

What's New in Birdland

Volume 3, Number 1

JANUARY 1960



Having opened the year with a bang (Hound 'n Hare Rally), your BATOC is following that right up with a Spaghetti Feed for the social-minded. February 13 will be the date, 8:30 the time, and the place once again the Lake Temescal Club House. Bill Bosak is providing the spaghetti and our wonderful ladies will again do the cookin' and most of the work. The tariff will be \$1.50 - for all you can eat!

Your cars will be subjected to their annual inspection beginning at 6 p.m. that same Saturday evening, so be sure your Bird is in safe operating condition. This includes the 1960 license tag or reasonable verification that same has been applied for. You are, by the way, hereby reminded that tardy applicants are going to be penalized DOUBLE by the Department of Motor Vehicles, so get yours now before you forget.

We hope all will plan to attend this gala repast and be in on the full evening of fun now being planned by our culinary experts. Bring your friends, too. The more the merrier . . . and the more profit!

Next month, on March 13th to be specific, we are staging our Second Annual

Happy Valley Rally. We trust all dyed-in-the-wool rally-ites will turn out in force, along with their friends, regardless of the kind of sports cars they drive. Starting point will be the parking lot at Station KPIX and the take-off time 10:00 a.m. Come early and be the first one out. If you don't know how to run a rally, come anyway and see how much fun you can have while learning.

Considerable publicity will be given this one big BATOC car event of the year through the medium of radio and the newspapers. We don't want to be disgraced by a poor turnout of our own members, do we? Determine right now to reserve Sunday, March 13th, as "Enjoy Our Birds" Day!

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TECH TIPS

by FRANK FICKER

Knowing at all times how your car's electrical system is operating enables you to avoid a variety of troubles. But the red "idiot light" in today's Thunderbirds doesn't give you a constant check - it lights up only when the generator voltage is less than that of the battery's.

The key to proper operation of the electrical system is the voltage regulator and its action should be checked periodically. By knowing the current entering or leaving the battery, you can determine when adjustment is needed. This is possible with a kit made by Allied Radio Corp., 100 N. Western Ave., Chicago 80, Ill. The Knight-Kit contains an ammeter and a voltmeter for installation in a 12-volt system. It sells for \$10. It should be a MUST on your BIRD.

For those willing to invest a little more money for safeguarding their engines, a combination ammeter and oil gauge kit is available from the J. C. Whitney Co., 1917 Archer Ave., Chicago 16, Ill. for \$22.95. The oil gauge shows exactly in pounds per square inch (0 to 100 lbs.) how much oil pressure your engine has at all times.

Speaking of accessory gauges, how's your gasoline gauge working? If it has been acting erratic lately, it is possible

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Coming Events

Feb. 2 - Activities Committee meets at 3917 Atlas Avenue, Oakland, 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 9 - REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING at The Driftwood, 1313 Park Street, Alameda, 8 p.m.
Dinner for all who can attend begins at 7 p.m.

Feb. 13 - CAR INSPECTION, Lake Temescal, 6 to 8 p.m.

Pre-Valentine's Day SPAGHETTI FEED. Bring your Heart Throb (and all your friends) to the Lake Temescal Club House, 8:30 p.m. All you can eat for \$1.50.

Feb. 17 - Membership Committee meets at 3451 - 35th Avenue, Oakland, 7:30 p.m. (Apt. 1)

Mar. 1 - Activities Committee meets at 3917 Atlas Avenue, Oakland, 7:30 p.m.

Mar. 8 - REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING at The Driftwood, 1313 Park Street, Alameda, 8 p.m.

Mar. 13 - SECOND ANNUAL HAPPY VALLEY RALLY. Details next month.



By Frances Giffin

We are sorry to report that the New Year's Eve turnout was not as great as we anticipated, but those who did attend seemed to enjoy themselves after indulging in a few short ones (those were short??).

A big THANK YOU to Paul Tanzillo is in order for gathering together a crew, and proceeding to decorate the hall on such short notice, so that we could all usher in the New Year in a festive atmosphere. If Joe White seemed a little short of breath during the evening, it was because he had spent a great deal of time blowing up the multitudes of balloons you found adhering to the ceiling and walls. Our high-wire expert, Ken Keyser, fearlessly attached these balloons to the overhead lights. It seems the rest of the crew suffer from acrophobia.

