



The Windshield Post

Mid-Peninsula Old Time Auto Club

FEBRUARY 2023

mpotac.com

ISSUE TWO

President's Message

Hello MPOTAC family,

I am reminded this month of those we love and remember, and wish you all a very happy Valentine's Day. I'm especially thankful for the one I couldn't do without, my very special lady Cynthia. Our January meeting was well attended, and it was great to share our stories of the holidays, offer an embrace with friends, and win a few raffle prizes. We thank Paul Thekan for sharing his recent cache of auto related books from a friend's estate, it was a great opportunity to add to your library. Please check your personal car club archives for any photos of fun events or stories of club related activities that you'd like to share with our website editor, or for publication in this spectacular Windshield Post bulletin. We recently received two large photo albums from a member, with lots of great photos and we will be scanning them into an electronic file for all to see.

Many thanks to our board for their continued work on our by-laws revision process, and especially Bill Mitchell for disseminating the new club roster – just great work! I hope some folks were able to join the Bay Area Horseless Carriage Club on their February 4th Capital Corridor tour of Old Town Sacramento and the California Automobile Museum. We'll plan to repeat this trip in better weather, later this year. I hope your car repairs are going smoothly, and you're planning for another great year of fun local events. Bill Bratt has invited us again, to join the Santa Clara Valley Model T Ford Club, visiting the Los Trancos Woods Model Train Museum in April – more info to follow.

Who Is This Fellow?
Read on...



Continued on page 3

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REO



The REO Motor Car Company was a company based in Lansing, Michigan, which produced automobiles and trucks from 1905 to 1975. At one point, the company also manufactured buses on its truck platforms.

Ransom E. Olds (above) was an entrepreneur who founded multiple companies in the automobile industry. In 1897 Olds founded Oldsmobile. In 1905 Olds left Oldsmobile and established a new company, REO Motor Car Company, in Lansing, Michigan. Olds had 52% of the stock and the titles of president and general manager.



President's Message Continued

We are in the thick of planning for Friendship Day 2023 and we will be assembling the best talent to get the tall task completed. If you are interested in trying something new this year, putting a different twist on an old idea, or just want to try your hat at helping run one small part of this great annual event, please let me know right away. It's our tradition to run this committee with an "all hands on deck" style of leadership, and we'll continue that theme this year. As mentioned at our regular meeting, we will try some new ideas this year at Friendship Day 2023 e.g., people's choice awards like original unrestored, best display of car restoration/history, best paint, best of show, oldest/youngest driver, farthest driven to attend, and maybe a few more categories as determined by the committee. We missed Pre-war alley and will bring that back for all to celebrate. We'll have a smaller and faster raffle process, and possible discounts for registered car clubs bringing 30 or more qualified shows cars. If you've got any new ideas or older ideas that need revisiting, please let me know by call, text, or email and our team will move quickly to provide the best event possible. We will be at the Port of Redwood City on Sunday, May 21st, 2023, so let's plan ahead for the greatest all inclusive, and welcoming family car show in the Bay Area – tell a friend!

Happy travels,
Charlie & Cynthia Drechsler

Upcoming MPOTAC Events

February 20 – Board Meeting

February 24 – Regular Meeting

April – Model Train tour, Portola Valley. Details to follow

May 21 – Friendship Day, Port of Redwood City

October 14 – Mini Concours, Magnolia in Millbrae

Club Newsletter

This newsletter is your publication. Have an event or article you'd like to submit? An idea for future Club events? News from another club? Please contact your editor, Jim Remington, at **650-342-0852** or e-mail: mtshastachalet@yahoo.com. Deadline for submission is the end of the month. This newsletter is published once a month except in December.

Packard Auto Plant Is the Largest Abandoned Factory in the World. It's Finally Coming Down



The gigantic Packard Auto Plant has been a 3,500,000-square-foot cancer in the heart of Detroit's Eastside since the brand shuttered the facility in 1956 — two years before the brand would also disappear. After decades of neglect, the looming ruin is finally coming down.

