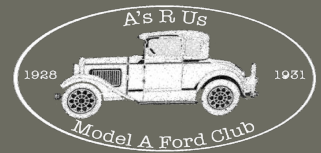


BACKFIRE



Volume #21

Issue #6

June 2016



*The Carp,
Editor in Chief*

One of the few great accomplishments of Facebook is the ability to reconnect with old friends. I met up with a grade school / high school friend that I hadn't seen in 30 years. Eric and I along with Clare and Nancy spent a day together in Michigan on our clubs spring trip weekend. There were lots of good times to catch-up on and Eric brought a surprise for me. We both had dark rooms and processed film and printed pictures in our basements. Most of my negatives are gone to history but Eric had many to share. I was 16 or 17 in the pictures and what memories came back. He also took pictures during the day and I will be sharing pictures he took with a few of his antique cameras for all to enjoy.

Phil

Eric Bergstrom and myself after 30 years!





Club members picture taken with the 1946 Kodak Brownie camera.

Cars in front of the Lakeside Inn.





Presidents Comments

So it looks as if the heat is on. And it's on in two different ways. As we begin summer this weekend it's in the nineties and it is very hot. At least it's hotter than it has been. And another way is the driving the Dixie is just days away. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their countless hours in making this event a success over the years. There is no job or responsibility that our members won't tackle. Yes different people put in different amounts of time and effort however this is a club function and has grown to a legacy of A's RUS. All of the prep work ahead of time and then the full day of activities that are performed by our club members is a testament to our desire to give back to the communities along the Dixie Highway. I don't believe I need to name names as everyone is fully aware of what each person has done to make this a success but definitely have to thank the people who had the vision from day one. It has evolved several times over the years but still has its core goal. So now we approach the final scramble to get all of our ducks in a row and get this event pulled off for another year without a hitch. Everyone at A's r us should be very proud of their participation and their efforts over the years. We do have one helluva Club

Ken



Sharron WI

A's-R-US members travel to Wisconsin for "Model 'A' Day".

On Sunday, June 12th, A's club members Ken Chamis, Randy Senkpeil and Steve Coe journeyed to Historic Downtown Sharon, Wisconsin to celebrate the town's annual "Model 'A' Day event. The trio was off to a very early morning start and encountered rather cool temperatures during their drive. After a brief breakfast stop along the way, the three ended-up traveling well over 100 miles to their destination. Upon arrival, they displayed their cars alongside many other Model A's of every variation, style and color. The sounds of Bluegrass and Dixieland bands were enjoyed near the town center circle where there was lots of food and entertainment. Some participants were clad in period dress to add an authentic flavor to the festivities. The large outdoor swap meet of Model A car parts drew a giant crowd and even Steve was able acquire a few needed parts for his "new" Fordor. All-in-all it was a great day trip!





DIXIE HIGHWAY HERITAGE

By Jim Wright

Watseka: Thriving city grew from a trading post on the Iroquois River

[Watseka](#) is named in honor of the [Potawatomi](#) princess "Watch-e-kee", or "Daughter of the Evening Star". She was the daughter of Shabbona, who was one of Tecumseh's trusted lieutenants. Watch-e-kee was also the first wife of early Illinois settler [Gurdon Saltonstall Hubbard](#). Hubbard, a young fur trader with John Jacob Astor's American Fur Trading Company, arrived in eastern Illinois in 1818. He set up trading posts between Chicago and Vincennes, Indiana and the route between these became known as Hubbard's Trail. One of the trading posts he established was on the Iroquois River at the west end of what is Smith Street today in Watseka. A monument marks this spot. Hubbard's Trail was the forerunner of the Dixie Highway and Illinois Route 1.

