



Reatta

Division Newsletter Buick Club of America



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Spring 2008

Craft Centre Awaits Demolition

For those who were able to attend April and Ron Gill's Reatta Reunion in September 2006, memories of this scene were thought to be your last. Would you believe the demolition of the Craft Centre is still pending? Disagreement between GM and the US government on the proper procedures to be used in the process are keeping things at a standstill. At this rate we will be able to visit the site this summer.

Even though the site has been deserted,

many, many memories still linger and will for some time. You can join us in bringing back those memories at the Tech Session planned for this summer's National Meet in Flint. Thursday is Reatta Day. The Tech Session will start after lunch at the GM Building adjacent to the Wingate Hotel in Grand Blanc. New and old topics will be discussed between current Reatta owners and those who worked to put your Reatta on the road; something you will not want to miss.



April Gill with her Reatta
in front of the not yet
demolished Craft Centre



View From My Workbench

By George Madsen, Assistant Director

Spring is finally showing signs of its arrival. Reatta owners who have stored their cars over the winter months are beginning the task of getting them ready for the warmer days ahead. On the return trip from our winter vacation in Naples, Florida, we found a place where no such task ever faces car owners: It is Sarasota, where the Gulf Coast Chapter of the BCA has hosted its Old Car Bash on the first Sunday in March for the last ten years. The car show is an all inclusive, no pressure event. It was



The Gulf Coast Chapter's Old Car Bash

billed in the Bugle as a day of fun and friendship with old Buicks, no judging, no trophies. There was a live band in addition to a car corral, parts vendors and food.

The Reatta gang turned out six cars; not bad for a local show. A number of participants as well as spectators showed genuine interest in our Buick two-seaters. Owners fielded a number of questions about options, engines, IPCs, CRTs, and so on. Everyone had an enjoyable day in the eighty degree temperatures. We would like to thank the Gulf Coast Chapter for hosting this fine show. Now that we are home it's time to start the task of getting our Reattas out of hibernation and ready for those warmer days just around the corner.

The Reatta Division's Ninth Annual Reatta Rendezvous will take place during the 2008 BCA National Meet in Flint. We will leave the Wingate Inn in Grand Blanc at 5:00 pm promptly on Thursday,

July 17th. We will drive into Flint to see RDiv member John Bourbeau, who has a special collection of Reattas and related items. We will also see the historically significant Durrant-Dort Building of General Motors fame. Then we will travel through the lake and ski areas south of Grand Blanc.

Dinner will be at Lucky's Steak House in Fenton at 6:30 pm. The restaurant lot will accommodate about thirty cars; overflow parking will be in parking lots adjacent to the restaurant. All entrees include house bread and butter, house or Caesar salad, vegetable and a starch. The following is the per person price per dinner and includes coffee, tea or soft drink plus tax and gratuity:

Chicken Marsala finished w/Marsala wine \$18.

Fettuccine Alfredo w/shrimp \$19.

8 oz. Aged Prime Rib w/au jus \$19.

The Rendezvous dinner form is in with this newsletter. Please fill it out and send it with your payment to Reatta Division c/o Ed Farnell by July 1st.

REATA PEER JUDGING CANCELLED

The planned Reatta Division peer judging event I wrote about in the winter edition of the newsletter has been cancelled. Here are the reasons for the cancellation: We had planned to hold the event in the Wingate parking lot on Saturday as we did during the 2003 BCA National Meet in Flint. This year we were unable to secure permission to use Wingate's lot on the date of the show.

It was suggested moving to the Cultural Center. After conferring with our hosts regarding judging our cars during their Saturday Cultural Center Display; it was clear that they would prefer we do not.

Both the Buicktown Chapter and the BCA had announced in advance that the 2008 meet would be a non-judged event. In order to not violate the spirit of that stated prerequisite and in deference to our hosts, we have regretfully decided to cancel Reatta judging at this year's BCA National Meet.

Reatta Mania Defined

By Ed Farnell, Secretary/Treasurer

About eight years ago my wife and I were taking our daughter to visit the college which I had attended many years ago. About three miles outside of Clemson, South Carolina, I spotted a Red Coupe on the road side with a for sale sign in the window. At sixty miles an hour it looked very much like a car that I thought was absolutely beautiful back in 1988, but was well beyond the reach of a state government investigator with lots of bills and children that would need a college education. My wife, Kitty, and daughter, Mary, indulged me as I turned around to look over the bright Red '89 Reatta that had, what I thought, was a reasonable price in the window.

