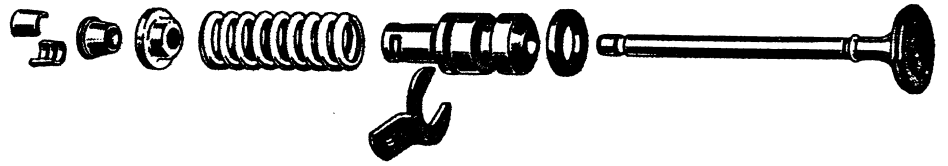




Valve Clatter



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

www.nvrg.org

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October 2008

Jim LaBaugh Editor

A visit to the President's House

Imagine driving in your Early Ford V8 over hill and over dale miles west of Washington, D.C. and then being able to walk on stone floors of the original White House. That is just what some 40 members of the Northern Virginia Regional Group did in late September. A nor'easter that stretched from the Carolinas to New England did not deter the Ford faithful as they ventured forth to Oak Hill, the home of the 5th President of the United States, James Monroe. NVRG member Bill Simons arranged for a visit to this wonderful mansion, which was the first stop on our September tour of the Virginia countryside. **Bill and Liz Simons** led the way in their '34 Tudor, along with **Frankie Martin** in his '51 Custom Tudor.

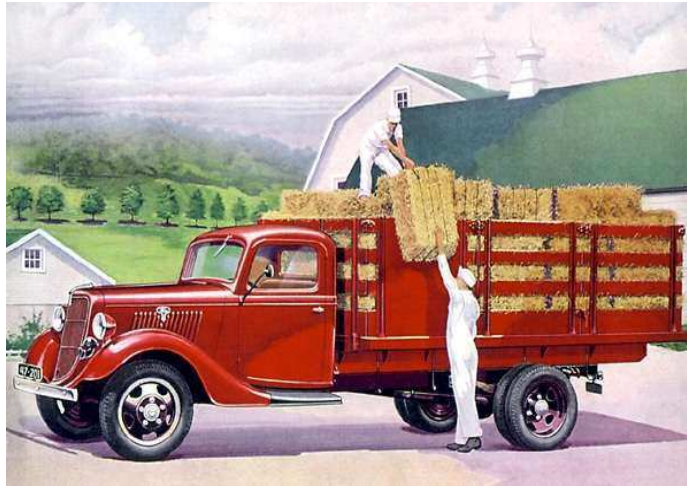


After driving over roads that Jame Monroe would have ridden in a horse and carriage, the group was greeted by owners Gayle and Tom DeLashmutt. The house and grounds are private and not open to the public. The hosts do, however, entertain historical society, garden club, and select school groups. Gayle is a past president of the Mosby Heritage Area Association and active

in the Fauquier and Loudon Garden Clubs. The tour began with Tom leading the way around to the back of the house where a spectacular garden rolls down the hillside. The path to the back of the house and paths within the garden are paved with stone quarried on the 1,300 acre grounds of the property. Those stones include dinosaur footprints, dated to approximately 250 million years before the present. As Tom pointed these features on the walk to the garden, he noted that the best ones are found in the house - something we would see later on the tour.



The house was purchased by Tom's father in 1948 and he delighted one and all with tales of growing up on the sprawling grounds (*continued on page 3*).



October 2008

Sarah and I had the fortune to attend the NVRG tour of the Monroe House arranged by **Bill Simons**. We were just in awe of the beauty of the home and grounds and felt surrounded by history. This was followed by a nice picnic and tour of the Doukenie Winery. It was another reminder of how amazingly blessed our club is to have members like Bill who provide such a rich tapestry of unique and unusual experiences that just aren't available otherwise and make membership in our organization something special. Speaking of special events and people, I just have to make notice of the hilarious definitions supplied by **Hank Amster**. This issue has a continuation of the list, which is sure to put a smile on your face - thanks Hank!

Speaking of tours, next month is a trip to Gettysburg and more for the annual Lebkicker Tour in memory of club member **Dick Lebkicker**. Check out the notice in this issue and join if you can, it promises to be another great tour. Thanks go to **Ken Burns** and **Don Lombard** for planning, organizing and field checking the route, attractions, accommodations and more to make it a first class event.

