

Spoke Folks



North Alabama Region  Antique Automobile Club of America



Tom Totcky – 1926 Ford Model T

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North Alabama Region



President's Message

NAR President / **Nell Owen**

The club members who were able to attend our Christmas dinner at Vision enjoyed the venue, decorations, and food. Randy broke his hip and had total hip replacement on December 3rd, so he was not with me. I enjoyed the food and hope you all did as well. Sonya Totcky Dunlap and her staff made us so welcome. Many of you remember her brother, Tom Totcky, and she told me last night that he was supposed to come but he didn't make it. Most won't know this but Tom has had several strokes in the past few years so she said he may simply have forgotten about the event or may have been too emotional to come. Sonya got emotional when talking with us but she was delighted for us to be there. My final count was 51 who came plus the magician.

If you were there you heard Jim Mullins introduce his fiancée Joann and his nephew. Natalie Hoha had her father with her and Joel and Tina Mason had Mika with them. Gene and Julia King brought their daughter Katie and her husband Michael. It was good to see Julia out and about. It was also good to see Linda Haney as she is recovering from breast cancer surgery earlier. Gerald Moore was there although not feeling great. He is still having problems with a hernia which he says they may have to do surgery on again. Dawn LaFalce was not there with John as she had hip surgery several weeks ago. Angie True was on crutches but seemed to be doing well after foot surgery and Gwyn Wright was there proving you can make it through hip surgery. (Dawn and Randy will have to catch up to Gwyn.)

For those who got pictures made, Jim True has posted his photos to our Facebook page. If you don't have access yet, go to Facebook and search for North Alabama Region AACA and ask for permission which we will gladly give you. I'm sure Frank will post his photos soon.

Those who were there won't know it but I mistakenly gave Ed Hanish the wrong trophy (Berry trophy) but the right plaque (Totcky award), so when you see the photo that Jim took you will see I gave him the wrong one. David Hoha brought me the correct trophy and I have swapped them with David receiving the correct Berry trophy. Sorry for the mixup.

If you haven't paid your 2022 dues, send a \$20 check made out to NAR to Carla Holder, 139 Gilley Drive, Harvest, AL 35749.

Hope everyone has great holidays. We'll be taking it slow and easy at the Owen house.

Nell

NAR Member Milestones

Birthdays

Dec 2 Angie True
Dec 3 Susan Stefanovic
Dec 4 Dean Beckman
Dec 6 M.D. Smith
Dec 10 Chuck Nickey
Dec 13 Bob Weidman
Dec 14 Julia King
Dec 23 Robert Scites
Dec 29 Linda Haney

Birthdays

Jan 4 Russell King
Jan 6 Keith Haney
Jan 16 David Hoha
Jan 23 Peter Catanese
Jan 25 John Adams
Jan 26 Lisa Vaughan
Jan 27 Peggy Richard
Jan 31 Natalie Hoha

Anniversaries

Dec 22 Paul and Lynn Wagner / 54 in 2021
Dec 23 Bob and Lisa Vaughan
Dec 27 Ron and Martha Dion / 52 in 2021

Anniversaries

Jan 9 Jerry and Annette Carignan / 50 in 2021
Jan 9 Marcia Snellen/Danny Barger
Jan 9 Robbie and Angie Henslee
Jan 23 Jeff and Drea Slagle



2021 NAR Awards



*Ed Hanish receiving the wrong trophy (Berry trophy)
but the right plaque (Totcky award)*



David Hoha receiving the Berry trophy

The Tom Totcky Award Trophy

Don Pryor - 1972

To familiarize our newer members with the Tom Totcky Trophy, the first recipient of the trophy, Don Pryor, was asked to write an article on the background of the award. Don writes of his personal experiences with Tom. Memories such as these are shared by many of the older members of our club because Tom Totcky truly exemplified what this hobby is all about. Thanks Don.

Over the past 6 years the North Alabama Region has awarded one of its members with the Tom Totcky Award for the best restored car of each year. Since our club has added a number of members during the years that the award has been given, we felt it was appropriate to give the background of the award to those of you who never knew Tom.

Tom was a typical antique car enthusiast. A transplanted Yankee who had a slow Michigan accent and a basic knowledge of cars and mechanics acquired during the 50's. During those years he, like so many others, recognized a 25 year old car first as a good candidate for a customized hot rod and second as an antique car.

