



# Western <sup>1997</sup> Model A News

Official Newsletter of the

MODEL A RESTORERS CLUB OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA, Inc

XVII

Year ~~XVI~~ Number VI

JANUARY, 1997

1996 REVISITED

14th National Meet  
Windsor April '96

Classic Line-Up  
Galleria March '96

Camp Fires Burning

Kirup April '96

Vehicle Inspection  
Noranda July '96

Morning Tea  
Gwambygine Park May '96

This Club is the WESTERN MODEL A-s Chapter of the Model A Ford Club of America, Inc  
MAFCA - 250 South Cypress, La Habra, California, 90631-5586, USA - Foreign Membership US\$24.00 per year

OFFICE BEARERS: President: ALAN JEFFREE Secretary/Treasurer: GERMAINE JEFFREE  
Vice-President: STEVE READ Vehicle Examiner: STEVE READ Editor: LOUISE READ

COPY DEADLINE: By the first day of the month to: Thornlie, W.A., 6108

VIEWS EXPRESSED HEREIN ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF M.A.R.C. of W.A.

Next Run/Meeting - Sunday, 26th January

Time: 10:00am, Place: Manners Hill Park

**REAL WILD CHILD** West Aust Museum, Francis St, Perth  
Australian Rock Music "Then and Now"

Admission Prices: Adults \$5 Children \$3 Families \$14  
Open Daily: 31 October - 2 February 10.30am - 5.00pm  
For more info ph [REDACTED]

**SUNDAY, 26 JANUARY, 1997**

**AUSTRALIA DAY ANNUAL PICNIC IN THE PARK**

Bring along that morning tea & lunch for a leisurely first meeting for 1997.  
Time: 10:00am. Place: Manners Hill Park, Cnr Keane & Lilla Sts, Peppermint Grove.

**SUNDAY, 23 FEBRUARY, 1997**

**3RD BIENNIAL AVON VALLEY VINTAGE & CLASSIC FAIR**

Jubilee Oval - Northam

Vintage & Classic Cars, Machinery, Stationary Engines, Entertainment, Bar  
Trade Displays, Arts & Crafts, Children's Entertainment.

Enquiries: Secretary AVVF - 2 Fermoy Avenue, Northam

Fax (all hours), Phone (after 6pm) - [REDACTED]

**FRIDAY 14 - SUNDAY 16 MARCH, 1997**

**RALLY '97 6th National Historic Machinery Rally - Busselton**

Hosted by: The Old Machinery Club of WA.

Displays & Parades of Steam & Oil Engines, Tractors & Farm Machinery,  
Veteran, Vintage & Classic Cars & Motorcycles, Models & Assoc Memorabilia.

For entry form & further enquiries contact Brian Blum [REDACTED]

**22 & 23 MARCH, 1997**

Wyalkatchem Vintage Fair

**SUNDAY, 23 MARCH, 1997**

**CLASSIC CAR SHOW - WHITEMAN PARK (CCC)**

**EASTER, 1997**

**KIRUP WEEKEND**

**JUNE/JULY, 1997**

Social Evening to Welcome Jim & Gae Galloway  
from New Zealand to Western Australia

**JULY, 1997**

**COMBINED CAR CLUB QUIZ NIGHT**

**9-13 APRIL, 1998**

**15TH NATIONAL MODEL A FORD MEET, Canberra.**



## **RAY ABBOTT ENGINE RECONDITIONING**

**\* Specialising in Veteran and Vintage engines**

**\* Cylinder Head Service \* Reboring and Sleaving \* Crankshaft Grinding**

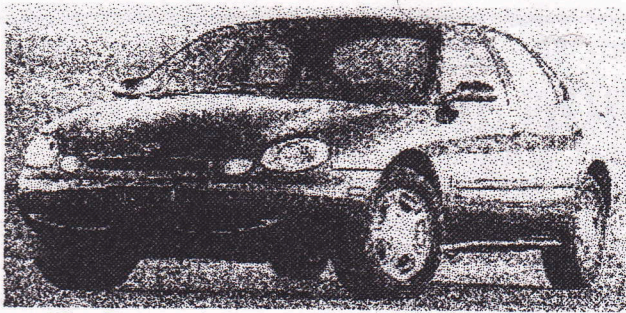
**Recommended by MARC member**

Established 1973

**18 RIO STREET, BAYSWATER**

**272 4566**

**34 years Experience**



• *The Taurus has sold almost four million models*

### **Ford's Best Sellers**

1. *F-Series* 21,789,065
2. *Escort* 17,592,216
3. *Model T* 15,458,781
4. *Galaxie* 12,085,968
5. *Fiesta* 8,854,376
6. *Mustang* 7,072,438
7. *Fairlane* 6,260,977
8. *Model A* 4,320,446
9. *Thunderbird* 4,169,313
10. *Taurus* 3,924,669

The following article was written by Mick Glasson and appeared in the West Australian on Saturday, 6th July, 1996.