It's last call for Board of Directors nominations. It's a great way to get to know some great people, doesn't take much time and it's fun too. If you are interested, let me know right away.

Tom Lumpkin is still recovering from an illness, so please keep him in your thoughts.

It's that special time of year to lace up your walking shoes and head to the fields of Hershey. The weather has changed from summer and the angle of light from the sun is lower, sure signs for the faithful to migrate. I have to admit, it's one of the highlights of my year. The smell of old oil and grease changing to the perfume of chocolate from the Hershey factory as the winds swirl, old car parts, new and old acquaintances, life doesn't get much better than that. If you do attend, come on down to the campground near the old farm house and join us for the daily happy hour. Also, please gather at the Early Ford V8 Club tent, which is right next to the Dennis Carpenter tent, at 1 pm on Thursday as we present the Early Ford V8 Foundation with a \$4,800 donation and have a photo opportunity. Check out more Hershey details in this issue.

Hope to see you in Hershey or at the next meeting.

Yours in V8'ing,

Dave

A visit to the President's House (continued)

The grounds originally were granted to Lord Fairfax by the British Crown in 1727. The approximately 2,000 acres of the estate were obtained by James Monroe and his brother, who were left the property by the previous owner. The house and grounds passed to Monroe's daughters, and after a succession of owners, now rests in the DeLashmutt family.



The five-terrace garden had been completely overgrown by the time the DeLashmutts began their stewardship of the property. Tom recalled seeing tractor in the lowest portion of the garden clearing the overgrowth and only being able to see the top of the head of the nephew driving the tractor. Tom pointed out that the garden was not something that dates to Monroe's time, but is a later addition. During the Civil War, the house and grounds were occupied by Federal troops seeking to curtailing Mosby's Raiders as well as a stop on the campaign that ultimately culminated in the battle of Gettysburg. The house was relatively untouched because of General George Meade's orders when he and his staff occupied the house. A fireplace mantle was damaged when one of Meade's staff hammered at the marble with the butt of his pistol as they were leaving for destiny in Pennsylvania. The mantle was one of two given to Monroe by Lafayette in tribute to the fact that Monroe's wife saved Lafayette's wife from the guillotine during the French Revolution. Evidently the day Mme Lafayette was to be executed Mrs. Madison paid a visit to her in prison. The

visit lasted so long that Mme Lafayette was spared that day. The authorities did not want to disturb Mrs. Monroe as she was the wife of the U.S. Ambassador and France valued its relation with the U.S. The visits continued for several days while negotiations were underway for Mme Lafayette's ultimate release.

The tour of the house began in the lowest level, which is entered from the garden. The family takes meals in a wonderfully cozy dining room surrounded by Monroe memorabilia. On the way to the stairs to see the upper part of the house are the stones from the original White House, which was burned in 1814 by the British. Tom explained the stones languished in a warehouse until the time that Monroe had his brick mansion built, a project begun in 1820. Times were difficult because of the panic of 1819 caused by the burst of a real-estate investment bubble. The builder of the house searched high and low for materials to finish the house and in that search located and procured the stones the NVRG walked on to continue the tour. Monroe lived on the grounds prior to the construction of the main house in the simple frame house that is adjacent to the brick mansion.



Once on the upper floors, we were shown the entry hall, the Monroe's bedroom, the library, and the dining room. The formal dining room is twice the size of the original wing as both wings of the mansion were extended in the 1920s. The half of the dining room closest to the central portion of the building had originally been Monroe's office where he wrote the Monroe doctrine. Just off the dining hall was an enclosed porch containing the best dinosaur print. After many wonderful stories from our gracious host, the quintessential Virginia Gentleman, we thanked our host for his hospitality and continued on the road to our next destination (continued on page 5).



