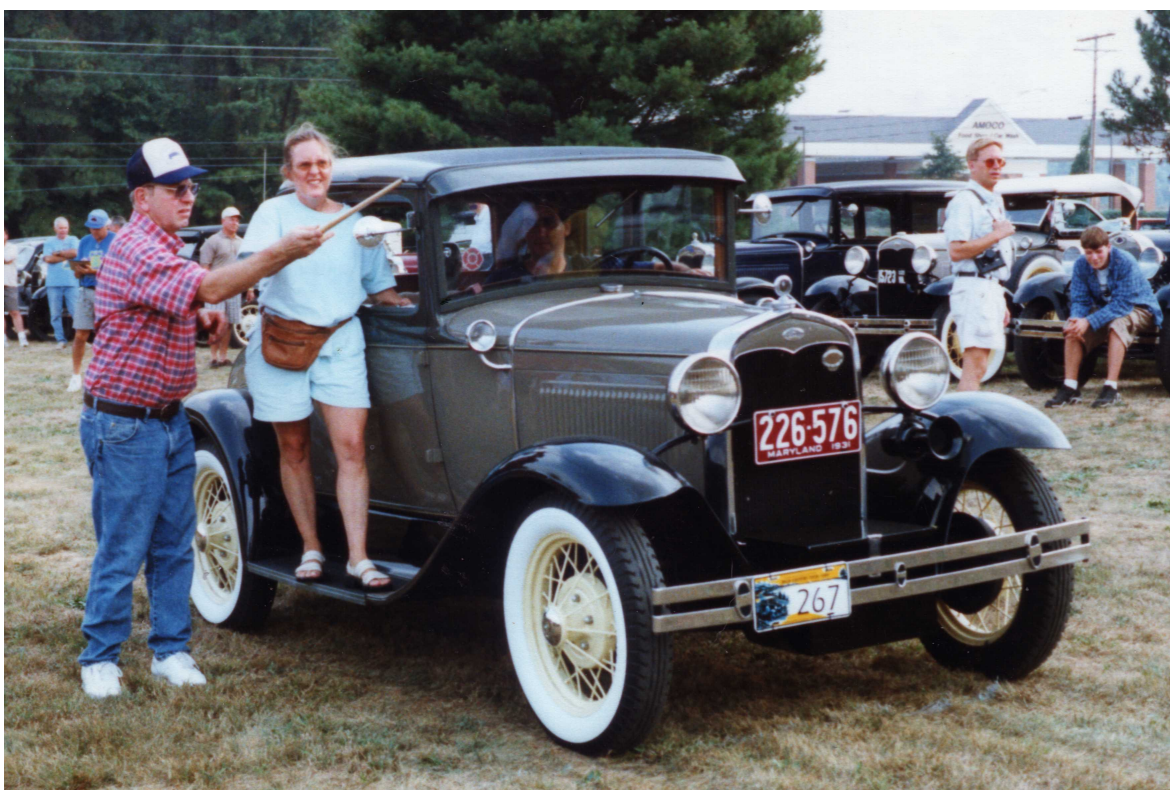


The Ford Script

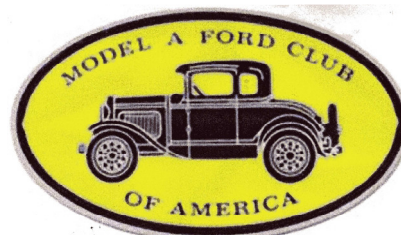
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April 2012

No. 4



George Merkel running the car games during a bygone Pig Pickin' at the Eisenman farm



Dedicated to the restoration and preservation of Model A Fords

The Ford Script

Official publication of:
George Washington Chapter, Inc.
of the Model A Ford Club of America
and the Mount Vernon Region
of the Model A Restorers Club
3903 Old Lee Highway
Fairfax, VA 22030

Chapter meetings are held on the third Wednesday of every month at the American Legion Hall, 1355 Balls Hill Road, McLean, Virginia. Social meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. and the business meeting starts at 7:45. Members and guests are invited and encouraged to drive their antique cars to the meetings.

