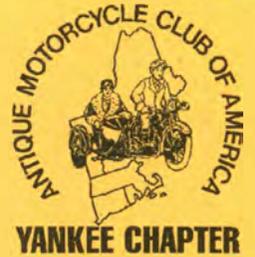




# YANKEE CHATTER



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SUMMER / AUTUMN 2001

No. 01 / 3

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YANKEE CHAPTER  
ANTIQUe MOTORCYCLE CLUB OF AMERICA, INC.  
*Chapter established in 1973*

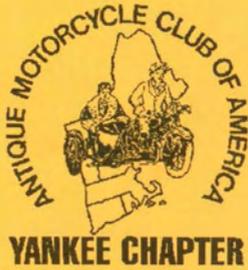
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*C. Gallo Photo*

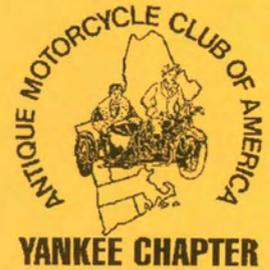
## Dennis Willette Picks Up Joe Barber Trophy

A new judging-by-peers selection process was used to award the Joe Barber Trophy this year. Dennis Willette's 1960 Harley-Davidson FLH was voted best panhead by the other 22 panhead owners, a considerable honor when you take into account the level of competition.



# Officers

Director  
Jessie Aikman



Vice Director  
James Friedlander

Vice Director  
Steve Ciccalone

Secretary  
Thomas Marston

Chapter Advisor  
Frederick D. Hirsch

Treasurer / Membership Chair  
Sandra Gallo

Vice Director  
Will Paley

Editor  
Charles Gallo

Chapter Judge  
Randall Walker

SUMMER / AUTUMN 2001

No. 01 / 3

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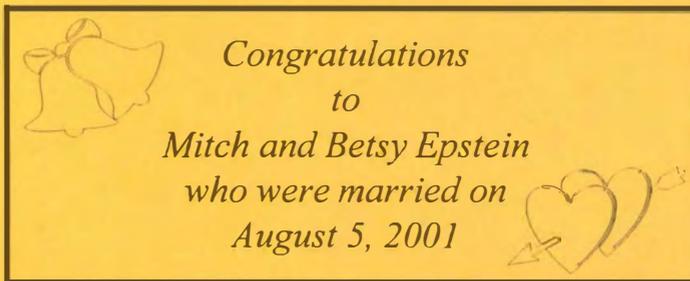
On behalf of the members of the Yankee Chapter, I wish to express our deep sorrow and sympathy to all those who lost loved ones in the recent senseless tragedies in New York, Washington, D.C. and Pennsylvania. Our thoughts and our prayers return to the innocent souls whose lives were lost and to the many valiant and selfless workers and volunteers who toil on to help mitigate a terrible wrong.

The Editor

In late October, Yankee Chapter Member, Jim Darby suffered a stroke and was hospitalized. He is recuperating and his address is as follows:

**Crestfield Rehabilitation Center**  
**James Darby, Room 16**  
**565 Vernon Street**  
**Manchester, CT 06040**

I'm sure he would appreciate hearing from his Yankee Chapter family of friends.



YANKEE CHATTER is the official newsletter of the YANKEE Chapter of the Antique Motorcycle Club of America, and is published three times a year on a pseudo-seasonal basis (Winter/Spring, Spring/Summer, Summer/Autumn) or when information warrants. The YANKEE Chapter of the AMC of A was established April 8, 1973. Dues for the 2001 membership year are \$ 10.00 individual; \$ 12.50 with spouse. Membership is not transferable and dues are not refundable.

Applicants wishing to join the YANKEE Chapter must FIRST be members in good standing (paid up) of the National AMC of A; however, applicants may send membership applications to the Chapter Membership Chairperson at any time, and memberships received after October 31st of any year will be held over for the next membership (calendar) year.

Distribution of YANKEE CHATTER is to members of record in good standing (paid up), officers and directors of the AMC of A, and certain editors and other officers of the AMC of A Chapters. As a member of the National AMC of A, YANKEE Chapter is a non-profit organization.



## Director's Message

The 2001 motorcycling season is rapidly coming to an end. The summer and fall this year have been beautiful; not so good for the lawns and gardens, but great for all sorts of outdoor activities, including motorcycling. Our national meet in Hebron was a success. Attendance was lower than usual, but that did not stop all who attended from having a good time.