Midget Racer Story

by Eric Sumner

About a month ago I received an email from Clem Clement. In it were several pictures of boxes of parts, and various other pieces of metal, none readily recognizable to me. Clem wrote that these boxes contained what he thought was an old race car, and asked "You interested?" Now any one who knows me, knows the answer to that question. From the pictures we were able to deduct that it was a Midget Racer of unknown make or year. Although we saw a V8 60 block, we did not see a frame or body panels. After a couple weeks went by, myself, along with Hank Dubois, Clem, and Clem's friend Dan, were able to get together and go inspect the parts in person. Upon arrival we went through the boxes and rummaged around the garage where it was stored and found the frame and the rest of the body panels. We put all the pieces in one area for removal later that week.



At first I thought to myself, "What am I doing?" I know nothing about a Midget Racer much less how one goes together. When we had it all loaded in the back of my truck, it sure didn't look like much. When Hank and I got back to my garage, we set the frame on jack stands and started to try and piece the puzzle together. After about an hour we had the main body panels loosely secured to the frame and then leaned the wheels up next to it and it didn't look so bad.

Through Clem's help I was able to purchase this car from the estate of the previous owner. He was a pilot during WWII and raced these cars after the war had ended. During the weeks since, I've researched these cars trying to figure out just what I'm dealing with. Some may have heard of Frank Kurtis who was himself a racer starting in the early thirties. By the late thirties Kurtis was building Midget Race cars for others. After the war another company, Solar, who was in the airplane business, built 100 cars in an effort to stay in business after war time

production ended. They would eventually go back to airplane parts when Kurtis racers became the preferred cars on the short dirt tracks across the country. This form of racing became very popular during the Forties because it was fairly inexpensive to go racing. If you did not have the money to order one of the Kurtis cars in complete form with a famous "Offy" engine, you could order the car in kit form and supply your own engine, the most common choice on a budget.....the Ford V8 60. It was small enough to fit and could be hopped up to double the horsepower. If you were not able to afford one of the 500 kits Kurtis sold, there were plans available in various magazines of the time. A common platform started with a '28 or '29 Chevrolet frame. Just follow the instructions, cut, weld, bend and shape. Major pieces were purchased from local speed shops and in your back yard garage you assembled your own Midget Racer.



The last example is what I believe I have. Lots of gas welding is evident throughout the body and there are some homemade parts. Hank believes the frame to be a '28-'29 Chevrolet although highly modified. After all is said and done I'm glad to have it sitting in my garage, and so are my boys Eli and Nate. "Is this a car for kids?" they asked, "For now.....sure, why not."



September Tour (continued
from page 3)

The second leg of the September tour was led by **Hank and Cindy Dubois**. They led the way for the NVRG caravan as it headed north past Purcellville along Route 690 to the Doukenie Winery. This vineyard is nestled at the base of Short Hill and is owned by Hank's physician. The spacious grounds surrounding the Winery included a large pond, acres and acres of grapes, and picnic benches and tents, for picnicking during inclement weather. Fortunately as the group headed towards the Winery, the clouds encountered closer to the coast from the nor'easter thinned out and intermittent sunshine warmed those eating a picnic lunch.



vintage. At the conclusion of the tour of the vats and barrels, the group assembled in the main building for good conversation and some tasted the variety of wines that have won praise and awards in local and national competitions. The Winery had been called Wyndham Farms, but a dispute with a major Australian label led the owners to chose the new name of Doukenie.

Among the wines were reds, whites, and raspberry and blackberry specialty wines. Our vintner assured us that their operation only uses freshly picked raspberries and blackberries in the production of the specialty wines. It had



After lunch, the group was ready for a tour of the facilities. The chief vintner showed us the devices that are used to wash the grapes before they are crushed and put in vats. The white grapes are fermented in refrigerated stainless steel vats. The red grapes are fermented in oak barrels. The white grapes had been harvested just a day before our arrival as the vintner informed us that white grapes, when ripe, have to be picked dry as a rain will turn them to mush on the vine.

been another great tour, thanks to Hank Dubois and Bill Simons. We are lucky to have such tour guides in the club as well as the Virginia countryside to wander through.