Chapter members are encouraged to belong to both MAFCA and MARC national clubs. The chapter Web page on the Internet may be accessed by:

www.gwcmodela.org
Web Master: Tom Frazier

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National Liaison	Howard Minners	301-530-1441	minndax@aol.com
Repair Advisor	Tom Terko	301-949-7329	tterko@verizon.net

Copy for THE FORD SCRIPT should be e-mailed to the Editor to arrive by the Sunday prior to the first Wednesday of the month to: billhsims@gmail.com

Next Script deadline: Sunday, May 6th

FROM THE QUAIL'S PERSPECTIVE



Spring has arrived with its warmer temperatures and longer days giving us many chances to resume driving our Model As. Remember to start your driving season by changing the oil, checking fluids, lubricating and making adjustments as needed.

April brings the beginning of club activities with Small Parts Day at Janet Merkel's on April 28 and Cherry Blossom Parade on April 14. Plan to repair carburetors, distributors, water pumps and other small parts at Small Parts Day with many of the needed tools available and expertise and assistance of club members. Look for further details in this newsletter.

Reminder: inform all eligible family candidates the GWC and Peyton Randolph scholarships are on the GWC website and are due April 27.

I am sad to report that another member of our Club, Fred Klein, died recently. Fred was an integral part of the Sully team for many years working the front gate and trailer parking.

Wishing you happy and safe times driving your Model A,

Charlene Beckner, President

FROM THE EDITOR

Last Saturday, I was in a Muslim wedding out in Manassas with my Model A. But first I had to deal with a dead battery, compliments of a brake pedal that didn't return all the way, thus leaving my brake light on for 4 days. I won't even go into the adventure I had that morning trying to find a replacement. Suffice it to say that after trying my two main sources of 6-volt batteries, who no longer stocked them, a random stop at Auto Zone saved the day and revealed a new source.

The wedding itself was an education in another culture. The groom, a high school buddy of my son, Beau's, rode in on a horse and rode away, with his bride, in my town sedan. In between, Alice and I dealt with certain time issues—4 times now we have arrived precisely on time for a Muslim ceremony, and 4 times we've had to sit around for close to 2 hours waiting for everyone else to arrive and the ceremony to begin. It's the quintessential definition of insanity—doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result. We are now certifiable.

The ceremony itself was a lot like other religions—bride and groom recite lines from the holy book and the cleric pronounces them man and wife. Then we all go in for a great feast and dancing. Conversations with other parents of my son's friends centered on their one major worry—that their children won't marry within their religion, which is less likely in our society.

Afterwards, the "kids," most of whom are now 30, took to the dance floor to dance the night away. It was after awhile that I realized that the dance floor was filled with Muslims, Hindus, Christians and Jews, all dancing together and unconcerned about the religion of the others. And I thought—only in America.

FROM THE SMOKE-FREE ROOM



President Charlene Beckner opened the meeting at 7:00 PM at Red, Hot & Blue in Fairfax City. Other board members present were Howard Minners, Gil Beckner, Bill Worsham, Bill Sims, Doug Tomb, Greg Shepherd, Suzan O'Neale, Tom Frazier, Benny Leonard and Chuck Kunstbeck. Also present was Jim O'Neale.

Reading of the February 2012 Board Meeting Minutes was dispensed with and approved as published in *The Script*.

President Charlene Beckner has received a request to give a club member a lifetime membership award. A motion was made and seconded to approve the nomination. The vote was unanimous.

Vice President and Program Chair Doug Tomb provided information on upcoming club programs. April's program will be a round robin repair session. May's meeting will concentrate on judging, June features Reed Martin on small model engines and July will be a swap meet/flea market.

Treasurer Gil Beckner provided the board with the treasurer's report as of March 28, 2012.

National Liaison Howard Minners provided an update on MAFFI and the proposed ground breaking of The Model "A" Ford Museum. Howard also reviewed upcoming MARC and MAFCA events.

Annual Meet Chairman Bill Worsham reported that the club needs a front gate chairman and help is also needed to assist George Smolenyak with judging. The food vendor contract has been mailed. Brochures for Sully have been mailed to last years participants. The blue grass band from last year has signed up again.

Membership Chair Greg Shepherd is in the process of updating the roster and will be sending it to print after March 30th. Greg also has club patches, big and small for sale.

