



1992 Western Model A News

The Official Newsletter of
THE MODEL A RESTORERS' CLUB (WESTERN AUSTRALIA BRANCH) INC.

Year XII Number VI

JANUARY, 1992

CLUB REGISTER

Well folks, such as it is, your Club Register of Members and Vehicles is enclosed. Open the two sheets, then fold them in half - hey presto - a Club Register! A bit like origami isn't it?

It's been a laborious process getting some members to pay their \$15 or \$10 annual subscription and waiting for details to complete the Register. We finally gave up on about five of our memberships from last year and have taken their details out of the records and off the mailing list.

The information in the Register is as accurate as we can get it from information supplied. Thank you to those who sent in the form to update Club records - of the 86 memberships, 58 sent the form back (28 paid without sending in any information). Some also left details blank or said "same as last year" - unfortunately there was no form sent out last year.

It is becoming increasingly difficult in these tight economic times to obtain advertising revenue to help offset the cost of producing your Newsletter. We have some more free paper but the postage alone will be around \$500 for the next 12 months. So, without advertising, we will not make a profit as we did last year and the annual subscription rate will have to increase to cover costs. If you have ANY ideas for possible advertisers PLEASE tell the Editor...

Thanks also to those who listed all their other vehicles. The theory was to establish the number to approach potential advertisers with a realistic figure to attract their support. Anyway, working on an average from those that did fill in the number, our W.A. Club members have a total of about 400 motor vehicles.

So, total membership is up by another 16% to 86 (with a increase in country memberships of 6% to 26). Total number of Model A Fords is up 18% to 119 with 57 restored (up 10%). An interesting statistic to note is that there are 51 restored Model A Fords in Perth - so it is possible to have a regular Club run with 50 Model A-s!!

NEXT RUN - Sunday, January 20, 1992. Meet at
Manners Hill Park - cnr Keane and Lilla Streets, Peppermint Grove at 10.30am. BYO lunch.

OFFICE BEARERS: *President:* LAUREL COOKE XXXXXXXXXX *Secretary/Treasurer:* HELEN SHARP XXXXXXXXXX
Vice-President: ANGELO CALLEJA XXXXXXXXXX *Editor:* BEVAN SHARP XXXXXXXXXX

COPY DEADLINE: by the 1st of each month to: XXXXXXXXXX Palmyra, W.A. 6157

VIEWS EXPRESSED ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF M.A.R.C. (W.A.)

Sunday, January 19, 1992

Picnic in the Park at Manners Hill Park, cnr Keane and Lilla Streets,
Peppermint Grove at 10.30am - BYO lunch.

Saturday, February 15, 1992

Big Al's Poker Run - starts McCallum Oval, Victoria Park at 4pm
50kms around Perth to finish at Millington Reserve, Karrinyup.
\$15 per car (includes raffle ticket and cloth badge).

Sunday, February 16, 1992

Vintage Automobile Association Car/Bike Swap and Sell
Kiev Soccer Grounds, 8th Avenue, Inglewood Enquiries: Neville [REDACTED]

Sunday, February 23, 1992

Club run - details to follow.

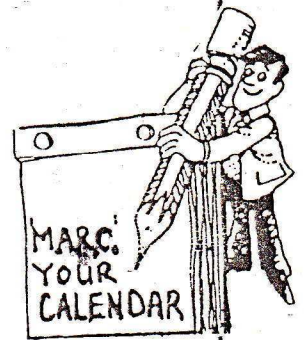
Saturday, March 28, 1992

Brookton Old Time Motor Show. Enquiries: [REDACTED]

Thursday April 16 to Tuesday, April 21, 1992

MODEL A FORD 12th NATIONAL MEET

Perth, W.A. Have you entered? Do you need Entry or Order Forms?



extracted from MAFCA's 'The Restorer'

Does Your Speedometer Oscillate?

If your speedo oscillates so that it's difficult to read ... this is the cure:-

Unscrew the instrument panel and pull it back without damaging any components. Then remove the top end of the cable - you may need pliers to remove the nut. Now reach into the cable housing with your pliers and pull the inner cable all the way out. Check it for rusty spots, wear or frizzy wires. You may wish to take the opportunity to install a new one.

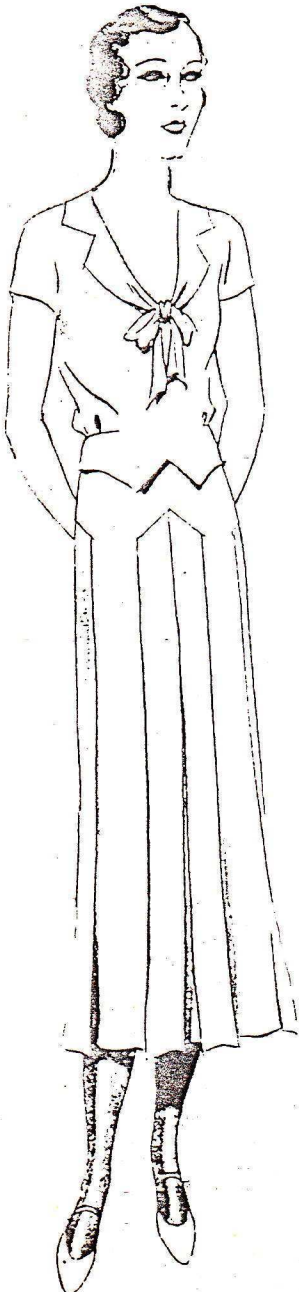
Whether you install a new one or not, lubricate the end going in first with chassis lube; then feed in the rest of the cable, applying copious amounts of grease. Reinstall the completed cable into the speedometer and secure the instrument panel.

MAFCA's Technical Director, John Hargrave,
lists the following as the most common

GENERATOR PROBLEMS

- 1) Weak brush springs.
- 2) Broken brush holder insulating bushings.
- 3) Incorrect brushes. The main brushes should be heavier than the third brush.
- 4) Oil soaked brushes and gummed-up commutator.
- 5) An out of round commutator.
- 6) Worn and/or dry bearings.
- 7) Dry and hardened oiler and bearing felts.
- 8) A loose field coil ground connection.
- 9) Loose field coil shoes.
- 10) A loose terminal stud.

More frequently than not, the Model A fan belt is kept too tight (this is hard on water pump and generator bearings), generator bearings are over oiled and small generator parts such as washers and bushings are missing.



