

The Chalmers Automobile Newsletter

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This issue commemorates the five-year anniversary of the Chalmers Automobile Registry. When Curt Schulze (#1) signed up in the spring of 1995, he established the start date. Consequently, I am making available back issues of this newsletter from the previous five years for any member who might like a copy. Several new members, for example, missed some popular issues including the CMC monogram patch description/purchase offer and the three part series on the Chalmers production chronology. Simply select the issue number(s) you would like and mail me your request. To defray the expenses, I am charging a nominal fee to cover material cost and postage. Please include payment (cash or a check made out to D. C. Hammond) with your request.

NEWSLETTER BACK ISSUE INDEX

Issue & # of Pages	Subjects	Price
1-1 February 1996 1 Page	Initial newsletter with introductory statement. Barry Peer (#8) 1919 Chalmers chassis with 1916 Studebaker body restoration story.	\$1.00
1-2 May 1996 2 Pages	Membership list for 1996. Comments from Barry Peer (#8), Tom Van Meeteren (#14), Bob DuBois (#9), Tommy Nelson (#4), Curt Schulze (#1), and Harold Overton (#2).	\$1.00
2-1 January 1997 2 Pages	Bob Valpey (#17) 1917 Chalmers "Record Speedster" story & picture. Chalmers race car facts.	\$1.00
2-2 April 1997 2 Pages	CMC monogram patch description and purchase offer.	\$1.00
2-3 June 1997 2 Pages	Tom Van Meeteren (#14) 1916 35-A restoration story.	\$1.00
2-4 November 1997 1 Page	Membership list for 1997. Chalmers owner and car demographics.	\$1.00
3-1 May 1998 4 Pages	Historical and technical chronology of the Chalmers "Forty", "30", and "36" model series production.	\$2.00
3-2 July 1998 3 Pages	Historical and technical chronology of the Chalmers "Six", "Master Six", and "Light-6" model series production.	\$2.00
3-3 September 1998 4 Pages	Historical and technical chronology of the Chalmers "Six-40", "Six-30" and "Y" model series production. Description of the Chalmers "Hot Spot" and "Ram's Horn".	\$2.00
4-1 May 1999 5 Pages	Membership list for 1998-99. Comments from Alan Mabbot (#50), and remarks about the National Automotive History Collection.	\$2.00
4-2 August 1999 3 Pages	Story of the 1910 Glidden Tour® Chalmers win. Related comments from Chuck Fanucci (#45) and Dave Soper (#34).	\$1.00
4-3 December 1999 2 Pages	Suggestions for improvements from Tommy Nelson (#4). Tom Van Meeteren (#14) 1916 35-A restoration update story. How to prepare your Chalmers for the year 2000 (Y2K compliance).	\$1.00
5-1 April 2000 3 Pages	Index of Chalmers parts drawings, sketches, specifications, artwork, patterns, etc available from Bob DuBois (#9).	\$2.00

CHALMERS CLASSIFIED

The Chalmers Classified listing is intended as a service for members to advertise Chalmers cars and parts that are for sale and/or wanted. Please contact me regarding items that should no longer be listed and pass-on your new wanted and for sale items.

WANTED:

- 1917 Model 35-B "Six 30" Standard touring body front wheel (with 10 spokes) and hubcap - contact Tommy Nelson (#4).
- 1922/1923 hubcaps - contact Bob DuBois (#9).
- 1912-1914 Chalmers Model 12/18 "Six" (also 1910-1912 Model "Forty", 1912-1914 Model "36", or 1914-1915 Model 24/29 "Master Six") - contact John Lehnert (#35).
- 1914 Chalmers Model 24 "Master Six" shop manual - contact Jim and Donna Stamper (#52).

FOR SALE:

- 1916 Model 35-A "Six-30" parts and some sheet metal - contact Don Ohnstad (#19).
- 1915 Model 26-B "Light Six" very good to excellent condition and all original - contact Walter Penrod (#18).