Frequently cited as the largest abandoned factory in the world, crews started on phase II of the plant's demolition in September by taking down two parcels of the plant that have belonged to the city for a few years.

The city seized the rest of the abandoned factory from perpetually absent owner Peruvian investor Fernando Palazuelo, who failed to pay back taxes or do basic maintenance to secure or improve the site.

When the Albert Kahn-designed plant open in 1903, it was the largest and most technologically advanced automotive plant in the world. Almost immediately the factory was expanded until it stretched for an astonishing 80 buildings cover 80 acres on city's Eastside. Packards were considered innovative luxury vehicles in the brand's heyday. The Packard Plant also built engines for P-51 Mustang fighter planes during World War II. Packard resisted getting swallowed up by the bigger brands, but it couldn't survive when the Big Three began a price cutting war in the '50s. Packard bowed out of history for good in 1958.

After Packard left, dozens of smaller companies took over portions of the site and operated up until the '90s, when it was shuttered for good. When the famed Packard Plant bridge collapsed on to a public street in 2019 city officials began to take a harder stance on the blighted site.



What will replace the ruined factory? It's hard to say. The neighborhoods surrounding the plant have been severely impacted by having 35-acres of blight in their neighborhood. Though the site is not far from GM's EV production plant, Hamtramck-Detroit Assembly. Maybe GM could finally snatch up a piece of Packard for cheap.

Detroit has no shortage of empty factories from the city's heyday as an automotive production mega hub. The 1.5-million-square-foot AMC headquarters is also slated for demolition, and you can find lots of smaller derelict buildings giving way to new structures and housing.

From Jalopnik

Repair of a 100 Year Old Aluminum Casting

Ted Panofsky



During the restoration of my 1917 Detroit Electric model 68, I removed the parking brake ratchet box from the chassis for cleaning and refinishing.

Upon disassembly I discovered that an important part of the casting was broken. This part is a clamp that secures the shaft that carries the brake pedals and as such has quite a bit of force applied to it when actuating the brakes.

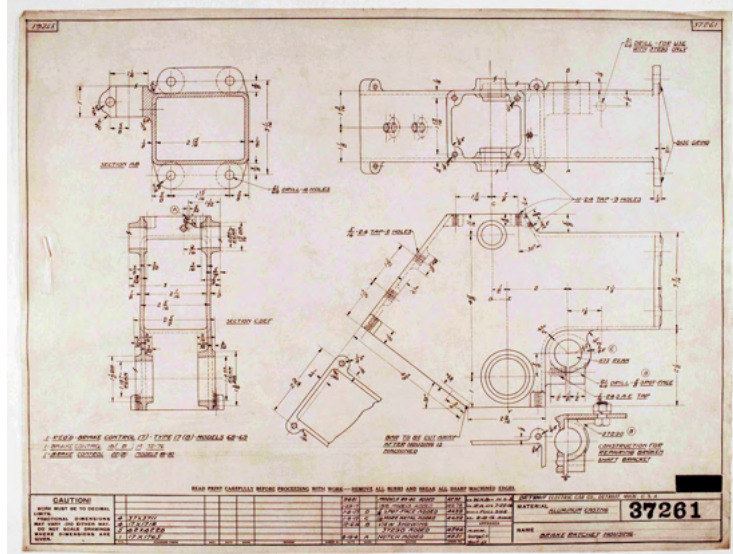
The ratchet box is fabricated as an aluminum casting, with machining of parts that must be precise. The clamp is broken at the point you would expect, where the thinnest section is

holding the clamp. I glass bead blasted the aluminum box before working on it, and in preparation for painting. A careful inspection revealed that the broken clamp had been attempted to be repaired by welding, and then it appears some epoxy was tried when the weld failed. I found that the prior assembly put a washer between the clamp and the base and installed the bolt, making a tenuous but serviceable assembly.