WOJDYLO, Joe & Elizabeth
 [REDACTED] KENWICK, 6107

WRIGHT, Rodney & Suzanne
 [REDACTED] ORANGE GROVE, 6109

WRINGE, Chris
 [REDACTED] YOKINE, 6060

'30 Roadster

'29 Phaeton

'29 Special Coupe



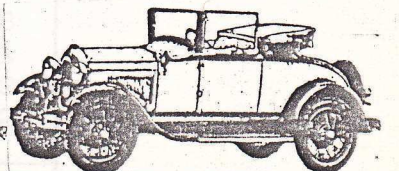
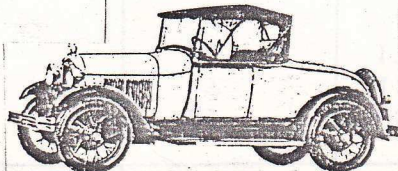
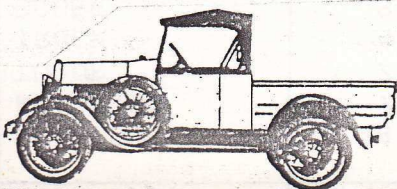
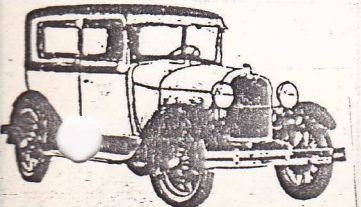
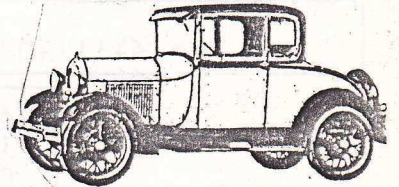
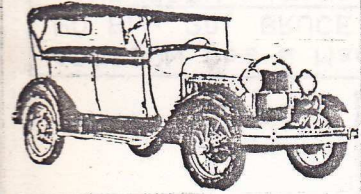
Model A Restorers' Club

Western Australia Branch Inc.

Secretary: M.A.R.C. W.A., [REDACTED] Palmyra, Western Australia. 6157
 Telephone [REDACTED]

Register of members and vehicles

- 1992 -



OFFICE BEARERS - 1991/92

President: LAUREL COOKE. Vice-President: ANGELO CALLEJA. Secretary/Treasurer: HELEN SHARP. Editor: BEVAN SHARP
 Chief Vehicle Examiner: STEVE READ. Examiners: MAX ANNEAR, REG BLEWETT. Committee: JIM WILLIAMS, STEVE READ
 National Meet Committee: Bill Bennie, Dorothy Bennie, Mike Cooke, Ross Letch, Peter Lynch, Louise Read, Bevan Sharp

TOTAL FAMILY MEMBERSHIPS: 86 (26 country & interstate)

MODEL A FORDS (WA only) Body Type	*		Total
	Unrestored	Restored	
PHAETON	24	21	45
ROADSTER	9	9	18
TUDOR	7	10	17
TRUCK	4	4	8
COUPE	3	8	11
UTILITY	12	4	16
FORDOR/TOWN	3	-	3
S/WAGON	-	1	1
Totals:	62	57	119

ADDISON Des & Marg [REDACTED] BRUCE ROCK, 6418	[REDACTED]	'30 Utility *
AINSWORTH, Andrew [REDACTED] ESPERANCE, 6450	[REDACTED]	'29 Truck
ANDREWS, Ron & Gail [REDACTED] ARMADALE, 6112	[REDACTED]	'28 Phaeton * '29 Utility
ANNEAR, Max & Dora [REDACTED] NORTH BEACH, 6020	[REDACTED]	'30 Roadster *
BARENDSE, Lionel & Mavis [REDACTED] COMO, 6152	[REDACTED]	'28 Phaeton
BURIE, Jack & Jill [REDACTED] SPEARWOOD, 6163	[REDACTED]	
BARRY, Tom [REDACTED] BOULDER, 6432	[REDACTED]	'28 Utility
BELL, Michael & Rene [REDACTED] CAPEL, 6271	[REDACTED]	'30 Phaeton

READ, Steve & Louise [REDACTED] THORNLIE, 6108	[REDACTED]	'28 Tudor * '29 Roadster *
REBE, Phil [REDACTED] INGLEWOOD, 6052	[REDACTED]	'28 Phaeton * '28 Phaeton *
RICHARDS, Jeannane [REDACTED] GOOSEBERRY HILL, 6076	[REDACTED]	'28 Phaeton * '28 Tudor *
SHARP, Bevan & Helen [REDACTED] EAST FREMANTLE, 6158	[REDACTED]	'29 Tudor *
SINCLAIR, Frank [REDACTED] DAMPIER, 6713	[REDACTED]	'28 Phaeton
SLATER, Dave & Sue [REDACTED] BAYSWATER NORTH, Vic 3153	[REDACTED]	'31 Tudor, '30 Ute '31 Fordor
SMITH, Alan & June [REDACTED] MARMION, 6020	[REDACTED]	'28 Tudor *
SMITH, Paul & Leigh [REDACTED] Glenfield, Auckland, N.Z.	[REDACTED]	'30 Roadster * Town* & Truck* +
SNELGAR, Terry & Lyn [REDACTED] KEWDALE, 6105	[REDACTED]	'29 Phaeton
SPENCER, Mavis [REDACTED] BUSSELTON, 6280	[REDACTED]	
STRIK, Henry [REDACTED] BASSENDEAN, 6054	[REDACTED]	'29 Utility
The SWAN BREWERY Coy Ltd (Trevor WRIGHT) [REDACTED] PERTH, 6001	[REDACTED]	'29 Truck *
TEALE, John, Margret & Robert [REDACTED] BUSSELTON, 6280	[REDACTED]	'29 Ute, AA, '30 Town '28 Phaeton '29 Road.
WILLIAMS, Jim & Nina [REDACTED] BULLCREEK, 6155	[REDACTED]	'29 Phaeton * '29 Station Wagon *
WILSON, Rex [REDACTED] NORTHAM, 6401	[REDACTED]	'30 Town Sedan

MATTHEWS W.T. [REDACTED], CORRIGIN, 6375	'28 Phaeton *
McLEAN, John & Ivy [REDACTED] DUNCRAIG, 6023	'29 Roadster *
NETHERWAY, Douglas & Sandra [REDACTED] GOSNELLS, 6110	'28 Phaeton*
OLIVER, Mick & Marilyn [REDACTED] GELORUP, 6230	'29 Tudor
PAISLEY, Ian & Dianne [REDACTED] 6062	'30 Roadster
PANZICH, Dale & Doreen [REDACTED] CLOVERDALE, 6105	'28 Phaeton
PARIN, Tony & Rita [REDACTED] WANNEROO, 6065	'30 Coupe *
PEPPER, Kelvin & Kath [REDACTED], MARIGINIUP, 6065	'28 Truck* '28 Tudor-2 '29 Phaeton, '28 Ute
PHILP, Don & Vi [REDACTED] NEDLANDS, 6009	'29 Roadster*
PINNINGTON, Daniel [REDACTED] KALAMUNDA, 6076	'28 Phaeton
PLEYSIER, Ron [REDACTED] ROLEYSTONE, 6111	'30 Tudor '28 Utility
POLLEY, Alex & Lesley [REDACTED], MANJIMUP, 6258	'30 Roadster
PRINGLE, Geoff & Janie [REDACTED], SHELLEY, 6155	'29 Phaeton * '30 Roadster *
QUINN, Douglas & Chris [REDACTED] WANNEROO, 6065	'28 Phaeton *
RACCUIA, Phillip [REDACTED] MORLEY, 6062	'28 Std. Coupe *

