

FEATURE ARTICLE... *THE FOUNDING OF THE FORD & MERCURY RESTORES CLUB AND BOB GUETSCHOW*

BY CHARTER MEMBER JERRY MATTSON



The FMRC which what it was called back then, had its first meeting in late fall of 1968. Consensus is that Jim Scott placed an ad in the Detroit Sunday paper looking for people interested in joining a new car club, focused on Ford automobiles from 1932-1953. The first meeting was held either at Jim Scott or Bob's Guetschow's house in Detroit, with 9 people in attendance.

The first few meetings were held at a different home each month. Sometime in early 1969 the meeting place was moved to a conference room in a Michigan Bell building, with secluded parking area for our cars, around Southfield Rd and 10 Mile Rd.

Bob was heavily into finding and selling original NOS Ford mechanical parts, accessories, and Ford V8 cars that he would purchase and then resell. Bob knew the part numbers and was very good at identifying a part and knowing which Fords it would fit. When you visited Bob's garage on the weekend you never knew if he would have a different Ford V8 that he just picked up or one that was ready to sell. Former charter member Don Olson still owns the 1938 Ford Station Wagon he bought from Bob in 1970 (52 years ago).

Bob was the first president of the FMRC 1969-1970. He also was elected president additional times covering the years 1975, 1976, 2003-2007 and 2012, 2013.

Bob was instrumental in starting our first swap meet at L & L Manufacturing over on the East side which was owned by the family of Phillip H. Lyon who was a club member. The swap meet stayed at this location, I believe, for 1969 and 1970 before moving to Ford Field in Dearborn and then later to the Royal Oak Farmers market and additional locations in succeeding in the following years.

During Bob's first year in office membership reached 36 by July 21, 1969. A year later July 26, 1970, membership had grown to 63 and continued to grow over the years reaching close to 400 members at one point in time.

Bob truly loved this club and with his hard work and dedication over the years contributed greatly to its success. R.I. P. Bob!



The Rotunda Times



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ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS

When you hear of a member/spouse's death, please get all the information such as the funeral home and address, viewing times and dates, and the service time and date.

CONTACT:

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313.467.7789 or jcrawfo2020@wowway.com

We will ensure that the membership at large knows of the death.



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The Ford & Mercury Restorers Club is a hobby organization whose purpose is to foster and promote the acquisition, preservation and use of all Ford vehicles.

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FOR ALL THE FOLKS WITH CELL PHONES.

(This should be printed and kept in your car, purse, and wallet. Good information to have with you.)

There are a few things that can be done in times of grave emergencies. Your mobile phone can actually be a life saver or an emergency tool for survival.

Check out the things that you can do with it:

FIRST (Emergency)

The Emergency Number worldwide for Mobile is 112. If you find yourself out of the coverage area of your mobile network and there is an Emergency, dial 112 and the mobile will search any existing network to establish the emergency number for you, and interestingly, this number 112 can be dialed even if the keypad is locked. Try it out.

SECOND (Locked Keys in Car)

Have you locked your keys in the car? Does your car have remote keyless entry?

This may come in handy someday. Good reason to own a cell phone:

If you lock your keys in the car and the spare keys are at home, call someone at home on their cell phone from your cell phone. Hold your cell phone about a foot from your car door and have the person at your home press the unlock button, holding it near the mobile phone on their end. Your car will unlock. Saves someone from having to drive your keys to you. Distance is no object. You could be hundreds of miles away, and if you can reach someone who has the other 'remote' for your car, you can unlock the doors (or the trunk).

Editor's Note: It works fine! We tried it out and it unlocked our car over a cell phone!

There will be no board meeting or general meeting in January or February due to covid. If any change to February will receive an email on meeting.

THIRD (Hidden Battery Power)

Imagine your cell battery is very low. To activate, press the keys *3370#. Your cell phone will restart with this reserve and the instrument will show a 50% increase in battery. This reserve will get charged when you charge your cell phone next time.

FOURTH

(How to disable a STOLEN mobile phone?)

To check your Mobile phone's serial number, key in the following Digits on your phone:

***#06# .**

A 15-digit code will appear on the screen. This number is unique to your handset. Write it down and keep it somewhere safe.

If your phone is stolen, you can phone your service provider and give them this code. They will then be able to block your handset so even if the thief changes the SIM card, your phone will be totally useless. You probably won't get your phone back, but at least you know that whoever stole it can't use/sell it either. If everybody does this, there would be no point in people stealing mobile phones.

And Finally....