John Moorehead kindly submitted it for the interest of members.

## **Ford Landmark**

Later this year, a century after Henry Ford took his first quadricycle out for a spin, the company bearing his name will build its 250 millionth vehicle. Put bumper-to-bumper, the Fords would stretch 30 times around the world. They'd reach more than 1.2 million kilometres into space - to the moon and 800,000km further. It is estimated Fords will have carried customers about 40 trillion kilometres in more than 200 countries.

Since the first Ford, a Model T, was built and sold on June 16, 1903, Ford factories have pumped out an average of more than eight cars or trucks each minute.

Today's production pace averages 20 vehicles a minute. Ford cars and trucks are built in 47 assembly plants in 18 countries.

Best-sellers over the years have included the famous Model T, with more than 15 million built between 1906 and 1927. Henry Ford's beloved Tin Lizzy has since been topped by cars bearing the Ford Escort badge, with nearly 18 million built, as well as the F-Series pick-up which is nearing the 22 million mark.

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### **CHRISTMAS PARTY held at PERTH TATTERSALLS & BOWLING CLUB**

Saturday 7th December, 1996 saw 55 Club Members get together at the above venue to share in the celebration of another Christmas. After everyone had arrived and pre-dinner drinks were had by all, a very nice meal was enjoyed. Later on a Christmas cake made by Edith Jeffree was cut and shared by everyone with coffee.

There was a very happy atmosphere and we all mingled, telling the usual tales, jokes, etc.

The ladies door prize was won by Shirley Hall and Colin Davidson took off the man's prize.

There were two raffles. Firstly a bottle of excellent Scotch donated by Frank Farrelly and won by Colin Davidson. Secondly another beautiful Christmas cake made by Edith Jeffree and won by Fran Timmings and a Gingerbread house donated by Shirley Hall and won by Barbara Farrelly.

To add a finishing touch to the evening, names were pulled out of a container resulting in every-one receiving a small gift in the form of a "Tree Hanging" to celebrate the Spirit of Christmas.

Thanks to all who attended for making it such a lovely evening.

*Dora Annear*

**SERVICE STATION and MOTOR TRADER**Official publication of the  
WESTERN AUSTRALIAN SERVICE STATION ASSOCIATION

These snippets give an interesting insight into the motor trade in Perth (and Western Australia in general) just after the Model A era. Compiled by: Bevan Sharp.

**COMPULSORY INSPECTION  
NEEDED****Motor Trade Should Take Lead**

That compulsory inspection of motor vehicles is a logical safety measure no one will dispute. But whilst the value of such a measure is fully appreciated, the indications are that no action will be taken to enforce anything of this nature unless the public generally are educated to realise the importance of same. The only real obstacle in the way of guaranteeing a further safeguard to the public will be the regularly experienced inertia of the law makers.

A typical dislike for governmental interference will probably be aroused in many motorists in that they consider that it would be an interference with private affairs.

Delicate adjustments are essential to the safe operation of the automobile, which latterly is a machine of tremendous power. How many motorists realise the harnessed power and momentum that they control as they speed along the highways? How many of them are so blatantly ignorant as to assume that petrol, oil and water are the only essentials to keep the vehicle in motion? Too many, unfortunately. There are quite a number of garage men who, with a view to business, take every advantage to check up, so far as possible, on client's cars and indicate definitely required adjustments, replacements and repairs. Such "live-wires" not only do a service to themselves in selling their knowledge, but definitely do a greater service to the motorist himself and the public generally.

Automobiles whose condition is so unsafe as to be a menace to the public may tour the highways without restriction and hold the lives of many individuals - passengers, occupants of other cars and pedestrians - in jeopardy all the while. Yet elevators involving a few persons only at a time and equipped with special safety devices have to be submitted to inspection at regular intervals.

Compulsory inspection is a matter on which the whole motor trade can unite and express a unanimous voice. Dealers and garage men are in the best position to show why regular periodical inspections are so vital. Also safe operation means more complete satisfaction to the owner. If enforced, compulsory inspection would mean that thousands of cars, even in Western Australia, which, at present, are never checked over, would be adequately and regularly serviced. *Sixty years later ....*

**CUNNING**

No system is perfect. The laws of the land are necessary in order that penalty may be inflicted upon those who offend the moral codes of a community. Were it not for the ever-present weakness of humanity such codes - social, civic and criminal - would not be necessary. In respect of trade, sad it is to relate, the same human weaknesses are evident and in many cases these weaknesses are evident, and in many cases these weaknesses are almighty, in the conduct of business, with some persons. The certain way to be cheated is to fancy one's self more cunning than others. The result is that these certain individuals assume unto themselves a false cloak and consider that they bask in the radiance of goodwill from their clients and competitors alike as they pursue their merry way violating honourable trade agreements and selling conditions.

