

ANTIQUE AUTOMOBILE CLUB Library & Research Center

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LIBRARY & RESEARCH CENTER

Whether you are visiting for the first time or are a frequent visitor, you are in for a pleasant surprise at the variety of information housed:

- 200,000+ pieces of sales literature, photos, owners manuals and clippings
- 3,000+ shop manuals and parts books
- 4,500+ books
- 200 periodicals which are received on a regular basis
- 40,000+ ads
- Blueprints, sheet music, accessory catalogs, folders, programs (including racing events, auto shows, etc.), color charts, wiring diagrams and calendars.
- The archives of the Society for the Preservation & Appreciation of Antique Motor Fire Apparatus in America
- The Society of Automotive Historians' Ralph Dunwoodie Archives.
- Vehicles owned by the L&RC – 1906 Mitchell, 1929 Harley-Davidson, 1940 Ford and 1925 Overland

Automotive Board Games

The AACA Library & Research Center occasionally receives donations of unusual automotive-themed items, such as the two antique board games pictured here from 1926 and 1937. Long before the advent of television and video games, card and board games were a popular means of recreation and covered a wide variety of themes. At the time of their introduction, these particular pieces reflected the growing significance of the automobile in American society.

While the automobile was still relatively young in 1906, William Janson Roche of Pennsylvania obtained a patent for his card game, "Touring." One of the earliest automobile-themed games, Touring has also been considered one of the most important. The first company to market Roche's product was pool table manufacturer Wallie Dorr Co. of New York, and it proved to be a big seller. So successful were Touring's sales, Parker Brothers took notice, approached Wallie Dorr and purchased the rights to the game in 1925.

Parker Brothers' decision to buy Touring was well-informed, as it quickly became one of their best-selling games. In fact, it did so well that it was available into the 1970s. As the style and engineering of cars evolved over time, so did Parker Brothers' game. In order to reflect these changes, box artwork was kept up to date by featuring period cars. In 1965, however, the box featured an image of a Model T. As people became more comfortable with traveling greater distances, even the number of miles on the game's mileage cards increased.

At its heart, Touring was a racing game with a unique twist for its time since it was the first real "take that!" card game, meaning playing to gain and win proved just as important as bringing setbacks upon other players. While the main objective was to use mileage cards and be the first to finish the length of the race, one could bring an opponent to their knees by using delay cards to slow them down. A flat tire required a go card to continue, and those unlucky enough to receive a collision card needed both a go and hauled-in card to restart.



While Touring proved a hit, the main reason for the game's discontinuance was Parker Brothers' 1963 acquisition of another racing card game, Mille Bornes. Designed by a Frenchman in 1953, Mille Bornes was actually based off of Touring with some added features. Under Parker Brothers, Mille Bornes sold quite well and, although no longer under their ownership, it is still in production today.

In addition to card games, Parker Brothers led the way when it came to board games. When they released their Lincoln Highway board game in 1926, development of the actual road had been well underway since its 1915 dedication. Spanning the country from sea to sea, the Lincoln Highway cut down travel time significantly, making it the talk of the nation. Parker Brothers sought to cash in on the road's fame, so they produced a colorful board game depicting a map of the U.S. Featuring the major highways of the time, the map on the board was considered accurate enough to be used while traveling the roads depicted. For those wanting to play a more traditional game, the reverse side doubled as a checker board.

The rules of the game itself were fairly straightforward and utilized game pieces, a pair of dice, and "tour tickets." Pulling a tour ticket determined which route you were to take, and each route consisted of six specific stops (cities) along the way. A roll of the dice decided the number of spaces to move between stops listed on the tour card, and each stop had to be reached by exact count of one or both of the dice. As in real life, players wanted to avoid winding up on the wrong road, since doing so would cause them to lose a turn and start from the beginning of their route.

While Parker Brothers' game had been designed to capitalize on the notoriety of current events, Pontiac released a game in 1937 to serve as a promotional

form of advertising for its 1938 lineup. The Pontiac Safety Drive Game, as it was named, was reminiscent of Pontiac's sales brochures and magazine ads. Game pieces were '38 Pontiacs, and play money featured images of "Pontiac extra value features," such as "improved center point steering." Slogans seemingly covered everything from the board and spinner to the game cards. One such chance card described an accident from which the player emerged unharmed, touting Pontiac's role in their survival: "You owe your life to your Pontiac's Safety Unisteel Body and strong, rigid, bridge-type frame."

At the time Pontiac's game was published, Monopoly had achieved critical success after acquisition by Parker Brothers in 1935. Consequently, Pontiac's game shared much in common with Monopoly, right down to the play money necessary for winning the game. Players drew objective cards that instructed them to "drive" to such places as the post office or zoo. Upon reaching their destination, players were awarded the amount of money printed on their objective cards.

As was the case in Monopoly, The Pontiac Safety Drive Game featured "chance" cards representing accidents or "lucky" near misses. These were to be drawn upon landing on a red spot, one of which was strategically placed in front of a hospital. "Sentence" cards served as penalties for traffic violations within the game, and the unlucky player faced jail time, a fine, or even the loss of their turn through "license suspension." To emphasize the dangers of drinking and driving, landing on "liquor violation" even required the player to draw both a chance and sentence card.

Should you ever be in Hershey, be sure to stop by the Library where you can see these games on display. If interested in old toys, be sure to check out our selection of books on toy cars, including die-cast models and pedal cars. We also have an extensive collection of *Antique Toy World* magazines from 1972 up until today. There is truly something for everyone at the AACA Library & Research Center!