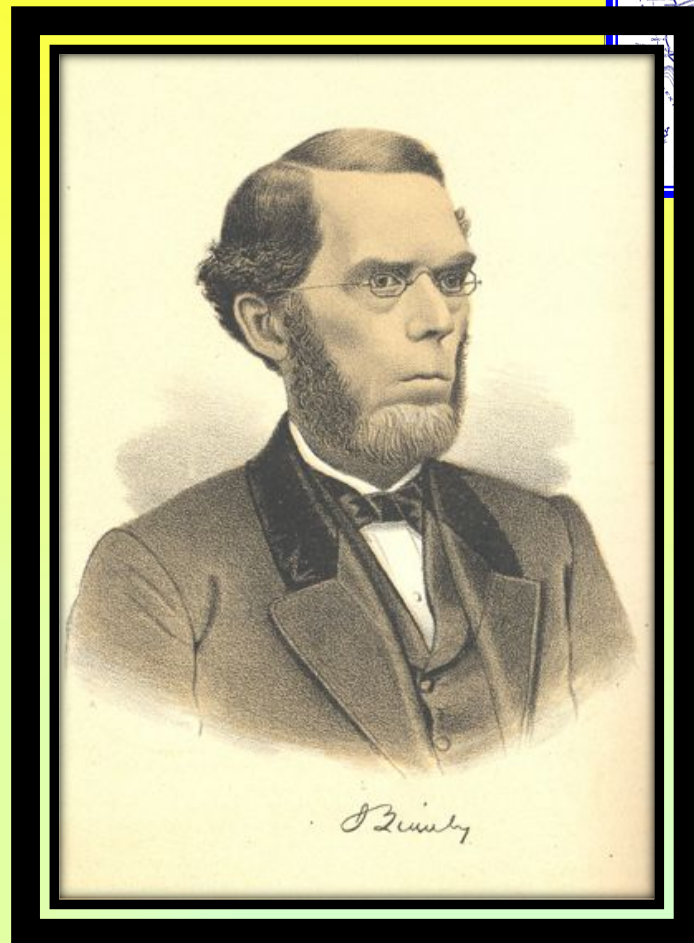


DIXIE HIGHWAY HERITAGE

By Jim Wright



Since its early days, Watseka has been a transportation hub. In 1858 the Peoria and Oquawka Railroad, later the Toledo, Peoria & Western Railroad, built its line east from Peoria to the Indiana state line. The route was surveyed through Middleport, a settlement just west of Watseka, but a dispute arose in that town regarding donating land for the depot grounds. A group of land owners to the southeast of Middleport proposed an alternative location to the railroad. This offer was accepted, and the rails were eventually laid south of Middleport. A new town, initially called South Middleport, was established. The name was changed in 1865 to Watseka; and upon incorporation of Watseka in 1867, Middleport was annexed into it.



Ivory Quinby
Judge, lawyer, Mayor of **Monmouth**,
mercantile owner, owner of the **Peoria**
and **Oquawka Railroad**

DIXIE HIGHWAY HERITAGE

By Jim Wright



In 1871, the Chicago, Danville & Vincennes Railroad, later the Chicago & Eastern Illinois (C&EI) Railroad, began service from Chicago to Vincennes with a depot serving Watseka. Watseka and Iroquois County residents then enjoyed through north-south and east-west passenger and freight rail service. In addition to the Dixie Highway, the Corn Belt Route, now U.S. Highway 24, was another early paved highway that bisected the county.