*The above was aimed at service station owners reducing their profit margins on tyres and price-cutting.*

**It pays to Rotate Tyres**

The great essential to economy in tyres is the securing of greater mileage from each individual tyre. It is obvious that if a whole set of tyres can be made to last longer, the motorist saves money by not having to pay out for replacements until a later date. No wise motorists, however, will run on tyres that have worn treadless.

One of the recognised methods of securing longer mileage is to even up tread wear by the rotation of tyres. Yet this system, so well known in theory, has until recently not been reduced to an exact practical application.

However, after a long period of trial the Goodyear Tyre Testing Department has evolved a new method which has been proved best to even up the tread wear and increase the average mileage.

The new method is as follows:- Change right front to right rear, left front to left rear, rear right to left front, left rear to right front; both front tyres being moved straight back to the rear on the same side, while the rear tyres are moved diagonally to the opposite position.

Changes are made by transferring wheels without dismounting tyres. However if tyres are removed from rims they should be reapplied so that the same side of the tyre will face outwards as before.

This method has the advantage of:- Reduction in noise from rear tyres; better average non-skid traction during life of the tread design; and better average mileage per tyre. Tyres should be rotated every 2,500 to 3,000 miles.

**Among the Garages**

A member was recently considered tough when he declined to cut the price on a half gallon of juice at 2am on a squally night. The bargaining wayfarer departed dolefully as no transaction ensued. Early closing will soon fix this type of nuisance and make them realise that elevation from a warm cot is worth slightly more than three farthings gross.

**Britain Reduces Car Imports**

American imports of automobiles into England were reduced more than 60% during July compared with the figure for July last year. During July, 1934 897 cars were imported, while only 352 came in this year. It is evident that the British are more "home minded". We in Australia certainly do not appear to offer over much incentive for local production in means to transport.

Before rebuilding the rear axle of your Model A Ford, you will want to check to see if you have the correct assembly for your year; that is, if you want to be authentic. If it is not, check with other club members and swap meets. The only new parts you can get (other than NOS) are seals, bearings, races and axles.

First, remove the axle assembly from the car. Remove the spring, using a spring spreader. Check the spring perch eyes for wear beyond the bushings. They can be welded back to size.

Next, pull the brake drums. Check the keyways in the axle and drum for wear. Check to see that the shoulder at the end of the axle taper is not outside of the drum hub, indicating excessive wear between hub and axle taper. Check the outer axle housing and inner hub bearing surfaces for uneven wear or pits.

Move each axle in and out. If more than .020 inch, note for later internal inspection. The axle end play should be within .015 - .020 inch.

Check the radius rods for straightness and worn mounting holes. Remove the drive shaft housing. Check the front drive shaft splines with a good U-joint and see that the amount of wear on the front shaft is not more than .005 inch. The pinion bearing race is a press fit and should not pull out of the banjo housing without heating.

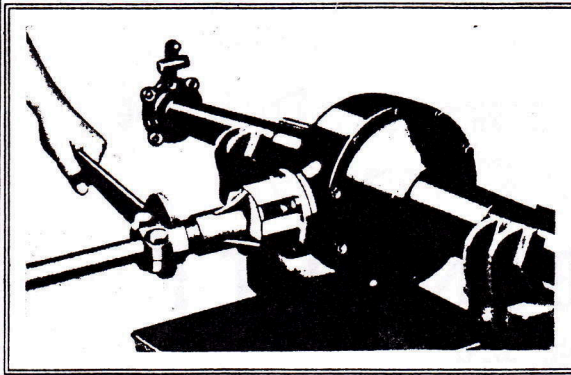
Remove both of the axle housings from the banjo and check the bearing races for looseness and wear. Check the axle end-play before splitting the differential carrier. Split the carrier and look for excessive wear at the three spider gears and spider yoke. Examine the back sides of the axle gears and the carrier case.

Remove pinion gear from the banjo and disassemble bearings from drive shaft and the gear. Clean all parts to be reused and check for cracks or worn areas that can be repaired. The ring and pinion gears can be reused if they are not worn excessively. If set up properly with good bearings, a little noise is OK.

Remove the inner axle seals (from the axle housings) and the drive shaft seal (from the torque tube).

Replace the carrier bearings and races in the axle housings. If the races had shims under them, replace with the same shims. Next, bolt the carrier back together without the axles and spider gears. Use 30-35 ft lbs of torque. Install the banjo housing and bolt on both axle housings without gaskets and torque to 30-35 ft lbs.

