

The Ford Script



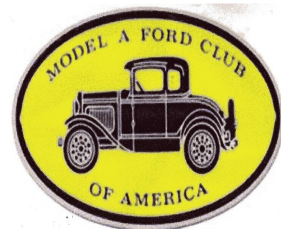
Vol. XLI

May 2020

No. 5



Blaze, like the Phoenix, is rising from the ashes (thanks to Donnie Temple)



Dedicated to the restoration and preservation of Model A Fords for over 55 years

The Ford Script



Official publication of:
George Washington Chapter, Inc.
of the Model A Ford Club of America
and the George Washington Region
of the Model A Restorers Club
GWC Model A Club
Post Office Box 971
McLean, VA 22101

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 and the Model A Ford Museum (MAFFI). The chapter Web page on the Internet may be accessed by:

www.gwcmodela.org
Web Master: Greg Shepherd

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Copy for THE FORD SCRIPT should be e-mailed to the Editor at: billhsims@gmail.com

Next deadline: Monday, June 1st

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER



Have you been in your own garage lately? How is that Model A Ford doing? By now, it should be almost re-restored!

I realize that everyone is staying home these days, and this has had a big impact on our antique car hobby, and the GWC Club activities, or lack thereof.

The GWC Board will hold the April Board Meeting this Wednesday via telephone conference call. We tried to do a video conference last Wednesday, but not everyone's PC has a built-in camera. Who would have thought?

Number One on the agenda is: What will the Club do for the rest of this Non-Sully Car Show year? Even more important: When will we be able to do it?

The first question, we can answer easily, since we have lots of ideas. The second, may be a bit harder, since no one knows. But, the planning needs to start Now!

In the meantime, we have been asking members to send in a video of their garage, pictures of your car, with a detailed history of it, and other virtual Model A experiences that we can share with the membership.

If you have some time (who doesn't), and an iPhone, just go out to your garage and start taking pictures, or even a video. If you have questions on how to do it, take a look at James's video of his garage. It was sent as an email to the membership.

If you still have questions, contact James or Greg, who can help you send your video in for sharing with others.

We have also had a request from the Carol McDonald, Site Manager at the Sully Historic Site, to have a Virtual Car Show, in place of our Sully Show.

She asked if GWC members could send pictures of their cars, with a short history of the car, directly to her. She requested that pictures be sent by May 29th.

If we can't have the real thing, pictures of our cars are a good second option. Pictures of your Model A are Great, but other cars qualify too. Pictures of that Thunderbird, Corvette, MG TD, or whatever, will be welcome.

Again, if you have questions, contact Greg or myself, so we can get those pictures forwarded to Carol.

And finally, if you have ideas for Club activities for this summer, let us know. Send them to Greg or myself, and we will get the Board working on them, for when things open up again.

Help us make the most of the rest of the year. Send in your ideas. We are counting on you.

Stay Safe.

Doug

FROM THE EDITOR

What an exciting month! For starters, I went down to my local bank, put on a mask, went in, took out money, and left without any alarms going off or police showing up. It was so much fun, I think I'll do it again!

The big news was that Alice and I were gifted with our THIRD grandchild only 4 months after getting our second grandchild. And they're all boys (much to Alice's chagrin—she wanted at least ONE girl out of this bunch). This one, Massey (no idea where that name came from), was born on the 28th and weighed in at 9 lbs, 2 ozs. Judging from the photos we've been getting, his older brother has really taken to him. We got to go up to Baltimore and watch him while his parents were in the hospital. He's almost 2 and utterly exhausting. We had him for 4 days and he rarely slowed down. Our only relief was to walk him to a nearby empty parking lot and watch while he threw rocks into a large puddle.

Blaze is coming along down in North Carolina. It's not much to look at now (see this month's cover) but I'm certain it'll be ready for our next Sully show. Meanwhile, my current A is on the disabled list. Life goes on.

Bill Sims

REPORT FROM VIRUS-FREE LIVINGROOMS

Board Meeting April 29, 2020

Call to Order. The Board meeting was called to order at about 7:00 pm by President Doug Tomb, via teleconference, due to the prevailing pandemic.

Attendance. A quorum was present for the Board meeting to enable voting. The members who were present included, Milford Sprecher, Doug Tomb, John Dougherty, James Kolody, Benny Leonard, Paul Bjarnason, Luke Chaplin, Greg Shepherd, Bill Sims and Jerry Olexson. Note the position of VP Activities is vacant at this time.

Not Present. Bruce Metcalf

Board Meeting Agenda. – President Tomb started the Board meeting with his agenda.

Treasurer's Report: Paul Bjarnason reported that Club liquidity at \$38.3 k. Treasurer and the Board were confident that the cash reserve, with conservative management, is sufficient to support the Club expenditures. Some budget adjustments will be forthcoming when the matter comes before the Board at the May meeting for 2020 Budget approval.

Sully Status Report: John Dougherty provided an activity reporting now that the 47th Sully Car Show for 2020 has been cancelled by the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA). He reported on the minimal expenditures for 350 event pins costing \$588 and Show Car registration postage costing \$430. Fortunately, the pins can be used for next year's Sully Show. And, the Postal Service will provide a refund on the stamps less 10% for handling fee.