One of the red grapes Cabernet Franc does particularly well in Virginia wine country. It used to be grown and blended with other types of grapes, but now is grown in such quantities that it is practical for it to be its own



September Meeting report

by Cliff Green

After a short discussion on upcoming tours, Hershey, the Lebkicker, and the 50/50 drawing, our stalwarts of the club retired for refreshments.

John Sweet introduced Bob Ford (no relation) of Garage Design Source who began his interesting explanation of what he does for a living via a Power Point presentation. Basically his company makes a place for anything and everything in your garage. Cabinets, walls, flooring and storage accessories.

He has five years in the garage organization business. His brochure states Your garage deserves the best. Increase the value of your home with storage solutions that will make your garage more attractive, plus add more function and versatility to your home. Get organized fast and easy at an affordable price.



The first of the images were of the g runge garages typical of what you see around the neighborhood, with the expensive cars out side and the junk inside. And TA-DAH, the after shots of what can be done even park the cars in there.

What Bob recommends is to go thru the stuff and use the triage system: trash, charity, keep. If you havent touched it in six months OUT! A dirty environment begets clutter said Bob.

His company will do the entire project or help the DIY (Do it yourself), recommending what products to use and where to find them. They will make a plan to follow. There are four systems, which he explained: Floor/ceiling/walls/cabinets.



Some of the floors were a knock out! Bob does not recommend painting the floors because it will come up and then you have a problem trying to remove the rest. The least expensive is the polyvinyl which is cut wall to wall. Next are Floor tiles which are easy to install and repair and last, which requires the most preparation, is the seamless poly and epoxy coatings. Bob said that the directions on the epoxy can has to be followed explicitly for good results.



One neat trick was storage between the overhead door tracks. A cabinet on pulleys can be lifted overhead. Likewise equipment like snow blowers and wheel barrels can be hoisted up and out of the way. Ask Dave Gunnarson where his truck cab went!!

Following his interesting presentation, Bob opened the floor to many questions from the NVRG. We appreciated him coming and for John in making the arrangements. Go to www.garagedesignsource.com for more information.



Amster's Dictionary

by Hank Amster

HYDRAULIC FLOOR JACK: Used for lowering an automobile to the ground after you have installed your new brake shoes, trapping the jack handle firmly under the bumper.

EIGHT-FOOT LONG YELLOW PINE 4X4: Used for levering an automobile upward off of a trapped hydraulic jack handle.

TWEEZERS: A tool for removing wood splinters and wire wheel wires.

E-Z OUT BOLT AND STUD EXTRACTOR: A tool ten times harder than any known drill bit that snaps neatly off in bolt holes thereby ending any possible future use.

RADIAL ARM SAW: A large stationary power saw primarily used by most shops to scare neophytes into choosing another line of work.

TWO-TON ENGINE HOIST: A tool for testing the maximum tensile strength of everything you forgot to disconnect.

CRAFTSMAN 1/2 x 24-INCH SCREW DRIVER: A very large pry bar that inexplicably has an accurately machined screwdriver tip on the end opposite the handle.

AVIATION METAL SNIPS: See hacksaw (last issue).

TROUBLE LIGHT: The home mechanic's own tanning booth. Sometimes called a drop light, it is a good source of vitamin D, 'the sunshine vitamin,' which is not otherwise found under cars at night. Health benefits aside, its main purpose is to consume 40-watt light bulbs at about the same rate that 105mm howitzer shells might be used during, say, the first few hours of the Battle of the Bulge. More often dark than light, its name is somewhat misleading. The accessory socket within the base, has been permanently rendered useless, unless requiring a source of 117vac power to shock the mechanic senseless.

PHILLIPS SCREWDRIVER: Normally used to stab the vacuum seals under lids, opening old-style paper-and-tin oil cans and splashing oil on your shirt; but can also be used, as the name implies, to strip out Phillips screw heads.

STRAIGHT SCREWDRIVER: A tool for opening paint cans. Sometimes used to convert common slotted screws into non-removable screws.