Reach through the pinion opening and try to turn the ring gear. It should not turn. If it turns snug or easy,



## **REAR AXLE Rebuilding and Adjustment**

**By Kenneth McCollum  
Salinas, California**

shims will have to be added under the axle housing races. If snug, add .005 under each race. If easy, add .010 under each race.

Banjo to axle housing gaskets of varying thicknesses are to be used now to set the proper carrier bearing pre-load. Add gaskets of about .022 to .025 to each side and re-torque the housing. The ring gear should turn freely, but not have sideways looseness. Reduce the baskets by .005 to .007 on each side. The ring gear should turn snugly with a .010 to .012 pre-load. Disassemble the rear axle and install pinion race (if removed).

A special tool for setting the pinion gear pre-load can be made from a scrap axle or drive shaft. Cut 10" off the tapered end and weld a 3/4" nut in the centre of the cut end. Install the pinion gear on this tool and set the pinion bearing pre-load:-.020 for new bearings, .012 - .015 for used bearings.

Assemble the banjo, carrier, axle housings and pinion without axles and turn the pinion to check the gear tooth pattern using bluing or white lead. The gear backlash should be .008-.010. Check at the ring gear through the oil filler hole in the banjo. Disassemble to check the gear tooth contact pattern and adjust backlash. This adjustment is made by removing the proper basket thickness from one side and adding the same amount to the other side of the banjo. This maintains the carrier bearing pre-load while moving the position of the ring gear relative to the pinion.

Reassemble and recheck your adjustments.

Disassemble and install seals in the axle housings. To guide the seal into place, insert the axle in the axle housing from the outside. Find a pipe that will slip over the axle (and a little longer). From the bell end, slip the new seal over the axle, with the lip toward you and slide the pipe over the axle. With this set-up in an upright position, drive the seal into position with the pipe. Both axle housing seals and the drive shaft seal are the same and can be installed in the same manner.

Install the axles into the differential carrier and install the drive shaft into the pinion gear. Assemble into the housings. Don't end up with three speeds in reverse - the ring gear should be toward the left axle housing. The axle housing seams should not be at the rear or bottom (this would indicate that you have switched them from left to right).

Ford made a strong drive axle with good steel, but he didn't make it to last 50+ years, or easy to work on. When I first encountered the Ford drive trains, there was a hard-and-fast rule: - Find a pepper tree to raise the car, or you were out of luck. •

# A Mysterious Figure behind the Ford Motor Company:

## HARRY BENNETT

by Bevan Sharp

*Researched acknowledged from:-*

"Ford" by Robert Lacey, "The Public Image of Henry Ford" by David L. Lewis.

When two ingratiating newsmen wrote a flattering biography of Harry Bennett they submitted it to Bennett for approval, he expressed disappointment, saying no one would recognise him. When asked why, he responded: "Well, you don't say I'm a son of a bitch."

The article never appeared in print.



Harry Bennett was a favourite of Henry Ford, Henry took his advice (often in preference to his own son, Edsel) and some say he virtually ran the Company following the untimely death of Edsel and during Henry's declining years. No one seemed sure of Bennett's power - but employees were not prepared to question his authority.

He was Henry's strong-arm man. In the early days when Ford made its name in motor racing to garner publicity, one of his star drivers was Frank Kulick. When Kulick won a race against America's best (and broke the record) at the Michigan State Fair in 1911 Henry Ford gave him a \$1,000 bill. But Kulick was becoming more famous than Henry. During the Model T - Model A change-over in 1927 Henry wanted Kulick sacked. Frank Kulick was asked to repair a car and take it to Harry Bennett. He did so but Bennett told him the engine was noisy and asked him to lie on the running board to listen through the hood. Bennett then sped rapidly through the factory gates, Kulick was thrown off and Bennett drove back. When he tried to reenter the factory Bennett's thugs barred his way.

HARRY BENNETT, an ex-sailor and ex-pugilist, joined the Ford Motor Company in 1915 as an artist in the Motion Picture Department. He was, alternatively, charming and ruthless. He began his rise in the company in 1919 with special tasks assigned by Henry Ford, which he executed promptly and efficiently, without question. By 1921 he was in charge of the Rouge Service Department, responsible for protection of the plant. During the next decade he assumed full control over personnel matters; including spying on workers. By the early 1930s, when other Ford executive's influence was falling, his was increasing and as Henry's 'personal man', was one of the most powerful men at the Rouge plant.

Legend traces Bennett's relationship with Ford to Bennett being involved in a brawl in New York when a Hearst reporter told police Bennett was only helping a friend. The journalist was on his way to see Henry Ford, who was more interested in the fight than the subject of the meeting. The reporter had brought Bennett along and Ford promptly hired him as a security officer. 'Can you shoot?' asked Henry. However, if this story is really true, why was Bennett's first recorded position as an artist?