If I were to pick one word to describe our fall meet in Sturbridge, it would have to be disappointing. A handful of people showed up in the morning, hung around for a while, and left. There were a few drifters in the afternoon, and that was it. The most exciting thing to happen all day was poor Sandy Gallo being rushed to the hospital after being stung by some sort of insect. Pretty sad. A dozen of us stayed over-night on the grounds. We enjoyed a wonderful campfire built by Ed Morinho and Co., shared the Gallos' wooden bucket and then called it a night. We had enough people show up with machines on Sunday to award 8 trophies along with the Giles Adams trophy, which went to long time Yankee member Mitch Epstein for his 1922 Harley Davidson J model. All in all, I would not say our fall meet was a disaster, but I do think that we need to decide at the Christmas party if Yankee wants to have more than one scheduled meet per year. We spent \$400.00 for the grounds at Sturbridge for a fall meet that practically no one attended. We had one vendor and returned their \$20.00 because there were no buyers!

I received a call from Dennis Craig right after the National AMC Board meeting in Dav-  
enport, to let me know that my letters to the editor and the National Board paid off. The

vendor fees for National Meets were returned to \$35.00 from \$45.00. It goes to show that our opinion does matter, and that we can change things if we put in the effort. Keep this in mind for our upcoming Christmas party. Please try to come to the Christmas party and help us decide what to do for 2002. Please keep in mind that this is an election year for your officers. This is YOUR big chance to get involved and help make a difference. As usual there will be an awesome pot luck dinner following the business meeting. It really is a lot of fun and a nice opportunity to see some fellow Yankees.

Jessie

[www.boston.quik.com/flatboy/yankee](http://www.boston.quik.com/flatboy/yankee)

This is the address of the new web site of the Yankee Chapter.

Jim Casey responded to our cry for help at last year's Christmas party by volunteering his services as webmaster. Since that time, he has presented an initial design and continued to refine and enhance the web site. The amount of time that he has spent working on this project is readily apparent. The site is a still changing and growing and all members are encouraged to have a look and submit any comments or ideas they might have to Jim Casey through the comment feature of the web site.

The site, as it is now, is an abbreviated version of the Yankee Chatter.

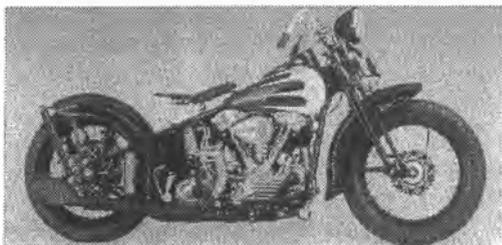
If you know of anyone who would like to join the club, there is a printable membership application on the site. Have a look and let Jim know what you think.



# Ride 'Em Don't Hide 'Em



## Special Awards for Bobbers and Period Customs



*By Jessie Aikman*

Yankee Chapter's National Meet in Hebron, CT was no exception to the trend that we have seen over the past few years; that of fewer vendors and a smaller walk in crowd. I will say, though, that there was no shortage of enthusiasm, and that everyone who came had a good time! The weather could've been better, but it did not actually rain in Hebron. It rained in many parts of the surrounding area but not on the Hebron Lions Club Park. We had enough vendors to make a good flea market, and a variety of motorcycles and parts to make for good conversation. The road run was a success; approximately 30 machines participated. A few of the riders got wet, some simply got damp and others managed to dodge the rain drops all together. Many thanks to Sandy Gallo; she spent hours along with several tanks of gas mapping out a good ride.

We concluded the day with a gathering of the Pan Clan and the banquet. There were 23 Panheads on hand for display, all vying for the coveted Joe Barber trophy. The banquet was a sell out; we could've sold at least 10 more tickets. We all enjoyed a fabulous BBQ rib dinner with corn on the cob and all the fixin's. After the meal, door prizes were presented.

John Bowman again donated a beautiful wooden truck as a prize. Michael and Jessica Thomson from Dallas, TX were the happy winners of this unique gift. Thanks again, John! The banquet was concluded with the awarding of the Joe Barber trophy. This year, a new method was established for deciding on the winner of this trophy. Every person who entered a Panhead for judging received a ballot. Without voting for their own bike, they selected their choice for first, second and third place machines. When the votes were tallied, Dennis Willette from Maine scored the trophy with his red and white 60 Pan. I'll have to say he really deserved it. He has worked very hard on that motorcycle and it sure looks great!