BENNIE, Bill & Dorothy [REDACTED] ALEXANDER HEIGHTS, 6064	'28 Phaeton * '30 Deluxe Roadster
BLACKLOCK, Lindsay [REDACTED] MADORA, 6211	'30 Phaeton *
BLEWETT, David & Barbara [REDACTED] BATEMAN, 6155	'31 5 Window *
BLEWETT, Reg & Coral [REDACTED] E. VICTORIA PARK, 6101	'28 Tudor*, '28 Ute * '30 Phaeton * '29 Ute
BRISTOW-STAGG, Barry & Sylvia [REDACTED] NORTHAM, 6401	'28 Phaeton '28 Utility
BRANDIS, Russell [REDACTED] MUKINBUDIN, 6479	'28 Truck
BROWN, Ken & Denise [REDACTED] HELENA VALLEY, 6056	'28 Tudor, '28 Truck '28 Phaeton
CALLEJA, Angelo & Judy [REDACTED] ALEXANDER HEIGHTS, 6064	'28 Roadster '30 Town '30 Phaeton
CALLOW, Mervyn & Thelma [REDACTED] GOOSEBERRY HILL, 6076	'28 Phaeton *
CARTER, John & Brenda [REDACTED] HILTON, 6163	'28 Coupe * '29 Coupe *
CHAMBERLAIN, Ross [REDACTED] SHELLEY, 6155	'30 Truck * '30 Phaeton
CHAMBERS, David [REDACTED] KONDININ, 6367	'28
CHRISTIE, Alec [REDACTED] CADDUX, 6466	'28 Utility *
CLARKE, Mac [REDACTED] SORRENTO, 6020	'30 Tudor *
COOKE, Michael & Laurel [REDACTED] KINGSLEY, 6026	'28 Phaeton * '28 Tudor *

COWLIN, Bill & Valerie ██████████ Fifty Road, BALDIVIS, 6171	██████████	'28 Roadster *
██████████ CREEDY, Maurice & Maxine ██████████ HAZELWOOD PARK, SA 5066		'29 Tudor * & Phaeton
██████████ DAVIDSON, Colin & Maxine ██████████ KELMSCOTT, 6111		'28 Phaeton *
██████████ DAVIES, Kath ██████████ ██████████ CLAREMONT, 6010		'29 Phaeton
██████████ DAVIES, Robert & Karen ██████████ SOUTH PERTH, 6151		'28 Roadster *
██████████ DEMIRIS, Jim & Zorica ██████████ NORANDA, 6062		'28 Phaeton
██████████ DOW, Peter & Janice ██████████ RAVENSTHORPE, 6346		'28 Phaeton
██████████ DUNS, Alan & Gail ██████████ MANJIMUP, 6258		'29 Utility *
██████████ EASTOUGH, Tom & Crispina ██████████ NOLLAMARA, 6061		'29 Phaeton
██████████ FERNIHOUGH, Alf & Phyl ██████████ MUNDIJONG, 6202		'29 Truck *
██████████ FERNIHOUGH, Tom & Alice ██████████ SUBIACO, 6008		'30 Utility * '29 Ute
██████████ FERREIRA, Nicholas & Lina ██████████ ██████████ BELLEVUE, 6056		'30 Phaeton *
██████████ FUGLIANI, Frank & Alexis ██████████ CARINE, 6020		'28 Coupe *
██████████ GODWIN, Gordon & Janine ██████████ GNANGARA, 6065		'28 Tudor *
██████████ GROWNS, Fred & Hazel ██████████ MEDINA, 6167		'30 & '28 Phaeton,

██████████ GUEST, Barrie & Gwen ██████████ WILLETTON, 6155	██████████	'28 Phaeton *
██████████ HEARD, Dave & Sonia ██████████ FORRESTFIELD, 6058		'29 Phaeton
██████████ INGRAM, Geoff & Lindy ██████████ DAMPIER, 6713		'30 Tudor
██████████ JEFFREE, Alan, Edith & Darren ██████████ DIANELLA, 6062		'28 Phaeton *
██████████ JENNINGS, Bruce & Sue ██████████ LESMURDIE, 6076		'28 Phaeton
██████████ KITCHENS, Mick & Nina ██████████ GLEN FORREST, 6071		'30 Roadster *
██████████ KIRKWOOD, Alex, Linda ██████████ PARMELIA, 6167		' Phaeton
██████████ KRIKKE, Peter & Julie ██████████ BUNBURY, 6230		'28 Phaeton *
██████████ LAURIE, John & Patricia ██████████ GIDGEGANNUP, 6555		'31 5W Coupe *
██████████ LETCH, Ross & Alma ██████████ GREENWOOD, 6024		'29 Roadster
██████████ LUCA, John & Fil ██████████ KINGSLEY, 6026		'29 Roadster *
██████████ LUCAS, David & Ruth ██████████ Great Eastern Hwy, NORTHAM, 6401		'28 Utility
██████████ LYNCH, Peter & Faye ██████████ GREENWOOD, 6024		'29 Tudor *
██████████ MAHONEY, Ray & Toni ██████████ BEDFORD, 6052		'28 Tudor
██████████ MARTIN, Beth ██████████ SEFTON PARK, S.A., 5083		'28 Utility
		'31 5 Window *
		'29 Phaeton *
		'28 Utility
		'28 Phaeton *

Engineering the Model A

by Leslie R. Henry

Leslie R. Henry, a founder member of SAH, is probably best known for his years as curator and consultant at the Henry Ford Museum. He has written several books on Ford automobiles, many of which were devoted to his particular interest and the subject of this article, the Model A Ford. This article was first delivered as a talk at a meeting of the Detroit Chapter of the Society of Automotive Engineers in 1961. It has since appeared in Antique Automobile, magazine of the Antique Automobile Club of America, and appears here in a form updated by the author. It was researched by the author in Ford Archives, and the quotations are taken directly from transcripts in the Archives' oral history files.