To make a long story short, I convinced myself and my wife (at least I told myself that I convinced her) that I needed a nice inexpensive air-conditioned car to use as a daily driver. Until that time I had been driving my MGB which was, and is still, almost pristine, but very hot in South Carolina summers. The MGB and two Austin Healeys, which I had restored, were the beginning of my self gratification that began as I got a little money put aside. Soon after calling the owner of the Reatta, who turned out to be a state criminal investigator that I vaguely knew, I owned a Reatta that needed a fair amount of TLC, but was a strong runner, looked really sharp, was cool in the summer and very comfortable to drive.

After numerous calls to Jim Finn for parts and lots of travel up the Reatta learning curve, I was really enjoying my new ride. Things rocked along pretty smoothly for a couple of years and I became a fairly frequent visitor to the Reatta discussion group on the internet; although mostly as a consumer of information and not particularly a contributor. One day while reading through the discussion page I noticed a Black 1990 Reatta Convertible for sale in Florida. A week or so later Kitty and I were on our way to Vero Beach, Florida, with a cashier's check made out to Toni Hunt for his Reatta. After all, what goes better with a Red Coupe than a Black Convertible?

Somewhere between the Red Coupe and the Black Convertible I joined the Reatta Division of the Buick Club of America and within two or three years was

convinced by Nancy Eaton to run for the office of Secretary/Treasurer. Of course the Secretary/Treasurer of the Reatta Division must have more than two Reattas. Since those seemingly innocent forays into the Reatta world, my supportive spouse, my truck and a borrowed car dolly have been to Dallas for a '90 Claret Red Coupe, to Phoenix for a '90



Maui Blue Convertible and to Florida for a '90 Driftwood Coupe. While Kitty is still at least superficially supportive, I have since made trips to Augusta, Georgia, for another '90 Maui Blue Convertible, to Ohio for a White '89 Coupe and to Fort Worth for a Red '91 Coupe with only my truck, my car dolly and books on CD to keep me company.

The rest of the story is that I have sold a few of the Reattas to convince folks that I am somewhat sane (and to make room for a '55 and a '57 Oldsmobile which I have coveted since my youth). I do still have two convertibles and two coupes; two of which I drive regularly.

What started out as a purchase of a flashy Buick that was comfortable to drive and that I could finally afford has ended up as a unique opportunity to make new friends, see a lot of the country, attend several great Buick meets, learn a lot about one of Buick's great cars that never was able to meet its full potential and to serve as an officer in a Division dedicated to the preservation of the Reatta. I hope each of you have as much fun being involved with your Reatta as I have with mine.

Technical Update

*By Barney Eaton, BCA Board Vice-President, Technical Advisor Coordinator,
Technical Advisor for Reattas, Keeper of the Reatta Database*

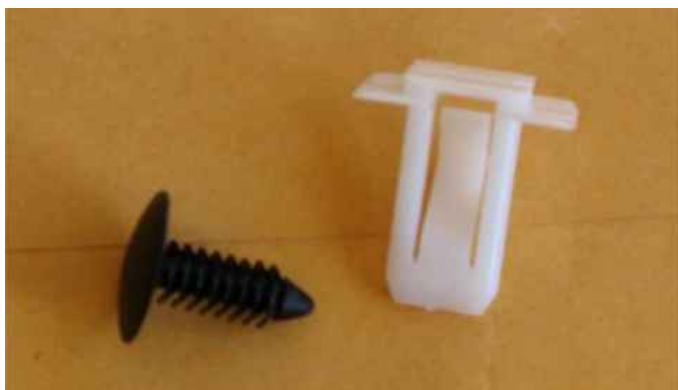
Headliner Replacement

If you own a Reatta Coupe, chances are your headliner is sagging or will someday soon. You can replace the headliner, or at the very least, save some money by removing it and taking it to a professional to be replaced.

Removal: Remove the sun visors, the coat hooks above the shoulder belt anchor, the screw in the shoulder belt anchor surround, the dome light lens, and the retaining things for the dome light. Take out the bulb to avoid breaking it; use caution as one of the bulb retainers has 12 volts going to it. If concerned, disconnect the battery.

