



# VALVE CLATTER



**THE EARLY FORD V-8 CLUB OF AMERICA**  
Regional Group 96

<http://clubs.hemmings.com/v-8northernvirginia/>

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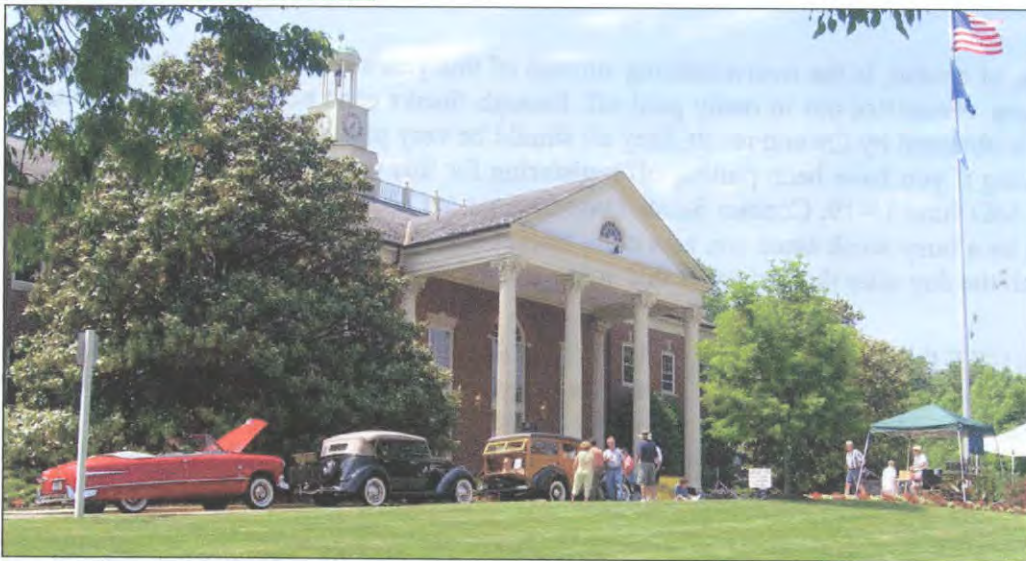
June 2004

Cliff Green & John Girman Editor

RECIPIENT OF THE 2003 "GOLDEN QUILL" AWARD FROM OLD CARS WEEKLY

FIRST PLACE AWARD, EFVSCA NEWSLETTER CONTEST 2003

## FAIRFAX CITY CAR SHOW



By all accounts, we had a very successful show this year. More importantly, it seems that the new location gives us the potential for future growth. I had hoped to have 100 cars, and we ended up with around 125. I take this occasion to thank Barbara Westrate and Patty Girman for their help and hard work to get out all of the letters and answering the phone; John Girman, Don Lombard, Cliff Green, Dave Gunnarson, Hank DuBois and Bill Simons made major contributions with their efforts. Our President, Steve Pieper, provided the leadership needed to make this a success. Finally, those who volunteered for various tasks on "game day" helped as well. We had twelve Model A's and a special interest car from the Northern Virginia Community College automotive program. We also enjoyed full support, including financial, from Fairfax City and the Fairfax Downtown Business Coalition. The most fun was Club Member, Bill Paris, winning the Best in Show trophy, picked by Vern Parker. Bill recently started attending our meetings, and this was the first time he showed his vehicle. Way to go Bill! Thanks again to all who participated in this First Class event! *Dave Westrate*

# UP FRONT WITH THE PRESIDENT

## JUNE 2004



Here it is June and the half way mark for the year is upon us.... the club's activity calendar, however, is just beginning. As we go to press, John Girman is putting the final details together for the drive-in overnight tour. Quite a number of folks have signed up but there is always room for more ...I hope you plan on attending. Speaking of John, this issue is a product of his good work since Cliff is away in Europe this week.