But that changed and by the time our club was formed in 1962 Tom had developed a genuine interest in restoring antiques and had developed all the typical characteristics of the hobby. He enjoyed chasing down car leads and parts as much as any of us but, more than that, he exemplified main purpose of the club. That is the sharing of knowledge, talent, and equipment among his friends in the hobby. He was always available to lend a hand, his gas welding outfit, or some other specialized tool that he had accumulated while becoming an experienced auto mechanic.

I recall his willingness to be of help from a number of personal experiences. My first contact with Tom was when he helped get a rumble seat lid for my 1931 Model A Coupe then under restoration. The lid came from Tom's 1931 customized cabriolet which he had recently sold in a final break with his hot rod interests. There were other occasions during the restoration of my coupe when he was to help out. The seasoned oak he gave me to make body mounting blocks. The introduction to one of his metal working friends when a floor pan had to be reproduced. The list goes on with me and many others active in the club during those days.

Tragedy struck Tom on September 4, 1965 when he lost his life in an attempt to save the lives of three others in a boating accident. Even in his death he was, as always, helping someone else.

Our club wanted to do something in remembrance of Tom and completion of his 1928-29 Model A mail truck restoration seemed appropriate. This project, in a sense, embodied the helping hand quality that we all admired in Tom. Each member contributed some part or effort until the mail truck was presented to Jackie, Tom's wife in the summer of 1968.

The trophy for the best restored car was anonymously donated for presentation in Tom's name each year and as fate would have it the little 1931 Model A coupe he helped me on was the first car to receive the award in 1966. This trophy serves as a reminder of the true spirit of comradeship that our club should represent and hopefully it gives an incentive for every member to put out a restoration worthy of receiving the award.

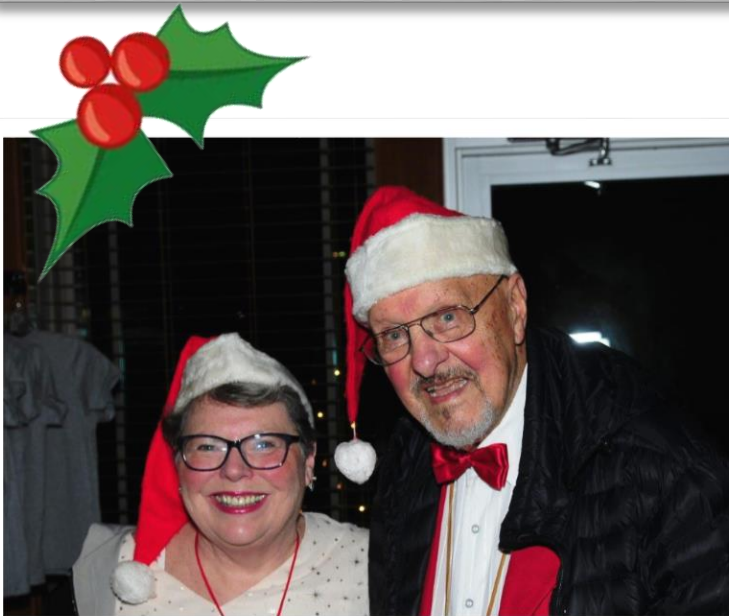
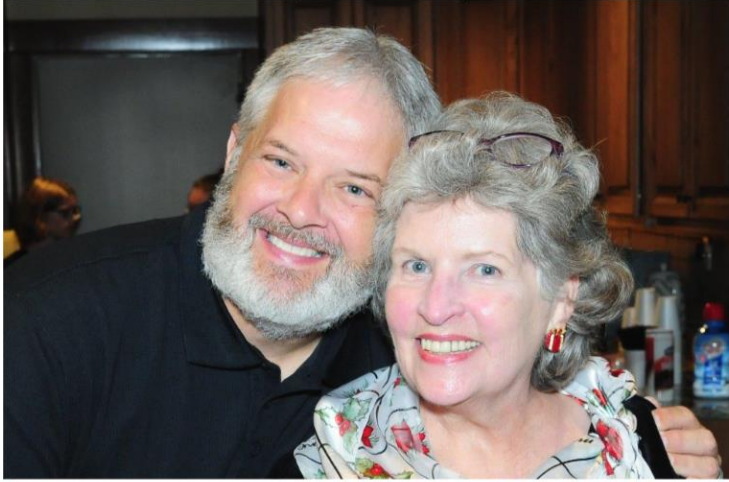


Mrs. Thomas J. Totcky congratulates Donald Pryor for winning the first North Alabama Region Totcky Memorial Trophy.