The Board was informed of the Sully FCPA Site Manager's desire to put a virtual car show on their website. This would entail our members sending to the Sully Chairman John Dougherty 1 photo and a description of the Model A or some other antique/classic vehicle. A description of the vehicle is not to exceed 70 words. May 29 is the cutoff date for any submissions. The information would be submitted to Sully FCPA, who will post it on their website.

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REPORT FROM VIRUS-FREE LIVINGROOMS (Cont.)

Membership Report: Greg Shepherd indicated the published a Club membership directory will be shortly mailed to the members. All renewals indicate the Club membership is at 157 family members.

Meeting Programs: Luke Chaplin indicated because of the current decision to suspend Club gatherings and meetings, there was little incentive to plan for programs. However, emphasis has turned to informative video projects to be made available to the membership. The consensus is to continue making and showing more video productions on Model A fabrications and projects underway or completed. Additional emphasis will be placed on the use of Club Library Repair Videos to be shown to membership.

Communication with the Board and membership is a priority during this unusual time and is seen as a most useful way of maintaining momentum in anticipation of events and activity opening up. Members are encouraged to share their ideas and thoughts and to encourage any line of communication. Along these lines the Board encouraged Doug and James to produce a video of Doug's work garage on May 5 and then share with the membership.

Tool Report: Benny Leonard reported on Bruce Metcalf's project to install a Mitchel overdrive in his touring car. It was emphasized that for anyone installing an overdrive, consideration ought to be given to enhance all the bearings in the rear end due to the added revolutions per minute and added wear on those parts as a result of the higher speed achieved. No doubt this is subject to pro and con discussions.

Youth Development: James Kolody discussed formation of a program, Grandma's Model A, to provide a knowledge foundation to have young folks better understand the Model A. This would include extensive video production of the various aspects of the hobby.

GWC Charitable Contributions for 2020: The Scholarship Award Program associated with the annual Sully Show has been suspended on account of the show cancellation by the FCPA.

The MAFFI contribution remains as a budget item for now and will be considered within the overall GWC budget. The GWC, one of the first chapters to support the MAFFI program, has contributed over a total of \$9,000. The MAFFI organization has achieved its goal of reaching a \$1 million endowment funding. The success of the growth of the fund now depends on the investment wisdom made by the MAFFI organization.

The contribution to AFRH is earmarked for consideration within the budget review.

The membership meeting for May has been cancelled in keeping with the Virginia health regulations.

The May Board meeting, which will be conducted via teleconference, is scheduled for May 27 at 7:00pm based on quorum availability.

Meeting concluded at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Gerard Olexson
Secretary

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON CHAPTER 25 YEARS AGO

With Sully fast approaching, the call was out to fill some spots still needing to be manned. Members were reminded the May 17th meeting would be the last one before the show and the final chance to sign up to help. Sully was our only fund raiser and the reward for a donation of at least two hours of time was a choice of 4 gate tickets or a free vehicle registration.



A name on the 1995 Sully steering committee line up stands out—Bill Benedict. He and spouse Carol have never retired from the huge task he performed annually, Carol deserves equal kudos of course.

Our chapter was especially fortunate to have popular WUSA Channel 9 Newscaster Bob Dalton as a member. He pulled some strings for us and arranged to publicize our show during a broadcast of the news on a late May evening. Members had an opportunity to show up at the station on the morning of the broadcast to be taped and shown with their cars, and possibly be interviewed. In any case, watching the Channel 9 broadcast that evening was a must.

President Jim Cartmill reported in on having attended the MARC Membership Meeting in Newburg, New York. Also attending were Joe and Alice Krafft, Jim and Ellie Scheidel, and Bill and Rickie Beardmore, all driving up in their A's. Joe Young, Millard Springer plus Howard and Gretchen Minners also attended. The two things that received the most attention in the Directors Meeting were the subject matter of the impact of environmental legislation and the attracting of youth to the hobby. Regarding the legislation, it was decided that two higher-ups in the National Club would confer with AACA officials to gather and return with their views. On the matter of attracting youth, MARC felt that the local regional level was where any program would succeed and emphasized their concern by encouraging regions to sponsor youth-oriented programs. Regions were asked to let the National Board know of their successes so they could be passed on to other regions.

A very promising program was set up for the May meeting by Program Chairman Millard Springer, who arranged for Bill Beardmore to present "Get Your Body In Shape." Your A's that is Bill would discuss evaluating what repairs were needed, describe a logical repair sequence, and demonstrate the best methods to follow. He would cover hammer, dolly and file work, installing patch panels, the proper use of Bondo, and selection and use of primer.

Editor Bill (Yup, the same Editor Bill) confessed to only having put 800 miles on his A (aka "Blaze") since the previous year. So, he explained he had begun a new driving season with a sortie out to the Asbury Methodist Home in Gaithersburg. With Daria and Andy Pogan, they met up with Bob Dalton and Frank Tuscano at the Toys 'R Us where in 20 minutes Andy had converted Frank's fading '29 Tudor into the best running car on the lot, "except Andy's."