The big news, of course, is the overwhelming success of this year's car show. The huge efforts that Dave Westrate's show committee put in really paid off. Enough thanks can't be stated for their undertakings. If gratification is obtained by the end result, they all should be very pleased. Thanks goes out to all involved. Time is pressing if you have been putting off registering for this year's Eastern National Meet being held in Frederick, MD June 15-19. Contact Sandi Zimmermann at (710) 560-0237 if you haven't already. That will prove to be a busy week since we, as a club, traditionally meet at the Father's Day Sully Meet which happens to fall the day after the Nationals this year.

**DON'T FORGET** this month's meeting is being held at the **Clark House** rather than our usual location. Directions are elsewhere in this issue. You are the program this month. Everyone is asked to bring an old auto related show and tell item to share with your fellow members. Some of the best have been items that are unusual and that you yourself may not know exactly what it is or what it does. Letting the members guess always brings up some interesting stories.

A big welcome is extended to our latest members: Van and Nancy Hendry from Centreville (1940 conv.) and Bill Bower from Marshall, VA. Bill owns a 1935 sedan delivery with plans to retro rod it.

Start planning now for the annual summer picnic held next month (July 13th, 6:00 pm) at the Nottoway sheltered picnic area, rain or shine. A \$5 per adult contribution will be collected at the picnic to help defray some of the costs. Bring your own drinks and if desired, a desert to share. Please call me (or e-mail) with the number in your party (703) 860-2801 or [swrcpieper@erols.com](mailto:swrcpieper@erols.com). Hope to see everyone there, Steve

*[Asst. Ed. Note: I appreciate Steve's thanks but must point out that, even when I put together an issue, Cliff Green typically supplies me with an issue that is already at least half completed. He makes it easy to assist.]*

## MERCURY IN THE 1940's Part II

Jim Roebuck

"Normalcy," of sorts, returned in 1945 as the Ford Motor Company was allowed to resume civilian passenger car production on July 3, 1945, after V-E Day but while the War in the Pacific was still raging. "Normalcy" was slow in coming; pent-up demand for consumer goods along with shortages of raw materials drove up prices. Increases in prices led to labor unrest. And the Ford Motor Company was reeling from years of mismanagement because of "Old Henry's" stubbornness. And the long-suffering President of the Ford Motor Company, Edsel Ford, succumbed to stomach cancer and undulant fever in 1943 at age 49. The future of the Ford Motor Company was very much in doubt. Edsel's untried son, Henry II, stepped up to the plate.

In spite of it all, the slightly modified 1946 Mercurys finally enjoyed their formal debut to the public on December 13, 1945. Continued production problems delayed their general availability until February of '46. In those days, demand for new cars was so great, and the inventory so small, that you put your name on a list and waited. And waited. And waited...

The "new" '46 models throughout the industry were nothing more than warmed-over '42s. But the new Fords, Mercurys, and Lincolns still looked pretty good. The Mercury lineup, introduced with the slogan "An Invitation to Step Up with Mercury!," included 5 models at first, the same as '42 but with the 3-passenger Coupe no longer in the line. Later, the wood-bodied Sportsman Convertible Coupe was added, a beautiful car which was Henry Ford II's own idea. He was inspired by the pre-war Chrysler Town and Country models, and had a wood-bodied Ford Model A made for himself. Like I said, a beautiful car, but sales did not exactly set the world on fire. Selling only about 3,000 units in three years in the Ford model, the Mercury Sportsman enjoyed a 1946 production of all of 205 units before the it was discontinued late in '46. Today, it is thought that only three of these highly sought-after models exist, and only one of those is an original Mercury Sportsman. In the fall of 2003, a 1946 Mercury Sportsman - I don't know whether it was the original or one of the clones - was sold at auction for a cool \$86,000.

(Would I like to own one of those beauties? Does the moon orbit the Earth?)

Prices on cars shot up during the year. The basic Sedan (Tudor) was originally priced at \$951 at introduction, and by late 1946 was up to \$1,448! And you think we had inflation in the 1970s! No wonder so many workers went on strike. Mercury ended the model year in February 1947 with a production run of 86,603 cars - a most respectable total considering all the difficulties.