Since our paper had listed two different times for this gala affair to begin, members and guests began filtering in shortly after 8:00, but we didn't get under way with a full head of steam until shortly after 10. We were waiting, very impatiently, for Art to arrive in the traditional tri-cornered costume that represents the birth of the New Year. He had planned to make his appearance as the bouncing babe of 1960 but it seems that Maxine threatened to remain within the security of home if he did; needless to say, we were all crestfallen when our President showed up in conventional attire. Our outgoing President, Don Brooks, was to have made his appearance as Father Time, but, he too, disappointed us.

We would like to thank all of the members who took time out to take over duties tending bar. From all appearances, it seemed that the bartenders may have had the gayest time of all.

Though the activities were slow in beginning, things picked up around 10:30 and kept rolling until around 1. All the old faithful die-hards stayed until they could no longer bend their elbows and there was no place to go but home.

Surprisingly enough, there were more guests than members present, all of whom seemed to be enjoying themselves, with one possible exception. There was one unidentified gentleman who spent the entire evening, sitting chin-in-hand, contemplating the antics on the dance floor. We have been wondering ever since if he came up with any profound analysis of BATOC behavior.

Thanks to all who attended my first presiding meeting at The Driftwood. I had many compliments on the way the meeting went, to my pleasant surprise. I was nervous and tangle-tongued at first, but thanks to a patient membership — and two highballs — things smoothed out before the evening had progressed very far.

The dinner was delish. Even hypercritical Dick Staples voiced his approval (the adjective was furnished by the Ecker Street Adjective Co., and is in no way the responsibility of the writer). I felt embarrassed at the poor turnout for dinner — the restaurant had prepared for 47 of us and only 15 brought their appetites with them. The choice was between steak and chicken. Possibly because of a carry-over from the Installation Dinner in December, all 15 went the steak route. They had hired two extra waitresses, one additional chef, and another dishwasher in anticipation of a real banquet. While I had warned them that we might have anywhere from 15 to 45 diners, they prepared for the maximum so as not to be caught short. Henceforth only one extra waitress will be added for BATOC night and we will have to draft some good-hearted Joe (like White) or a Handy (like Larsen) to help dispense the coffee and save this poor gal from a fate worse than fatigue.

Perhaps our paper de-emphasized the pre-meeting dinner too much last month. We'd like to have as many as possible eat at The Driftwood in order to show them that we appreciate their courtesy in making their meeting room available to us.

The food, through the courtesy of Weyert and Trolander Catering Service, was pleasing to the palate and more than sufficient in quantity. For the first time in BATOC history, the supply of liquor exceeded the demand. In fact, 22 bottles were left over. Due to the fact that the cost of this evening was greater than the revenue collected, it was decided to dispose of the extra beverages by raffling them off a few bottles at a time at successive business meetings. This plan was put into effect at the January meeting with Bob Growden winning the piece-de-resistance, a giant bottle of vodka. Any hopes that he might not be able to squeeze it into the trunk of his Bird were soon dispelled. Our guest, Jerry Plemmons of the Oakland DeMolay, won a fifth of whiskey, as did Andy Larsen. Our thanks to spieler Staples who could sell a Corvette to Skip Riggs.

We can well imagine the sad condition of the hall on the following day when the clean-up committee arrived. Art and Dale Horsfall, Ben, Dwight and Dr. Frank, hale and hearty souls, descended en masse on the scene and proceeded to erase all signs of the last bacchanal of '59. Our heartfelt appreciation to them, as well as to those who tried so hard to put it over.

(An Editor's interjection: Who set his whiskey cup on Art's long-plays? He avers that some of his records have hicoughs now that weren't there before.)

PRESIDENT'S PERCH

But the dinner will remain completely independent of the meeting proper, and those who, for one reason or another, wish to dine elsewhere, will not be subjected to watching the rest of the Club eat while the business meeting takes place, as sometimes occurred last year.

You may be interested to know that we are not being served The Driftwood's special \$1.50 steak, but the regular \$2.50 Club Steak at a cost of \$3.25 (well worth it, too, as included in the one price are tax, tip, desert, the extra waitress, hors d'oeuvres, and the use of a completely private banquet room). It is no more than right that we try not to make our Club a liability to The Driftwood. They are happy to have us and we hope this matter will adjust itself in short order. 'Nuff said.

Frank Ficker is now custodian of Club property. So if you have any of the Club's paraphernalia, please turn it over to the good Doctor. This gives him two jobs, as he is also our Technical Chairman and conducts a monthly column for "Birdland" commencing with this issue. And you know something? He's a darn good mechanic.