Editor Bill Sims reminded the Board that the deadline for articles in the newsletter is Sunday, April 1st.

Web Master Tom Frazier has updated several items on the club's website and will post the Sully brochure this week.

Youth Development Chair Suzan O'Neale said that she has received one application so far for the Peyton Randolph scholarship. Suzan also reviewed the scholarship application forms.

Tool Chairman Benny Leonard said that lots of tools are out for loan. Benny submitted a drawing that his grandson has produced that he would like printed on Tee shirts and given to the youth who attend Sully this year. Benny is also working on another handout.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM.
April meeting will be at the Fairfax City Library.
Respectfully submitted: Chuck Kunstbeck, Secretary

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON CHAPTER 25 YEARS AGO

Spring had sprung and the club was geared up with an enticing array of activities for members. First, Millard Springer would be hosting a "Distributor Day" in his garage in Great Falls. Well planned, it would facilitate the complete rebuilding of one's unit. Millard said that Walt Bratton would even be there with "Walt Packs" for those needing parts.



Next in the line-up was a planned caravan to the Winchester Apple Blossom Show, with departure from the Yorktown shopping center at 7:30 on the show date. Then, in rapid fire, only a week later, was the Chesapeake Beach Railway Museum Antique Auto Show. What an event—plaques, free museum admission, trolley rides, a band, and if you got there by 11:30 AM you would get a free luncheon, all included in the \$3.00 registration fee! Still more in the planning for later in May.

Just back from the MARC Membership Meet, Howard Minners gave an update on future national meets, telling us that the prospect of another World Meet was being hashed over. He said that the revised Judging Standards were reported to be well along. John Kandl was putting out a call for members to pitch in to man the repair tent at the National Meet coming up at Virginia Beach in June. 120 had already registered for it.

The "In the Marketplace" swap column of the Script was beginning to look like a page out of Hemmings Motor News. Only thing is, a pair of vintage coke machines crept in. No one complained. One also found ads for garage space needed, a coupe wanted, a water neck, and someone even sought a Jim Beam pickup decanter. You had your pick of all these cars; a Toyota, a Datsun, A Falcon, a Model A coupe (did it sell to the person seeking one?) and not just one, but three AA trucks. Well, 2 1/2--one didn't have a cab.

Dave Henderson

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SIGN UP FOR SULLY!

Fellow members. We are now in the final countdown for our Sully car show and still need help in all areas. With the passing of Front Gate chairman, Fred Klein, we now have a big pair of shoes to fill. For this show to be success we need the help of each and every member. Please sign up at the next meeting or call a committee chairman. Those who help at Sully receive four gate passes for their family and friends or a free car registration or discount on a flea market space. Its going to take a team effort. Let's all plan to help.

Bill Worsham
Meet Chairman

THE STEERING COMMITTEE – 2012 SULLY MEET


ANNUAL MEET CHAIRMAN	Bill Worsham	(703) 250-5474	billworsham@aol.com
SHOW CAR REGISTRATION	Bill Benedict	(703) 430-2441	arolabenedict@aol.com
FLEA MARKET			
(Vendor liaison)	Karen Bush	(703) 757-1884	klfbush@hotmail.com
(Field set up)	Benny Leonard	(703) 278-2994	Ben5@cox.net
CAR CORRAL	Andy Jaeger	(703) 490-4846	elanjaeger@aol.com
CONCESSION/SNOW CONE	Greg Shepherd	(703) 476-6496	shepman@gmail.com
OLD CAR PARKING	Tom Terko	(301) 949-7329	tterko@verizon.net
JUDGING CHAIRMAN			
(Chief Judge)	George Smolenyak	(703) 969-1715	gsmolenyak@aol.com
(Judges liaison)	OPEN		
TROPHIES	Gil Beckner	(703-971-3795)	gbeckner@verizon.net
PUBLICITY	CHAIRMAN NEEDED		
SPECIAL DISPLAYS	Benny Leonard	(703) 278-2994	ben5@cox.net
INFORMATION BOOTH	Dan/Donna Lyon	(301) 330-5564	maneline@comcast.net
FRONT GATE	CHAIRMAN NEEDED		
HELP WHERE NEEDED	Woody Williams	(703) 858-1192	vamodela@verizon.net

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

No new members for the month. But we did very well with everyone paying their dues so it's time to get the roster printed. Look for that in the coming months. Thanks
Greg Shepherd

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REMEMBER WHEN GAS WAS 18 CENTS A GALLON?

