This year, the Orphan Car Show will take place on September 17th, at Ypsilanti’s historic Riverside Park. The show starts at 9:00 a.m., and admission is only $6.00. Children are free. The Pass in Review starts at 10:15 a.m., where cars will drive past the reviewing stand, and the spectators will be treated to commentary by automotive historians.

A few years ago, show co-founders Randy Mason and Jack Miller reminisced about the founding of the Orphan Car Show. Jack said “For many years, we talked about how Hudsons, Studebakers, Willys, and many other orphans were always overshadowed at car shows and parked in the back rows behind Mustangs, Corvettes, classic tri-5 Chevys, and others. We finally did something about it in 1997 and held the first orphan show which featured Hudson, and still have most of the first volunteers working on the show in 2014.”

Randy mentioned “Ypsilanti has such a rich history of orphan-make development and production; it’s a natural location for the show. The enthusiasm and dedication of the local folks has made it work well over the years.”

The “Pass In Review” is a unique feature of the show and has been part of the show from the beginning. With auto writers and historians narrating, the show is an automotive history classroom.

From the start, the first Sunday in June was the date for the show. Tornado warnings the second year of the show and showers several of the early years bothered the show. In June of 2010, heavy rains flooded the Huron River and Riverside Park where the show is held. It was then decided to move the show to the third Sunday in September, a drier time of year.

Early on, the New York Times declared the show one of the country’s best auto shows. The Motor Cities National Heritage Area continues to highlight and promote the show as one of the top auto-related events in Southeastern Michigan.
On June 22, 2017, they were in Jacksonville, Florida. A week later, June 29th, they started arriving in Ypsilanti.

The Great Race, open to vintage cars, is really a rally. This year it started in Jacksonville, FL. The race participants, many in open cars, braved the heat and the rain for over a thousand miles. A finish line arch was set up on Cross Street, and at about 5:00 p.m., cars started crossing the line. The usual Thursday night cruise night was canceled so that the racers could park and display their cars along Cross Street.

Cars arrived for the next couple of hours, until Cross Street was filled across the bridge.

Racers were treated to a dinner at the Freight house, while spectators checked over the cars.

It was quite a bunch of cars, too. The oldest cars were a pair of 1916 Hudson Super Sixes, both equipped with speedster, and racing bodies. There were plenty of other old cars, like Packards, early V8 Fords, and even a 1960 Plymouth, complete with fins. A striking entrant was the Peerless Green Dragon, a replica of the famous Peerless race car from 1922. It even sported a V8 engine.

One of the noteworthy cars was the Zeus. It was assembled from other vintage parts, using a fire truck as it’s base. It has a Hall-Scott engine, similar in many ways to the Hudson Invader engine displayed in the museum. The owner claimed it could go 100 mph, but with big drive chains singing right next to the driver, I suspect he might not have done that too often.

Some of the cars showed the wear and tear of 1000 miles of driving, with a few oil stains and signs of other leaks.

About 9:00 p.m. the cars and participants, started drifting away to their hotels, trying to get ready for an early start for the next leg of the race. By 10 o’clock, the streets were empty again, and the racers prepared for the rest of their journey. It was a great couple of hours for Ypsilanti.
Early in July, the local chapter of the Hudson-Essex-Terraplane Club met at the Museum.

The parking lot was filled with about a dozen Hudson and Terraplane cars, where they made a striking lineup in the parking lot. Hudsons included many stepdown models from 1948 to 1954, and a few rare Hudson Jets.

Members of the club toured the museum and enjoyed the latest additions to the Hudson Historical Society’s collection of Hudson cars and memorabilia. The Italia, the Invader engine, and the rare barn find 1929 Hudson coupe remain favorites.

The club was treated to a great lunch, prepared by Patti Bluhm and other volunteers at the museum, and featured Patti’s special chicken (OK, it came from a caterer, but Pattie told me is made just the way she would have made it!) and lots of side dishes and desserts.

After lunch and a club business meeting, HET chapter president Joe Delaney presented museum director Ron Bluhm with a check for $1000 to show their support for the museum. “We plan to make this an annual event,” Joe said at the presentation of the check.

Eventually the day was over, and chapter members departed after a day of good cheer and great fellowship.
Oldsmobile Custom Cruiser Joins Museum Display

A rare 1992 Oldsmobile Custom Cruiser joins the museum’s display. This is one of the very few Oldsmobiles built at Willow Run on the B-body platform. It was built alongside Chevrolet Caprice sedans and wagons, and Buick wagons.

This Oldsmobile was built in the higher trim level, and features the glass roof insert that was an Oldsmobile wagon feature since 1965.

While similar to Chevrolet and Buick wagons, the Oldsmobile has a unique grill and front end treatment, and a special instrument cluster with full instrumentation.

1992 was the last year for the production of this car, and fewer than 4000 were made. The museum is fortunate to have this car to display as one of the last cars built at the Willow Run Assembly Plant.

Etch Your Name In Ypsilanti Automotive History

Preserve your memory or honor someone today with a personalized brick at the Ypsilanti Automotive Heritage Museum!

Please check one:  
- 4” x 8” brick $100 each 3 lines of text
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Please PRINT what you want your brick to say. One letter or space per box. Punctuation marks and space take up one box. 4x8 bricks can have 3 lines 8x8 bricks can have 6 lines

One Order Form Per Brick Please

Funds will go to enhancing the Ypsilanti Automotive Heritage Museum
President’s Report

It has been a busy year at the museum. It is always a work in progress. We would like to take the opportunity to thank James Curran for doing our last newsletter and Bob Elton for stepping in and helping out with this one. Additional thanks to Gerald Szostak for taking time to fine-tune our website.

This year we have had a lot of support for our Cruise Night and our upcoming Orphan Car Show. Special thanks to Aubree’s Pizzeria & Grill, Old Towne Coin & Gold, City Body, Cueter Chrysler Jeep Dodge, Cream & Crumb, Ollies Food + Spirits and Sidetrack. Without our volunteers for Cruise Night Donnie Wiseman, Mickey Ischesco, Cecil Rollins, Sid Stone and our friends at the Yankee Air Museum Dave Callahan, Al Hudson, Matt Korich and Sheldon Chandler, we would not be able to do this every week. Let’s not forget our DJ, Dwayne Henderson for keeping us entertained each week. A huge thank you to you all.

We continue to receive support from all our donors such as Hudson Essex Terraplane Historical Society, Hudson Hometown Chapter, Detroit Area Corvair Club, Mosaic Foundation, The Tucker Club of America and Points and Condenser Preservation Society.
MEMBERSHIP/CONTRIBUTION FORM

Join YAHM’s Circle of Friends Enjoy the following benefits

- Free museum admission
- Quarterly newsletters
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Name ____________________________________________
Address __________________________________________
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Do you own a historical automobile? ☐ yes ☐ no
Make __________________ Model __________________ Year __________________

Are you interested in becoming a museum volunteer? ☐ yes ☐ no
Areas in which you have interest:

☐ Single $25 ☐ Family $35 annual (2 adults) ☐ Supporter $100 annual (4 adults)
Contribution for upgrading and developing new exhibits $___________________________

Amount enclosed $_________________ ☐ check ☐ MasterCard ☐ VISA
Credit Card Number ____________________________________________________________
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Signature _______________________________________________________________________

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