In the Classifieds, Ed Simpson offered for sale a '57 T Bird and four Model A's, including a "30 Roadster described as "running gear restored, body work done, no rust outs."

Dave Henderson

MEMBERSHIP NEWS AND INFORMATION

The rosters are finished and on their way! We have around 160 members in the Club, so it might take a few days to get them all addressed, stamped and shipped. What color will this year's be?

Greg Shepherd

MAFFI NEWSLETTER MINUTE

What's new at the Museum, you might ask? Well, in spite of the mandatory closure due to Covid19, the Board of Trustees has been working hard behind the scenes in anticipation of the 10th Annual Model A Day, September 19, 2020. There have been new projects underway to make the Museum more enjoyable. We are hoping to have the Interactive Chassis up and running for Model A Day. A Vintage Post Card machine to go along with our Penny Machine will give you more ways to take home a souvenir of your day at the Museum. Recently some of our Trustees have been also working on a complete collection of Model A Jim Beam Bottles to have on display. Two new donations to the Museum are The America's Sweetheart (see article in The Restorer Mar/Apr 1998) and a Sears Tractor Conversion!

The response to the 2019 Model A Day pins and the 20 Millionth Model A pins has been great. If you didn't get your order in, contact Suzan O'Neale (oneale31@gmail.com). She will be able to let you know what is still available.

Make sure to get in your hotel reservations for Model A Day if you haven't done so. Our host hotel is the Four Points by Sheraton in Kalamazoo. Call them directly to get our Model A Day room rate (269)385-3922. DO NOT CALL THE SHERATON 800 NUMBER! There are other hotels in the vicinity as well if the Four Points is sold out and also RV and camping areas.

Thank you for your continued support of MAFFI through your membership and donations!

Marsha Quesnel, MAFFI Trustee

Clubcontact@maffi.org



QUARANTINE PROJECTS

There is a saying that if you want something done, give it to someone who is busy. I think the corollary of that is if you don't want something done, give it to someone who isn't busy. I feel I resemble the latter phrase.

I have been a casualty of the current virus-related downturn and lost my job at the end of last month. I have been looking for a new job, but have also had a lot of time on my hands. I have undertaken a number of house projects that have been on the to-do list for a long time. I stained and refinished an old door, varnished another one, restrung broken sash weight cords in five windows, painted my front and rear storm doors, my front steps and a bunch of other stuff. Car projects seem to have been neglected, although I did go through a collection of antique Maryland license plates and list them for sale with the various clubs, on Craigslist and eBay.

As I have completed a bunch of long-pending house projects, I have been working on my Model A Town Sedan while simultaneously tidying up my garage.

A while back I realized that the battery ground cable at the post connection was almost corroded through. I was pushing my luck on that one. I bought one of the original style ground straps instead of the braided connection you see these days and finally went about replacing it. The existing cable was attached to the top of the side frame rail rather than the crossmember, so I moved it to the original location. I also cleaned the battery hold-down and painted it and replaced the wire end for the trickle charger connection. No half-done aspects of this project.

My second project was to repair the wood back rail of the seat. I am not tiny, but I am not so big that I would think that I would break the seat back frame, but that is what I did a year or so ago. I have since repaired it twice by gluing and with screws only to have it break again. This time I screwed a metal reinforcing strap across the break in the wood and also glued the broken piece. I hope this will work.

The repair is far from pristine as the mohair upholstery on the seat had ripped, so I had to stitch that back together. It only looks marginally better, but I thought it was something I needed to do. New upholstery may be in order at some point. The reinforcing strap I used is visible under the fabric, unfortunately, but this is better than it being broken as it has been since last year.

My final project was finishing up a third brake light that I had made a few years ago. I bought a new Model A tail light and a bracket and attached it to a piece of wood that was designed to sit on top of the spare tire. I had done everything I needed to do except to run a ground wire so the light would actually work. I designed the light so it could be disconnected easily if I needed to use the spare tire.

Earlier I had replaced my carburetor with another I had redone at a small parts day. I have had some difficulties with the new one dying at stop lights, but it does start more easily than it did. More learning required to get it running perfectly, but at least I made some progress.

Milford Sprecher

GRAY AND FORD – MY WAY OR THE HIGHWAY

This is the second of a three-part series about the beginning of the Ford Motor Company and how it led to both the creation and demise of the Gray Motor Corporation.

To reiterate just a bit, Henry Ford liked to figure things out, to tinker and to go fast. All he needed was money, and Ford believed he needed to race to get the attention of the investors who could provide that money.