Sunday started out on the gray side but it did not rain! There were 30+ machines down in the judging area. Penny Nickerson even had her 1923 Cleveland single decorated with a bouquet of flowers, a nice touch for a so so day. A special thanks goes out to Linda Fuller, who wins the honest biker award. She found over \$150 in judging fees that had been lost on the ground and turned it in to an officer. Dennis Willette ended up with 98 points from the judges, he probably left Hebron happier than anyone. There ya have it!



*C. Gallo Photo*

Robin Gazza has reason to be proud of his 1935 Indian Sport Scout bobber. The detailing is impressive and this baby really flies.

John Yushkevich was at Hebron with his 1926 Henderson. He used Ford Model T valves to help save on rebuilding costs. He also added oil and air filters to keep things clean. This smooth running machine attracted quite a group of admirers.



*C. Gallo Photo*



Sandy Gallo and Fred Hirsch share a moment of levity while working at the registration tent.

*C. Gallo Photo*

*C. Gallo Photo*

Jim and Linda Casey rode to Hebron on Jim's 1975 Harley-Davidson. Jim is the webmaster and administrator of the new Yankee Chapter web site. He brought copies of pages from the site and headed a discussion of his efforts. The board of directors approved his work and asked that he continue developing the site.





Chris Duffy had the misfortune to blow a head gasket on his 1945 Harley-Davidson UL during Saturday's road run. Bill Brauch, who was on the run, called his son Richard for help. Here we see Chris limping his bike onto the trailer that Richard brought to the rescue. Back at the fairgrounds, Chris was able to get a head gasket and make the necessary repairs before riding home to RI on Sunday.

*C. Gallo Photo*

During Sunday morning's judging, Will Paley and Randy Walker peruse a beautifully restored 1954 BMW R51/3 belonging to Phil Mathews.



*C. Gallo Photo*

*C. Gallo Photo*



Peter and Andrea Esposito and Dennis Willette are hard at work judging a Harley-Davidson Hummer on Sunday morning.

# Antique Motorcycle Club of America Hebron, Connecticut Awards August 5, 2001

Oldest Motorcycle  
Longest Distance Ridden I  
Longest Distance Ridden II  
Most Unique I  
Most Unique II  
Best Bobber I  
Best Bobber II  
Bobber Longest Distance Ridden I  
Bobber Longest Distance Ridden II

Penny Nickerson  
Ray Dhue  
Bob Provenchar  
Steven Geiger  
John Kowal  
Robin Gazza  
Jim Prosper  
Travis Potter  
Stanley Kasparewicz

1914 Douglas  
1949 Harley-Davidson FL - 165 miles  
1957 Harley-Davidson FL - 112 miles  
1929 Cleveland Tornado 4 Cylinder  
1949 Simplex  
1935 Indian Sport Scout  
1942 Indian Military 741 / Sport Scout  
1947 Harley-Davidson UL - 20 miles  
1956 Harley-Davidson FL - 3 miles



## Yankee Chapter Award



Joe Barber Memorial Trophy

Dennis Willette

1960 Harley-Davidson FLH



The award winners at the Yankee National Meet gather behind the bobbers of Robin Gazza and Jim Prosper to display their new trophies.

*C. Gallo Photo*

# Once Upon A Time,

way back in the summer of ought-one, while judging bikes at the Yankee Chapter National Meet in Hebron, CT, your editor was introduced to Kenneth Fitts. Even though we had lived in the same town for over 25 years, I had never met Kenneth despite the fact that I had ridden past his house hundreds of times. Kenneth rode across the United States in 1935 on his motorcycle. He offered an account of his adventure to be published in the Yankee Chatter. Here is his story:

## MY 1935 MOTORCYCLE TRIP

by Kenneth Walker Fitts

One day early in August 1935, I left my home in Storrs, Connecticut on my motorcycle and headed for California. I was to be gone 35 days to travel over 7000 miles, through 21 states and part of Canada. My recollections of the trip are still quite clear, probably from reliving it in my mind and retelling the story over the years. 1935 road maps, still in my possession, have helped me retrace my route in this September 1988 account of my experiences.