FIFTH (Free Directory Service for Cells)

Cell phone companies are charging us \$1.00 to \$1.75 or more for 411 information calls when they don't have to. Most of us do not carry a telephone directory in our vehicle, which makes this situation even more of a problem. When you need to use the 411 information option, simply dial:

(800) FREE411 or (800) 373-3411

without incurring any charge at all. Program this into your cell phone now.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Feb. 11–13 • Chrome and Ice indoor car show in Flint

March 2 • FMRCOA Club Meeting

March 4–6 • 69th Detroit Autorama

April 6 • FMRCOA Club Meeting

April 10 • Monroe Swap Meet

April 16 • Greenfield Village opens

April 3 • 46th Great Lakes Regional Swap Meet in Fowlerville

THE HIROHATA MERC

A prime example of the custom car scene that blossomed in midcentury Southern California, notched two records in its sale.



The two-tone green coupe is known as the Hirohata Merc for the 21-year-old Japanese American Navy veteran, Masato Hirohata, who commissioned it in 1952. A customized 1951 Mercury Coupe astonished aficionados over the weekend, selling for \$1.95 million at the Mecum collector car auction in Kissimmee, Fla., outpacing the vehicle's presale estimate of up to \$1.25 million.

The two-tone green coupe — known as the Hirohata Merc for the 21-year-old Japanese American Navy veteran, Masato Hirohata, who commissioned it in 1952 — is a prime example of the custom car scene that blossomed in Southern California at that time.

“This sale is a record for a 1951 Mercury, and the highest-selling custom car that wasn’t a movie or TV show car,” John Wiley, manager of valuation analytics at the classic car insurer Hagerty, said on Sunday. “The continuing relevance of the Hirohata Merc thrills us. A car that was customized almost 70 years ago, within the context of an emerging American art form, is still revered today.”

Few cars share the Merc’s pedigree. It was built by many of the most prominent names in the midcentury Southern California custom car scene, including George Barris, who went on to design iconic cars for TV shows such as “The Munsters,” “The Beverly Hillbillies” and “Batman.” It went on to win scores of awards and trophies.

The sellers were Scott and Darla McNiel, son and daughter of Jim McNiel, who bought the car in 1959 for \$500, saved it and eventually restored it to its original glory before his death in 2018. The automotive historian Ken Gross and the classic car expert Wayne Carini helped the McNiel siblings broker the sale. The buyer’s name has not been disclosed.

The McNiels were long-term stewards of the car, and they hoped to maintain their family’s narrative connection to the Merc. “The thing that’s most important to me is that my dad’s impact on the history and legacy of the car stays attached to it,” Scott McNiel said. “And my fear that once it moves away from our family, it becomes just a Barris Kustom and Jim McNiel gets left out of the storytelling process.”

Apparently, this connection will persevere. “Darla kept a \$10 bill that her father gave her at an early age,” Mr. Carini said. “Before the car went over the block for sale, Darla and I hid that same \$10 in the car, so Jim will always be a piece of the car.”



AS THE DEALERSHIP TURNS: STORIES FROM BEHIND THE PARTS COUNTER

by Mark Sapienz

Memories of the Winter Time at the Dealership. The Body Shop guys were so happy at the first snowfall of the year as their wives made out Christmas lists. The Dealerships owner tucked away his boats and classic cars in the service and shop bays.

The parts department converted into a liquor store for a couple of weeks. We stored and delivered cases of booze to all the dealers valued customers. The manager's office was locked down like Fort Knox. I spent almost two weeks as Liquid Santa delivering two bottles to Body, Repair, Service, Fleet, and Dealer Suppliers in the area. I was an underage non drinker, still my boss invoiced each bottle and had to be signed for. I was such a nervous wreck praying not to break a bottle or worst get pulled over. Stress could drive you to drink. Nowadays, it is probably fruit baskets if anything at all.

In January, the Dealership would always hand out Auto Show Tickets. They would put on a Holiday dinner at a hall with door gifts. Those traditions have pretty much dried up too. Then, Superbowl time, everyone would break the law buying a square. My boss wanted to up the illegality one year and play for 20 bucks a square. He tried around the dealership and sold two dozen squares. He was just about to give the money back I suggested trust me selling at my delivery stops. I got back that day and my boss eagerly asked how I did. I told him sadly I could not sell all of the squares. He thanks me for trying. I pulled out wad of twenties \$1400 5 squares left. I was so stressed out with that much cash on me in the parks truck. My boss was so happy he bought me a square. Well, Superbowl was over and one guy who bought 5 squares won 3 of the quarters. That Same guy had his name on the Dealership. Rich get Richer. I was very unpopular on my deliveries for a while when people found out who won.

