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By Jerry Gordon

Baltimore's first Flowermart in 1911 was meant to celebrate the beauty of flowers in spring. One-hundred years later, on Friday, May 6th, Chesapeake Region, AACA was part of the 2011 Flowermart. It remains a floral and plant exhibition, enhanced, of course, with arts and crafts vendors, civic groups, music and dance entertainment, and many contests.

Now it's a 21st century street fair with lots of tradition – thousands of people dressed in upscale casual clothing, hundreds of women wearing fancy hats decorated with bright flowers, and unique Baltimore food treats like lemon sticks and crab cake sandwiches.

The entire event is influenced by the restored Victorian era row houses and buildings of the historic Mount Vernon neighborhood. The cobblestone and brick paved streets around the Washington Monument add to the feel of 19th century Baltimore. The past five years, our Club has been selected to display our antique cars, which has proved to be a very popular spectator attraction and has added to the event's ambiance.

On an absolutely wonderful spring day, we had twenty cars on the east plaza park. After positioning our cars, most Club members looked at the items for sale in the booths. Some of us were looking for the perfect item for Mother's Day. Many of



Frank Ruehl's 1937 Buick parked in front of the restored Victorian row houses in historic Mount Vernon.

us also enjoyed the entertainers at the two performance stages. Included were big bands, music ensembles, ballroom and flamenco dancers, and a chorus.

At the opening ceremony, a bagpiper played and a moment of silence was observed in honor of the late William Donald

Looking around Flowermart 2011 shown below from the left: The Maypole dancers, the lemon stick stand, street-entertainer walking tall, vendor booths in the west park, and part of the children's hat contest.

Schaefer, who was an honorary chairman of Flowermart.

One of the two pre-WWII cars on display was Frank Ruehl's 1937 Buick four-door sedan. Frank has been a Chesapeake Region member since 1968 and has owned several cars. Frank remembers how, as a youngster, he was enamored with the big '37 and '38 Buicks in his neighborhood. The sound of the Buick straight-eight engine was like a song to him.

Frank wanted to have one, but that opportunity didn't present itself until 1970, when he noticed a low mileage 1937 Buick for sale in the Washington Post. What he found was a car that was very well preserved and didn't need much to

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Shown from the left: Bill Schmuck & Ruth Synodinos, 1947 Cadillac; Paula & Gary Ruby, 1973 Chevrolet; George Spicka, 1969 Chevrolet



Shown from the left: Jim Turner, 1953 DeSoto; Helen & Jerry Gordon, 1961 Cadillac; Pat Wenderoth, 1928 Studebaker



From the left: Rosemary Wybourn & Ted Schneider, 1983 Oldsmobile, Mildred & Al Lawson, 1965 Mustang; Bob Johnson, 1968 Shelby

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function as a collector car. The '37 Buick Frank brought home was a Special 40 Series, five-passenger, four-door sedan. The rear deck of the car has distinctive slant back styling that Buick called "plain back". And powering this impressive car is the famous Buick overhead valve, straight-eight engine that even today sings to Frank.

In 1970, Frank's Buick had 84K miles on the odometer. He's added 32K miles attending more than 40 years of local events like Flowermart, the Howard

County Fair Show and the Mayor's Christmas Parade.

In recent years, Frank has needed to do some minor repainting, rechromed the bumpers, and replaced some of the safety glass; proof of the quality built into those early Buicks. The only major mechanical repair was a broken axle.

Showing antique cars at Flowermart were: Dave Benson, 1955 Jaguar; Paul Habicht, 1959 Cadillac; Jack Kremen, 1982 Buick; Bud Currey, 1960 Pontiac; Tom Kenney, 1955 DeSoto; Helen & Jerry Gordon, 1961 Cadillac; Terry &

Dan Materazzi, 1956 Corvette; Mildred & Al Lawson, 1965 Mustang; Paula & Gary Ruby, 1973 Chevrolet; Henry Ver Valen, 1960 Jaguar; Bill Schmuck & Ruth Synodinos, 1947 Cadillac; George Spicka, 1969 Chevrolet.

Also: Read Van Zile & Joanne Day, 1963 Thunderbird; Bob Johnson, 1968 Shelby Mustang GT; Rosemary Wybourn & Ted Schneider, 1983 Oldsmobile; Buzz Diehl, 1966 Pontiac; Pat Wenderoth, 1928 Studebaker; Alan Aronson, 1967 Rolls Royce; and Jim Turner, 1953 DeSoto.