First let me describe the motorcycle that took me on this trip. It was a 1928 Harley-Davidson L head (flat head, side valve) single cylinder motorcycle with a 21 cubic-inch piston displacement. To lubricate the engine, oil was slowly pumped from the oil tank into the crank case. Oil that leaked past the piston rings was burned and blown out the exhaust. The oil was not recirculated as in a modern engine. An oil pump control was attached to the throttle cable. The greater the throttle opening, the faster the oil was pumped into the crankcase. It had two compression rings. 1928 is the first year Harley-Davidson

came out with a front wheel brake. The tires were 3.30 X 20 clincher type, with inner tubes. Ignition was by a conventional spark coil and six-volt battery. The generator was known as the three-brush type. There was no voltage regulator. Output of the generator was controlled by the position of the third brush. The headlight had two bulbs, a small one for park and a large one for a bright light. It had no tilt. The only instrument on the motorcycle was an ammeter. It had no speedometer or odometer. One gas tank held two gallons. The reserve tank held nine-tenths of a gallon. I bought the motorcycle in 1935 from a man who was asking \$30.00 for it. After some haggling, I bought it for \$22.50. I had saddlebags on both sides of the rear wheel. I also made a frame to support a box over the rear fender for additional storage. Across the handle bars, I secured a piece of strap iron. This kept my bed roll from sagging down to the gas tanks when I tied it on the handlebars. The bedroll consisted of two blankets and a canvas.

I was 21 years old when I made this trip. The night before I left, I drained the old oil from the engine crankcase. I worked the plunger twice on the hand oil pump to bring the new oil up to the proper level in the crankcase. Apparently the valve didn't seat properly in the



Kenneth Fitts takes his 1928 Harley-Davidson, which he rode cross country in 1935, out for a spin.

hand pump and additional oil ran into the crankcase overnight. I left home trailing a cloud of blue smoke from the exhaust pipe.

I didn't have a watch, a calendar or a compass with me. The only maps I had were those I picked up at filling stations along the way. I felt lucky when one map I obtained had the whole United States on the back side. I tied this on the outside of my bedroll so I could see my progress from day to day.

I spent the first night near Niagara Falls, N.Y. When I slept out, I would lay the canvas on the ground and spread the two blankets on top of it. Next I would lie near one edge of the top blanket, grab the canvas with one hand and roll over about twice so that I would be rolled up in the canvas and blankets. I always tried to find a place where I would be hidden from sight.

I drove across Canada and came back into the United States at Detroit. Somewhere in Canada the carburetor started flooding. I took the top off of the carburetor float bowl and found that the pivot that closes the needle valve had become unsoldered from the float. I left the top off so I could see the level of gasoline in the bowl and controlled this level by turning the valve on and off from the gas tank. When I came to a small garage I had a mechanic make the necessary repairs by soldering the pivot back onto the float. It hasn't given any more trouble.

Somewhere, while driving across Michigan, vibration broke the supports to the battery box and the box started to fall out. I stopped at a garage and a mechanic gave me some baling wire and I wired it back in place. Incidentally, vibration gave me trouble throughout the trip. I kept my flashlight in my right rear saddle bag. The bulb in the flashlight would become completely ruined because of vibration due to the pressure of the battery on the end of the bulb. I found I had to leave the batteries out or the flashlight except when I used it. Before long, vibration chafed holes through my canvas where it came in contact with the cross bar on the handlebars. The bolts holding the box over the rear fender would fatigue and break. I had to replace them quite often.

I normally used the front wheel brake only, except for sudden stops when I would use both front and rear wheel brakes. The front wheel brake was activated by a lever on the handlebars. Going through Chicago a knob on the end of the front wheel brake cable gave way so that I no longer had a front wheel brake. I didn't get this repaired until I got to Los Angeles. The timer was driven from a gear in the generator. I was worried that it might need lubrication. I greased the timer shaft by unscrewing the grease fitting, putting grease in the hole and screwing the fitting in again. I did this several times until I was satisfied the timer shaft was well greased. I repeated this from time to time during the trip.

Traveling across Iowa I saw many immense corn fields. One time after dark I was looking for a place to put my bedroll. I backed my motorcycle between two rows of corn and managed to get rolled up in my bedroll. Next morning I stood up and saw nearby a house, barn, and a farmer standing with his back to me, putting cows in a pasture. I stooped down and tied the bedroll on the handlebars, pushed the motorcycle out to the road, put it in low gear, and activated the compression release. I pushed the motorcycle until the engine was turning over at a good clip and then deactivated the compression release. The engine started and I jumped on. The farmer must have wondered where the motorcycle came from.