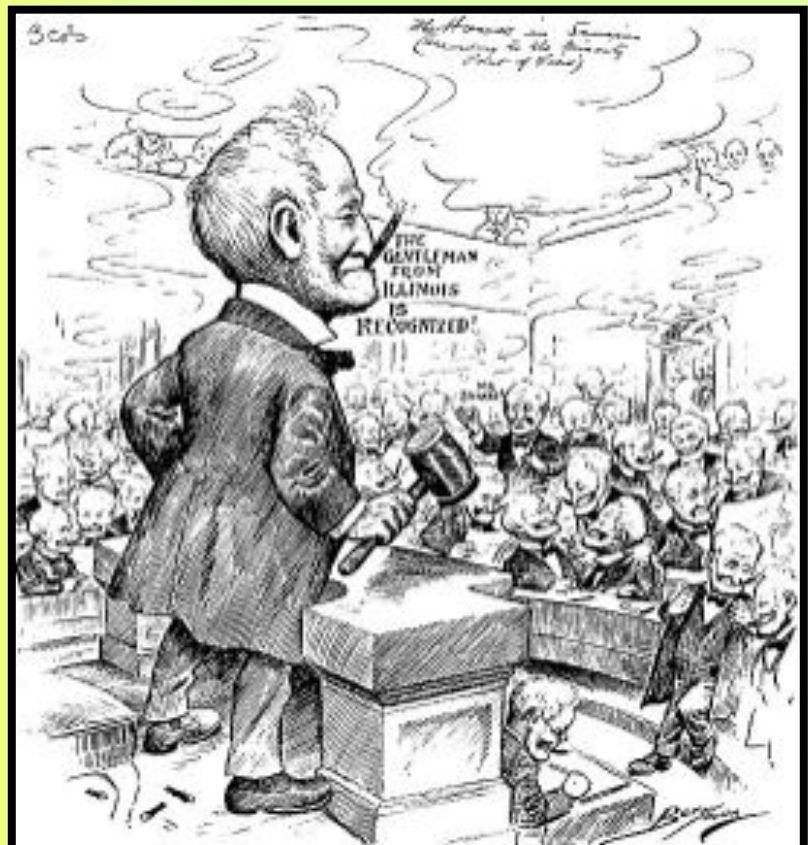
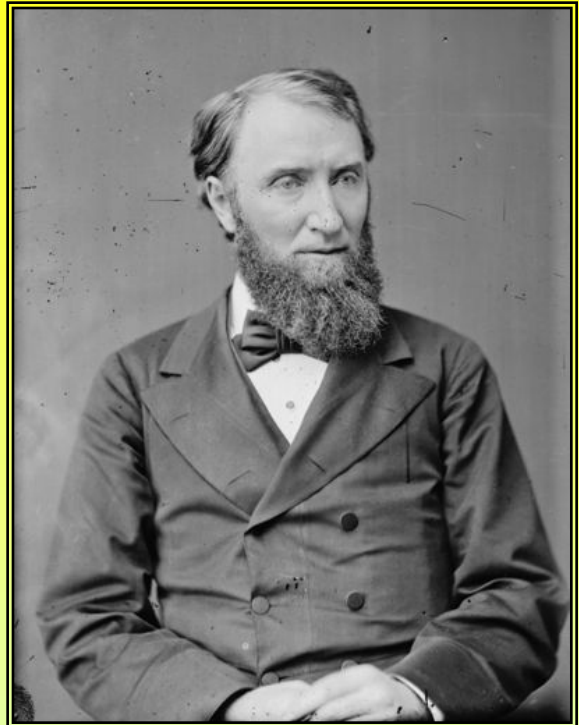
Watseska is the seat of Iroquois County. In area, Iroquois County ranks as the third largest in the state. The county is 35 miles long and 32 miles wide and contains 1,120 square miles, only 130 square miles less than the state of Rhode Island.

DIXIE HIGHWAY HERITAGE

By Jim Wright

Watseka has figured prominently in Illinois Dixie Highway history from the beginning. On July 14, 1915 Congressman Joseph "Uncle Joe" Cannon of Danville, who was speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives at the time, turned the first shovelful of earth just south of Watseka, east of the county farm, ceremoniously signifying the start of improvements on the highway in the state. A crowd estimated at over 10,000 people attended the event in a parade of automobiles said to be 3 miles long!

Today Watseka remains the economic, governmental and transportation hub of Iroquois County.



**A'S R US MEETING MINUTES
MAY 18. 2016**

MEETING LOCATION: BOBS GARAGE FRANKFORT

CALL TO ORDER BY PRESIDENT KEN CHAMIS AT 7:05 PM. Minutes of the April meeting were read by Sandy Kaleta and approved as read

TREASURERS REPORT:

Ken reported in Jim's absence, the A's account has \$ [REDACTED] and the Driving the Dixie account has \$ [REDACTED]. Steve reported he needs to submit a bill for the Shakedown/Auction Cruise expenses.

FAMILY NEWS:

Linnea stated she had Cataract surgery on one eye, is scheduled for the second eye and is doing well.

OLD BUSINESS:

Updates: Ken received a thank you from the Calumet Model A club, thanking us for participating in their Soup Day. Bob read a thank you for our participation, in the Teen/Bridge Auction Event. Thank you to Jon for arranging our participation in the Ford Stamping Plant Open House.

- The Grinders Game is August 28th, more info to follow
- Crete Memorial Day Parade: 10:30 Line up, 11:00 Service, 12:00 Parade
- Manteno Veterans Home is September 17th, more info to follow
- St. James at the Sag, June 26th at 10:00 AM
- Camp Quality event is August 9th, more info to follow
- Fall trip Arthur, Il October 14, 15, & 16 details to follow
- Sharon, Wi. Model A Day, June th, Main Street 9am to 2pm
- Exposure Trip Greenfield Village in Michigan, September 6th to 13th.