THE CHALMERS AND HUDSON CONNECTION

The Hudson Motor Company was born under the auspices of the Chalmers-Detroit Motor Company and its two young stars, Howard E. Coffin and Roy D. Chapin. One year after Coffin, Chapin, and Hugh Chalmers had agreed to form the Chalmers-Detroit Motor Company; Coffin was designing a new 1909 car. This was a low cost lightweight automobile, known as the Model "20", intended to supplement the heavier Model "Forty" and the mid-priced Model "30" Chalmers-Detroit's. The Model "20", however, was in contradiction to what Hugh Chalmers had envisioned for his next new model. Hugh preferred the larger and more expensive automobiles that yielded higher profits, and he was reluctant to enter the low-price market. After all, the Chalmers name was earning a good reputation for high-quality, value, and prestige; characteristics that demanded growth toward larger cars, not smaller. Consequently the Model "20" was deemed unsuitable by Chalmers, but he didn't abandon the design. Coffin and Chapin, however, were confident that the low cost lightweight market held promise and they convinced Hugh that an independent source of funding should be found to build the Model "20". At about this point, an old Coffin/Chapin associate from the Olds Motor Works joined Chalmers-Detroit. His name was Roscoe B. Jackson and he was married to a niece of Joseph L. Hudson, a wealthy Detroit merchant. With the assistance of the two Jackson's, "Uncle Joe" was persuaded to put up the \$90,000 needed to start the new company. This was all done with Hugh Chalmers' full knowledge and assistance.

Consequently in February 1909, the Hudson Motor Car Company became a legitimate company named after the man who provided the initial capital. Officially, J. L. Hudson became president, Hugh Chalmers was elected vice-president, Roy Chapin served as Secretary, and R. B. Jackson was Treasurer and General Manager. Because of previously formed partnerships, Fred Bezner, James Brady, and George Dunham were also included in the new Hudson organization. Each of them were apportioned shares of stock, including Hugh Chalmers who received his shares as a goodwill gesture in consideration for his cooperation.

(J. L. Hudson never took an active role in directing the day-to-day operations of the Hudson Motor Car Company; instead, he continued to build his mercantile business, the J. L. Hudson department store that became one of the best known in Detroit. However, J. L. did provide valuable financial advice, endorsements, and related assistance to the Hudson car-men when needed. In 1912,

while visiting family in England, J. L. Hudson suddenly died of pneumonia. He had formed a partnership with four nephews, Oscar, James, Richard, and Joseph Webber in Detroit, who inherited his automobile and mercantile business interests.)

Ostensibly, the intermingling of two auto companies that shared operating officers did not alter the Chalmers operations. All of the original Chalmers people continued work as usual. They in fact improved Chalmers-Detroit's business position sufficiently to be ranked within the top four auto producers during this period. The two newcomers, Jackson and his partner Dunham, setup a small shop for the Hudson operations in Detroit. Hugh Chalmers provided the salaries and expenses for Jackson and Dunham who began work on the Model "20" and two other Models (one of which was a Dunham design) known as the "15A" and "15B". The Hudson development work actually began as an experiment, under the sponsorship of the Chalmers men, four months before the formal February 1909 agreement to form the Hudson Motor Car Company. According to Charles H. Vincent, a 24-year-old Chalmers worker in late 1908, some of the Hudson experimental work may have been conducted in the Chalmers Jefferson Avenue plant. The practice of combining the work of two companies under shared management was not unusual in these early days of the new auto-industry where there were no formal rules for conducting business.

The first advertisements for Hudson appeared in the summer of 1909. Response from the public was enthusiastic and slightly over 1100 cars were produced by the end of 1909. These were 1910 models called the "Hudson Twenty" and they sold for \$900 in basic form. Technically they were known as Model "20" equipped with a four cylinder 20 H.P. engine, sliding gear transmission, semi-floating rear axle, and two wheel brakes. Initially the Atlas Motor Company supplied the engines; later, with increased production, Buda engines were added. Wheelbase varied from 100" to 110" depending on one of three body styles that were available (roadster, fore door roadster, and touring). By the end of 1910, Hudson gained 17th place in automobile sales and the total production for the company's introductory model was 8200 cars.

Late in 1909, Hugh Chalmers lost interest in the new venture, decided to sell his Hudson stock and withdraw from the low-cost automobile business. A deal was struck where he sold all his stock to Coffin, Chapin, and Bezner and in turn, the threesome sold all of their Chalmers-Detroit stock to Hugh. The transaction resulted in almost a 10:1 dollar ratio in favor of Chalmers; the loss of his two star employees, Coffin and Chapin; and total independence for the Hudson Motor Car Company. Roy Chapin became president of Hudson and lead the company to a peak in 1929 when it was ranked third in the industry behind Ford and Chevrolet. Chapin continued as president until his death at age 56 in early 1936. The last Hudson was produced in Detroit in late summer 1954 when the company finally succumbed to a combination of styling, financial, and market problems leading to a merger with Nash-Kelvinator Corporation to form the American Motors Corporation of Kenosha Wisconsin. Then, much later in 1987, Chrysler Corporation (the 1924 successor of the Chalmers-Maxwell combination) absorbed American Motors, completing the "Chalmers circle".

That's all for now! Please send me any questions and comments that you may have about this newsletter issue or other Chalmers topics.

Dave Hammond