Since there was no voltage regulator in the generator charging system, each night when I turned on the headlight I would stop and take the cover off of the generator and set the third brush ahead enough to just show charge on the ammeter with the headlight on and with the engine running at normal driving speed. In the morning with the headlight off, I would set the third brush back to the point where the ammeter just showed charge. This I did throughout the trip.

I traveled all the way across Nebraska on a dirt road. It was the dustiest road I have ever seen. Every time a car passed I would pull off the road, stop the engine, and wait for the dust to settle. The air intake to the carburetor did not

have an air filter and I was worried that the abrasive dust would wear my engine out before I completed my trip.

I came into Wyoming at Lusk and went through Casper and Thermopolis. At Thermopolis I saw the largest hot mineral spring in the world. From there I went through Worland, Basin, and Cody. I saw Hell's Half Acre where I am told the Indians ran buffalo off the top of a cliff to kill them.

One morning I had to wait in a line of cars for the Forest Rangers to open the gates to let people into Yellowstone Park. I saw many sights in Yellowstone including hot springs and Old Faithful. Forest Rangers had put planks across sections of trees for people to sit on while they watched Old Faithful. I estimate there must have been about eighteen people in our group. Only dirt roads were in the park at that time. I was planning to leave the park the next day and as I was driving down a road late in the afternoon I saw a mother bear standing beside the road. Beside her were two cubs. When the cubs saw me on the motorcycle one of them ran into the woods and the other one started to climb a tree. The mother bear watched me go by. Soon I came to a pine forest with lots of pine needles on the ground, I drove out into the forest a short distance and rolled up in my bedroll. Shortly after that it got so dark in the forest that all I could see was black. Then I began to hear snapping noises like some big animal walking on sticks and twigs. I decided I wasn't going to get much sleep there so I tied the bedroll on the motorcycle and drove some distance until I came to the ranger station at the south exit of the park. I pulled in beside the ranger station and rolled up in my bedroll. It was quite chilly that night and when the sun came up the next morning it felt so nice and warm I stayed there a considerable length of time getting thawed out.

I continued south along the east edge of Grand Teton National Park. I went over the Continental Divide on a dirt road. In order to get over the Divide, even with the engine running with wide open throttle and in low gear, I had to get off the motorcycle and push. As long as I

would push, the engine would keep running, but when I got tired it would stall. We eventually made it to the top. Actually I made better progress than several cars I passed on the way that were stopped with steam coming from under their hoods. A non-supercharged gasoline engine loses about one-third of its horsepower at 10,000 feet above sea level. I could tell the difference in power when I got down near sea level again. Coming down the other side of the Divide a man that was working with a road crew yelled to tell me my brake was burning. I stopped and let it cool.

In Idaho I passed through Pocatello on my way south. In Utah I came into Logan then went south to Ogden. It was raining quite hard when I arrived in Ogden. In 1935 I believe motels hadn't been invented. Overnight cabins preceded them. I went to the house where they rented the overnight cabins and asked the person if he had a place I could stay for fifty cents. He let me have a cabin for fifty cents. 1935 was a depression year. Besides who would want to leave a young fellow out in the rain all night? The next day I drove to Salt Lake City and went for a swim in the Great Salt Lake. I can remember floating around like a cork. The swimming beach was some distance from Salt Lake City. On my way back to the city I ran over a nail and got a flat tire on the rear wheel. I took the wheel off and took the tube out of the tire. I discovered the tube had several punctures. As I was proceeding to patch the tube I discovered that my tube of patching cement had chafed through due to vibration and the liquid had run out and dried.