1970: THE YEAR FORD PRODUCED TWO TOTALLY DIFFERENT FALCONS

Motor City Garage



For the 1970 model year, the Ford Motor Company offered two completely different products that wore the familiar Falcon nameplate, and enthusiasts have been scratching their heads ever since.

How Ford ended up with two distinctly different products in 1970, each wearing the Falcon emblem, rightly begins with the introduction of the Ford Maverick on April 17, 1969. As Ford's replacement for the Falcon in the Detroit compact class, the new Maverick boasted ponycar-like long-hood/short-deck styling, an updated version of the Falcon's versatile unit-construction chassis, and a bargain-basement price of just \$1995. As the Mavericks filled up the dealer network, the trusty '66-'69-style Falcon was continued with almost no changes for MY 1970 (above) but only until the end of the '69 calendar year. New federal safety standards were going into effect on Jan. 1, and there was little sense in updating a car that would soon be discontinued anyway.

There was only one drawback to this orderly phase-out/phase-in plan: For its introductory model year, the new Maverick was available only as a two-door coupe, unlike the Falcon, which included four-door sedan and station wagon body styles. And that left a fairly sizable hole in Ford's economy-class line-up, or a perceived one, anyway. To plug it, the product people whipped up a stripped-down, bare-bones version of the mid-sized Fairlane 500, slapped some Falcon badges on it, and sent it into production as a mid-year model.

This 1970 1/2 Falcon, as the sales folders described it, was available as a four-door sedan, four-door wagon, or a two-door pillared coupe (below). Since it was built on the intermediate Fairlane/Torino platform, this Falcon boasted a longer 117-inch wheelbase. And even more interesting, it could be ordered with the full slate of Fairlane/Torino driveline options, including the mighty 429 Cobra Jet V8, and a small number of such cars were actually produced. This mildly confusing product alignment didn't last long, however. For 1971, the Maverick became available as a four-door and meanwhile, the Fairlane and Falcon names were dropped. All the Ford mid-sized models for 1971 wore Torino badges.

THE ROVING REPORTER

by Lou Ironside

Well, the first club sponsored swap meet of the year is now in the history books. The local chapter of the AACA have been putting on the Jackson swap meet since the early 1960's, and I have attended most since my first visit in 1963. The swap meet has had some "up's and down's" over the years, but after a two year absence it was back, and a decent meet. Most of the vendors seem to be local to Jackson, and there were quite a variety of parts available. Of course a lot of non-Ford parts, and only a few Model "A" and early V8 parts. I saw a few people carrying out parts, so some of the vendors were making sales. There

was a decent crowd, the aisles are wide so easy to wander around, so an enjoyable meet. There were several tool vendors but none of the "trash and trinkets" you find at a lot of the swap meets which was good. Basically, I like all swap meets...big or small, just the fun of walking around and visiting with friends and vendors. I had fun, the weather cooperated, I found a couple items to add to the collection, so I was pleased. Next is the Script A's swap meet in Saginaw and the big swap meet in Kalamazoo on the 5th and 6th of February. And East Side A's on March 20th. Nothing like swap meet season !!

POSTCARDS FROM THE PAST

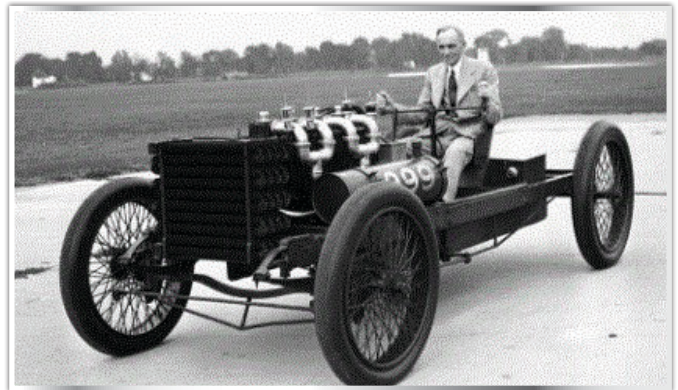
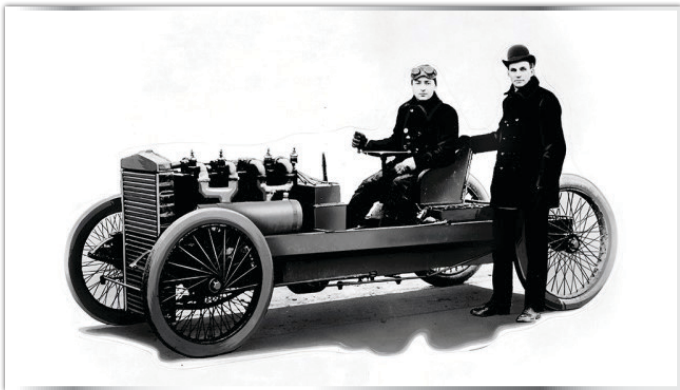
by Lou Ironside