If the '46 models were just warmed-over '42s, the 1947 models were even less of a change. The grill surround was

changed from painted to chrome, and the hood trim was a bit different, and those were about the only obvious exterior



differences between the 1946 and '47 models. And those changes weren't made until April of 1947 - the month that the Old Man Himself, Henry Ford, passed away in his sleep, at 83 years of age.

The Sedan (Tudor) was dropped from the line, for reasons that are beyond me (they sold well in 1946, with worldwide production of 13,108 units in '46), but it probably had something to do with cutting costs. So the '47 Mercury lineup consisted of only four body styles: the attention-grabbing Convertible Coupe; the big Station Wagon; the attractive Sedan-Coupe; and the workhorse Town Sedan (Four Door). The 8-month model year saw production at 86,363 Mercurys.

The company was working very hard to offer an all-new, postwar model for 1948, but as we know, they didn't ... quite ... make it. Continuing materials shortages and not enough time to test the new models pushed back the introductions of the new Mercurys (and Fords, and Lincolns) until the 1949 model year. So the 1948 models are sort of "orphans;" they were regarded as outdated, and FoMoCo wanted to get rid of them, but they had to sell SOMETHING. The 1948 models "debuted" in November of '47, and this time there was no change at all from the 1947 models. The lineup soldiered on with the same four models as in 1947.

If the Ford Motor Company didn't quite make their deadline for the all new postwar passenger car lineup, they came pretty close. Factory shutdown for re-tooling for the new Mercurys and Lincolns, at least, must have taken place in March of '48, because the debut of the '49 Mercury was April 29, 1948! So, in a puny 5-month (or so) model year, the old prewar Merc ended with 1948 production of 50,268 units. (Of that total, 24,283 were Town Sedans. And I'm the proud owner of one of those 24,283...)

(Part III next month)

## HOT ROD HISTORY

*Al Edwards*

At our last meeting, an enthusiastic and interesting slide show was presented by club member Ken Gross, a noted car historian who has been involved in the "Hot Rod" scene since the 1950s.

Ken first came across hot rodding as a young man living in the Boston, Massachusetts's area. Like many other non-California communities where this new sport was mushrooming, there were no "Dry Lakes" to permit hot rodders to prove the raw speed of their creations. Ken says that instead, local rodders took to proving their designs on sanctioned drag strips (wherever they were available), running against official timing devices - or, unfortunately, (and not infrequently), running against each other on local streets and highways. The hot rod scene spawned dozens of car clubs with the 1932 Ford Roadster and its close counterpart, the "Deuce Coupe" as the standard.



Ken continued to be a fan of the sport as he went through college, lived in New York, and Hawaii, served in Viet Nam, and then lived in Australia. In 1997, Ken and his family moved to Los Angeles, California, the "Mecca" for hot rodders.

The latter move was significant for Ken, whose background in business, coupled with his knowledge of and enthusiasm for cars, led to his being chosen to serve a five-year term as

Director of the Los Angeles-based Petersen Automotive Museum. The museum had universal appeal to all devotees of automotive history. During this period, Ken got "up close and personal" with many of the original pioneers of the hot rod movement. According to Ken, he was privileged at that time to live in a world where "his heroes became his friends". He was also able to care for and even drive restored incarnations of vehicles that had graced the cover of many early Hot Rod magazines.

As his knowledge and sources of information have grown, Ken has involved himself deeply in chronicling the history of hot rodding. He serves on the board of The American Hot Rod Archives Foundation, a group that has interviewed and videotaped over 80 hot rod pioneers - a truly remarkable and historical achievement.



There were too many cars pictured in Ken's talk to comment on each one of them; however, each could be (and probably has been) the subject of numerous write-ups and magazine articles outlining the performance of the car, the ingenuity of design and the absolute craftsmanship of the builder. Ken showed 75 excellent color slides of some 25 of these historic cars, and provided commentary on each one. Assisted by 40 other slides provided by Jim McDaniel, Ken and Jim provided narrative covering much of the early years of hot rodding.