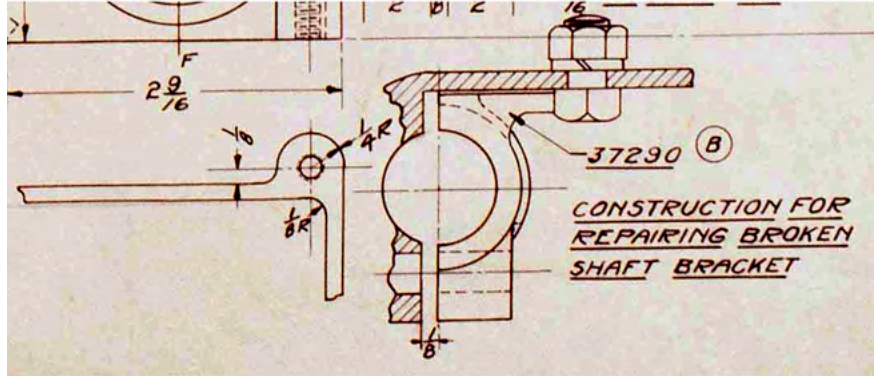


So, what to do? I considered trying to weld it again, but I think the first weld failed because aluminum casting of the era was not a well matured process and likely has porosity and contamination, making welding unlikely to succeed. Also, the previous welding attempt is poor and has compromised the base material. I considered trying to drill holes across the break and installing steel pins, possibly with screws or epoxy. I considered just putting the washer back and leaving it broken. My brain worked on the problem for several days and sleepless nights.

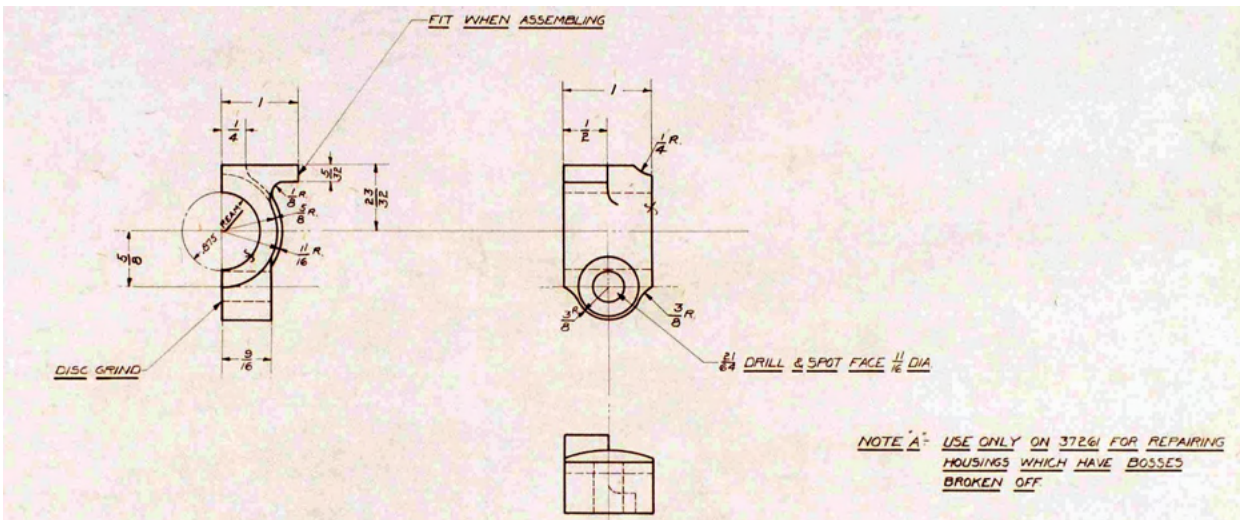
My next step in the process was to search the excellent electricvehicle.com archive of digitized Detroit Electric blueprints, and Eureka! I found the drawing for the casting.



After doing a little processing on the drawing to enhance the contrast, I examined the area of the break to try to come up with ideas. During this process, I noticed a small inset in the lower right corner of the drawing.