While browsing through an antique mall recently, I came across this 100 year old postcard of the "New Ford body plant – Iron Mountain, Mich.". This card was mailed from Iron Mountain, MI in 1922 wishing Mr. Virgil Flarity a Merry Christmas. The town/village that he lived in was Brithren, MI which is an unincorporated town in Manistee County....and according to Google...population of 410 Although difficult to see on the postcard is the Fordson tractor at the extreme right edge pulling a cart. And at the extreme left you can barely make out the image of a model "T" Ford. When this plant was first built

it was supplying wood parts for the Model "T" vehicles and of course later after several expansions, it produced Woodie wagons until the early 1950's. The factory still stands, and a few years ago they were producing metal garbage dumpsters there. I have no idea if they are still using the plant, but for the economy of the U.P, I sure hope so.



HENRY FORD SETS SPEED RECORD WITH BLUSTERY 999 RUN



As winter takes hold in Southeast Michigan, we reminiscence on a land speed record Henry Ford set on a frozen lake near Detroit that helped solidify the reputation of a fledgling Ford Motor Company.

In the months that followed his seminal racing victory with Sweepstakes, Henry Ford was hard at work on two nearly identical cars – one named 999, the other one Arrow – both with 18.5-liter engines making 80 horsepower. The high-powered race cars had one forward speed and their final drive gearing was completely exposed. Ford said the “roar of the cylinders alone was enough to half kill a man.”

While he had declared his retirement from racing after the Sweepstakes victory, Ford went on to achieve a new land speed record with 999 on Jan. 12, 1904, reaching 91.37 mph on the frozen surface of Lake St. Clair despite a bulge in the ice that sent him airborne at one point.

“The rush of cold air was so terrific,” he reported, “I had to keep my eyes almost closed.”

Sanctioned by the American Automobile Association, that blustery run quickly became fodder for advertising for the months-old car company. Though the record only stood for two weeks – W.K. Vanderbilt took his 90-horsepower Mercedes to 92.3 mph on a Florida beach on Jan. 27, 1904 – the endeavor helped to put Ford Motor Company on the map.

@FordOnline

FORD IS KING

WORLD'S MILE STRAIGHTAWAY
RECORD BROKEN BY A
FORD MACHINE.

On January 12, 1904, on a cinder covered ice course on Lake St. Clair, at New Baltimore, Mich., Henry Ford drove the famous “999” one mile in the fastest time ever made with an automobile on any race track in the world, lowering the world's best record by 6 3/5 seconds.

Official Time:

“999”—39 4/5 seconds.
Best previous record—46 seconds.

The trial was held under the auspices of the American Automobile Association, and the time was taken with three watches at the start and three at the finish.

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LACK-ERA MODEL T GIVES WAY TO VARIETY OF COLORS

@FordOnline



To mark the anniversary of the introduction of the Model T, and the outset of fall colors, we're looking back at one of the most famous traits of the universal car, or lack thereof – color choices. It's often asserted the vehicle was offered only in black over the course of its nearly 20-year run, but that's not so. In peak production years, Henry Ford restricted choices in favor of increased productivity, but from 1908 to 1914 and again in 1926-27, the Model T was available in a variety of colors.

Early Model Ts were available in red, green, blue, gray and black, though the original blue and green were so dark that many considered them black. A select number of early Model Ts also were available in white, as they were painted prior to arriving at Ford for production. While customers could still choose black in the last two years of production, they also now had the option of four shades of green and two shades of maroon, plus Fawn Gray, Gunmetal Blue, Phoenix Brown, and Moleskin (gray). Closed car models were available with thin stripes below the body molding, in Champagne, Cream, Emerald Green, Orange and Vermillion. Exposed parts, including nuts, bolts, and small assemblies, were painted to match the body colors, while wire wheels available on later models came in Casino Red, Emerald Green and Straw.

Throughout much of the black era, 1914-22, when roughly 11.5 million of the 15 million Model Ts were produced, bodies were painted with four coats of air-drying varnish. The vehicles were stacked for drying for 24 hours after each step of the process. By 1916, storage was needed to dry as many as 8,000 bodies at a time, forcing the company to add four six-story buildings at the Highland Park Plant to accommodate the drying process.