2021 NAR Christmas Dinner



The Vision



2021 NAR Christmas Dinner



The Vision



Tom Totcky's Cars



*Gathering around Tom Totcky's 1926 Ford Model T
at 2006 NAR depot car show*



*Tom Totcky's mail truck at
2006 NAR depot car show*



*Tom Totcky's 1926 Ford Model T at
2006 NAR depot car show*



*Tom Totcky's 1926 Ford Model T at
2006 NAR depot car show*

For Sale - 1966 Toronado by Oldsmobile

Jim Mullins is putting his 1966 Oldsmobile Toronado up for sale. If we had room it would be a great orphan car for our collection.

Description:	Price:	Contact:
Interior Replaced	\$16,000	Jim Mullins
		Home (256) 883-9900
		Cell (256) 683-3912



The Cars of A Christmas Story

Motor City Garage

In A Christmas Story essayist and storyteller Jean Shepherd included some memorable characters and a few memorable cars as well.

No doubt everyone in America has seen A Christmas Story, the classic 1983 movie that has since become a cable television staple at Christmas time every year. Fewer people know, probably, that its creator, writer and radio personality Jean Shepherd, was a serious car guy. He owned MGs, Porsches, and Morgans, even a Goggomobil. He was an announcer at sports car rallies and a monthly columnist in Car and Driver magazine. A Christmas Story is infused with the Jean Shepherd perspective on the automobile.

Both Shepherd and director Bob Clark were determined to make the movie “amorphously late 1930s, early 1940s”, as Clark put it. No specific year is ever mentioned, and there is no reference to World War II, which would have changed the tone of the movie considerably. So the vehicles in the film were not selected to point to any particular year but simply to set the time and mood. The story unfolds like a favorite reminiscence as told by a friend.

For example, in the scene in which Ralphie’s schoolmate Flick (Scott Schwartz) accepts a “triple dog dare” and sticks his tongue to the school’s frozen flagpole, the authorities come to his rescue in a 1948 Chevrolet Stylemaster police car and a 1938 Ford LaFrance fire truck. The same Ford LaFrance used in the movie still belongs to the Chippawa Volunteers Firefighters Association in Ontario to this day, reportedly, though it was listed for sale at one point.



*1948 Chevrolet Stylemaster police car and
1938 Ford LaFrance fire truck*

For the fight scene between Ralphie (Peter Billingsley) and neighborhood bully Scut Farkus (Zack Ward) there were two memorable props in the alley near the school: a pair of derelict Ford Model A bodies in red oxide primer. Taking a shortcut, Ralphie walks straight through a Cabriolet body, while a Briggs Tudor Sedan body serves as the backdrop for the scuffle.



Derelict Ford Model A - Cabriolet body



Derelict Ford Model A - Briggs Tudor Sedan

Christmas Story (Continued)

When Ralphie's mom (Melinda Dillon; we never learn her character's first name) comes to break up the fight, we see her rush past the distinctive front end of a 1937 Hudson Terraplane. It's interesting to note how many details were left out the movie, and the short story on which it was based, by Shepherd, the master storyteller, who supplied just enough information to propel the tale along.

We never learn the name of Ralphie's dad, either, (TV and movie veteran Darren McGavin). But we do learn that "the old man," as we know him throughout the movie, was a fan of the Chicago Bears and the Indianapolis 500, and he drove Oldsmobiles. Specifically: a 1937 Oldsmobile F-37 Six Touring Sedan. As the adult Ralphie, the voice of Jean Shepherd himself, recalls, "Some men are Baptists; others Catholics. My father was an Oldsmobile man."



1937 Hudson Terraplane



1937 Oldsmobile F-37 Six Touring Sedan



Tis the season to be jolly, Fa Ra Ra Ra Ra, Ra Ra Ra Ra



North Alabama Region