“Hiring a bicycle rider named Barney Oldfield as his driver, Ford entered “Old 999” – the most powerful American car built to date – in the widely -publicized Grosse Pointe race. Old “999” won, setting a new American record, and the crowd surged on the track to carry Oldfield on their shoulders – a new hero was born - and the engineering skill of Henry Ford was now something to be reckoned with on the infant automobile scene.” (*The American Ford*, pg. 22)

After Oldfield won the Manufacturers’ Challenge Cup in Grosse Pointe Michigan on October 25, 1902, in Ford’s 999, the time was right. “A week after the big race I formed the Ford Motor Company ... I was vice-president, designer, master mechanic, superintendent and business manager” (*The American Ford*, pg. 23)

In later years, Ford claimed he pursued speed because it was the only thing the public had an interest in. “When it was found that an automobile really could go and several makers started to put out cars, the immediate query was as to which would go fastest. It was a curious but natural development - that racing idea. I never thought anything of racing, but the public refused to consider the automobile in any light other than as a fast toy.” (*My Life and Work*, pg. 36)

Sometimes if you can’t find the money, it will find you; that’s why my approach to this history has been to follow the money. Ford’s racing exploits had re-awakened the interest of his old friend the “coal baron,” Alexander Malcomson; a risk taker and “disrupter” if you will, with an interest in the new world of automobiles... and drawn to the idea of getting into the automobile business as a moth is drawn to the flame. Ford and Malcomson had first met when inspecting a load of coal delivered by Malcomson’s coal wagon to the Edison Company when Ford was chief engineer.

Ford understood that Malcomson had a reputation as a notorious speculator, but one with potentially deep pockets, so he made sure they became reacquainted in May 1902. Ford sold him on the idea of building an inexpensive car for the masses – the same line he’d used in his two previous attempts to build a business. Malcomson was hooked – and they signed a memorandum of agreement in August 1902.

Ford brought a design for a production model, drawn by Harold Wills, to the table; Malcomson brought the money - \$3,000 - to start and supply the new venture and a pledge to provide the additional funding necessary to establish the company. This investment was a huge risk for Malcomson – if this enterprise failed, he could lose everything. To keep his other creditors (especially his uncle John S. Gray) from learning about the risk, he opened a bank account in the name of his chief clerk, a Canadian ex-pat (future Detroit Mayor and Michigan Senator) named James Couzens – a man so consumed with detail – and especially business detail - it could almost be considered a fault. But when working with Ford, who had almost no business sense (although he thought he did), Couzens’ exceptional adherence to detail would prove to be pivotal to Ford’s success over the ensuing 10 years. (*Drive!*, pgs. 147 – 150)

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GRAY AND FORD – MY WAY OR THE HIGHWAY (Cont.)

In November 1902, Ford and Malcomson converted their partnership into a corporation, “Ford & Malcomson,” to be capitalized at \$150,000 divided into 15,000 shares. Ford and Malcomson “... split 6,900 of those shares and paid \$3,500 for an additional 350, which left 7,750 shares to be sold to the public.” (*Drive!*, pg. 149)



Image from my collection. Words by Vincent Bryan, Music by Gus Edwards. Sheet music copyright 1905 by M. Witmark & Sons, N.Y.

Couzens was tasked with selling those additional shares; he found the resistance intractable. The problem was that the big money investors were gun shy of the automobile entrepreneurs promising riches and delivering red ink. That, and the fact that Ransom Eli Olds had beaten the nascent company to the punch in the production of a mass-produced affordable automobile with his curved dash Olds, “immortalized in the popular song “In My Merry Oldsmobile.” (*Drive!*, pg. 149)

And it was Olds from whom Ford would “borrow” another idea “he would later claim as his own.”

“Olds [took] a page from history. Just as Eli Terry found that by standardizing and increasing production, he could reduce the price of this clocks from \$25 to \$5, so Olds found he could sell a car for \$600 if he concentrated on a single model and made enough of them using efficient production methods to keep the cost down” (Kettering, *American Battle for Abundance*, pg. 51)

his curved dash wonder, and the Dodge Brothers (as they demanded they be called) agreed – on a handshake – to produce two thousand transmissions, to be mated to two thousand engines produced under contract by Henry Leland - to meet that demand.

From that start, “Ransom Olds revolutionized automaking. Remembering a visit to a musket factory where a gun was assembled by a series of workers, each performing a specific task, Olds decided to employ the same technique for automobiles. He set up an experimental production line soon after his factory reopened in 1901 [following a disastrous fire that destroyed his original factory building], and expanded it the following year. By 1903, the entire plant was devoted to pushing a single model through in numbers as great as the market would bear. By then, with Leland gone, Olds was once more producing his own motors. Raw materials, metal, wood, or fabric, would be delivered to the appropriate station to be machined, cut, trimmed, or shaped; finished components would be completed by degrees, tested, and then assembled until a finished car emerged at the other end of the factory.”

“A 1904 article in the Detroit Free Press described the Olds plant with words that might easily have applied to a Ford factory a dozen years afterward:

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GRAY AND FORD – MY WAY OR THE HIGHWAY (Cont.)

Rows upon rows of special machinery are humming and buzzing away, bewildering the onlooker with their number. A great expanse of floor space stretches away before the visitor, along which are arranged these ingenious devices, each with its own peculiar work to do. Some bore out cylinders... some finish the connecting rods and shafts ... every step in the process of turning out... a modern car is carried out by a group of these beautiful machines.” 12

(*Drive!*, pp 153 – 154)

The introduction of the Dodge brothers to automobile manufacturing figured right into Ford’s plans ... or more correctly, into James Couzens’ hands. Couzens had convinced Ford, Wills and Malcomson that they work into the automobile business by becoming an assembler of parts. Malcomson knew the Dodge brothers, and he took Couzens with him to discuss a deal for purchasing the entire undercarriage of a planned car. After Horace Dodge reviewed the plans ... and made substantive suggestions on improvements, Malcomson offered the Dodge brothers a contract to build 650 complete chassis—frames, engines and transmissions—for \$250 apiece. This \$162,500 agreement was much bigger than the deal the Dodges had with Olds, and they wanted money up front to sign on. They got an agreement for a \$10,000 advance from Malcomson.