I do! I was a sophomore in high school and I could fill up the tank on my Model A for less than \$2. In fact, if you bought 8 or more gallons at one time, you could get a free set of drinking glasses. Also, there were frequent “gas wars” between competing gasoline stations that sometimes made gasoline even cheaper.

As good as this sounds, especially now when gasoline is averaging over \$3.75 per gallon, it was not easy for a high school kid in 1952 to come up with gas money. In my case, my friends and I picked up beer and soda bottles and took them to the store for a cash refund. The typical refund was one or two cents per bottle, so I had to have 50—100 bottles to buy a tank of gasoline.

I knew where the good parking places were where people would go to watch the “submarine races.” Of course, no one would want to get caught with empty bottles in their car, so they would throw them out the car window on Friday or Saturday night and they would be waiting there for me in the morning.

My parents also had some property in the country where I could go to pick salad and other greenery to sell to local florist shops for floral decorations. The next year I got a paper route, which helped. Then I went to work at a Dairy Queen and later became a “Watkins Man” selling Watkins products door to door and also went to work as a shoe salesman at the J.C. Penney Company. Even with three part-time jobs, it was still a stretch to buy a tank of gasoline.

I also did almost all of my own mechanical work on my Model A, both as a matter of necessity and because I liked fixing things.

My purpose in telling you all of this is that while gas was incredibly cheap then by today’s standards, it was still not easy for a high school kid to buy a tank of gas.

Mike Brownell

SUNSHINE REPORT

If you or someone you know wants to be mentioned, please drop me a line or another club officer. We need to stay in touch with and support our members when they need it and our Sunshine Report gets the word out. You can contact me at Shepman@gmail.com. Thanks.
Greg Shepherd

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SMALL PARTS REPAIR DAY, SATURDAY, APRIL 28TH

No matter how well your Model A runs, it's always good to have a good working spare carburetor, distributor, water pump and other small parts. Small Parts Day is where club members bring small parts that are in need of repair. At the garage, many of the tools and member's expertise are available to restore the part to like-new condition.

This year, Small Parts Day will be held at the home of George and Janet Merkel, 9306 Merkel Farms Road, Bowie, MD from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 28th. Members should bring any parts that will be needed to repair their item. Be sure to get those ordered ahead of time so as to have them on the 28th. Equipment will be on hand to do final cleaning and paint parts, as well as tools to aid in mechanical restoration tasks. The cleaner the parts are when they arrive, the faster the rebuilding effort will be. Sand blasting is available for those that need it. Craig Sawyer from Southern Maryland Model A Club will be at the Merckels' to assist with carburetor work and will flow test the jets. Even if you don't plan to rebuild a part, anyone is welcome to come, watch and learn.

Coffee and donuts will be provided by the club in the morning and lunch will also be served. If possible, please let Janet know if you plan to attend by email: gmjm64@verizon.net or phone 301-262-6587 so she has an approximate count for food. Even if you find out at the last minute you can attend but didn't sign up, it's ok. Please still come.

Directions:

From Route 495, Woodrow Wilson Bridge:

Exit off Beltway onto Route 50 East. From Route 50, exit onto Route 197 North. Stay on Rt. 197, crossing over Route 450. At Old Chapel Road, turn right. There is a Sunoco Gas Station where you will turn. Turn left onto Race Track Road. Go past the race track and head up the hill.

***Turn right into Patuxent Riding subdivision. At the stop sign, turn right onto Arabian Lane. Stay on this road. This road will become a gravel road, which is now Merkel Farm Road. Their house is the first house on the left. You'll see the garages.