Bennett claimed his pre-Ford career included Secret Service work, underwater sabotage, a sabre through the arm and a bullet through his side - none of these claims were ever substantiated.

What is certain is that Bennett was not a mechanic, an engineer, designer, or even an accountant. He knew nothing about cars and even drove a Franklin, *not* a Ford, while he was at the Ford Motor Company!

Soon after starting at Ford, Henry told him: 'Harry, never try to outguess me.' Bennett responded: 'You mean

I should never try to understand you?' 'Well' responded Henry, 'that's close enough', Bennett concluded that Henry had two motives for doing anything and he was never to question his master's will; just carry out instructions to the letter.

Bennett was just 5ft 6in, with reddish, slicked down hair and bright blue eyes. He wore bow ties (explaining that ties can be used to strangle you) and well-cut suits. He was engaging, spoke fluently and told a joke well. Even those who disliked him found him amusing company.

The entire source of Bennett's power was his special relationship with Henry Ford. Bennett carried out any of Henry's instructions without question. He supposedly had a connection with Detroit's underworld which, allegedly, gave him the capacity to protect the Ford family. The more complex ingredient was in Bennett's close relationship with Ford's founder. Henry had tried to mould Edsel in his own image, but failed. In Bennett, Henry found the cocky, ex-sailor's hard-nosed traits in line with those he wished he could implant in his urbane, sensitive son. Bennett became more than a lieutenant, he was a crony and something of a substitute son.

Bennett said that he once had a call from Henry who told him that a Finnish serving girl at the Ford home, Wantatja, had come across him 'comforting' a crying serving girl, Agnes, behind a hedge. Henry thought if she told Mrs Ford then Clara might get the wrong idea and asked Bennett: 'to send Wantatja back from whence she came.'

Wantatja found herself back in Finland with little delay but her brother, who lived in Michigan, found the circumstances mysterious and lodged a complaint with the police. It took a while for him to be silenced - but

silencing was one of Harry Bennett's specialties.

Henry then thought it would be an idea if Agnes also left Dearborn, so Bennett arranged a job for her brother 2,000 miles away on the west coast and Agnes was persuaded to accompany him. However, Agnes returned to Dearborn - Mrs Ford had heard some stories and hired a Pinkerton detective to find her. When Henry told Bennett he said: 'This time I'll handle it.' What actually happened has remained a mystery but nothing more was ever heard from Agnes, or Wantatja for that matter...

When the Ford Motor Company was fighting unionists, Bennett's brief was to 'handle' the unions: to avoid any sort of working relationship they were to be defeated by evasion and delay. His Service Department was described as: 'a standing army unique in America' and the: 'largest privately owned secret service force in existence'. Harry Bennett said: 'They're a lot of tough bastards, but every goddamn one of them's a gentleman.' They were superannuated boxers, ex-football players and thugs who not only harassed employees suspected of union sympathies, but sometimes beat them as well. Bennett's methods particularly stressed the more sensitive and compassionate Edsel who favoured bargaining to reach a mutually satisfactory conclusion to the dispute.

In April, 1940 a report released in Dallas accused Ford of: 'gathering together the most brutal, vicious and conscienceless thugs in its employ' to block unionisation in that city. The examiner added that the company's 'strong arm squad ... employed blackjacks, loaded hose and cat-o'-nine tails made of rubber stripping and electric light wire' as weapons to intimidate its workmen.

When a large crowd of very vocal demonstrators massed outside the Rouge, Bennett decided to intervene personally; whatever else he was, he was courageous. He buttonholed nineteen-year-old Joseph York, organiser of the Young Communist League. When the crowd saw this short, bowlegged executive arguing with York they turned on him. A lump of slag struck Bennett on the side of the head, he grabbed York, blood streaming from the wound and they both fell to the ground, Bennett was briefly unconscious, and fortunate not to be killed. York stood up fi and a hail of machine gun fire rang out. York fell down again, on top of Bennett - dead. Twenty-three others were wounded, three mortally.

Bennett eventually agreed for Ford employees to hold union elections 'because Mr Ford will observe the law'. He acknowledged that they would eventually win 'and we will bargain because the law says so. We will bargain until hell freezes over, but they won't get anything.'

When the situation had deteriorated and workers picketed the plant, Bennett fired off an 'open' telegram to President Roosevelt asking for troops to help quell the strike. Roosevelt refused.

Harry Bennett had some influential and staunch supporters. 'Dear Harry,' said a letter from J. Edgar Hoover, director of the FBI, 'I wanted you to know how much I appreciate your fine cooperation.'