The Ford & Malcomson team continued to pursue the parts they would need – wheels (from a Lansing, Mich., firm at \$26 per set of 4); tires (from the Hartford Rubber Co. at \$46 per set of 4); and bodies and cushions (from the C.R. Wilson carriage Co at \$52 and \$16 apiece respectively). In the end they had committed to buy \$350,000 worth of parts. Only one thing was missing – the money to pay for it all. (specific figures from McCalley, *How the Ford Motor Company was Established*)

With lots of debt he’d agreed to and no money to pay his creditors, Malcomson turned to his uncle, the banker John Gray. Gray was initially stunned by the magnitude of the hole his nephew had dug for himself, but was persuaded to help. After all, Alexander did have a knack for identifying good investments; and he, the uncle, had established a pattern of financing most of those schemes.

For starters, Gray would front the \$10,000 cash needed to keep the Dodge brothers going on their part of the bargain, and he would invest \$10,000 himself.

So, it was on Saturday, June 13, 1903, when 10 of the 13 members of the fledging company leadership gathered in Alexander Malcomson’s office.

“Ford and Malcomson turned over the assets of the Ford and Malcomson Company in exchange for 255 shares each in the new company. Neither contributed any new money to the venture.”⁵

John S. Gray – 105 shares for \$10,500 cash. President of the German-American Bank in Detroit, Malcomson’s uncle and banker.

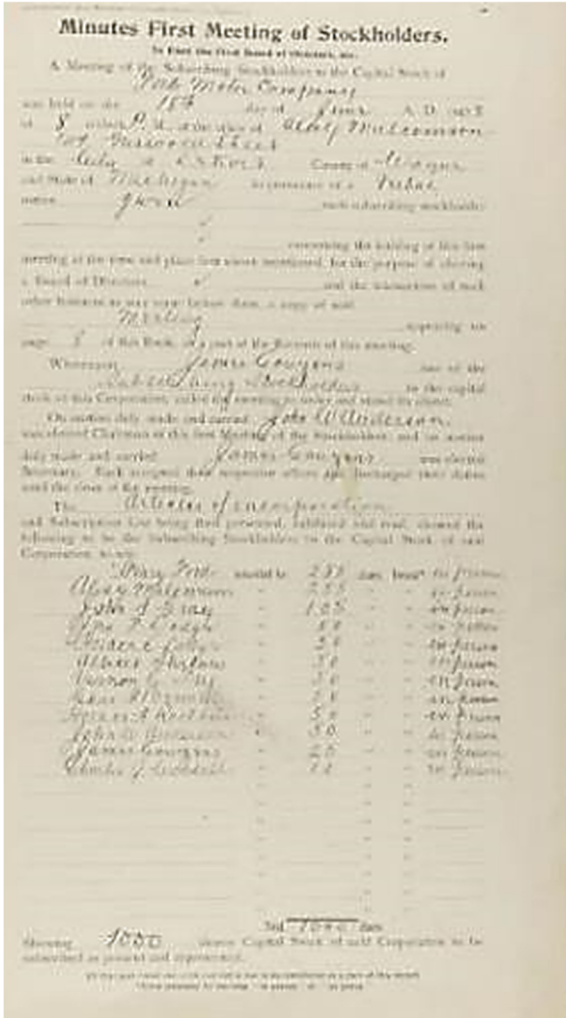
Dr. Frederick E. Zumstein (his 5 shares were picked up by Gray)

Horace H. Rackham – 50 shares for \$5,000; Malcomson’s attorney. Had drawn up the Dodge agreement in February.

John W. Anderson – 50 shares for \$5,000; Rackham’s partner. Borrowed the money from his father.

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GRAY AND FORD – MY WAY OR THE HIGHWAY (Cont.)



The Ford Motor Company First Stockholder's Meeting, The Henry Ford

Vernon C. Fry – 50 shares for \$5,000; Malcomson's cousin – made down payment of \$3,000 on June 26, 1903.

Charles J Woodall – 10 shares for \$1,000; Malcomson's bookkeeper.

Charles H. Bennett – 50 shares for \$5,000; made first payment on March 24, 1904, apparently out of dividends from the Ford Motor Company.

John and Horace Dodge – 100 shares for \$10,000; paid for by Malcomson with John Gray's money.

James Couzens – 25 shares for \$2,500 (\$100 from his sister, Rosetta, a school teacher)

Albert Strelow – 50 shares for \$5,000; owner of the Ford "factory" building. (MAFCA article)

There was apparently some concern about having 13 members of the group, so Gray offered to buy out Dr. Zumstein's \$500 investment, giving him a total of 105 shares and making him the majority stockholder. The group also agreed to re-name the company the Ford Motor Company, after Malcomson suggested deleting his name from the banner head.