From Route 495, American Legion Bridge:

Stay on Route 495 until you get to the Balt/Wash Pkwy. Take the Baltimore exit onto the Parkway. Go several miles and take the Powder Mill Rd exit. Turn right onto Powder Mill Rd. Stay on this until it ends at Rt. 197. Turn right onto Rt. 197. After passing Bowie State University, and at the next light, turn left onto Race Track Rd. At the fork, bear to the right (there's a child care center at the fork). Turn left into Patuxent Riding subdivision. Follow direction from above marked with ***.

If you get lost, call Janet on her cell phone, 301-325-7020,

COMING EVENTS

April 8 Happy Easter!

April 14 Cherry Blossom Parade for those registered to go

April 14 St. Patrick's Episcopal Church in Falls Church is hosting a car show and car trunk sale from 9:00a.m. to noon. Cash prizes will be awarded. GWC members and their cars are invited to attend. For more information, contact Mr. Chris Nicholson at 703-591-1811.

April 18 Monthly GWC general meeting

April 21 The Arlington Kiwanis Club will have its second annual pancake breakfast and antique auto show. This year it will be held at Clarendon United Methodist Church at 6th and N. Irving St. in Arlington. The Nation's Capital Model T Club will have its take-apart car. All members of the Model T and the Model A clubs are asked to bring their cars to the church by 8:00 that morning. There will be trophies awarded for Members' Choice, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places at 11:00 and breakfast will end at noon.

May 11-12 Winchester AACA Apple Blossom Show at Jim Barnett Park, Winchester, VA. For info, contact GWC club member Wayne Parker at shipleyparker1@aol.com or Meet Chairman Duane Carlett at 540-533-7376. Web site is www.sraaca.com.

May 19 City of Fairfax Antique Car Show, hosted by the Fairfax Early V-8 Club. No restrictions on car or truck makes, types, or years -- antiques, modifieds, hot rods, works-in-progress, all are welcome. Asphalt parking with sidewalks, lots of shade. Live bluegrass band, the reassembly of a Model-T Ford in 15 minutes, and on-grounds food vendors. Indoor rest rooms. Show hours are 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Lots of trophies awarded. Location is at the Fairfax City Hall, just off Rt. 123 in Fairfax City on Armstrong Street (across Rt. 123 from the Red Hot and Blue). For information, contact Jim McDaniel at jim.mcd@cox.net

CLASSIFIED ADS

For Sale

1929 Ford Model A 2-Door Sedan, Green/Black, Vin/Motor No. A1773065. \$3,000 or Best Offer. All original, and very restorable. Mileage on Odometer shows 3362. The tires have a lot of tread left on them and are in very good shape. This vehicle has been kept in a building for some time. It does have some rust but mostly surface. All windows are complete and have no cracks, lights front and rear are complete and the body has no body damage. The motor is complete, but we have not had it started. The interior is all there, seats, etc...but will have to be completely redone. If you have any questions, please call me at the information below.
Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA
Bryan K. Mitchell – Purchasing Analyst
Office: 434-592-4828
Cell: 434-238-4770

A MESSAGE FROM JANET

My family and I want to thank you for your love and support during this sad time. The cards, flowers, phone calls, food and memorial contributions were so appreciated. George loved the old cars and enjoyed each of you and the club activities. George was a giving man and because he was an organ donor, his corneas were used so that two previously blind people can now see. George will be missed, but we'll cherish the memories we have of him.

Love,
Janet Merkel and Family

GEORGE "SUNNY SIDE OF THE STREET" MERKEL

Grab your coat and get your hat
Leave your worries on the doorstep
Life can be so sweet
On the sunny side of the street¹

George lived on the sunny side of the street, and he loved his music – make that his *country* music. Rumor has it he and Janet used to listen to country music in the back seat of his 1950 Mercury many years ago. Jump to the recent past and you see George doing something Janet said he just never did: dancing with her to "Waltz Across Texas" performed by Lisa Meadows last September at Skyland.



I remember watching them dance their love affair. George and the love of his life dancing to a favorite song; Janet delighted, he just a bit uncomfortable, but happy to be pleasing his bride.

I met George in 1996 when I joined the club. He was the snacks man and the "50-50" guy at every club meeting I attended until Janet and he handed those duties off in January, 2011. I discovered in these past 16 years that George was much more. He was a generous helper and a rescuer; a painter by profession, and a gentle prankster by the grace of the Good Lord.