FBI papers reveal Harry Bennett worked closely with the FBI during the late 1920s and early 1930s. Which explains why he was able to operate outside the law: the country's principle law-enforcement agency virtually gave him a licence to do so.

Showing he was also adept at subtle politics (as well as strong-arm tactics), Bennett invited moderate union leader Homer Martin to a private meeting with Henry Ford then

showed him around bright and clean Rouge plant. Then, in late December, 1938, Bennett announced that Ford had come to a tentative agreement with Martin's union, but no details were released. The consequence was an uproar and a split that took the union more than a year to repair.

The Ford plant became unionised but trouble persisted, often antagonised by Bennett's heavy-handed tactics - between 1941 and 1945 there were 733 work stoppages.

Henry Ford often took Bennett's advice and point of view, even when it conflicted strongly with Edsel's suggestions or requests.

Arriving at a Michigan State Fair one year to inspect the Ford exhibit, Henry complained: 'This isn't the way I remember State Fairs...' Bennett took him back next day and he found himself surrounded with wheat, soya beans, sheep and cattle. 'That's nice, Harry', said Henry Ford.

That was Harry Bennett's specialty: getting things done ... from spiriting away serving girls to getting a jury dismissed, just leave it to Harry.

When Highland Park was shut down after production of the Model T ceased, Bennett began driving to Fairlane every morning to see what his boss wanted. That became a regular habit for nearly 20 years as Bennett regularly picked him up, and often drove him home as well.

Harry Bennett had a target in his office and would whip out an air pistol for regular practice. The Kaiser's grandson, who worked at the Ford plant in the 1930s, explained that he once showed a visitor into Bennett's office who inadvertently forgot to remove his hat. Harry shot a hole through it!

He fortified his 'tough guy' image by keeping lions and tigers as pets and occasionally took them to work, walking them around the Rouge on a leash; or even slipping them into the back seats of visitor's cars as a joke. According to Dearborn folk lore, one such lion fell asleep, only to awaken and place an affectionate paw on the unsuspecting driver's shoulder on a city street. The Dearborn Police Station's duty officer's official report recorded that the lion 'hanged himself'!!

Harry Bennett's home by the Detroit River had a wall of shelves which swung back at the press of a button to reveal a winding staircase going down to his speedboats. Henry loved Bennett's stories and lifestyle (true or not).

When asked by a journalist (in the presence of Henry Ford) if there was anything he couldn't fix, Bennett replied: 'If Mr Ford told me to blacken out the sun tomorrow, I might have trouble fixing it. But you'd see a hundred thousand sons of bitches coming through the Rouge gates in the morning all wearing dark glasses.'

Mr Ford thought that was a marvellous joke.

With prohibition came gangsters and Henry Ford was concerned for his grandchildren as potential kidnap victims. He considered Edsel too weak to arrange their safety and so two of Bennett's servicemen rode shotgun. Henry Ford also thought Edsel should be shadowed, for his safety, which provided a convenient excuse for regular and detailed reports on his son's movements.

Harry Bennett revelled in personal contact with the underworld and his ghost-written memoirs (*We Never Called Him Henry*) boasts a catalogue of murderers and racketeers whose friendship he purchased with funds and influence of the Ford Motor Company.

There was Chester LaMare, a Sicilian who eliminated the opposition, through a series of bloody ambushes and executions, to rule Detroit; police estimated his 1928

bootlegging income at \$215 million. Bennett gave him a car agency, which became the gang's headquarters, and gave him the very profitable concession to supply the canteens and lunch stands of Ford factories. He also arranged for 'Murder Incorporated' to get franchises to truck Ford cars to dealers on the eastern seaboard.

Another Italian warlord, Joe Tocco, deferentially referred to Bennett as 'Boss'. In his memoirs Bennett told how Tocco would wire dynamite to the walls of restaurants who refused to pay him protection money.

Experts on business practice and procedures will claim that it was sometimes difficult to tell the difference between big business and crime in America in the 1930s. Perhaps clarification of the Ford Motor Company's procedures in that era may also be blurred - however if there had not been a Harry Bennett, would there have been someone else carrying out the same functions?

Harry Bennett's office was in the Administration Building overlooking the Rouge. But it was not located on one of the prestigious upper floors, it was in a corner of the basement, right beside the garages so visitors arrived, and left, unseen. His door was controlled by secret buttons beneath his own desk and that of his burly secretary. Anyone lingering around that corner uninvited would be approached by several heavy-set gentlemen whose jackets bulged below one armpit.

When Charles Lindbergh was hired by Ford as an aeronautical advisor, Mrs Anne Lindbergh attended a party at Bennett's home. She found him a delightful host who gave the impression of youth and health. The host was dressed as a cowboy and serenaded the guests.