— Editor

Certainly the Model A was a man's car in what was the beginning of a woman's market. By all precepts of the modern market researcher, the Model A should have been a miserable failure in its first year; instead, it became a monument to Henry Ford's intuition. Austere in style, masterful in design, economical to maintain, dependable in operation, the Model A sprang into immediate leadership and acceptance by a nation already glutted by motor cars. It outsold, outperformed, and ultimately outlasted all competitors, and in its four brief years of production, 1928-1931, it earned a reputation as enviable as that of the Rolls-Royce.

While the Model A itself appeared almost overnight, the decision for it came painfully slowly and at great cost. The wonder of it is that the Model A Ford ever came into being at all. It was born of necessity, a child of adversity. It was forced upon Henry Ford, who was not mentally set for it, and his organization, which was not physically prepared for it, but fortunately the past was a prologue for Model A. It was the undeliberated sum of all that had gone before in the Ford Motor Company. And being distinctly Ford in background and in features, it was patently the kind of car that could have been built successfully nowhere else. Not the result of long directed planning, for Ford engineering was not then set up to operate on long range projects, the Model A actually sprang into being in less than a year through the integration and compromise of the latent ideas of Edsel Ford, Henry Ford, and a small group of engineers steeped in the Ford way.

Once Henry Ford had made his decision for Model A, the work of its creation went forward at a furious, but often interrupted, pace. There was naturally a great deal of confusion in the Ford Motor Company, and in the Ford Engineering Department in particular, when Henry Ford suddenly ordered work started on an entirely new car. This condition was not lessened any by the continued decimation of Ford personnel at that time. Then, too, Henry Ford was making so many assignments, reassignments, and divisions of authority within the company that progress in designing the car was further hampered. Only he knew from day to day what was being accomplished with the new car, and perchance even he knew not.

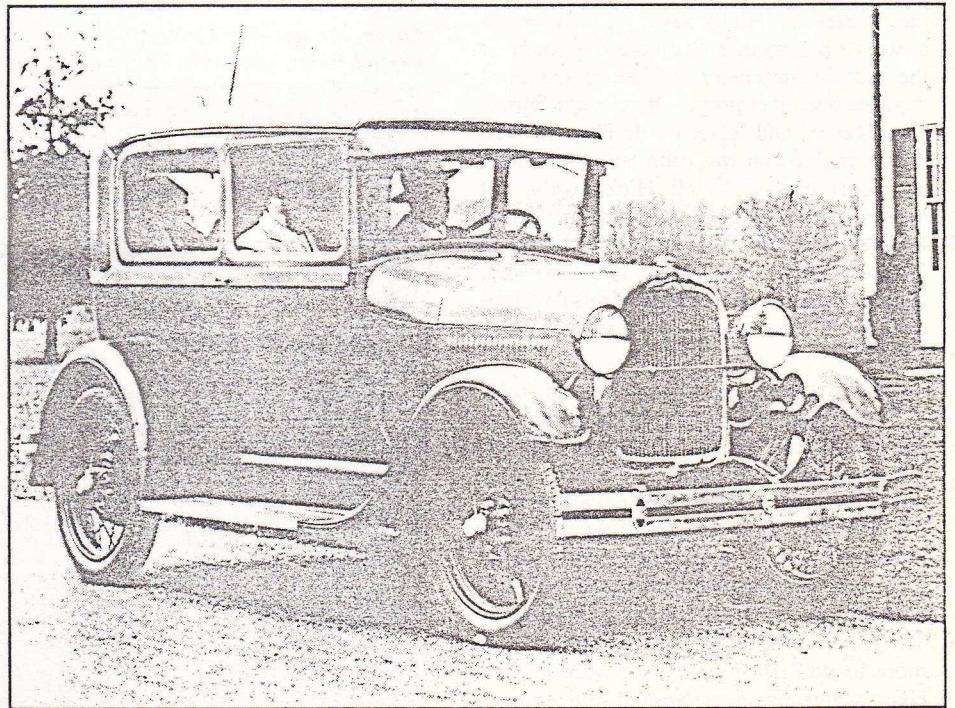
Although the car was at first neither Henry Ford's idea nor his ideal, he was quick to adopt it as *his* Model A Ford. Certainly it was never entirely his as was Model T, for while he actually *approved* Model A, he had *dictated* all of Model T. Thus, for Henry Ford, the designing of the Model A was a combination of his approvals, dictates, rejections, concessions, and compromises. But with all its delays, Model A was created with remarkable speed. So fast, in fact, that many of its parts went directly from the drawing

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board into production, and in the later stages of its birth, some of the plant layout and some of the new special machine tools were designed simultaneously with the specific parts of the car each was to accommodate.

Since the long period for decision extended almost to the end of 1926, it left no time in 1927 for extensive experimenting, thorough developing, or exhaustive testing such as usually attends the birth of a completely new and successful car. The Model A had to be exactly right the first time, and it was.

The need for a new transmission in any new Ford car was basic, and this issue was forced by Edsel Ford months before Henry Ford ever conceded to a successor of any kind for the Model T. That a new transmission was the first of Henry Ford's many, many compromises between his ideal car and the final product is well attested by his close associate, Charles Sorensen, who said, "The Model T planetary was the elder Ford's idea for the future car. He called the shifting gear a crunch gear. He said the transmission would never stand up because the gears would clash when changing speeds." This was a paradoxical statement for Henry Ford, who was even then building the Lincoln car



The 1928 Ford Model A Tudor Sedan. From the collections of the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village.

with a sliding gear transmission which stood up very well. As a matter of fact, it was a scaled down version of the Lincoln transmission that went into Model A. This and so many other Lincoln features finally were incorporated in the Model A Ford that it became known as the "Baby Lincoln."

Lawrence Sheldrick, who was assigned to engine design late in 1926, recalls that "we followed the Model T only in the respect that it was to be a four-cylinder L-head engine of the same general type, but with a number of improvements. Specifications just grew from this start. For example, the new crankshaft was the same length as Model T but was made much stronger and had larger journals." This, too, was a compromise, for Henry Ford would not permit Edsel Ford and Lawrence Sheldrick to make the journals as large as they wished. Henry said, "No, I want those journals small so that the crankshaft will be limber enough to follow the bearings in the block."

It was characteristic of Henry Ford that he should concentrate on an improved power plant for the new car and he took a personal interest in the engine work. According to Sheldrick, "Mr. Ford wanted full-size sketches of the engine, vertically, in front of him. We used a cloth blackboard, which could be rolled up, and different colored chalk for drawing the various parts. He found the usual intricate drawings with sectional views, one upon the other, a little difficult to follow."