If you are planning on going, Chuck needs a head count for hotels. You can contact him at cfritz5@aol.com or 708-747-2515. The plan is to leave on 9/6 arrive on 9/7 eve. Tour of Museums on Friday, Saturday is the Old Car Festival and Sunday the Conclusion. We will leave on Monday and return Tuesday pm. Approx 275 miles each way. More info to follow and a hotel list will go out.

- Danville Balloon Fest, is July 15 & 16. We will be attending on Saturday The 16th, spending the night and returning on the 17th. If you wish to attend call Mr. Patel to reserve a hotel room at 217-442-2500. Rooms are \$126 king/135 double, king deluxe, a 15% discount was offered.

Spring Trip update:

- **May 20th thru 22nd. Bob gave a synopsis of the trip Meet at Commodore Restaurant 745 Ridge Munster, Indiana. Plan to leave at 9:00am. Pit stop at the Lighthouse Mall and lunch at Casey's Brewery, In New Buffalo. A menu was passed for lunch choices and a request to bring cash to cover the cost. (\$14.00 @, plus drinks). The Chuck Wagon will be in use for Friday's dinner, Hotdogs and hamburgers. Please bring snacks, drinks and desserts to share for this meal. Saturday, Farmers Market, Tour of a Spirits Distillery, tasting (\$10.00) and lunch (\$15.00). Then stopping at a Garden Shop and Antique Stores. Sunday will leave the hotel at 11:00am. WEEKEND THEME: RELAXATION**

Club Shirts,

- **Tim D reported that Corporate Threads has a website Corporatethread.com. Tim will forward an email with choices and prices before the next meeting.**

Ronald McDonald House re:

- **Dale is waiting for a response from Ronald McDonald House re: a date.**

DIXIE DASH:

- **The costs of the blue shirts are now \$6.50@, therefore it was voted on and approved to raise the cost to \$12.00 for the day of the Dash. Tim Borchert stated the Maps are ready, 12 pages per packet and it was recommended he get 150 copies. Karen stated 360 people have been notified with pre-registration forms. Bob stated we have over 150 stickers left from previous years, which we can trim the years off and use. That was approved by the membership. Packets will be stuffed at the next meeting.**

KEN passed around a signup sheet for the day's events. He further reviewed a Needs List for the Day.

Ken also stated that each town will have two nice prizes and a money prize in Momence.

MISC DISCUSSIONS:

- **Discussion ensued regarding Club Members winning prizes and money. It was motioned and passed that "On the day of the Dixie Dash, the club members will not register, therefore they cannot be a winner". Further discussion ensued regarding the club paying for all or part of the club members meals at Aurelios after the day of the Dash. It was motioned and passed that the members will pay their own bill at Aurelios.**

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Chuck proposed the club invest in Educational Information to be used for Tech Talks. Bob stated we have purchased videos in the past and they should be in a bin that the President has. Ken stated he would look. Chuck thanked Ken for the donation of the wagon, which is now the A'SRUS Chuck Wagon. He also thanked everyone who participated in getting it rejuvenated and road ready.**
- **Ken thanked Bob for hosting the meeting and the members for bringing appetizers and desserts.**
- **The next meeting will be at Bobs Garage, Frankfort on June 15th, 7:00pm.**
- **Badge Fines: \$4.00 50/50: Winner: Bob S \$43.00, Club \$44.00.**
- **The meeting was adjourned at 8:45PM**