Bennett arranged for college students to get easy jobs at a Ford plant and even paid the tuition for some. The entire University of Michigan football squad worked at Ford during the summers of the late 1930s, reporting at the Rouge for light duties but spending most of their time training under their coach, Harry Kipke, Bennett's drinking companion. Married men with families were being laid off, but college kids got paid to do nothing, remembered one union activist.

Under the guise of his 'personnel' responsibilities for the company - second only to Henry Ford - Bennett's power expanded throughout the Ford Motor Company as he also carried out Henry's erratic instructions in sacking advertising personnel (usually Edsel's people), was concerned with press matters and even had input into Ford's sponsorship of particular radio shows.

After Edsel's untimely death in 1943, and with Henry President again but almost eighty years old and rapidly declining, Bennett's already great influence was enhanced as he manipulated Henry's senile resentments.

Nobody was ever sure if Harry Bennett's orders were given in his capacity as Henry's acknowledged deputy, or in his own right - so he was in a position of authority to virtually rule the huge company. Understandably, employees would wonder if Bennett actually had any real power at all. One Ford executive had the answer to that question: 'Mr Bennett is just so powerful that nobody around here wants to risk finding out.'

In 1943, a magazine writer asked Henry Ford who he considered the greatest man he had ever met. Henry replied by jerking his thumb across the car. The writer was confused, Ford was pointing to his short, bow-tied sidekick. The fading industrialist, who had rubbed shoulders with Thomas Edison, John Burroughs and

Presidents, could now imagine no one finer than Harry Bennett. Henry Ford actually favoured Harry Bennett for the next President of the Ford Motor Company.

Henry Ford did not want Edsel's son, Henry II, to follow him as President. The board drew up a codicil to Henry's will, placing the company in a trust for ten years after Henry's death - which Bennett personally burned, placed the ashes in an envelope and sent to Henry II.

Edsel's widow, Eleanor, is attributed to saying about Bennett: 'He killed my husband, he's not going to kill my son.'

Henry II also voiced the opinion the Harry Bennett had killed his father. He also felt strongly that Henry Ford had contributed to his father's illness, and death.

With Henry's health failing, and following pressure by his wife, Clara, and his daughter-in-law threatening to sell her 41.6% of the Company, Henry resigned and Henry II became President on September 21, 1945 with assurances from Henry of a 'completely free hand.'

Henry II instructed that a letter of resignation be drawn up. Then his phone rang, it was Bennett who said: 'I've got wonderful news for you. I've just talked your grandfather into making you president of the company.'

The next day the board held the most important meeting in its history. As the first sentence of Henry's resignation was read, Bennett, anticipating his dismissal, hurled an angry word of congratulations at Henry II, then bolted for the door. He was persuaded to stay.

Immediately after the brief meeting, Henry II went straight down to the basement and told Bennett he was through but that he could have a face-saving month-long directorship and would be kept on the payroll for eighteen months, and then pensioned.

Snarling, Henry's 'personal man' told young Henry: 'You're taking over a billion dollar organisation here that you haven't contributed a thing to!' He could have offered no better revelation into his personal character and aims.

For the rest of that fateful afternoon, the basement office was filled with smoke as Harry Bennett burned his records.

Bennett left for California a few days later and the Company said his future duties would be limited to a 'consultancy and advisory capacity'. One news story described Bennett as: 'about as romantic as a chicken coop door knob.' He resigned from the board in late October, 1945.

When Henry II drove to Fairlane to break the news to his grandfather, he braced himself for an explosion. After sitting in silence for a while Henry just said: 'Well, now Harry's back where he started from.'

Henry II proceeded to clean Bennett's cronies out of the company. After the Service Chief's departure, more than 1,000 employees were abruptly let go.

Bennett and his wife, Esther, retired to the foothills in Desert Hot Springs, California. In 1969 they moved to a ranch house in Las Vegas. In 1973, at aged 81, he was still strong, with a good memory and devoted his time to painting and home maintenance.

The previously snappily sartorial Harry Bennett was photographed in his declining years, in 1974, wearing his habitual toddler-like, shapeless orange jumpsuit and slippers.

Harry Bennett died on January 4, 1979 He was aged eighty-seven years. 88 •





# Notebook

**BIRTHDAYS for JANUARY: Birthstone: Garnet; Flower: Carnation**

Max Annear, Russell Brandis, Ian Dalby, Gary Eva, Barrie Guest, Edith Jeffree, James Pinnington, Matthew Read and Mavis Spencer. Birthday greetings to you all.

**NEW MEMBERS:** Welcome to our newest recruits Phillip & Sylvia Wemm,

██████████ Huntingdale, 6110. Ph. ██████████ These folk have just acquired a 1929 unrestored coupe. Look forward to seeing you at the next meeting.