Harold Hicks, who had earlier distinguished himself by work on the World War I Liberty aircraft engines, played a very important part in the engine development of the Model A. Hicks says, "I was called down to the north end of the big room of the old dynamometer section of the Ford engineering laboratory. There were Sorensen, Martin, and Edsel Ford. They showed me an engine that was running on the block and Sorensen said, 'Well, Hicks, we've got here an engine which is 203 cubic inches — Model T was 176 — but it is only developing 22 horsepower — Model T developed 20. If we should give you charge of this development, how much could you increase the horsepower?'"

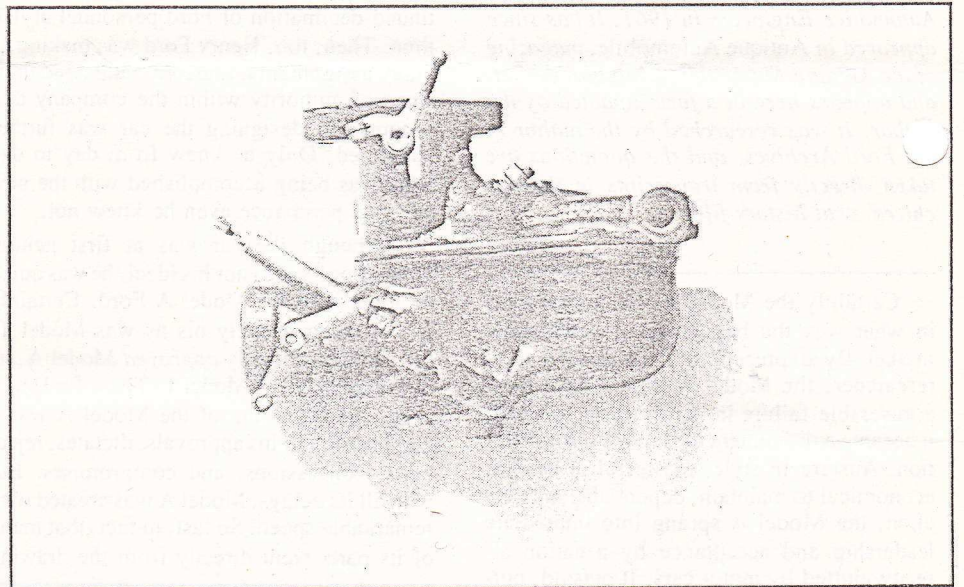
Hicks recalled, "I took out my slide rule, did a few calculations and said 'I think I can get you 40 hp'" Hicks was given the job. He asked for two months in which to complete the work but Sorensen gave him one. Hicks stated, "We got out first a Y-type manifold in only seven days using certain principles I had obtained from Col. Hall way back in World War I Liberty engine days. This gave us 30 hp right off. But there was more to do." He found there were insufficient water passages around the exhaust valve ports and had them opened up. He and Edsel Ford both believed the valves them-

selves were too small in diameter. These were enlarged and the hp went up to 34.

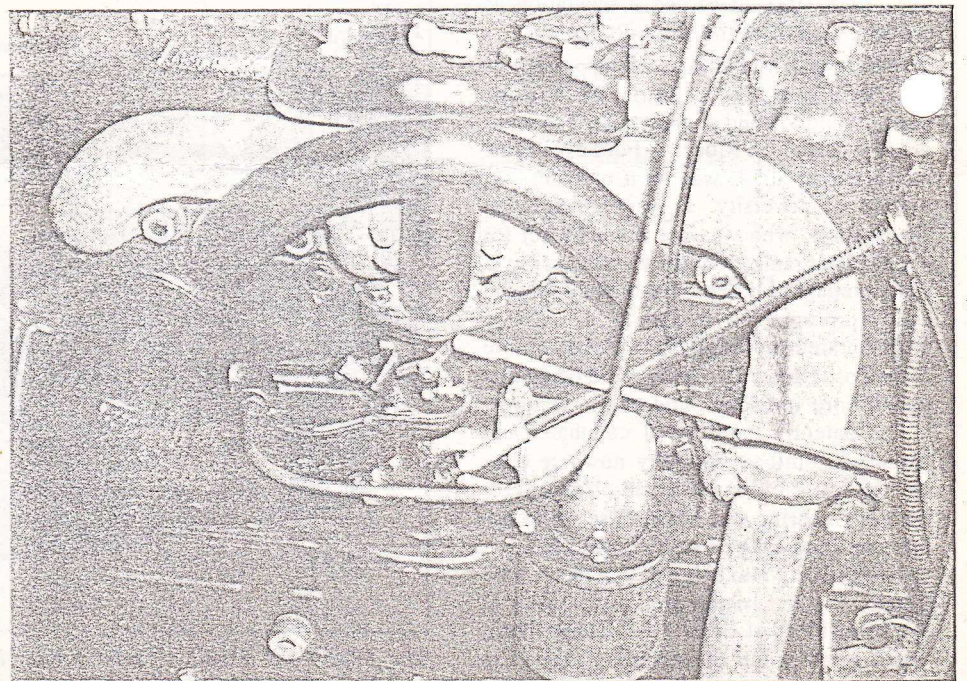
Hicks realized that the original vaporizer-type manifold and carburetor, designed by Holley, did not give sufficient range for a 40 hp engine of that size. Therefore, he went to his friend, Howard Manwaring at Zenith Carburetor Company for a test carburetor and then, only three weeks after he had started the job, Hicks had the engine developing the promised 40 hp.

Since Henry Ford was at that time laid up in Fairlane recovering from an automobile accident, he did not witness the engine test nor see the Zenith carburetor on the job. Joe Galamb, another of Model A's creators, added this sidelight on the matter of the carburetor: Holley had a terrific "in"

at Ford Motor Company as a bosom friend of Henry Ford. Hicks knew this and cleverly needled Sorensen each time he came down to watch the dynamometer tests by saying, "Of course we're developing 40 hp but you'll never use the Zenith carburetor." Finally Sorensen said, "Why in the hell do you keep telling me we won't use the Zenith carburetor? By God, we're going to. You get the Zenith Company in." Because of Sorensen, Henry Ford accepted the Zenith carburetor, but not without first giving it his personal touch. Hicks says, "I remember we had too many bolts holding it together. Henry Ford said to me 'Cut those bolts down,' so I had Zenith get out a new design and I felt quite proud that they had reduced the number of bolts from 14 to 2. Then Mr.



Above, the one-bolt Zenith carburetor. Below, the carburetor fitted to Hicks's final manifold. The oil filter, obviously, is a modern adaptation. Jim Schild photos.