Other recent appointments were Dwight Johnston, parliamentarian — a wonderful choice — and likeable Bill Bosak as Parade chairman.

We had more than 40 people in attendance at our January meeting, including guests Richard Leavitt and friend, Kay Paxton, Dr. L. F. Temple, Joseph Mish of Dawson Ski Tours, and Jerry and Thomas Plemmons.

Are you proud to be a member of the most progressive car club in America? Are you still as fond of your Bird as you were when you first joined BATOC? In this, our third year, it is to be expected that some of us will become complacent about many of the things which used to thrill us so because of their newness . . . the friends . . . trips . . . even the other person's car. Well, for one thing, the events are better planned than they ever were before. Chairmen in charge are now experienced and they know better what sort of events you prefer. Friendships are now genuine rather than casual. So, don't allow your attitude to stagnate . . . don't remain aloof and watch us grow . . .

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TECHNICAL TIPS

— continued from first page

that the electrical connection on top of the gas tank has become corroded. Lift the mat in the trunk and remove the small round cover in the middle of the floor. Remove the connector by pulling straight up. Sandpaper the terminal post and then reconnect. This should solve the problem if the tank unit is not defective.



Despite adverse weather, 14 Birds flocked into Jack London Square on Sunday morning, January 24, to participate in the Hound and Hare Rally so well planned and executed by the appropriate members of the Activities Committee, Don Brooks and Dick Staples.

The Hare, otherwise known to us as Skip Riggs, led us out Broadway through the tunnel and up into the hills. The route, which wound its way through the Berkeley Hills and Tilden Park, proved to be a challenge to all the participants. We found the lime sacks at distances greater than the prescribed 50 feet at many of the intersections and this made it necessary for both driver and navigator to be really alert when it came to spotting the elusive white powder that was the only indication as to the direction in which we should travel. The five minute intervals at which the cars were dispatched by Don in a downpour of rain (he must have been drenched) from the starting point, put enough time and distance between most of the cars to avoid our traveling in groups. However, we ended up in a three-car caravan that couldn't seem to separate. As it turned out, this was not a situation that left room for complaint since both the first and second place winners were in this group. Thanks to this spirit of "togetherness", we could rely on several pairs of eyes scanning the roadside for clues, not to forget the saving in leg work (believe me, there was plenty of that, as we were determined not to build up any more mileage than necessary) to discover the all-important spots of white along the road. The trip became a little rough at times, due to fog in the hills, but the final ten miles proved the easiest, as the weather began to clear.

The lime bags were more discernible and had been dropped at shorter intervals, indicating that the Hare was tiring and doubtless looking forward to some nice hot coffee and breakfast.

Since there were 34 people at the Pancake House partaking of the delicious fare, it must be pretty obvious that quite a few members joined us to eat who did not run the rally. This was quite appropriate, as the event was planned not only on the basis of car participation, but as a social as well.

We were happy to see Jackie and Warren Clarke whom we had not seen for many a moon. Likewise two prospective members, Don Sousa and Rich Leavitt. Rich was our first place winner with an error of only .1 mile from a perfect score. Andy Larsen placed second with an error of 1.4 miles. Bev Staples and Donna Brooks managed to pile up an error of 12.3 miles and were given the "Gooney Bird" award.

All the cars leaving the departure point arrived safely at the appointed destination with one exception. Even after we had satisfied our ravenous appetites, we were still short one Bird. We sincerely hope Bill Bosak isn't still out in the Berkeley Hills looking for lime sacks.

If this, the first rally of the year, is an indication of car events to come, we will certainly be looking forward to the next one with great anticipation. To say 14 Birds had a wonderful time would be putting it mildly. We had a BALL!

- Fran Giffin

PRESIDENT'S PERCH

- Continued from preceding page

be active and help us become a better club. Be adult and recognize the symptoms which mark the moribund car club - we've all noted how apathy and a "Let somebody else do the work" attitude have ruined so many other groups like ours. Remember, a busy member is a good member and helps build a sound club.

Volunteer for some responsibility and watch your interest in BATOC develop. Roger welcomes articles for the paper, either on a regular or a sporadic basis.

Thank you again for your vote of confidence in electing me President. I know I have a tough job on my hands in following the great Brooks, a born club man, versatile speaker, humorous and a gifted leader. In comparison I will fumble over my words, perhaps talk too long. But if good intent and hard work can atone for other deficiencies I know I will get the job done.