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Sandy Kaleta, Secretary

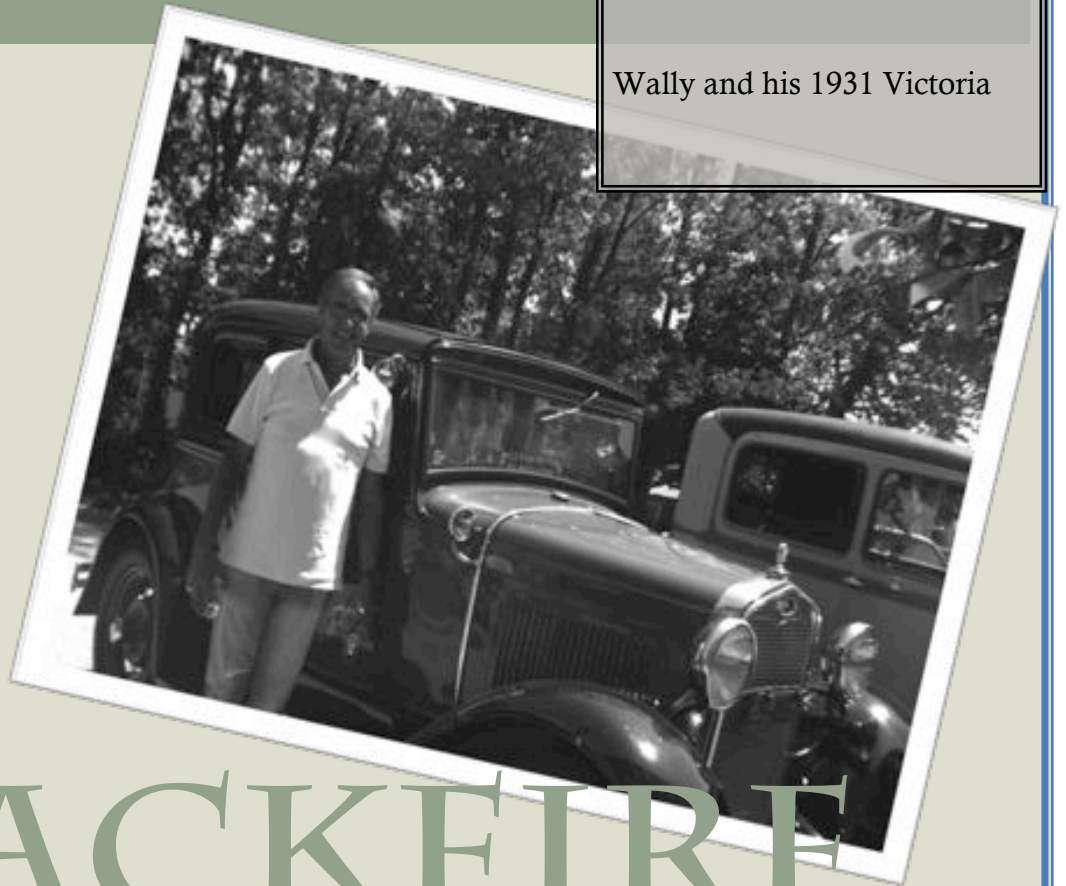
Upcoming Events:

- **GRINDERS GAME: August 28th was the chosen date. Chuck suggested we bring the Chuck Wagon. Tim B and Pat will have more information.**
- **MANTENO VETERANS HOME:**
- **Jim is going to look into the date of September 17th. There was some discussion as to what else we can do while there, a bingo was suggested.**
- **CAMP QUALITY:**
- **Tuesday August 9th. Alan E to get this years information.**
- **DANVILLE BALOON FESTIVAL;**
- **July 16-17th Jim stated that Watseka, St Anns and Momence have signs which may be ready to dedicate. This could be done on the way down to Danville. Jim to contact Mr. Patel re: hotel reservations.**
- **FALL TRIP:**
- **October 14 -16th, Arthur Illinois an Amish community. Chairs will be Ken/Dale and Randy/Bonnie. More info to follow.**

A's R Us 2016 Officers and Staff

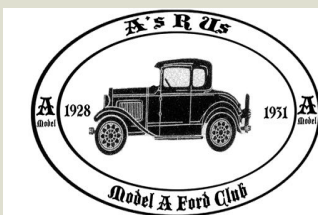
- President – Ken Chamis
- Vice President – Randy Senkpeil
- Treasurer – Jim Wright
- Secretary – Sandy Kaleta
- Newsletter – Phillip Serviss
- Member Relations – Ken Chamis
- Web Page – Allen Betschart
- Parade Coordinator – Wally Ekstrom
- Director of Safety – Ron Bonneau
- Nat'l Rep. – Ken Chamis
- Historian – Ken Chamis
- Sgt. At Arms Steve Coe
- Motor Medic - Jon Isota

Wally and his 1931 Victoria



*Please send **Backfire** articles or items of interest to:*

BACKFIRE



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