>>>>>

GEORGE “SUNNY SIDE OF THE STREET” MERKEL (Cont.)

The first time I really experienced his helping hand was in 2003 on our way to the MARC national meet in Dearborn. As our convoy headed out the second day, our coupe started sputtering and finally stalled out while climbing the mountains of West Virginia. George and Janet were behind us and pulled over. George grabbed his roll of tools, opened our hood and loosened the gas line; a drop fell out. “You’re not gettin’ any gas... loosen your gas cap.” I tilted the windscreen up high and loosened the cap; immediately I heard a whoosh as gas began to flow. George closed the fuel shut off valve and reattached the gas line. “The vent in your gas cap must be plugged... keep loosening the cap. You’ll be fine until we get some place where we can fix it.” Diagnosis done, problem resolved and advice given, he rolled up his tools and got back in his car. With his cap-loosening suggestion, Kathie and I continued on with the caravan until our lunch stop where George helped me work a straightened paperclip through the gas vent on my cap. That was George; finish the job... clean it up... move on.

George was not only the rescuer, he was the rescued. As Bill recounted in last month’s “From the Editor” column, George nearly died a decade ago while rushing to the aid of victims of an automobile accident. Only God could have interceded with a cardiac care nurse and a defibrillator at that exact place and that exact moment in time to save George and give him the “golden years” he so richly earned.

George spent some of his retirement time making movies. George and his son, George Junior, drove cars in “My One and Only,” starring Renee Zellweger and Kevin Bacon, which was released in 2009. George and George Junior again drove cars in the Clint Eastwood- directed “J. Edgar” in 2011. Thinking back to the old 1980s game “Six degrees of Kevin Bacon,” George just may be the unifying factor between Clint and Renee. After all, in 2003, Clint directed Kevin Bacon in “Mystic River.”

George showed us how to live the good life: he worked hard for his God, his family, and his church. As a painter, he got to work on some of the most iconic buildings not only in America, but in the world: the White House; the Library of Congress; the National Archives. As a husband and father, he helped raise three fine sons, who have taken his and Janet’s world view with them into the world: praise God; support church; love your family.

But George was also a gentle prankster blessed with the timing of a late-night TV talk show host. George was the guy you could expect to bring the giant plastic bug into restaurants; put fake old men into beds for the entertainment of his friends’ wives; surprise other wives at the Pokino table with yet another mask; get caught outdoors in his Christmas BVDs; and don a fake hair visor on club outings.

Just as George was always there to help us with our cars, our projects, our picnics, our tours and car shows, God was there for George when he needed him the most. George lived his life helping, amusing and sharing the good that God put in us all. When George’s time finally came, God granted him a final breath to tell his bride “I love you.”

>>>>>

GEORGE “SUNNY SIDE OF THE STREET” MERKEL (Cont.)



Sharon Leonard with “Z.Z. Top”



Spooked at the Pokino Table



Father Christmas in his B.V.D.s



Reverend Grab-a-Dollar at Skyland

GEORGE "SUNNY SIDE OF THE STREET" MERKEL (Cont.)

Now I'm not afraid
I'm crossing over and walking in clovers
... There will be gold dust at my feet
On the sunny --
sunny side of the street¹

Goodbye George. We miss you.

Jim Gray

1. Lyrics from "On The Sunny Side of the Street" by Dorothy Fields, 1930
Listen to a 3 ½ minute clip of "On The Sunny Side of the Street" performed by Louis Armstrong
at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nn3soYbSpS4&feature=related>

Photos by Ellen Jaeger, Janet Merkel and Jim Gray

OTHER SHOTS OF GEORGE AT PLAY



JOHN SHEPHERD MADE A DIFFERENCE

John Shepherd passed away February 20, 2012, at 92. Many of us today may not have known John very well, if at all; but each of us has benefited by his many contributions to the Model A hobby.

When I became Membership Chairman in 2001, I inherited a list of members who had let their memberships lapse; John Shepherd was on that list. He'd been a long-time active member along with his wife, Milly. He served on our Board of Directors (BOD) in the 1970s and 80s; and been our Club Car Chairman; but when I first called, he said he wasn't interested.