PRETTY AIDE



Svelte, poised and capable Fran Giffin, our new Associate Editor. Fran has contributed an article or so before, but really bursts forth with two dandy stories this month, well calculated to make you stay-at-homes nibble your nails in envy.

SOFT TOP FOR SALE

Andy Larsen wishes to dispose of the soft top from his '55 Red Bird. Make him an offer. Andy is contemplating a BIG MOVE (starting his own business-fooled ya!) and will sell the soles off his shoes if need be to get started properly. Even the Bird itself is not entirely safe.

PRODIGAL RETURNS

It's a hearty "welcome back" to our No. 1 charter member and founding father, Skip Riggs. A more enthusiastic T-Bird man cannot be imagined and this Club is indeed fortunate to have his energy and earnestness on our side once more.

POTPOURRI

It's Happy Birthday! to Beverly Staples on February 7th and to Larry Farrell on the 16th . . . Donna Sell, completely recovered from her recent illness, has become very active lately; at present is heading up the Spaghetti Feed which even now draws on apace. Donna plans to return to school soon, with a view toward becoming a dental technician . . . Dr. Frank Ficker must be the most careful driver in this here Club. It's been said he is now thinking of installing 4 x 4 clear plastic windows in his front fenders so he can ascertain if the wheels are revolving in the proper direction . . . Ain't it tough, Lorraine, to get sick between sheets - Birdland sheets, that is? Nobody learns about it and you don't get your fair share of flowers, cards and candy . . . Shocking News - the Farrells defected to the enemy. Traded their Bird in on a Corvette, of all things! . . . Sad News - Ken Keyser, the handsome bachelor with physique to match, has decided to sell his pretty Blue-Green '56 and return to college . . . New address for Danny and Betty Nieto: 1124 - 7th Avenue, Oakland . . . Is someone always borrowing your Bird? You can teach him a good lesson by draining the oil from your engine before he borrows it the next time . . . If you're going to eat out anyway prior to our next business meeting, won't you give The Driftwood's cuisine a try?



"SINCE WHEN HAS THERE BEEN ANY LAW AGAINST BIRD-WATCHING?"

Can We Believe Our Eyes?

On page 4 of the preceding issue of "Birdland" you read a short composition entitled, "Watch What You Say". Or at least you did if you are the hardy type who can stomach more than one page of our monthly literary efforts. In that article were listed a few common words with some rather uncommon meanings, pointing up the moral that "Things may not always be what they seem."** Elsewhere in the same issue and in line with this theme we snafued Membership into meeting on Activities' night and vice versa. My new Associate Editor slyly advises in our pages this month that we goofed and gave various starting times for the New Year's Party also. All of which only goes to prove that you shouldn't always believe everything you should.

This month we'd like to carry the subject of uncertainty a bit further. But you needn't lay this aside right here... we're not going to discourse on words again. Instead, the topic will be "Optical Illusions", and we intend to prove that even the best of us can be victimized by them. Vision is of utmost importance to us all—when we're tooling our precious Thunderbirds along the pulsating freeway... window-shopping at Capwell's... or just plain surveying the scene for well-filled nylons.

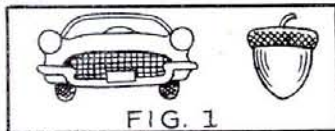


FIG. 1

According to experts, if your eyes tell you something is so, there's at least a 50-50 chance you should believe exactly the opposite. All you have to do is read the Sunday supplements to learn what gay deceivers** our eyes really are. Even the advertisements have gotten into the game of confusing us with pictures showing large arrows and small arrows (or large ovals and small ovals) with captions like: "Which of these two arrows (ovals) is larger?"

Of course, it is perfectly obvious which is larger, but when you come to measure them you find that, through some machination of the devil, they are both the same size!

I don't know how you feel about all this, but I will put up with just so much more of this before I stop measuring.

This unreliability on the part of visual images is only one aspect of Nature's way of making saps out of her children. As an example, take figure 1 of the accompanying illustrations. (If you can lift it from the paper, you're a better man than I am, Gunga Din.) Which of these two acorns would you say is taller? (One is really a T-Bird, but most people figure

anyone stupid enough to own one is a nut anyway.) As a BATOC member in good standing, you would naturally say that the acorn on the left is taller than the one on the right. Taller and handsomer.