The painting process had created a bottleneck by the early 1920s, bringing about more innovation. Faster drying paints were developed and implemented in 1922. Wood content in the Model T was reduced, allowing for use of Japan-type oven drying paints, condensing the process to just two phases. Oven drying also cut down on the amount of prep time needed for metal parts, further reducing time and labor demands.

More than 30 types of black paint were used as a result of the painting methods employed, including brushing, plus flowing and dipping, as well as the type of drying – either air or oven drying. Spraying didn't become common in Ford plants until 1926.

While Henry Ford's quote about limiting color selection to only black has been well documented, the notion that the color was chosen because it dried faster than others is more difficult to ascertain. (Authors on the subject have concluded Ford archive material from that time does not support this.) Rather, it seems black was chosen for its cost effectiveness and durability, likely helping add to the significant price reductions over the course of the Model T's run.



FORD HOSTS OUTDOOR HOCKEY NEAR HIGHLAND PARK PLANT

@FordOnline



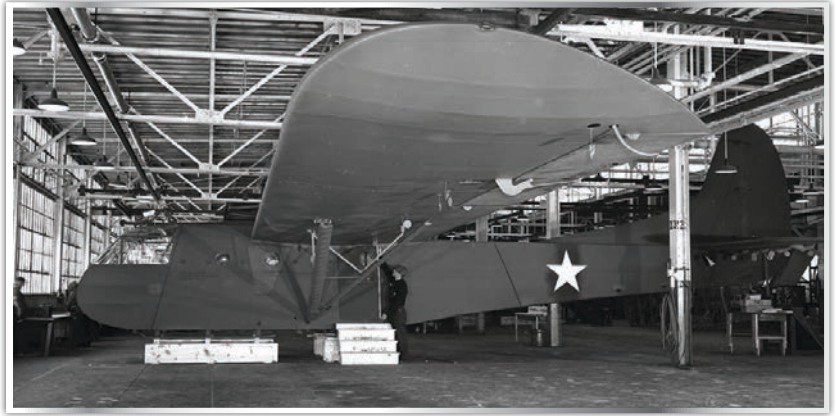
Outdoor hockey has long been a popular activity in the winter in many parts of the world, and a century ago, Ford even played host for a time. This photo, dated Jan. 29, 1922, shows one of many outdoor hockey games that took place at Ford Athletic Park in Detroit that season.

Located about a quarter-mile from the company's Highland Park Plant, the park was established by Henry Ford in 1915 to help preserve green space and provide an outlet for activity for the public in a period of rapid expansion in Detroit. The park featured swings and slides, more than a dozen clay tennis courts and multiple baseball fields. In the summer, concerts were held there two nights a week. Ford Athletic Park saw about 7,000 visitors in its first year.

Every winter, the baseball fields were flooded with water to create an ice rink for hockey and figure skating that took place there on Sunday afternoons. The rink at Ford Athletic Park was open to the public for 46 days in the winter of 1922, when an estimated 64,000 people visited, including 5,000 on one Sunday alone over the holiday period.

FORD-BUILT GLIDERS POWER U.S. ARMY IN WORLD WAR II

@FordOnline



Ford's Iron Mountain plant in Michigan's Upper Peninsula was converted to build gliders for the U.S. Army during World War II.

Ford employees at the company's Iron Mountain plant in Michigan's Upper Peninsula had a new use for their woodworking skills during World War II, as they went from producing parts like station wagon bodies to building thousands of lightweight wooden gliders for the U.S. Army.

In addition to tanks, jeeps and bombers, Ford was making for the military, the company took on the manufacturing of Waco CG-4A gliders in 1942 at the request of the U.S. government.

Essentially an airplane without a motor or propeller; the gliders were used to deliver troops and cargo to the battlefields where they could make a quiet, stealthy landing. Larger, more capable versions of the aircraft, the CG-13 and CG-13A, were later created, more than doubling passenger space and increasing cargo area.

The first Ford-built glider was built and tested at Ford Airport within five months of the U.S. government's letter of intent. Ford engineers improved on the original design as well as production procedures and reduced the build time needed. Ford workers produced over 4,000 of the gliders, the most of any facility contracted to build them. The Ford gliders were so efficient that they were used by other plants as a model of interchangeability of parts and assemblies.



Construction of the massive Iron Mountain sawmill complex began 100 years ago this month, after company founder Henry Ford purchased more than 300,000 acres of timberland in order to produce wooden auto parts such as framework, floorboards and wheels. Iron Mountain was also the site of a hydroelectric plant.

■ ADS ■

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Please contact Jerry Worful to
continue an ad or post a new ad.

OIL LEAK?



THAT'S JUST SWEAT FROM ALL OF THAT HORSEPOWER!

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