In January, 2002, he finally agreed to rejoin. Maybe it was because I told him I was a retired Air Force Colonel after he told me he was a retired Navy Captain. He'd been the Navy Program Manager on the Tactical Fighter Experimental (TFX) / F-111 joint-service aircraft development program - a highly contentious McNamara-driven initiative in the early 60s. It seemed John must have been a stickler for detail; he was.

A 1943 Annapolis graduate who served in Naval Aviation in WWII and Korea, I learned from club stories – verified by John - that he forced his maintenance crew on one of his carrier cruises to throw all their adjustable wrenches overboard; there was a correct wrench for each maintenance task, none other was acceptable. Rear Admiral Daniel. K. Weitzenfeld, former Vice Commander of the Naval Air Systems Command, wrote that in 1954, (then) Lieutenant Commander Shepherd was one of three hand-picked operations and engineering experts that directed installation of the first steam catapults in a US Navy carrier, the USS Hancock. Steam brought much greater power and speed - both necessary for jet aircraft - than available from the old hydraulic catapults. In fact, without steam catapults, according to Admiral Weitzenfeld, there'd literally be no Naval Aviation today; John Shepherd made a difference.

John brought this pursuit of improvement and perfection to the Model A hobby. He was a national judge; a member of the MARC BOD; and Technical Editor of "The Restorer" magazine. He participated in the initial organization of what has become the joint MARC/MAFCA judging standards, and pushed hard to establish a tax-exempt national research organization before there was a MAFFI.

The engineering expertise honed in his Navy career was evident in two precise articles John wrote: "Alignment of the Flywheel Housing" and "A simplified method for using stroboscopic timing lights on Model A ignition systems," both of which are still part of MAFCA's "How to Restore Your Model A" book series (Volumes 4 & 6 respectively).

John was passionate about his timing method, and gave me one of the handouts from the seminars he'd given on the topic. "It'll give your Model A much greater power and speed" he said.

John was never convinced that you could use a paper match or a dime to set gaps on anything on the Model A, or even that the "simple" timing system (with the indented timing gear system of locating Top Dead Center on cylinder #1) was accurate enough for timing an A engine. John felt there was a more precise way – the right way - and often held that to be the only way. But John Shepherd's contributions to our club and to our hobby were significant, and many affect us to this day. In the Model A hobby, as in the Navy, John Shepherd made a difference.

Fair winds and following seas, my friend.

Jim Gray

FREDERICK "Fred" C. KLEIN
September 29, 1940 ~ March 21, 2012

Long time member Fred Klein passed away March 21, 2012 after a brief illness. Fred was our Front Gate chairman at Sully for many years. He was in charge of bringing the cars and trailers to the registration gate and always did an excellent job. In private life, Fred was an entrepreneur, businessman and real estate investor. He also owned an interest in several auto salvage yards.

His generosity of spirit was exemplified in his works with various charities and his big-heartedness was renowned among his family and friends. Our condolences go out to his wife Allison and family.

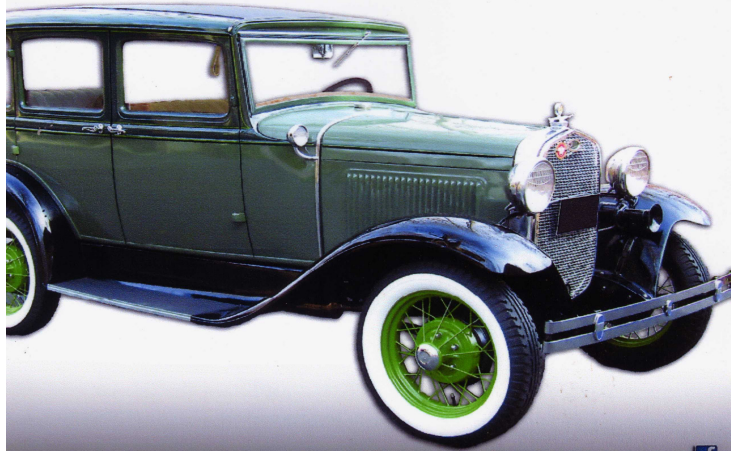
Bill Worsham



Fred opening his "gift" at the December 2011 Brown Bag event.



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