It seems that the company had experience with this part breaking and identified it as a design flaw. They designed a fix which includes removing part of the existing clamp that is prone to breakage, installing a support bolt, and they designed a replacement part that implements the missing part of the clamp. Another search of the Electric Vehicle Archive and I found the drawing for the replacement part. The solution is now in hand, I just had to implement it.



My shop has a miscellaneous collection of tools, but is far from a full machine shop; I had to do this with what I have. I started by machining off the broken bracket. I used my woodworking radial arm saw, fitted with a “non-ferrous metal” carbide blade, slicing off the parts as indicated in the drawing.



The drawing for the replacement clamp calls out “Cast Bronze”. Casting bronze is beyond my shop capability, as well as my skill set. Instead I purchased a chunk of bronze from eBay; I have no idea what alloy it is, but it does not seem to be important.

I cut the bronze piece into two pieces and trimmed the rough size for the part with the non-ferrous blade in the radial arm saw, then clamped them together in the four-jaw chuck of my ancient lathe, positioned so the joint between the pieces was centered on the lathe canter. I then bored a hole in the bronze, making two pieces with the appropriate half-hole. I decided to make two copies of the clamp since I had the material, and as a hedge in case I made a mistake.





The next step was to drill the hole for the clamp bolt. I made a pointed piece of a bolt to install in the mounting hole; a tap with a hammer marked the position to drill the hole in the clamp.



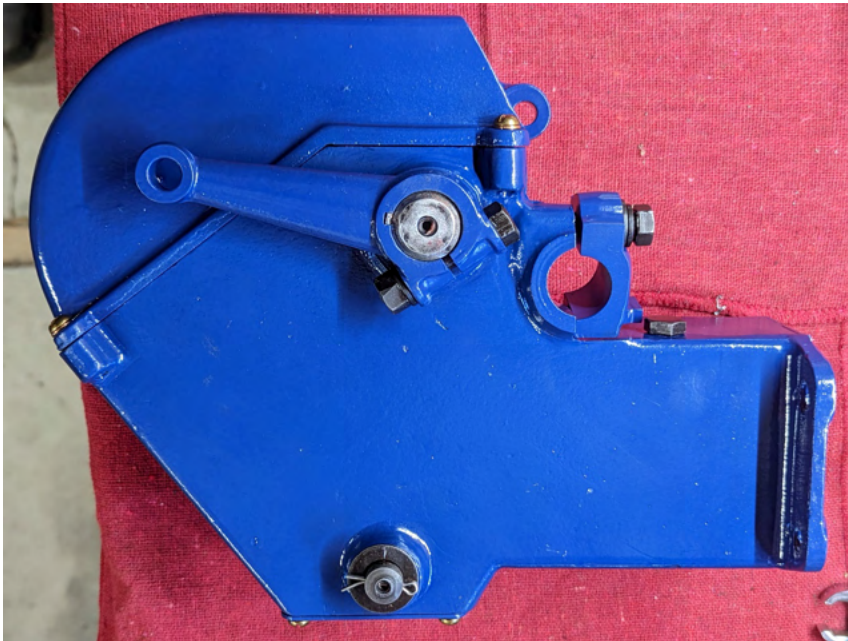
Then it was a matter of removing material to make the shape indicated in the drawing. I did not try to make it the exact shape from the drawing, but rather make it functional and approximately the right shape. I started by whittling away bits with the radial arm saw, then a carbide bit in a die grinder, then files and sanding discs. The design includes a tang which is supported against a bolt placed in the housing; I left this tang a little long to allow me to adjust the clamp by filing the tang when it is all put together.



The last step is to place the support bolt in the housing. The drawing is not complete in the dimension of the placement of the bolt, but since I left the clamp tang long, the placement of the bolt is not highly critical. I drilled the hole and added the bolt and nut.



It works! A little filing of the clamp tang and the fix is complete. It holds the pedal shaft firmly and is much stronger than the original design. Now the box and parts can get painted and reassembled.



Here is the completed ratchet box. It is now installed in the car and works as it should.