Ford looked at it and said, 'Two's too many — make it just one bolt.' So the Model A carburetor came out with a single bolt down through it."

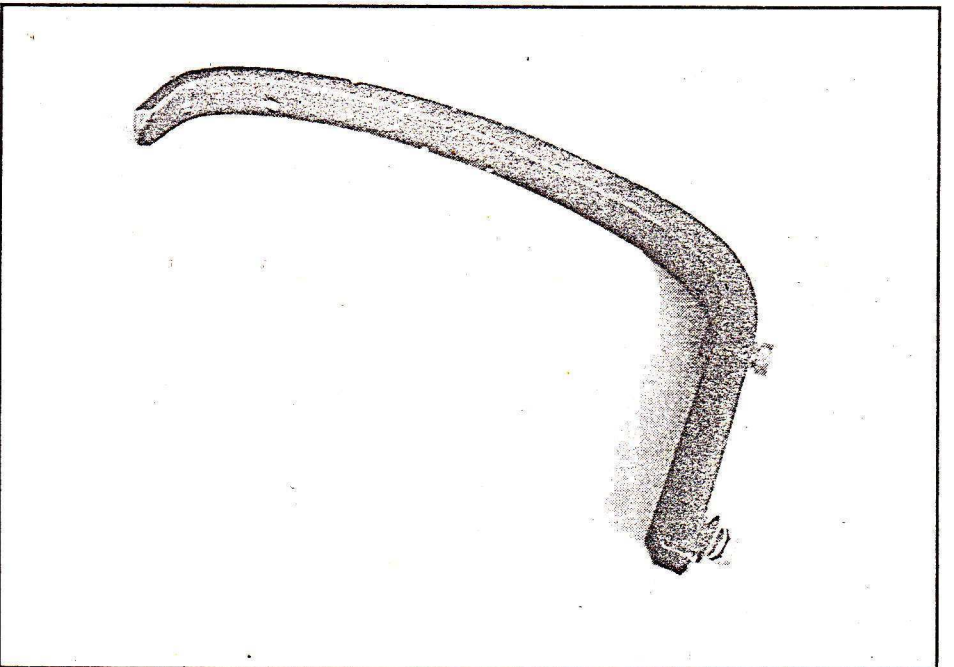
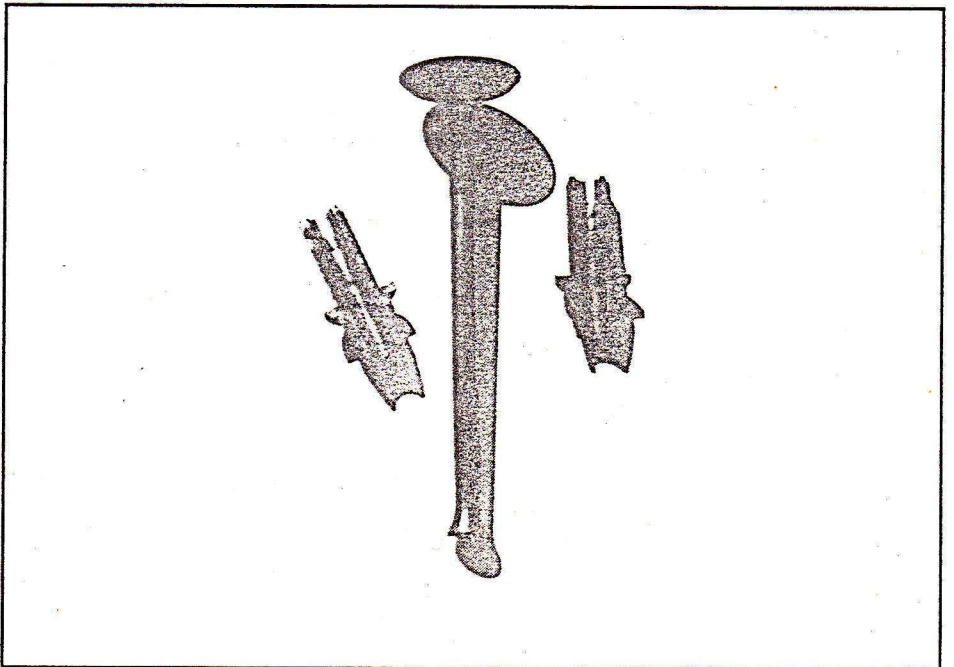
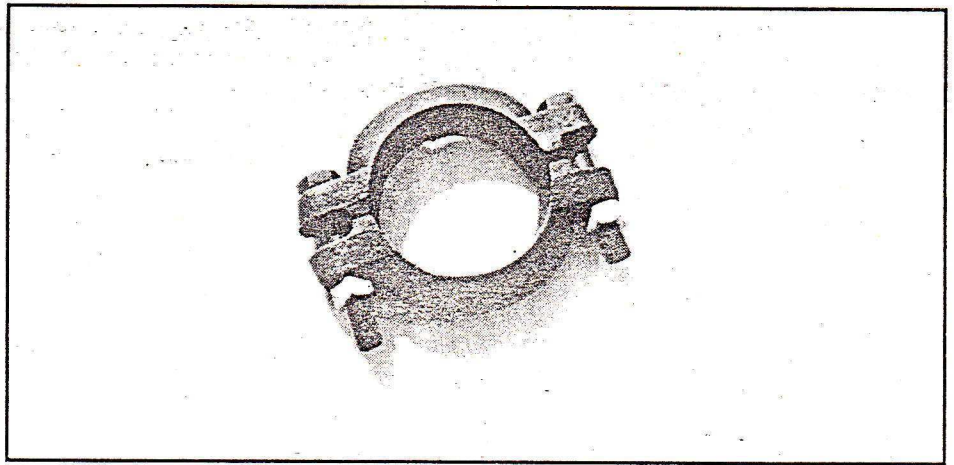
Hicks' choice of carburetor was vindicated in the final test he ran for Henry Ford on July 28, 1927 with the carburetors of Holley, Stromberg and Kingston all competing unsuccessfully with Zenith. Hicks' original Y-type manifold never went into production because he had to put a certain amount of heat on it to make it function correctly. His final manifold was more successful because of this heat operation.

The characteristic Model A tapered muffler welded into a single unit with exhaust and tailpipe was Hicks' design to which Henry Ford added his own personal touch in the form of a V-shaped forged clamp to hold the exhaust pipe to the manifold. About this, Harold Hicks said, "At this time throughout the Model A development, Henry Ford went forging crazy. Everything had to be a forging; even on the carburetors there were little forgings for controlling the throttle and choke valves."