Malcomson was still short on cash, and he'd guaranteed \$10,000 to the Dodges – Malcomson initially got this money from Uncle John.

Gray was elected president, Ford vice-president, Malcomson treasurer, and James Couzens secretary. Gray returned to his duties as president of the German-American Bank of Detroit; Malcomson had to (at the insistence of Gray) return to running his coal business. This left Ford effectively acting in the role of president, with the detail-driven Couzens serving as secretary-treasurer.

"Beginning with a fund of just \$28,000, the roller coaster ride to riches began. It was rough at first. By July 11, 1903, the cash on hand had dropped to just \$223.65. It was on that date that Albert Strelow made his first payment of \$5,000 [for his shares], preventing perhaps the fastest bankruptcy of all time. On July 15, a Detroit Dentist, Dr. Pfennig paid \$850 cash for the first Ford automobile to be sold (but not the first one delivered to a customer). From here it was all uphill. By August 20 there was \$23,060.67 in the Ford bank account."⁵

With a capital stock of \$100,000 at \$100 per share, there was only \$28,000 on the table at the end of the organizational meeting of the Ford Motor Company. Twenty thousand, five hundred of that came from John S. Gray, Other monies trickled in over the next several months. But as we've followed the money, we find that on the day of the establishment of the Ford Motor Company, over 73% of that money came from John S. Gray.

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GRAY AND FORD – MY WAY OR THE HIGHWAY (Cont.)

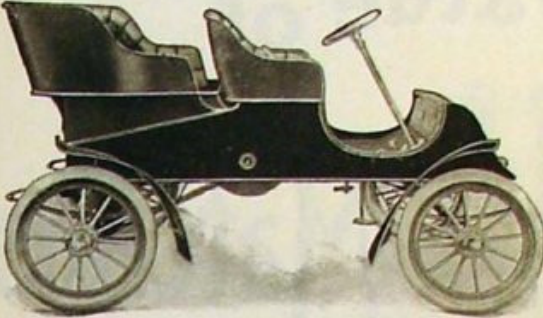
Now that the business at hand was making automobiles and money, “In October, Couzens issued a dividend of two percent. In November, another ten percent. In January 1904, still another dividend of twenty percent. On June 16, 1904, on the first anniversary of the Ford Motor Company, a dividend of sixty-eight percent was declared – a total of \$100,000 in dividends in the first year!”⁵

The company’s first car was the 1903 Model A. We know that the cost of building this car was \$554 (add \$50 for a tonneau, (or rear seat)). The car sold, with tonneau, for \$850. This brought a profit of \$246 per car.⁵



John Gray, Alexander Malcomson, James Couzens and (I believe) Albert Strelow
(*The American Ford*, pg. 23)

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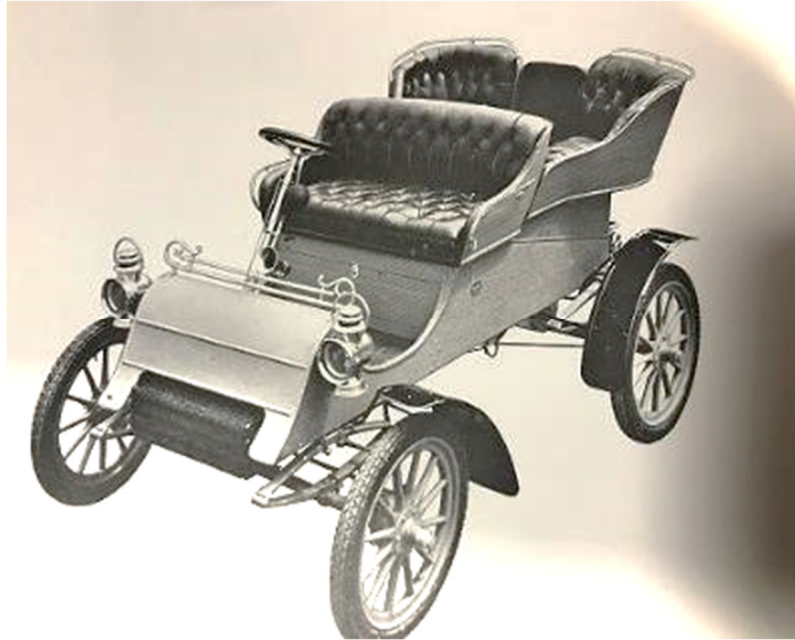
Image: <http://bowienewsonline.com/2018/07/1903-ford-motor-company-takes-its-first-order/>

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GRAY AND FORD – MY WAY OR THE HIGHWAY (Cont.)

“Designed primarily by Ford’s assistant C. Harold Wills, the Model A could accommodate two people side-by-side on a bench; it had no top, and was painted red. The car’s biggest selling point was its engine, which at two cylinders and eight-horsepower was the most powerful to be found in a passenger car. It had relatively simple controls, including two forward gears that the driver operated with a foot pedal, and could reach speeds of up to 30 miles per hour (comparable to the car’s biggest competition at the time, the curved-dash Oldsmobile).

