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The rearview mirror

Vintage-car parade turns heads on Main Street

By CINTIA FURTADO
News Staff Reporter
7/11/2002

The calendar said 2002, but it seemed like 1920.

The Motor Maids Parade, featuring vintage cars driven by women in vintage attire, was the image of motorized antiquity Wednesday, all the way from Tupper and Main streets to M&T Plaza.

Sponsored by the Buffalo Transportation/Pierce-Arrow Museum, the parade attracted the attention of workers on their lunch break and others enjoying downtown on a spectacular day.

The first vehicle in the parade, a 1902 Buffalo Electric, caught some by surprise.

"I thought they were filming a movie at first," said Andrew Knit of Brooklyn, a visitor to the city. "I like these cars. I love classic cars. They are very nice."

"I thought somebody was getting married - I didn't know what was going on," said city resident Yolanda Ross. "I love the old cars."

Jim Sandoro, founder of the museum at Michigan Avenue and Seneca Street, called the parade "a highlight for people downtown."

"We don't know of another parade with all women drivers," he said.

Sandoro pointed to the role of women in the fledgling automobile industry and its prominent display in the museum.

"We have pieces of memorabilia on display in the museum that feature women



MICHAEL GROLL/Buffalo News
From left, Mary Ann Sandoro and Annabelle and Katharine Hogel, appropriately dressed for the era, lead a parade of automotive antiquity along Main Street on Wednesday in a 1902 Buffalo Electric.

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from the 1900s to the 1960s - advertisements, jewelry, hats and clothing. No one else have ever done it. We thought we should be the ones."

Riding in a 1921 Page, Dianne Jones of Buffalo called the parade a reason to celebrate.

"In the '30s, this would be new to women, so we are celebrating the fact that we can ride," she said

State Sen. Mary Lou Rath, R-Williamsville, riding in a 1930s-era car, said women have always been interested in cars.

"I don't think people have identified women with vintage cars," she said. "There's all kinds of evidence that women were interested in cars as they are now."

The museum, she added, "brings a lot of excitement to downtown and richness to our heritage."

Chris Binkowski said the parade was a welcome departure from a steady diet of Metro Rail.

"I just came to see the old cars, especially because they are finally doing something on Main Street besides the train," he said.

The museum's exhibit "Women & the Automobile" is open from noon to 5 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday.

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