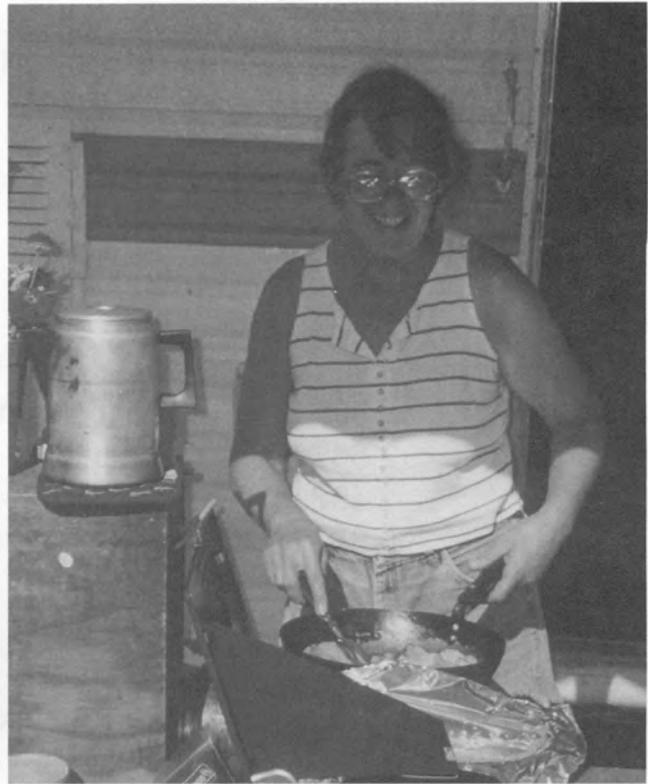


## YANKEE CHAPTER

Autumn Meet  
Sturbridge, MA  
September 8-9, 2001



S. Gallo Photo



C. Gallo Photo

Barbara Salisbury provided coffee and breakfast to the early risers on Sunday morning.

Jessie Aikman runs her 1955 Harley-Davidson ST 165 through its paces while chasing down the ball during a game of motorcycle polo.



S. Gallo Photo

Jessie Aikman on her ST 165, Charlie Gallo on his 1929 Harley-Davidson JD and Russell "Weasel" Luther on his 1967 BMW R60/2 try their feet at an impromptu game of motorcycle polo on Sunday morning.

Mitch Epstein was the proud winner of the Giles J. Adams Memorial Award for 2001. His 1923 Harley-Davidson J Model putted around the grounds flawlessly. Mitch also won this award in 1996.



*C. Gallo Photo*



*S. Gallo Photo*

Jack Kowal brought his 1949 Servi-Cycle to Sturbridge and garnered a Best Restored II trophy. With its sheepskin covered seat it looks like it would be a cushy ride.

*S. Gallo Photo*

Will Paley brought his 1906 Griffon to Sturbridge on Sunday morning. Unfortunately he arrived after the judging had been completed. He still delighted in answering the many questions asked about this unusual machine.





# YANKEE CHAPTER AUTUMN MEET STURBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS SEPTEMBER 8 & 9, 2001



*C. Gallo Photo*

## Awards List

Giles J. Adams Memorial Award	Mitch Epstein	1923 Harley-Davidson J Model
Longest Distance Ridden	Ed Morinho	1964 Harley-Davidson FLH - 72 miles
Most Unique	David DeChambeau	1941 Indian 841
Best Foreign	Russell Luther	1967 BMW R60/2
Best Sidecar	Tim Gottier	1946 Harley-Davidson FL
Most Ridden (at meets)	Don Salisbury	1948 Cushman
Best Restored I	Mitch Epstein	1923 Harley-Davidson J Model
Best Restored II	Jack Kowal	1949 Servi-Cycle
Best Unrestored	Jessie Aikman	1955 Harley-Davidson ST 165



**Yankee Chapter  
Christmas Party**

**Sunday**

**December 2, 2001**

**12 Noon**

This will be our usual  
**POT LUCK**  
affair, so bring your specialty.

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS HALL**

**ROUTE 12, NORTH OXFORD, MASS.**

**EASY TO GET TO:**

**FROM CONNECTICUT:**

Follow I-395 North. Six miles north of the Massachusetts border, take exit 4B, "Sutton Ave., Oxford". Follow about 1 mile. At first traffic light, turn right on Main St. (Route 12 North). Follow 3.5 miles to Knights of Columbus Hall on right (about one-half mile past the junction with Route 56).

**FROM OTHER DIRECTIONS:**

Exit Massachusetts Turnpike at Auburn, MA (Exit #10) and follow Route 12 South for about three miles. When you pass Wal-Mart (left side), Knights of Columbus Hall is a few hundred feet on the left.

**PARK AT REAR OF BUILDING AND ENTER THE REAR DOOR .**

**Anyone Lost ?????? Call (508) 987-8795 \* Business Meeting at noon, dinner following.**



**YANKEE CHAPTER**

Charles Gallo

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