Dr. Pfenning’s order turned out to be the first of many, from around the country, launching Ford on its way to profitability. Within two months, the company had sold 215 Fords, and by the end of its first year the Mack Avenue plant had turned out some 1,000 cars.”⁷



The 1903 Ford Model A, *The American Ford*, pg. 28



The Ford Mack Avenue Plant, *The American Ford*, pg. 29

Now these 1903 Model As weren’t perfect – they had a tendency to overheat, even on level roads. But Couzens pushed to “make the sale and fix them later” to keep cars going out the door. This approach was much to the chagrin of Ford, whose idea was to withhold selling the cars until they were “perfected”. Without the push of the salesman Couzens, Ford might have well led this third company down the same road he led the previous two down with his “my way or the highway approach” he’d used before. This time, though, it was Couzen’s way – get the cars on the highway and the money into the hands of our investors.

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GRAY AND FORD – MY WAY OR THE HIGHWAY (Cont.)


The money trail didn't end here. "John died in early July of 1906 leaving his wife Anna and four adult children; my Great grandfather, Philip Hayward, Paul Robert, David and Alice, all heirs to The Gray Estates. My interest in Ford Motor Company trickles off at this point as Philip was pursuing a career in insurance and was not interested in the automobile industry. Paul Robert and David, however, continued on at Ford as representatives of the Gray Estates and were involved until the Michigan Supreme Court decision in 1919 forced Henry Ford to settle with his investors. It was one of the most dramatic payouts in the history of American commerce, and the Gray Estates received over \$25 million. Not bad for an initial investment of \$10,500.00." (Stephenson, John. [Gray descendent])⁸ Next month we'll follow the money to the Gray Motor Company, the Gray Marine Motor Company, and the Gray Motor Corporation.

Jim Gray

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WHAT I DID IN THE TIME OF CORONAVIRUS

My coupe stopped running last Fall while on a hill dynamometer run to check on overheating. I parked it and worked on other tasks for a while. When I got back to it, I discovered that the cam gear teeth had stripped. To be able to clean the pan oil pan, I decided to take the motor out; a solo job it was to be because of the years ago, so I could do it again.



while. When I got back to it, I stripped. To be able to clean the pan oil pan, I decided to take the motor out; a solo job it was to be because of the years ago, so I could do it again.

I used my engine hoist to lift off the hood, rather than wrangle it without help. I folded it, tied a loose loop of rope around the center V, then had a second loop connecting the ends of the first loop, and connected the hoist hook to that. The light bar and front bumper were removed for crane access. I also had the jack stands under the axle non-symmetrically to let the hoist front legs get in far enough. To pull the engine, I used a load leveler, but when I removed and installed the engine before, I didn't have the load leveler and it seemed easier. I tilted the engine by having the center link offset from the chain mid-point and did that when installing the motor this time. I left the flywheel housing, etc., in the car and supported the transmission with a 2x4 straddling the frame and a ratchet strap.



With the engine out and on the engine stand, reassembly was pretty normal. But, for some reason, I didn't take care of it 10 years ago when I had the motor out, but this time, I had to relieve the engine splash pan flanges at the oil pump bulge and a couple other spots, too. The pans could have stood some tweaking, too, to make them lie flat in the engine bay, but I compromised on that. Installing the nuts and bolts at the frame side with the nuts on top was a bit of a challenge, but I only had to stick the right rear one in with the nut on the bottom.

To put the engine back in, I used the GWC frame spreader (Thanks, Benny). The Les Andrews book surely says this, but why would I read it in detail? But the four motor mount bolts should go in before the trans is bolted to the motor. That makes it a lot easier to pry and hoist the engine around to get those babies lined up. When I was reinstalling the head studs, one was a little loose, so I decided to helicoil it. Well, I didn't research it well enough and, afterwards, Benny had to remind me to use the head as a guide to drill the hole for the tap straight. My two helicoils were 4° from square and the head wouldn't go on. I used this insert to recover from my error

<https://www.mcmaster.com/90259a154>. The specs say it needs a 33/64" tap drill, which I don't have, but 1/2" worked fine. In order to use the head as a guide, the holes in the head had to be reamed 1/16" (as I recall), but that doesn't hurt anything, in my opinion. For checking squareness of tap, I used a 4" square I have. I would start the tap, turn enough to get a bite and then check for square in two directions, then adjust the tap and continue to bias the horizontal force in the direction needed