Among the outstanding cars shown were:

- The Jim Khougaz street and lakes-racing channeled '32 Roadster;
- Pete Henderson's '32 Highboy, the hot rod that raced and beat the quarter horse back in the late 1940's;
- The mysterious lost (and subsequently found), Eddie Dye '29 roadster, with a hand-crafted race car nose by the talented Whitey Clayton, and bodywork by Gil and Al Ayala of East Los Angeles;
- The Bob McGee '32 roadster, owned by Bruce Meyer;
- The ex-Ray Brown '32 Ford Highboy that rodding pioneer and racer, Ray Brown drove to work at Eddie Meyer's Speed Shop in West L.A., drove at the Dry Lakes, and even drove on skiing trips to Big Bear, North of L.A. This car is a Senior AACA Winner in Class 24J.



For anyone in the club who missed the talk, there's good news! Ken has just completed a book, entitled, "Historic Hot Rods - 25 Cars That Set The Style" which will be in print by the end of the year. Whether you are a classic car enthusiast, a dedicated restorer, or a hot rodder who sees an old car as an exhilarating platform for modifications and improvements that stretch the limits, you'll enjoy his book.



### ??? SHOW & TELL ??? June 14 Meeting

Got something that you are proud to share? Want to show something off or maybe figure out what it is? Bring it to the next program and let the expert audience share in the fun. While old Ford items are what we are about, it's fine to bring non-V8 item too, sometimes these get the most interest. If you have something to show off, or maybe sell, but you don't want to talk to the group, bring them anyway and display it in the break area. The purpose of this program is to have fun and share the V8 experience.

FROM THE LITERATURE COLLECTION OF THE EDITOR "FORD AT THE FAIR"



This item was newly purchased at the Winchester Flea Market. I was one vendor ahead of the grand master of literature collectors, Chad Coombs. I have several pieces of Rouge literature, but none about Ford at the Exhibitions or the World Fairs – this is another sideline altogether.

We know that Henry shunned the first Century of Progress at Chicago in 1933 and had his own show in Detroit. But in 1934, he changed his mind to participate at Chicago, jumping in with both feet, so to speak. Not to be outdone by other auto manufacturers, he built the famed Rotunda, shaped like a ring of gears with two wings on the side.

The first page of this 22 page 8 x 5 booklet (a handy size to retain in one's pocket) opened with this statement: "This booklet is presented by the Ford Motor Company as a souvenir of your visit to the Exposition and as a reminder of some of the significant things you have seen." There it is in a nut shell. So this booklet was probably handed to the thousands of visitors as they came in the main door of the Rotunda, yet how many remain? My example is creased slightly in the middle, but otherwise in very good condition. It has been in someone's desk for 70 years waiting to surface!

In the middle of the booklet is a two-page map of what there is to see. In the Rotunda itself, there was displayed the "Drama of Transportation" with horseless carriages, and the evolution of the Ford car. In the center was the world globe with a railing made of V8 symbols. Off the circle into the smaller wing were early Ford machine shops, soybean research and early-industrialized barn, etc.



The mail hall was reserved for the supplier of Ford to show their wares. Familiar names like Kelsey-Hayes wheel Corp, Bendix, United Engineering and Foundry, Timken Detroit axles, Detroit Gasket, US Rubber, Stewart –Warner and of course the body manufactures Briggs and Murray. I am sure that Henry

encouraged them to come and exhibit.

The feature display – the one that every visitor would remember, was the three 1934 Ford Tudors suspended by wires "from the rim of a centrally supported welded steel wheel such as used on Ford V8's. Actually the wheel is strong enough to support fourteen cars having a total weight of twenty tons."

This booklet concludes "The purpose of the entire Exposition is educational, presenting in graphic, entertaining form, the fascinating story of the motor car which plays such an important part in the life of American people."

FOR THE LADIES

Quoted from the January 1941 "Ford News" –"At annual automobile shows, fashions keynoted the introduction of the 1941 automobiles. At the suggestion of a leading fashion magazine, automobile designers created women's clothes to match the new cars. Utilizing distinguished lines in the new models, stylists designed a Mercury 8 sport dress and its accessories."