AIR COMPRESSOR: A machine that takes energy produced in a coal-burning power plant 200 miles away and transforms it into compressed air that travels by hose to a Chicago Pneumatic impact gun that grips rusty bolts which were last over-tightened 40 years ago by someone at VW, and instantly rounds off their heads. Also used to quickly snap off lug nuts.

PRY BAR: A tool used to crumple the metal surrounding that clip or bracket you needed to remove in order to replace a 50 cent part.

HOSE CUTTER: A tool used to make hoses too short.

HAMMER: Originally employed as a weapon of war, the hammer nowadays is used as a kind of divining rod to locate the most expensive parts adjacent to the object we are trying to hit.

MECHANIC'S KNIFE: Used to open and slice through the contents of cardboard cartons delivered to your front door; works particularly well on contents such as seats, vinyl records, liquids in plastic bottles, collector magazines, refund checks, and rubber or plastic parts. Especially useful for slicing work clothes, but only while in use. It is also useful for removing large chunks of human flesh from the user's hands.

DAMMIT TOOL: Any handy tool that you grab and throw across the garage while yelling 'DAMMIT' at the top of your lungs. It is also, most often, the next tool that you will need after a really big hammer.



A **Hershey review** is the program for our **October meeting**. Mark your calendar for **Tuesday, October 14th** at **7:00pm** at the Hunter House in Nottoway Park, Vienna. For those going to Hershey, come to Carpenter's tent at 1:00 pm on Thursday when the club will present the Ford Foundation a check for \$4800 to help with the museum building. The Ford Foundation tent is next to Carpenter's.

'08 Lebkicker Fall Tour

October 24-26



Friday, October 24

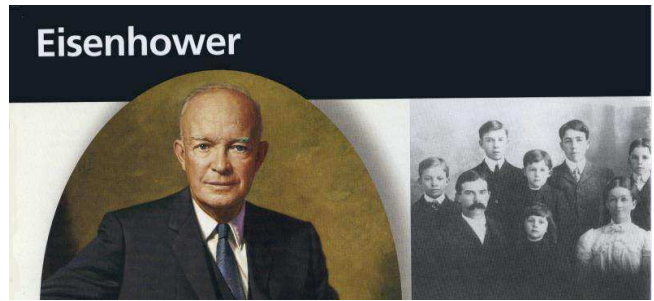
- o AM - Depart Fair Oaks Mall @ 9:00 AM - Depart Sonoco Station, Edwards Ferry Road, Leesburg @ 10:00
- o Lunch en route
- o PM - Visit new Gettysburg
<<http://www.gettysburgfoundation.org/>>
Visitor Center Museum, see
<<http://www.gettysburgfoundation.org/visit/experience.html>>
"A New Birth of Freedom" and the newly restored Cyclorama
<http://www.gettysburgfoundation.org/preserve/cyclorama_painting.html> -check in at the Quality Inn Gettysburg <<http://www.gettysburgqualityinn.com/>>
- o Dinner at local restaurant

Saturday, October 25

- o AM - Visit Woodgraining Specialists in Littlestown, PA for dashboard woodgraining demonstration
- o Lunch at local restaurant in Littlestown
- o PM - Battlefield bus tour or individual driving tour - or individual activity (lots of antiques and outlet malls)
- o Award Banquet at local restaurant



Sunday, October 26



- o AM - Visit Eisenhower Farm
<<http://www.nps.gov/eise/>> or individual activity

- o Lunch

- o PM - Return home

Reservations

- o Quality Inn Gettysburg
<<http://www.gettysburgqualityinn.com/>> -717-334-1103

- o Rates: Single \$99, Double \$104, Triple \$109, Quad \$114

- o Tell them you're with the "V-8 Club"

- o Cutoff date: October 14

- o Check-in >3pm, checkout <11am

Let Don (don.lombard@verizon.net) and Ken (helenandken@verizon.net)

know you're coming and where you'll meet us: Fair Oaks or Leesburg

Questions???