Well, you would be right. But this was only a come-on to make you over-confident. When you see two subjects like



FIG. 2

those in the eye test (fig. 2), you think: "There must be a trick here. I'm supposed to say the one on the left is taller, so it can't be. I will say the one on the right, much against my better judgment." And so you lose five dollars.

This is only one of the many fascinating things you can do with your eyes. Another is to wink one of them very slowly at the well-stacked chick sitting at the next table in a restaurant. The first thing you know, the other eye will be all blue and bulging (and very sore), owing to her escort having shown you that the doubled fist is quicker than the eye.

There is a well-authenticated case of optical illusion recorded in the files of the British War Office. It seems that during the African Campaign of the last war a detachment of British troops was stationed in an isolated village amid a clump of trees. (The natives were tree-dwellers, silly as that may seem in this day and age.) Having nothing to do but watch for signs of Rommel's Afrika Korps, the soldiers whiled away their time sipping the native drink, a mixture of heartsease and absinthe, which the company medico recommended for men who would rather be dead, anyway.

Thus the days wore on.

One night three subalterns† were sitting around a small fire drinking this strange concoction (no longer strange to them, however), when one of them, a sergeant named Villiers, turned to his companions and said:

"Don't look now, chappies, but there go the Coldstream Guards†, all but Joe White."*** (The Coldstream Guard was a regiment on maneuvers near Yorkshire at the time, and White was the only man in the regiment whom Villiers knew.)

"I rather doubt that the Coldstream Guard is in Africa at present," said Smythe, one of the three, "but I see what you mean. It's a body of moving figures swaying from side to side, and it's my guess they're penguins. See! There's a penguin now... leading the troops!"

The third member of the party, a Lieutenant† Byerley, up to this point had said nothing. He still said nothing. It was later discovered that Byerley (who subse-

quently swore off all intoxicants and invented an orange drink) had allowed his chin to sag in such a manner that it became entangled in his haversack strap, making it impossible for him to talk. Moreover, he didn't care.

But the two who had seen the passing regiment of either Coldstream Guards or penguins argued far into the night over the phantom marchers, finally agreeing they had really been nothing but a herd of rather ungainly sheep trying to show off by walking by on their hind legs.

In the morning, however, it was found that, so far as the sentries knew, nobody had passed through the camp at all!

This, one of the more famous examples of optical illusion, is only one item in the testimony to uphold our contention that we cannot believe our eyes, either. One wonders (or at least I wonder, and that is sufficient for the purposes of this article) what can we believe? Not too much of what you see in "Birdland", that's for sure.

The whole thing becomes frightening when you think about it.

So why think about it?

CLASSIFIED SECTION

25% discount on all T-Bird Tune-ups and general repair work. See Bob Rosen, 842 Athens Avenue, or call TW 3-4330.

FOR SALE: Tonneau Cover of White Nauhahide in good condition. Make an offer. Skip Riggs, 1334 Jenkinson Drive, Concord, or phone MU 5-1500.

FOR SALE: 1955 T-Bird with stick shift and power seat. \$2250. Call Doris Carroll, BE 4-5092.

FOR SALE: Complete set of rust-colored rugs for Bird (incl. trunk). Make an offer to Skip Riggs, 1334 Jenkinson Dr., Concord, phone MU 5-1500.

FOR SALE: '55 T-Bird with Stick Shift, Dual Quad Carbs, Hard Top, Traction Masters, Reversed and Chromed Wheels. Re-chromed and Re-Painted (Gunmetal) with Red and White Upholstery. Call Art Horsfall at Cirimele's, TW 3-4567.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

We hate to mention it, but this is 1960 and many membership renewals are due! Is yours among them?

You may mail your check to MaraLee Houston, Treasurer, at 2423 - 76th Avenue in Oakland. Or if you prefer to watch her dark eyes light up in person, bring ten bucks worth of your green stuff to the next General Business meeting.

BAY AREA Thunderbird OWNERS CLUB	
ART HORSFALL	President
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ROGER NEISS	Corresponding Secretary
FRANCES GIFFIN	Editor
FRANCES GIFFIN	Associate Editor

Contributions should be submitted to the Editor, 45 Ecker Street, San Francisco

*Shakespeare said it first. That is, Algonquin Shakespeare of Bloomer, Wisc.

**Remind us to write an article on Gay Deceivers some time.

***No relation to our Joe White, who, incidentally, was too young to enlist.

†Bona fide British words thrown in here to show you we know a thing or two.