Committee Chairs

Membership – Bill Mitchell
Webmaster – Ted Panofsky
Publications – Jim Remington
Programs – Charlie Drechsler Jr.
Refreshments – Bill Bratt
Friendship Day – Bob Moll
Historian – Ed Krantz
Health & Welfare – Tanya Pomposo

SIRS Luncheon

With guest speaker Ed Archer
Basque Cultural Center
March 1, Noon (arrive a bit before)
Cost - \$30
Contact Person: MPOTAC member
Alfred Herpe, 650-992-3344

MPOTAC Board Meeting

January 23, 2023

The meeting was called to order by President Charlie Dreschsler, Jr. at 7:45 PM.

Membership: Bill Mitchell reported no new members. New 2023 rosters were printed and will be mailed out.

Secretary: Minutes of the November 21, 2022 board meeting were approved as printed in our newsletter.

Treasurer: No major changes occurred during November and December 2022. Details upon request.

Health/Welfare: Tanya Pomposo was not available, but members present at the meeting says Vince Perry and Lowell Wolfe are doing fine.

Tours: No immediate tours are planned. Suggestions are welcomed. Maybe revisit tours from the past year.

Friendship Day: Bob Moll was not available, but it is on schedule for May 21, 2023.

Publications: Jim Remington had nothing new to report. Cost of printing was lower for the January 2023 issue. Maybe a mistake from the printer?

Webmaster: Ted Panofsky had nothing major to report. Finally have time to post event pictures and continue working on updates. Suggestion of printing QR code on our business cards was discussed.

Historian: Ed Krantz was not available.

Program: Steve Marchegiani will have a report on the NFL alumni car show at our general meeting.

Unfinished Business: Our by-laws review are ongoing. Motion was made and approved to re-imburse Sherry Plambeck from Magnolia for personal expenses she had to pay for the chocolate car gifts.

New Business: Our annual picnic is locked in for August 13, 2023. The Magnolia Mini-Concourse is also set for October 14, 2023.

Meeting adjourned: 8:45 PM

Submitted by Co:Secretary: Ed Wong

MPOTAC General Meeting

January 27, 2023

Welcome back everyone. Thank you for your attendance.

The meeting was called to order by President Charlie Dreschsler, Jr. at 7:30.

Membership: Bill Mitchell was not present. New 2023 rosters were mailed out.

Secretary: The November 21, 2022 board meeting minutes was approved as printed. There was no general meeting minutes from November 2022 because of Thanksgiving. No meeting were scheduled for December 2022.

Treasurer: Ted Panofsky reported a healthy December budget. Details upon request.

Health/Welfare: Tanya Pomposo was not available but it was good to see Vince Perry and Lowell Wolfe in attendance at our meeting.

Tours: Scheduled for February 4, 2023 is the Old Sacramento train trip. We will be joining the Horse Carriage Club. Wear your club jacket and badge. Contact Charlie Dreschsler, Jr. or Ed Archer for information and attendance. Bill Bratt is gathering information for a return trip to the Portola Train Museum sometime in March.

Friendship Day: Slowly making progress for the May 21, 2023 event.

Publication: Jim Remington had no major changes to report.

Webmaster: Ted Padnofsky is making progress on our cell phone problem. Also working on updating the history page.

Social Media: Welcome Lewald Ferris. Results of our club on Facebook have been positive.

Historian: Ed Krantz was not available, but Ed Archer gave a short speech on the club's change from 25 years to 35 years requirement.

Programs: Steve Marchegiani reported on the NFL Alumni dinner. Half a dozen football alumni were in attendance. Entertainment was provided by the Drifters. Trophies included a signed football. Spaghetti dinner and fun was had by all.

Unfinished Business: Continue work is needed for by-laws review and revisions.

New Business: Our annual is August 13, 2023. The Magnolia Mini-Concourse is on October 17, 2023.

Refreshments: Thank you Bill Bratt for hot coffee and cookies. Please sign up if you want to volunteer.

Adjourned: 8:25 PM

Submitted by co-secretary: Ed Wong