- o After 10/1 - Ken at 703-978-5939 or helenandken@verizon.net





NVRG Calendar



October

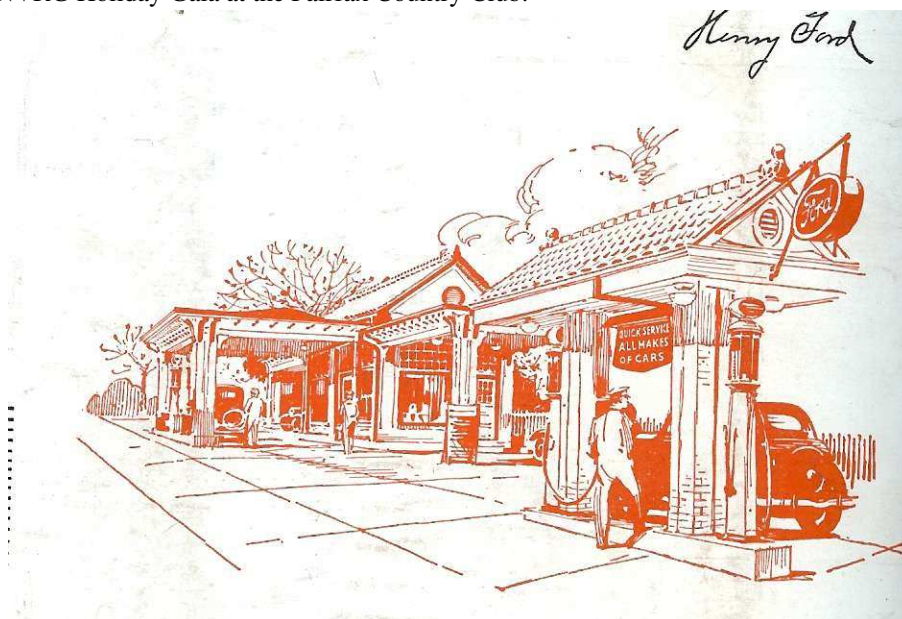
- 5 51st Annual Antique Auto assembly, Armed Forces Retirement Home, Washington, D.C.
- 8 to 11 **Hershey!** Fords, fleas, and fellowship - need we say more? Join us for Happy Hour and/or breakfast at the Flathead Grill.
- 14 **Membership Meeting** - 7:00 pm - Nottaway Park - **Program:** Hershey review
- 24-26 **Annual Lebkicker Tour** - two-night tour to the Gettysburg area - join us!
- 28 NVRG Board of Directors meeting

November

- 1 **Valve Clatter** deadline -send items to editor Jim La Baugh - (jlabaugh@verizon.net)
- 8 **NVRG Garage Tour** to Al Mason's - learn about Al's participation in the Great Race - visit his fantastic shop and join us for lunch at Magnolia's in Purcellville - this will be a great tour for ladies, also. Departure time to be determined.
- 12 **Membership Meeting** - 7:00 pm - Nottaway Park - **PLEASE NOTE THAT THE MEETING IS ON A WEDNESDAY THIS MONTH** - **Program:** Fun with your Ford - 30 years with the Northern Virginia Regional Group. **Refreshments:** Jim La Baugh
- 25 NVRG Board of Directors meeting

Down the Road

December 6 - NVRG Holiday Gala at the Fairfax Country Club.





Board of directors
Northern Virginia Regional Group



President: **Dave Gunnarson** 703-425-7708

Vice President: Eric Sumner	703-860-1916	Programs: John Sweet	703-430-5770
Secretary: Cliff Green	703-426-2662	Property: Frankie Martin	703-928-7136
Treasurer: Greg Mensinger	703-893-5644	Activities: Dave Westrate	703-620-9597
Membership: Jim McDaniel	703-569-6699	Historian: Don Lombard	703-690-7971
Tours: Leo Cummings, Hank Dubois	703-866-9707	Newsletter: Jim La Baugh	703-573-9285
Past President: John Girman	703-242-1459	Web master: helenandken@verizon.net	

Mark your calendar!
The October Meeting is on
TUESDAY October 14
at 7:00 pm in the historic Hunter
House, located adjacent to the tennis
courts, Nottoway Park, Court House
Road, Vienna, VA



The program - Hershey!



FIRST CLASS MAIL

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