I was able to remove the dome light housing retainers by grabbing them with a needle-nose pliers and pulling, wiggling, and turning. If you damage one, you will need to find a replacement.

The front "A" pillar trim is retained by two plastic parts that will probably break (see photo below).



The black part is the lower retainer and can be purchased at most auto parts stores, I only found the white part at GM, #20462090, about \$1.60. There is also a screw holding the trim at the back of the door window opening. The trim interferes with removing the headliner. Finally, tilt the rearview mirror down out of the way to remove the center sun visor clips. Now the headliner will come out as

a unit. Velcro strips above each door and two over the back window can be separated using a kitchen knife. Use care not to bend or damage any of the



Headliner removed

corners or edges of the headliner shell. It is a compressed fiberglass mat but is only slightly stronger than an ice cream cone.

Make note of the excess material in certain areas and how the material folds over the back of the headliner shell. Carefully remove the headliner cloth. Take a photo for reference later.

Now you will see why the headliner is sagging. The headliner material comes with a thin foam backing. The foam deteriorates causing the headliner to sag.

Next you remove the old foam residue from the headliner shell. A wire brush will remove most of the dead foam, I used an old toothbrush and vegetable brush to get into the corners and tight areas.

Replacement headliner material is available in larger fabric shops like Jo Ann's Fabrics or Hancock Fabrics. If you live in a metropolitan area, you may have an upholstery supply store with a good selection of colors. Remove the passenger side sun visor to take as a sample color. I paid \$9.99 a

yard and purchased 5 feet (1 2/3 yard). I was concerned about a yard and a half not being enough. You will also need a good spray adhesive. 3M brand #77 is very good and is available at Home Depot and Lowe's.

For attaching the headliner material to the shell I recommend a helper. Also if your headliner shell has been damaged during removal, you can use tape on the back side for minor damage, but you may need to do some fiberglass repair on bad breaks or corners that get broken. Use care in removing the headliner and damage can be avoided.

Installing the foam-backed cloth is not difficult. Select a location out of the wind to avoid overspray from the adhesive. Lay the headliner material on the headliner shell and allow for excess material and enough to wrap around the back of the shell. Fold the material in half exposing the shell and foam to be sprayed, you are only going to do one half/side at a time.

Spray an even coat of adhesive on half of the shell, spray a little extra in the corners of the creases. Then spray an even coat on the foam backing. Use caution not to have any headliner cloth exposed to the adhesive. Allow the adhesive to dry (see can for instructions).



New headliner insulation

Now, with your helper's extra hands, start from the center and smooth the material. Your helper will hold the material up so that it does not get glued

down before you are ready. Work from the center out, smoothing it into the contours of the headliner shell. When you complete one side, fold the remaining side back over the finished side, spray and repeat. Once you are satisfied with the appearance of the glue job, turn the unit over and finish by wrapping the front, back and sides to the back and gluing in place. The photo taken earlier is helpful now. Finish by trimming where required and cut a hole for the dome light and visor parts.

Installing it into the car you can always use some extra hands. Again, you don't want to bend the shell. Once in the car get it above the plastic trim at the shoulder belt anchor and position it side to side...front to back. Start by locating the dome light hole and install the dome light housing, next install the sun visor clips. With those done, the unit is located as it was originally and you can start reinstalling screws, etc. Push the headliner in place where the Velcro pads are located.

The last thing I did was install the sun visors. This is tricky because you can't see the holes. I used a sharp awl to find the screw holes and align the first one with the sun visor mount, then find the next hole and install the screw (only start the screws when you have all three properly located).

Doing a headliner for a sunroof car is similar: The service manual tells you to open the sunroof about 2 inches, slide the inside cover for the sliding part of the sunroof forward and it will come off.

I added an optional item while the headliner was out - insulation. There are several types that will work, mainly it needs to be no more than 1/4 inch thick. I used the bubble type with foil on both sides (see photo at left).

If you get stuck, call or email me.

REATA FUN FACT

The CRT (Cathode Ray Tube) screen, in the center of the dashboard of '88 and '89 models, takes the place of more than ninety gauges and switches.

Secretary's Ramblings

By Ed Farnell

I am offering again this year for the office of Secretary/Treasurer and I appreciate your vote. I have stopped counting, but believe this will be my fifth year.