"The striped jacket, the bumper belt and the hubcap hand bag were fashioned to match the fitting of the 1941 Mercury 8."

Now you know what to wear at a car show!! Wendy Pieper, has been seen in fashions to match her Metropolitan – color coordinated to the little car!



## BACK PAGE PICTURE

Vern Parker of the *Washington Times* selected our own Bill Paris' 1955 Mercury Montclair as the Best of Show. This beautiful car has factory air conditioning! This is the second year in a row that Vern has chosen a Merc.!



### John Tutz

3305 Pocahontas Drive  
Edgewater, MD 21037  
410-798-4249 [baylife07@cs.com](mailto:baylife07@cs.com)

### Van C. Hendry

14504 Meeting Camp Road  
Centreville, VA 20121  
703-968-8427  
1940 Ford Convert

### Tom and Vicki Grady

3707 Aquia Drive  
Stafford, VA 22554  
540-720-2137 [t.jgtoy1@msn.com](mailto:t.jgtoy1@msn.com)  
1951 Custom Tudor

## SELL/WANT

**FOR SALE:** 1952 Ford Truck, F350, original state, dual tires, 2-speed rear axle, power take-off, tow truck bed, call Nelson Nestor at 703-361-1401

**FOR SALE:** 12x20x8 "Cover-It" Instant Garage w/ zipper door front and solid back panel. Bought about 4 years ago from a club member but instead built a barn-type shed. The frame has been assembled once (and since disassembled) but the vinyl covering has never been on it. Covering is still like new. Have all the parts. Asking \$100 or best offer. See top photo at [http://coverit.com/residential/res\\_classic.html](http://coverit.com/residential/res_classic.html). Jim McDaniel [jim.mcd@cox.net](mailto:jim.mcd@cox.net) or 703-569-6699.

**FOR SALE:** I have a friend that has a set of 1938 VA plates that he wants to sell - not sure what they are worth. Since they are 1938, someone in your club may be interested. Paul E. Gauthier 703-323-0009 or at [gokie@cox.net](mailto:gokie@cox.net).

**WANTED:** Looking for the plain, grey cardboard used for trunk lining and kick panels in our early V8s. Anybody know of a source for this material? Thanks. Jason Javaras at (540) 786-5819 or [JJsFords@aol.com](mailto:JJsFords@aol.com)

**MEMBER UPDATE:** I sold my 1947 Mercury for the asking price of \$8,995 through my ad in Hemmings. The purchaser is a Belgian gentlemen who keeps a collection of 1940's cars in a rural area south of Montreal. He has paid for the old Merc and will send a car carrier to pick it up in June. I was sad to sell it, but it has been a great friend who introduced me to the NVRG and its wonderful band of old car brothers. Steve Dawkins

## SUNNY WINCHESTER! Editor

Winchester finally had a day to be remembered, not one of rain, but cool temperatures, bright sun and dry field. Selley, Amster and Green toured together with the windows rolled up most of the way!

The Flea Market was substantial with members Chad Coombs and Bob Wild selling their wares. I was able to obtain a desirable piece of early Ford literature at ½ price and a headlight wiring harness for the '36 for only \$10. The harness had lots of "patina" with flexible wires and loom, which will be perfect replacement for my original car. I have always been able to find a "Goodie" at Winchester.

Member cars spotted on the field were Myrick's, Blum's, Burns', Hardesty's, and Welch's. Members wandering around: Clift & Judy Hardin, Buzzy Potter, Nick Arrington, Bill & Jo Ann Fox, Jerry Lunt, Jerry Hill, and Alan Wheilhan.



