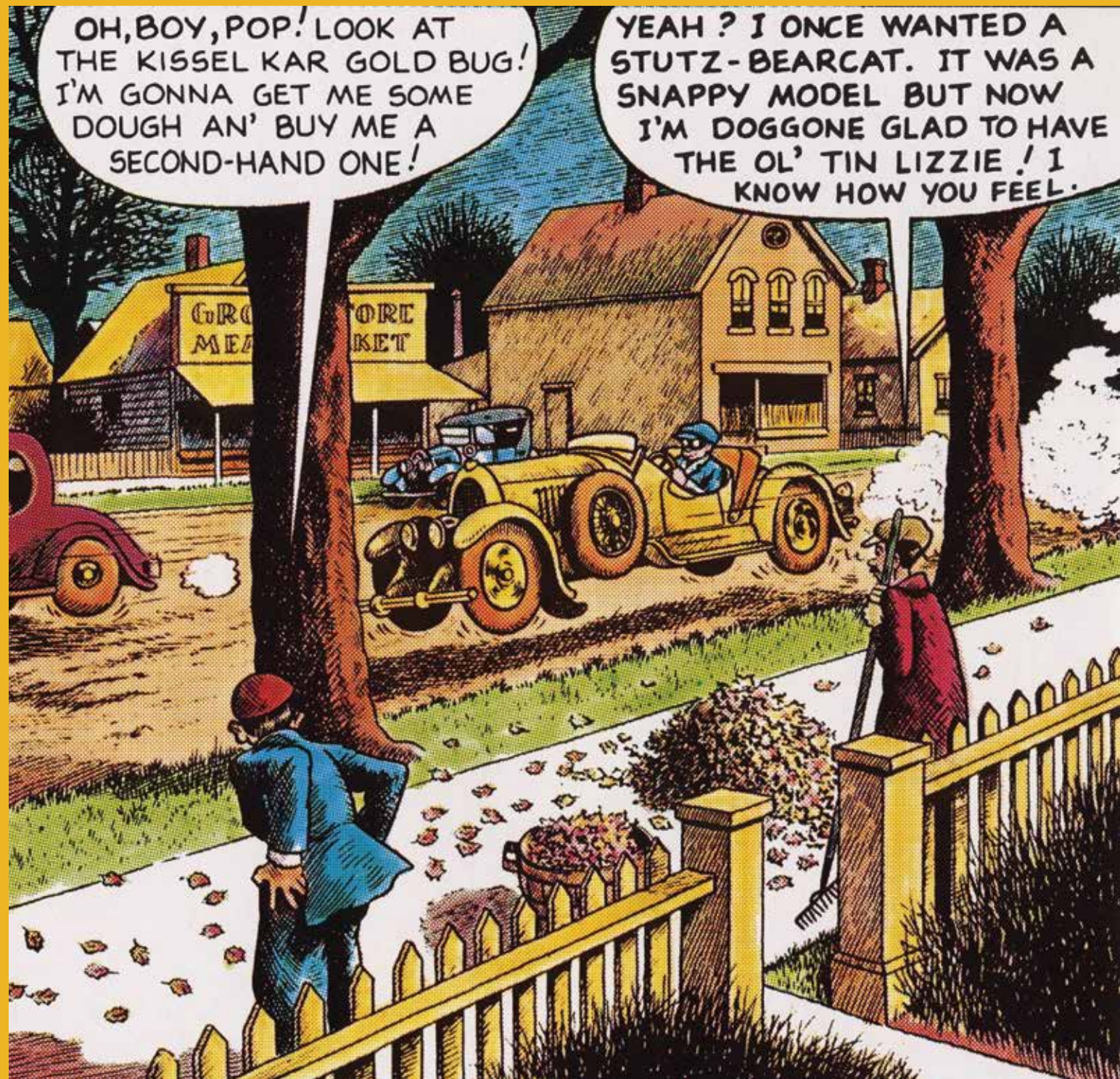


The Story of the “GOLDBUG”



1927 Kissel Speedster Model 8-75

For those of you who read the story of our 1932 Stutz DV-32 in the Side Mount Mirror issue #3-2017, this is the sequel.

In 1927, my grandmother and grandfather had been taking golf lessons—golf being all the rage in the Roaring Twenties. One day my grandfather, Arthur N. Powers of Kankakee, Illinois saw an ad for the new 1927 Kissel four-passenger speedster with golf bag mounts on the rear fenders. He decided to order one as a surprise for his wife, (my grandmother) because they needed a way to get the golf bags to the country club.

Most of the speedsters were painted yellow, hence the nickname “Goldbug”, but he ordered a special paint job in Robin’s Egg Blue. The Model 8-75 Speedster for 1927 has a 131-inch wheelbase, a 287 cubic-inch, straight-eight Lycoming engine with a Kissel cylinder head and oil pan, and hydraulic brakes. Cost when new: \$2,500.

My grandparents would take it for a drive to the country club and on occasion, to Chicago on a nice day. In the winter the Kissel was shipped by enclosed boxcar to Phoenix or Tucson, Arizona where they spent the winters (where they could play more golf!).

As a young boy in Kankakee, I would help my grandfather dust the Kissel, which lived in the carriage house with his several Stutz and Packard automobiles. >>>



By **Bruce McBroom**

*Opposite page
> Kissel “Goldbug”
cartoon, circa 1920s*

*This page from top
> Mr. & Mrs. A.N. Powers,
Bruce’s grandparents
> Arthur N. Powers in
his golfing attire.*

The Story of the "GOLDBUG"



> Bruce McBroom and his Grandfather, 1948



> Bruce McBroom's mother at the wheel, his grandmother next to her and William the chauffeur in the "rumble seat"



> Kathie & Bruce McBroom in their 1927 Kissel Speedster Model 8-7.



I can remember him telling me when I was about seven that when I was old enough to drive he would give me the Kissel Speedster. A few years later my parents and I were living in California and one day my mother told me grandfather had sold the Kissel but that when I turned 16 he would buy me a brand new car. I realize now that is when my interest in Classic Cars began and in later years, I wondered whatever happened to that Kissel.

Many years later while working with Tom Sparks in Hollywood restoring my mother's 1932 Stutz I would tell all my car friends about my search for the Kissel. In the early 1970s I was put in touch with a collector back east who was the Kissel expert. His name was Gene Husting and he had kept track of the car and its multiple owners since 1950. During the 1960s one of the owners had repainted it to the more traditional color scheme for 1927 Kissels: an ivory body and black fenders.

The car was in Milwaukee in the collection of Wally Rank, a long-time member of the CCCA, now deceased. I contacted Wally and he told me the Kissel was his favorite and he would never sell it, but on the outside chance if he ever changed his mind, he would call me first. For the next 25 years I would call Wally, send him Christmas and Happy Birthday cards, and each message ended with "If you ever decide to sell the Kissel, call me!".

Well, he never called. Then one day in 1993 I saw an ad in Hemming's Motor News: "For Sale, 1927 Kissel" with his phone number! I called the number



> 1927 Kissel Speedster at Santa Ynez, California Airport.

about 3 a.m. and woke him up. The next day I called him at his office and he said "Oh, I forgot, but I have drawer full of cards from you."

A few weeks later, the Kissel was at our home in California. Tom Sparks tuned it up for us. Since it only has 25,000 miles from new, that's all we had to do. We did splurge on new tires and I have some of my grandparents' original golf clubs so they are back together with the car I remember as a kid.