

Welcome to the Horseless Carriage Club of Missouri!

By Joseph F Yochim, HCCM president for 2016

Thank you for exploring our website.

The HCCM is the oldest regional club of its type in America. We are also the oldest region affiliated with the Horseless carriage club of America. The roots of the Horseless Carriage Club of Missouri started in the early 1900s. The St. Louis automotive industry at this time was second only to Detroit. Early St. Louis innovators in the automobile business included notables such as George P. Dorris, Alex Deeken, Harry Rook, Wayne Bledsoe and Frank Steward. These gentlemen, and others, had formed a loose confederation doing automotive related things together for many years after some of their industries had ceased automotive production.

Finally a name was given to that group of individuals in the early 1940s. It was named the Horseless Carriage Club of Missouri and chartered on December 5 1944. George P. Dorris, one of the club's founders, had made the Dorris automobile and had also engineered its design and production. Today, Dorris family members are still active with the club. That legacy is important to our history and is a vital part of what ensures our club a healthy future, dedicated to the preservation of automobile history in the St. Louis area.

Our membership includes many second, third, and even fourth generation families, as cars get passed from one generation to the next. While we trace our early roots to "Brass and Nickel" era automobiles, the club is open to everyone with an interest in the automotive history. You don't need to own a car to belong to the HCCM. The HCCM organization follows the Missouri rule on "historic vehicles", which means that cars eligible for show must be at least 25 years old.

There are members of the HCCM club who own and drive cars that are over 100 years old. Since I have been a member of this club I have had the opportunity to see and learn about cars I never heard of or even knew existed, most of them having been produced right here in St. Louis.

One of the main activities of the club is the Easter show. By 1962 there were 75 "member families" in the HCCM. That was a large number back then and the club dominated the regional vintage car scene. 1962 was the year when the Easter Concourse d'Elegance show was established. This activity is what gave the Horseless Carriage Club of Missouri a public face. Ever since, no other antique car show in the greater St. Louis area has held such appeal to the public for so many decades. It is a legendary tradition.

This year marked the club's 55th consecutive Easter Sunday Concourse d'Elegance car show. The Concourse d'Elegance embodies the concept of the HCCM automobile, which is to keep the vehicle as closely to "OEM" (original equipment manufacturer) standards

as possible, namely, to keep the vehicle the way it was the day it was delivered from the dealership to the owner.

An enormous procession of cars from a broad spectrum of vehicles comes to the Easter Sunday show. Someone may come with a 1909 Buick, followed by a 1970 Dodge Charger 383 6-pack V8 engine. Behind the Charger may be a 1931 model-A Ford. The Muni Opera House parking lot transforms itself into its own grand venue. You will find vehicles from A to Z and from the 1900s to the 1990s at the Easter show.

Having given you an overview of HCCM, and, in the interests of transparency, I will tell you right away that I have an ulterior motive for writing these notes. It is to induce you, a person with interest in automobile history, to attend one of our events, attend one of our monthly meetings, or, better yet, become a member of the club. I hear you asking, "So what do I get out of doing any of these things?" I'm so glad you asked! But, let's get serious. From my own experience, I can tell you the answers to that question, which I myself asked when I joined the club. First, you will learn a great deal about how the automobile developed as well as what's in its future. Second, you will meet a lot of interesting people. And third, you will have fun. (Additional inducements: our monthly meetings have free FOOD. And a half hour program presented by experts in technology, automobile history, St. Louis history, etc., etc.).

Now, let's get to the final marketing pitch! Should you decide to become a member of the club, and should you at any time find, for any reason, that the benefits are less than you anticipated, I will, personally, (trumpet fanfare, please) refund your membership costs, no questions asked! You can't lose!

Once more thank you for visiting our web page and I hope to see you in person soon.

Sincerely

JOSEPH F. YOCHIM

HCCM President 2016