Even "Sheet Metal Joe" Galamb, as he was affectionately called by Henry Ford, complained about the indiscriminate use of forgings for the brackets to support fenders, lamps, and running boards. He knew those brackets could be made just as strong and much cheaper with pressed sheet metal. It took Galamb nearly a year to demonstrate to Mr. Ford that he could have strong pressed steel brackets and save \$30 on the cost of a Model A. Late in 1928 Fords began to lose some of their expensive forgings. By early 1929 pressed steel had pretty well taken over the body brackets. But Henry Ford's insistence then on many forgings was based on two things: he had just put a large forging shop in operation and, to him, forgings had always meant quality. Here was his chance to put his new shop to work and to put quality into his new car at the same time. He counted on the high cost of forgings — then.

Henry Ford contributed other of his own ideas to the Model A engine design, which, however, often added to expense in time, money, and difficulty of manufacture. His insistence on a mushroom foot on the engine valve stems, for example, was good from the standpoint of reducing stem end wear and thus enabled the Ford valves to last the life of the engine without adjustment. The mushroom valves were more expensive and more difficult to manufacture than conventional valves and, in addition, required more expensive split guide bushings in order to be assembled in the engine.

Top to bottom: Henry's personal forging — the exhaust pipe clamp, the mushroom-stemmed valve with split guide, Goe Galamb's pressed steel fender bracket. Jim Schild photos.



Lawrence Sheldrick recalled also that the original crankshaft had thick discs or cheeks between the throws, a machining extravagance that Mr. Ford explained he wanted because sometime he might want to put on counter-weights and then every car in the field could have them added. Others of Henry Ford's peculiar ideas involved the connecting rods. At first he wanted forged X-section rods, then welded tubular section rods in the early Model A engines. But neither of these was as satisfactory as the conventional I-sectional rod, which he soon had to approve for all subsequent production.

Harold Hicks indirectly made one more contribution to the Model A because of an automobile accident. He was road testing one of the experimental cars when an old truck pulled right out in front of him. In the resulting crash, Hicks and a passenger were thrown through the windshield and were badly injured and severely cut. Henry Ford and Edsel both looked at the wreck and decided, then and there, to put laminated safety glass in the windshield of the Model A. This was another Ford first, as was their method of making the glass in a continuous strip, rather than in small batches.

The cowl-mounted gravity fuel tank, while not Henry Ford's original idea, was his adoption. It was extremely simple, and simplicity appealed to him. Furthermore, Henry Ford did not like the vacuum tank system, and having no faith in the fuel pumps then on the market, he would have none of these things on his new car. It remained only for Edsel then to give the tank uniqueness by designing it as an actual and visible part of the body cowl on the Model A.

Gene Farkas, who was in charge of developing the suspension, the all-welded wire wheels, the axles, and the new 4-wheel brakes, progressed admirably with all but the brakes; here he was handicapped by some of Ford's ideas that were either illegal or impractical. Since Henry Ford would have nothing to do with any of the 4-wheel designs already on the market, Farkas had to design a new system that would not be a complicated mechanism nor a patent infringement. His first design included a cam-operated, wedge-adjusted brake shoe linked directly to the foot pedal bar. But Henry Ford demanded an equalizer bar and linkage, and Farkas and Sheldrick, the chief engineer, had to take time to install an equalizer bar in a test chassis and demonstrate to Mr. Ford that it made the car skid. They were then allowed to go back to the solid cross-shaft system. Farkas had an easier time with his other assignments. His job was to improve the suspension for the Model A. This had to include Henry Ford's two transverse springs, mounted across the frame, rather than the conventional four lateral springs placed along the frame. Many people believed that the two transverse springs must

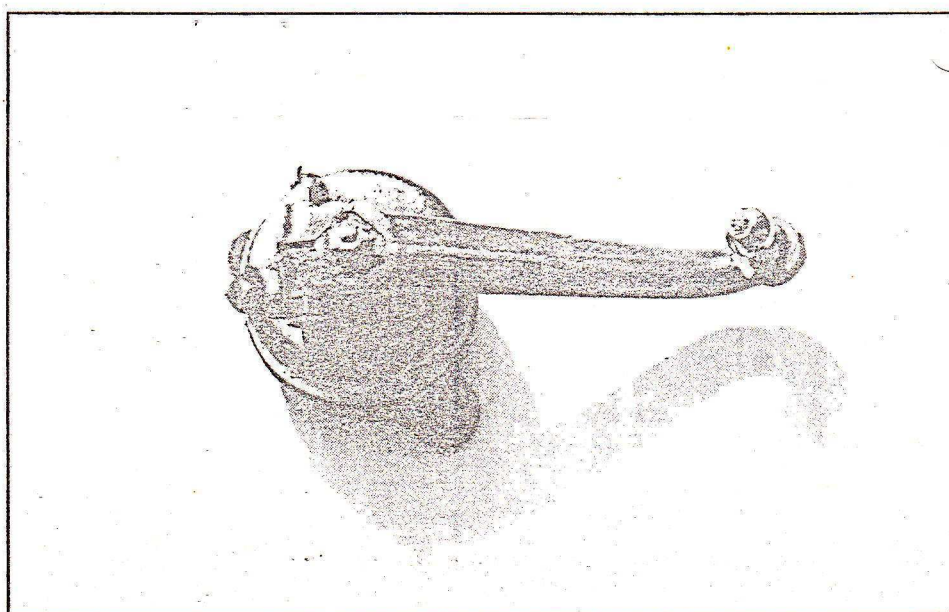
necessarily give a harder ride than four lateral springs, but Henry Ford believed otherwise. So no Ford car since 1908 had any lateral springs until after his death in 1947. Regardless of what was generally believed, Henry Ford *knew* that transverse suspension made the springs carry their own weight and so relieved the axles of that unsprung weight; then lighter axles and bearings could be used to advantage and lightness with strength was the Model A's biggest advantage over its competitors.

The new suspension, while a great improvement over that of the Model T, did not satisfy Mr. Ford; he may have laughed along with his customers when they joked that the passengers were the Model T shock absorbers, but he wanted no such jokes about the Model A, which was to be a masterpiece of economy with comfort. He asked Gene Farkas to get the best shock absorbers on the market for the new car and Farkas chose the same Houdaille double-acting shock absorbers they were using on the high-priced Lincoln. Thus the Model A came to pioneer expensive hydraulic shock absorbers on a low-priced popular car. All the others soon followed.