My job consists primarily of maintaining the membership data base, collecting the annual dues, paying the Division expenses and printing and mailing the quarterly newsletter and answering periodic questions about the Division. The easy part of the job is showing up at the annual meeting and taking the minutes. I have thoroughly enjoyed being your Secretary/Treasurer and look forward to serving you for another year.

This coming year I hope to help with a review of our by-laws, which have been almost unchanged since our Division was formed.

Another challenge will be managing the mailing of the newsletter, new member packets and dues acknowledgements in the face of rising postage costs. With a little luck, we should be able to maintain the present dues for the foreseeable future.

I am looking forward to seeing many of you in Flint in July. As always, I welcome your comments on the way the office of Secretary/Treasurer is serving you.



Packing for the trip to Flint

Reatta Marketplace - Cars and Parts For Sale

Parts You name it, I should have it. John 810-730-9230

Parts Large inventory. Reasonable prices. Jim jfinn@cpinternet.com

1990 Coupe. Red w/tan interior. 83,500 miles. California car in showroom condition. Photos available. \$9,000. 707-527-5455. Email Jaq_Caz@sbcglobal.net

1991 Convertible. 39,000 miles. White on white with black rub strip; flame red interior. Cassette and disc player, 16 way driver's seat, original floor mats and window sticker. Signed log book from the Craft Centre with pen, tire gauge and flashlight. Price \$13,500. Call 248-437-5022. Ask for David. BCA # 15683

1991 Coupe. White with red interior. 70,000 miles. No CD or sunroof. Garage kept, regular maintenance, in very good condition. Tires in good condition. Price negotiable. Pictures available. Located in Punta Gorda, FL. Call RitaAnne Sakal at 941-268-4632 or email whiskers@yahoo.com

Reatta Wear at Flint this Summer

Warmer weather is just around the corner. Reatta Division members are busy getting their cars ready for the July meet in Flint. This is the perfect time to update your Reatta Wear wardrobe. Some of our best spring and summer sellers are hats, fashion visors, golf shirts and ladies scoop neck shirts.

We will be in Flint with these items and more. Nancy Eaton has designed a great new item which will be on display at the Reatta Wear table in the Wingate Inn. The Reatta Wear table will be open in the lobby of the Wingate Inn in Grand Blanc starting Wednesday afternoon, July 16th.

Attention: Service Bulletin 1986-89 Reattas & Rivieras

This bulletin has been revised to change bulletin number from 89-8-5 to bulletin number 89-8-15.

Some 1986-1989 Rivieras and Reattas may experience flickering or blank instrument panel cluster (IPC) and Graphic Control Center (GCC) displays accompanied by code E047. This may be caused by a poor solder connection in the Central Power Supply (CPS). If both the IPC and the GCC displays are flickering or are blank, check the part number on the CPS. If it is 16058596, replace it with part number 16088406.

1988 Modified Reatta w/ Northstar V8



Open for comments! And yes, it's for sale.

Reatta Division

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Membership and Division Information

Reatta Division membership dues are \$10.00 per year. Membership is for a twelve month period.

Please note that a pink highlighter mark on the RDiv number on your mailing list means that your Reatta Division dues are due or overdue. In order to continue receiving the Reatta Division newsletter, your RDiv membership status needs to be current.

Please make checks payable to: Reatta Division, BCA.

Send all dues payments and address changes (please write your RDiv# on your check) to:
Secretary/Treasurer, Ed Farnell, 440 Langford Road, Blythewood, SC 29016.

All Reatta Division members are required to be members of the national organization, the Buick Club of America, of which we are an authorized division. Please note that a blue highlighter mark on the BCA number on your mailing label means that you are not a current member of the Buick Club of America. BCA dues are due or overdue or you never became a member of the BCA, in which case a BCA membership form is enclosed. In order to continue receiving the Reatta Division newsletter, your BCA membership status needs to be current. The national organization can be contacted as follows: Buick Club of America, P O Box 360775, Columbus, OH 43236 or by email at bcaoffice@buickclub.org

Please send classified ads and newsletter submissions to:

Newsletter Editor, Nancy Eaton, 20111 Deerfield Drive, Georgetown, TX 78628 email reatta@texas.net

Reatta Division meeting dates: We normally meet once a year at the BCA National Meet.