and one-half times its price and I will say I never knew what a car could be like until I had this Brougham. I have had no major expense, no breakage or replacements. The upkeep has been the least I have known, and I have seen all the essential working parts at one time and another and I can see that there are many years of service left in them before I need to think of replacing any. The upholstery even with my weight which is heavy, upon it daily, shows next to no evidence of this use, and the finish of the exterior at a very short distance appears like new. I don't know any car at any price which can equal it.

All in all, I shall be very sorry when it becomes necessary to get even another Kissel, since this one has fulfilled my requirements so admirably well. As for requirements, I may say that I took a long list which I had prepared from my previous experience along with me when I looked for a car. This Kissel had practically all of these requirements. I was very exacting in this matter and looked for a period of six months before deciding upon my present Kissel.

By this you can see how pleased I am with my Kissel and I have recommended it highly to my friends.

Very truly yours,

CEH:LDeJ

C. E. HYDE, M.D.

Progress on Restoration of 1918 Kissel Sedanette

We hear of **Ronald Hausmann's** progress restoring the only known surviving Sedanette styled Kissel. We wrote about Ron's early efforts in Vol. 41, No. 2 of *The Kisselgraph* (Dec 2015). Ron now says...

"The 1918 Kissel Sedanette is essentially done except for upholstery and door / hood trim which is being nickeled. Drives great.

I will not show it this year but will wait to finish the convertible top on it this season and then display it at next years' concours in convertible guise with the removable black hardtop next to it."

On the AACA Forums (under "AACA GENERAL DISCUSSION | Our Cars & Restoration Projects | Kissel 1918 Sedanette") Ron has been leading an ongoing discussion on his efforts since 2013. That discussion now runs to eight pages with many great pictures and details.



The 1918 Kissel Sedanette in 2013



Ronald Hausmann sends the editor this image of his 1918 Kissel Sedanette (car# 38-5241)

Ron's project got a big boost recently when he connected with a new old stock folding top, complete with all the hardware including porthole windows, sockets and bows. Preserved for many years by Klub members Randy Blohm and Joe Leaf, they knew that the top was for a Kissel vehicle, but had not determined exactly which

model it fit. Fortunately, Ron recognized that it was built for his Sedanette and immediately acquired it for his car.

Ron writes on the AACA Forums that he expects to display this car at the 2020 KisselKar Klub Meet as well as at other shows in the Wisconsin and Michigan area.



Kathie and Bruce McBroom in their 1927 Kissel Speedster (car# 75-5891)

Kissel in SoCal CCCA Newsletter; McBrooms in Washington State

Your editor has noticed a colorful article about their family's Kissel Gold Bug written by Bruce McBroom in the *Side Mount Mirror* (2017 No7), newsletter of the Southern California Region of the Classic Car Club of America.

Bought new by his grandparents in sup-

port of their golfing interests, then much to Bruce's disappointment this 1927 Kissel Speedster (car# 75-5891) was sold to another collector in the 1950s. Bruce reacquired the car in 1993 and it is now often displayed with his grandparents golf bags.

Early this year, **Kathie and Bruce McBroom** moved to Bainbridge Island, WA, near to Kissel owners **Joe and Isabelle Leaf**.

There's More Than One Way to Skin a Cat!

Bruce Yeaton discusses his approach replacing the generator on his 1922 Speedster

In *The Kisselgraph* Vol. 44 No. 2 (Dec 2018), Mark A. Kissel told us of his efforts to adapt a Remy 940F generator to replace the deteriorated generator in his 1923 Kissel Phaeton (car# 55-1799). This is important because the generator drives the ignition distributor. Without a mechanically sound generator, the engine won't run as built.

In brief editorial comments at the end of Mark's article, other efforts by Joe Leaf, and separately Bruce Yeaton, to replace a Kissel generator were mentioned.

With a light edit, here are some comments by Bruce Yeaton, the owner of a 1922 Kissel Speedster (car# 45-5061), on his efforts to address his missing generator/distributor. A distinct feature of Bruce's approach is that he makes no modification to his Kissel, a distinct advantage for Kissel owners.

Armed with information from Joe Leaf, here is some background information. Both Mark's and Bruce's approach utilize Remy 940-series generators used on 6-cylinder Buick engines. Generators for these motors have a generator:distributor rotation ratio of 3:1, same as that on Kissel model 45 and 55 6-cylinder engines through 55-12000.

Kissel used a Remy 912B "pot metal" generator on Model 45 engines numbered 45-4365 and later, and Model 55 engines numbered through 55-12000. Due to uncontrolled contamination, these generators have a rear zinc-cast distributor housing that typically swells and distorts over time, eventually becoming unusable.

Kissel Model 45 engines, and Model 55 engines through 55-6000 were "gear" engines, using a gears to drive the cam shaft and



A Remy 940 M-4 generator advertised for sale on eBay.

pump shaft. Engines 55-12001 and later were all "chain" engines. There may have been a mix of gear and chain engines for 55-6001 through 55-12000; visually gear motors have a pressed steel gear-case cover while chain motors have a cast iron cover.

At engine 55-12001, Kissel changed the generator:distributor rotation ratio to 2-1/3:1.

Bruce started with no generator or distributor and writes ...

"I decided to adapt a Buick unit, since I had several Buick generators. I discussed this at length with Joe Leaf and he encouraged me to go ahead. It turns out that he had the same idea years before. Joe has had my back on many, many occasions.

Starting with a Buick unit in my possession (a Remy 940M generator), my conversion makes changes to the generator, leaving all Kissel parts unchanged.

1. I turned the shell of the Buick unit down so that it fit the Kissel cradle exactly. I maintained exact concentricity between the armature and the outer surface of the genera-

tor body. Doing this most importantly maintained alignment.

2. Since the Buick unit originally drove a water pump as well, it had far more bearing area that was necessary for a generator alone. I removed (machined off) the front section (on the Kissel water pump side), leaving more than one inch of bearing. I created an aluminum retainer for a modern seal. I turned the forward end of the armature shaft to a standard diameter and installed a coupling with a Woodruff key and nut, mimicking that on a Kissel generator. This shortened the Buick unit so that the Kissel water pump shaft could be left untouched.

I advise this as the timing case has to be open to remove the water pump. I rebuilt my pump with a new shaft, bushings, and new tapered packing nuts. This is not for the faint of heart! Do not cut off the water pump shaft without a little forethought.

[Ed: Is it necessary to remove the gear cover to replace the water pump? The water pump of a 55-5066 gear motor could be replaced without opening the gear case. After removing the fan-belt pulley from the front of the shaft, the water pump could be removed, leaving the drive gear engaged within the case. Would this method also work with the Model 45 engine?]

I also drilled the forward bearing of the generator unit for either a grease fitting or an oiler. On the rear, distributor end of the unit, I installed a sealed bearing also easily available.

The conversion hasn't run, yet, with my engine as my engine is still in the rebuild process.

The generator is my baby wholly as far as the work is concerned. It I believe will stand the test of time."



Mika Suominen (Nikkla, Finland) displays his 1928 Kissel Brougham (car# 80-3004) at the 2019 American Car Show in Helsinki, April 19-21. This handsome vehicle was awarded a top-10 prize at the show.

The KisselKar Klub
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Hartford, WI 53027

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John Noel's 1924 Kissel Speedster in 2019



Owned by John Noel, this Kissel Speedster (car# 55-4323) now sits on a motorized turntable at the center of his spectacular car barn. In the background we see Mima's Ice Cream ParLOUR and some of the other cars in his collection. (Our visit with John and Patty Noel is featured in this issue starting on page 4.)