Although Harold Hicks' injuries had taken him away from the Model A work during the last days of its creation, he kept in close contact with it through Henry Ford and others. Hicks recounted later, "The new Model A pleased Henry Ford very much. He told me, 'Well, you go out and drive a Model A wide open. The other fellows will stick with you for a while; pretty soon they'll get tired and you just go right ahead of them all.' At that time there were few autos that could go above 75 miles per hour, most around 70. The Model A was right out there competing with them. Up to 30 m.p.h. the A could skin the pants off anything that was

on the road. Lionel Woolson, chief engineer at Packard, called me one day and asked, 'Hicks, what are you fellas out there trying to do? You really made us just look silly below 30 because we can't catch those Model A's.'" Henry Ford had long been the world leader with his 4-cylinder Model T; he now knew that he was again leading with his 4-cylinder Model A. "There is no excuse for a 6-cylinder car," he used to say. "It has all the engineering difficulties of an 8 and none of its advantages, and furthermore; I will not build a 6-cylinder car for then I would simply be following the industry, not leading it."

Actually Henry Ford built "the new car" better than he realized. There are no other 63-year old cars still in existence in so great a number as the Model A. Of the original 5 million built, it is estimated by some authorities that 900,000 still remain and in use. Part of this longevity is due to the durability resulting from what we might call an "over-engineering" of many of the parts. For example, the wheel bearings, the clutch throw-out bearing, the clutch discs and the universal joints remained standard from 1928 through 1948 for all Fords and Mercurys. These parts were strong enough in the Model A to serve later in cars having twice the weight and three times the horsepower of the Model A Ford. This is, indeed, a tribute to Henry Ford and his engineering staff at that time. And how large was that staff? How did it compare with today's engineering department, with thousands of employees and covering dozens of acres of ground with buildings? Well, only 34 engineers made up the Ford Engineering Department, which occupied a small section of the building just behind the Henry Ford Museum on Oakwood Boulevard. From this small group came one of the world's greatest motor cars.



Houdaille shock absorbers were a hand-me-down from Lincoln. Jim Schild photo.

... Notebook ...

Welcome to new member: TOM BARRY of [REDACTED] Boulder, 6432 - [REDACTED] - who is restoring a 1928 Utility.

FOR SALE - 1928 Utility conversion. New metal sides from original plans. Includes all main parts. Not restored. Engine runs. Comes with spare engine, axles and various parts. Offers and information from Frank Cocks on [REDACTED]

WANTED - Good 1929 right-hand front guard. Has a 1930 radiator grill shell. GEOFF PRINGLE [REDACTED]

FOR SALE - 1930 Business Roadster coming from Queensland for the National Meet - available from Easter Monday for \$16,000, ONO, Contact: Ralph Owen, [REDACTED] Holmview, Qld, 4207.

WANT SOME NEW GEARS FOR YOUR MODEL A?

The New South Wales Club are about to have new gears made. Prices are:- cluster gear: \$220, second and low/reverse: \$85 each. They will request a 50% deposit. If you would like to place an order, or request more information, contact Dennis Ashton promptly on [REDACTED] South Windsor, NSW 2756.

Our THANKS to Boomerang Paper Pty Ltd of 96 Walters Drive, Osborne Park for the donation of 10 reams of A4 paper for your Newsletter. If you want paper in quantity - see Trevor Stone at Boomerang Paper.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY this month to: BARRIE GUEST, EDITH JEFFREE, TONY and RITA PARIN, LEIGH SMITH and MATTHEW READ.

YOU COULD WIN A MODEL A FORD

The Vintage Drivers' Club in Victoria are having a raffle in conjunction with their 2-day Spectacular Swap Meet in May. First Prize is a restored 1928 Model A Ford Phaeton. Second Prize is a leather bound copy of James Flood's book valued at \$1,000. Tickets are \$2 each, they will be on sale from mid-February and the draw will be on May 30, 1992. Contact: Bill Elderidge, [REDACTED] Noble Park, Victoria, 3174. Phone [REDACTED]

WESTERN AUSTRALIA'S MODEL A FORD EVENT OF YOUR LIFETIME IS NOW JUST THREE MONTHS AWAY

If you have not yet entered - time is running out. Don't miss out on: mixing with hundreds of interesting people from all over Australia, New Zealand, United States of America and even Holland; Model A Fords in a huge variety of colours and body shapes; interesting daily trips; a wonderful atmosphere at Rally Headquarters - Noalimba Centre; tea/coffee 24-hours a day; our own bar (with head barman JIM WILLIAMS); repair marquee run by ALAN and DARREN JEFFREE; oil for a FREE engine oil change and DISCOUNTED FUEL on set days kindly provided by Shell. An event not to be missed. Enter today!!!

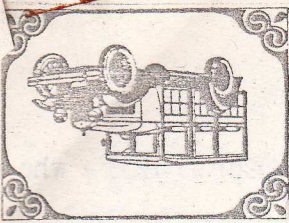
* VERY IMPORTANT *

If your Model A has not yet been inspected by one of our authorised Vehicle Examiners it is ESSENTIAL that you either arrange for an inspection NOW, or forward a copy of the Examination Report to prove that the vehicle has passed inspection by another authorised Club. Vehicles which have not been inspected may not participate in Club events.

Under new rules advised in August, '91 Newsletter, if your vehicle is on CONCESSIONAL LICENCE you MUST sign a standard form acknowledging the regulations and your willingness to comply before you can drive the vehicle. The vehicle MUST be examined by our Examiner or the Police.

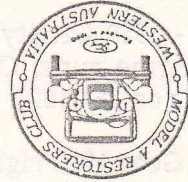
We are now required to advise the Police Department of ANY vehicle on Concessional Licence which has not been inspected. A list is now being compiled to forward to the Police so PLEASE attend to this matter urgently if this situation applies to your Model A.

PLEASE ACT TODAY



Western Australia, 6157
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If undelivered, please return to:

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PAISLEY Ian and Dianne



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Model A News

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SOME THOUGHTS ON MEN

1. The only problem with women is men.
2. Women like simple things in life - like men.
3. Boys will be boys, but one day all girls will be women.
4. When a woman makes a fool of a man it is usually an improvement.
5. Most men prefer looks to brains because most men see better than they think.
6. I only wanted to have a child - not marry one.
7. The trouble with some women is that they get all excited about nothing, and then marry him.
8. Q. What is the difference between men and pigs? A. Pigs don't turn into men when they drink.
9. The average man is proof enough that women can take a joke.
10. Boys will be boys - but men are better at it.
11. Q. What do you call a man who has lost 98% of his brain? A. A widower.
12. They put one man on the moon. Why can't they put them all there?
13. What is an orgasm Mum? A. I don't know love - ask your father.
14. If you catch a man - throw him back.
15. Q. What do you call 500 men at the bottom of the sea? A. A good start.
16. Men call women birds. Is that because of all the worms they pick up?
17. Every man has it in his power to make one woman happy - by remaining a bachelor.