**CHRISTMAS DINNER:** By all accounts the dinner was a great success. It was great to see some members along than don't often get to our regular meetings. A special mention of Dave & Ruth Lucas of Northam who made the journey to join us. We had a pleasant spot at the Perth Bowling Club, some of us didn't know it was hidden behind the hedge of oleanders. The evening was spent chatting and eating, both activities members of the Model A Club are good at. Several raffles were held through out the night with the prizes being carried off in triumph by the winners. The evening came to a close with all those who attended being in receipt of a Christmas decoration. Thanks again Dora.

**ON THE MOVE:** Farewell and good luck to Barrie & Gwen Guest on their eight week sojourn to the Eastern States. Barrie & Gwen will take in the Tamworth Country Music Festival and meet up with their boot scootin' cousins and then onto Queensland to catch up with friends. See you back here in February.

**JOKE OF THE MONTH:** Members are invited to send in their favourite joke to share with other readers. Please make them reasonably brief and suitable to be read by all, nothing too risqué. Here is a pet topic to start off the year.

"Filling in tax forms has always been a time-consuming job, so the income tax authorities have decided to simplify the paperwork. The form now consists of just two parts:

1) How much do you earn? 2) Send it."

**WANTED:** Volunteers to organize the monthly outings for 1997. If you would like to visit a particular place or see a particular thing, then you can share the experience with your favourite club. Please give your name and the month you have in mind to either myself or Germaine at the January meeting.

Now it's **TOOL TIME:**

**STAPLEGUN:** Invented by Charles Atlas for developing the forearm. This tool should never be used for trying to attach one item to another as staples are not made in that size.

**BATTERY ELECTROLYTE TESTER:** A handy tool for transferring sulphuric acid from a car battery to the inside of your toolbox after determining that your battery is dead as a doornail, just as you thought.

**HAPPY NEW YEAR** to all our members and their families. Have a safe & prosperous 1997 and see you all on the 26th January!



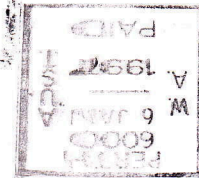
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### THE FIRST



### Motor Car - Manufacturer in Britain

... was probably the Arnold Motor Carriage Co of East Peckham, an offshoot of the firm of agricultural engineers, W. Arnold & Co founded in 1844. Walter Arnold was associated with Henry Hewetson in importing the first Benz car to England in November, 1894, and together they secured the agency for the sale of Benz cars in Britain. He then applied to Benz for a licence to manufacture cars under the Benz patents, and this was granted. The first Arnold-Benz engine was completed in the summer of 1896 and it was decided to proceed with the manufacture of a pilot series of 12 cars. The engine employed in the prototype, although based on the Benz patents, differed considerably in detail. The bore and stroke dimensions of the cylinders were altered to give an improved power output, and the cylinder-barrel and water jacket were separate castings ('wet-liner' construction), instead of a single integral casting as on the Benz engine.

The prototype Arnold, the first petrol driven car known definitely to have been manufactured for sale in England, made what is believed to have been its first extended road trial from East Peckham to Bromley on 13 November, 1896, the eve of the Emancipation Run to Brighton. Having proved its road-worthiness, it was taken back to the works and the Benz transmission system replaced by a similar Arnold designed belt drive.

The first customer, H.J. Dowsing of Ealing, took delivery before the end of 1896 - the car represented the total output of the British motor industry deliveries for that year.

Dowsing named his car 'Adam', to which he fitted the world's first electric self starter, and never parted with the car. It was later repaired by garages who replaced worn-out parts with modern equivalents. After Dowsing's death, the car was bought by Capt. E. de S. Colver, a pioneer in restoring 'old crocks' to original condition, in 1930. He contacted the Arnold firm and was delighted to find that they still retained a stock of original parts that were missing. He ran the car until his death in 1971, when it was purchased by a member of the Arnold family.

A brochure stated that: 'these carriages will ascend hills of 1 in 10'. Capt. Colver is on record as saying that while this statement may have been literally true, it would perhaps have been fairer to mention that they were capable of climbing such a gradient provided both driver and passenger were out in the road pushing from the rear.

Finding that the manufacture of the 12 prototype cars produced a loss of £2,000, the Arnold Motor Carriage Co decided against further production. They continued in business as motor agents until the turn of the century, before disposing of their interest in the imported Benz to Henry Hewetson. W. Arnold & Son Ltd continues today. BS •

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ARE NOW DUE AS AT 1ST JANUARY  
GIVE THEM TO *GERMAINE* AT THE  
NEXT MEETING OR POST THEM TO:  
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