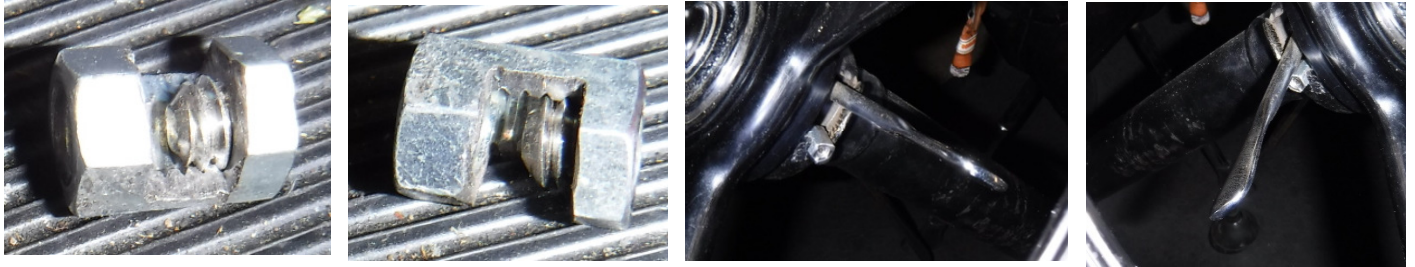
and repeat every half turn or so. I used a nut and bolt to install the insert. At various points in the whole project, my Lang Tools 2581 26-Piece Thread Restorer Tap and Die Set came in handy. Model A lore says that using regular taps and dies is not recommended on original parts.

The rest of the work was pretty conventional and I took it for some test runs and head nut retorquing. It was a little hard to start, so I read up on ignition timing with a 6:1 head. The consensus seems to

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WHAT I DID IN THE TIME OF CORONAVIRUS (Cont.)

be to keep starting advance at 0°, but limit full advance to 28°. To limit the spark lever travel, I made this little clamp from a 1/4" coupler nut and a setscrew. The opening was carved with a cutting wheel on my Dremel and dressed up with a file. I shortened it and filed some off the top to let the spark lever



pivot down to where it needed to be for full advance. After setting the spark with the lever up at TDC, I set the crankshaft at 28° BTDC, using the Nurex timing strip. Next, I installed the little clamp on the lower edge of the "window" that the lever swings through, then lowered the lever. To check, I put the crank at ~35°, then confirmed the points opened when I rotated the engine to the 28° spot. The price was right for the clamp! I haven't checked what difference this makes on starting, but I also slowed the idle down and maybe that will improve starting.

The next task was to make a new bracket for my hidden toggle turn signal switch. My electric wiper switch is in a hole in the dash rail to the left of the steering wheel. I had been using that for a bracket mounting spot and wanted a two-point mount that wouldn't loosen and pivot. I made a cardboard prototype, then a couple of light sheet metal ones. At first, I was trying to incorporate the hole for the electric wiper switch, but the step drill kept tearing the sheet metal. I altered course and just cut away the material around that big hole for the final configuration. If I were to redo it, I'd shift the switch a bit more to the right.



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SOCIAL DISTANCING

We'd agreed months ago to put Clem and "Ole' Smokey" on our pin for the 2020 Sully show. After we had to cancel, I consulted with John and Doug to get their go-ahead to deliver the first of our Clem Sully pins to him. Though sheltering at home, I felt it would be unfortunate if we didn't share that bit of glory with Clem.



Enter "Social Distancing." Here I am – maintaining an appropriate social distance – delivering Clem's 2020 Sully pin.

Since we plan to use the "Clem Pin" at next year's Sully, only Clem has his. I think he was surprised, since he stood clear of my pool pole until he realized it was something good. Kathie took the delivery picture, and Sandy took the picture from which the pin was made some time ago.



Kathie's and my only other big "exercising our car" event was to drive to Jaime's house in Aldie and create some sidewalk Easter-themed art before calling and announcing our presence.

A few days later, on a run to the store, we were able to see the Thunderbirds and the Blue Angels in their flyover salute to our Covid-19 Heroes – now THAT'S social distancing!



We didn't fly six-ship formations in pilot training, but I remember my 4-ship formation days in the T-38 well.

I've been socially distant in my garage working on my '23 Gray. Although it was amazingly complete and quite authentic when I got it, several big items needed work before I could drive it. Like the steering. And the carburetor. And the wheels & tires. I'm getting close, but it'll be a little while before I'm ready for a test drive.

Jim Gray

COMING EVENTS

May

Everything in May is cancelled due to Covid-19

May 25 Deadline to send a picture of your car, with a short history of the car, to Carol McDonald, Site Manager at the Sully Historic Site, to have it included in a virtual Sully Show in June, which will substitute for the real thing this year. Send photo and write-up (under 70 words) to John Dougherty (doughert@cox.net). and he will forward them to Carol.

June

Everything in June is cancelled due to Covid-19

WANT ADS

For Sale

Original Maryland License Plates Sets- Model A era:

1928 - \$75

1930 - \$60

Also have singles for 1928, 29 & 30 plus other years from 1919 - 1970.



Pair of 1930-31 stainless headlights, used. Very good condition. \$200. Contact Bud Pratsch at 703-620-2518



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WANT ADS (Cont.)

For Sale

Reproduction '30-'31 popout with key, tests ok. No longer being produced, \$75
'30-'31 under-radiator front splash apron, \$25
Correct 6-piece hand tool set, all WITHOUT script as per the Judging Standards for most month/years, \$85. WITH script as applicable, \$70 (some Ford tools thought to be for Model A's are actually for T's and V8's).
C1 jack, restored for display, \$125
Brake parts, drums, hubs, anything that wiggles, any reasonable offer
Front cross member, no cracks, \$50
10-leaf front spring \$55
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Axle shaft, \$40
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