## Vintage Car Lovers... **CAR SHOW**



**14<sup>th</sup> Annual Antique Car Show**  
ALL MAKES & MODELS OF VEHICLES WELCOME  
Sunday, July 11, 2004 8am-2pm  
Longwood Community Center  
19300 Georgia Avenue, Brookeville, MD 20833  
(map on back)

FREE Spectator Admission & Parking  
Clean Air-Conditioned Rest Rooms  
Door Prizes Throughout The Day  
Food & Cold Drinks  
Flea Market



Car Show open to all:  
Cars  
Trucks  
Customs  
Street Rods  
Motor Cycles  
Pedal Cars  
(Display Only)

For information call: Sandi Zimmermann or Lois Krupinsky  
410-560-0237 or 410-833-8269

Dash Plaques given to the first 200 registered vehicles on the show field  
(To be judged, vehicles must be registered before 11:30 a.m.)





# V8 CALENDAR NVRG



## JUNE

- 5 & 6 **NVRG Drive-in Movie Night and Virginia Wine Festival**
- 6 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Kena Temple Car Show  
Arlington Blvd., Fairfax
- 8 **NVRG Membership Meeting**  
Program: Member Show & Tell  
Refreshments: Mike Mote
- 16-19 **EFV8CA Eastern National Meet**  
Frederick, MD
- 20 Sully Car Show
- 29 NVRG Board of Directors

## JULY

- 11 National Capital V8 Car Show  
14<sup>th</sup> Annual, Longwood Rec Ctr  
Brookville, MD
- 13 **NVRG Annual Family Picnic**  
Nottoway Park, Vienna 6pm
- 23-25 Summer Carlsile
- 27 **NVRG BOD**

## AUGUST

- 6-8 41<sup>ST</sup> Annual Awkscht Fescht,  
Macungie, PA
- 7 Summer Thunder Cruise In,  
Purcellville, 540-687-4852
- 10 **General Membership Meeting**  
Program: Rouge Factory, Cliff Green  
Refreshments: Tom Lumpkin
- 15 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Francis Scott Key  
Antique Auto Club, Frederick, MD
- 31 **NVRG BOD**

## September

- 6 10 am - 3 pm, Cruising Clifton,  
Custom Cruisers of No. VA &  
Clifton Lions Club, at Town of  
Clifton
- 11 AACA Sugarloaf Mt..Region car  
show, Mt Airy, MD. 8 am - 4 pm
- 14 **General Membership Meeting**
- 18 Bull Run AACA 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Edgar  
Rohr Memorial Antique Car Show,  
Prince William Fair, Grounds



**JUNE MEETING - "SHOW AND TELL"**

1939 Columbia Axle exhibit - Worlds Fair



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**NORTHERN VIRGINIA REGIONAL GROUP**



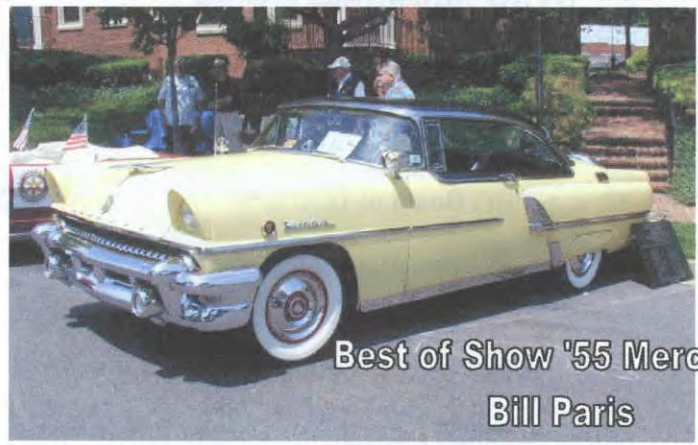
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Historian : **Don Lombard** 703-690-7971  
Newsletter: **Cliff Green** 703-426-2662  
Web master: **kenb@headstartinfo.org**

**CLARK HOUSE**  
**FOR JUNE**  
**MEETING**

6332 Barcroft Mews Drive, next  
to Lake Barcroft Shopping Center,  
& Barcroft Mews Townhomes,  
Annandale. 7:30 pm



Best of Show '55 Merc  
Bill Paris



**FIRST CLASS MAIL**

Regional Group 96  
Early Ford V8 Club  
Post Office Box 1195  
Vienna, Virginia, 22183