



Valve Clatter



Northern
Virginia
Regional
Group



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

www.nvrg.org

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January 2010

Ken Burns Editor

2009 HOLIDAY GALA

Neither rain nor snow nor dark of night...

Contributed by Jim La Baugh – Photos by Cliff Green



A fast moving Nor'easter blanketed the roadways with snow throughout the day of the NVRG annual Holiday Party. Many roads were slippery, yet some 40 plus hearty Flathead Ford V8ers managed to make the trek to the Country Club of Fairfax for the festivities. The event room was decked out for the holidays and everyone in attendance embodied the spirit of camaraderie as they mingled around the tables set for the feast. Once our gracious hosts, Cliff and Sandra Green, announced the staff was ready to serve dinner, the tables filled quickly, followed by the invocation delivered by Hank Dubois.

Conversation begun during the cocktail hour resumed around the tables while the staff served up a superb meal. Sounds of laughter punctuated the hum of conviviality adding to the holiday atmosphere throughout the room. As desert and coffee replaced the main meal, Master of Ceremonies, Bill Simons took the floor to preside over the gala. He noted that arrangements had been made to deliver the meals to those 10 or so members who could not attend due to the storm and thanked those members in attendance who would perform the deliveries. Then it was on to the finale of the evening - the gift exchange.

(Continued on Page 4)

Up Front with the President



January 2010

As 2009 draws to a close I look back at some of the great tours and events our club hosted this year and can't help but think how fortunate we are to have such an active membership. Over the years that I have been involved with NVRG, I have been privileged to go places and see things I would not have access to normally. This year one example sticks out as it is still fresh in my mind. The Wright Experience in Warrenton, VA. While there I not only got to see four original Wright brothers aircraft engines, but I was encouraged to touch one, really... they told us to. So there I stood, actuating intake valves, inspecting casting thickness, advancing timing, actuating the mechanical kill switch, all the while thinking to myself "how many people get to do this?" This was just one example of the many events available to us that all NVRG members can participate in. Do yourself a favor and start marking you calendar for 2010 and make it out to every event you can, you won't be disappointed.

Our last event of 2009 was our annual Holiday Party. Every year our hosts, Cliff and Sandra Green, bring us to the Country Club of Fairfax for a night fun and fine dining. As always the cuisine was outstanding. Due to questionable weather conditions, some members were not able to attend the party so Sandra made sure to have their meals and desserts boxed up and arrangements to have them delivered. Many thanks to Cliff and Sandra for yet another success.

Do you make New Year's resolutions? I have a hard time sticking to them except for the last one I made which was to quit making New Year's resolutions. In lieu of a resolution, I want to try and drive my V8 more than I did last year. Maybe go to a show I don't normally go to, or just go for a drive for no reason in particular. I invite you all to do the same. If you do make resolutions then put attendance to NVRG membership meetings on your list. We have a full slate of programs for 2010 beginning in January when our own Cliff Green will discuss Ford dealerships of the flathead era. Don't miss it.

Hope to see you there,

Eric Sumner

Collector Cars in the 1960s

Images and Memories

Contributed by Von Hardesty

Photos of my '33 Ford recently surfaced in an old slide cartridge from the 1960s. I have scanned them and now share them with the NVRG readership. These photos, ca. 1966, were taken in Painesville, Ohio.



The United States changed dramatically in the turbulent decade of the 1960s, the era many of us remember vividly for the Vietnam War, the Cuban missile crisis, and the social transformations that have shaped modern life. Lest we forget, some of us had just graduated from high school or found ourselves on the front side of young adulthood.

We look back wistfully on the decade. And for good reason: there was an abundance of older vehicles around—now appropriately labeled as collector cars. In time, of course, many of those familiar vintage cars disappeared from the streets. The cruel irony was the fact that we often lacked the deep pockets to make a timely investment. Like the older generation, most of us viewed the cars from the 1930s or 1940s as cheap transportation. A few among us, of course, saw them as potential hot rods or a moving object for customizing. We did not discern a distant future when these familiar automobiles would acquire a special value. The price inflation mirrored in a present-day Barrett Jackson auction was beyond our prophetic powers. Even the collector car hobby

(Continued on page 5 – column 1)

"The Ford"

A Real Keeper

Contributed by Michael Kozak

In late 1939, 25 year old Dan Babcock of Pasadena, California and his good friend George Kozak went looking for a replacement for Dan's 1935 Ford Coupe. They set out to purchase a new 1940 Ford, but decided that the one 1939 coupe remaining on the dealer's lot was better looking due to the art deco grille. And it was \$50 cheaper! Dan drove the 39 for the next couple of years until he and his twin brother Dale entered the army. While Dan and Dale were stationed in Marseilles moving supplies to Patton's army as it raced to defeat the Nazis in the Battle of the Bulge, their sister Margaret alternated driving Dan's 1939 Coupe and Dale's 1936 Convertible Sedan to UCLA and then to Lockheed Aircraft in Burbank where she parked under camouflage netting. During the war, a pregnant lady rear ended the 39 and the left rear fender was repaired with lead which remains on the car to this day.



Dan's friend George was meanwhile serving in the U.S. Merchant Marine in the South Pacific. When his ship arrived to pick up cargo in Southern California, he called Dan's sister Margaret to get contact information on another girl who he wanted to ask for a date. Margaret had had a crush on her big brothers' friend since she was 11 years old, sabotaged the date with the other girl, and conned him into taking her out instead. They were married in 1945 and went on their honeymoon in the 39.

(Continued on page 5 – column 2)



At the start of the proceedings, Bill explained the rules of the exchange and then drew the first number from tickets stubs all participating had been given duplicates at the beginning of the evening.



Ken Burns' number was selected so he got first pick of the wrapped packages at the front of the room. In turn as other's numbers were selected they picked a package, unwrapped it, and then decided to keep it or exchange it for one opened by a previous participant.



All the while, Bill Simons provided entertaining

running commentary on gift opening techniques and the unique qualities of each opened item, commentary equivalent to Johnny Carson in his heyday.



The quality of the items was such that many changed hands several times throughout the evening. With many couples in attendance, gifts included those most suitable for the garage or our vintage V8, as well as those useful to our better halves.



A few examples of the items were a Ford script bar stool, a serving tray lined with ceramic tiles featuring Woodies, a Christmas tree music box, a hub-puller, a holiday needlepoint purse, and other Ford memorabilia.

At the end, the first was last. Ken Burns could now select from among all those opened for exchange. After much deliberation (and side commentary), Ken by passed the Woodie-themed ceramic serving tray in favor of the Ford script bar stool.

With the exchange over, all of us gave Bill Simons a

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(Gala - continued from page 4) round of applause for his wonderful work keeping the gift exchange scintillating, as well as a round of applause to Cliff and Sandra Green for their making the arrangements for this wonderful party with the Country Club. It

had been yet another delightful evening in the company of so many V8ers, who all were looking fondly to the New Year ahead in our Flathead Fords and the opportunity to meet once again at the end of 2010 at another NVRG holiday gala.



(Collector Cars – continued from page 3) itself attracted only a small company of enthusiasts.

Those days, for certain, did hint vaguely at some changes in the automotive world. For example, a small number of Japanese car dealerships opened on the West Coast. The Mustang appeared and attracted an enthusiastic following, suggesting a more youthful market. Also, we were on the cusp of the muscle car era. A friend, I remember, braved the high risk perils associated with car financing and purchased a brand new 1968 Dodge Charger. His Charger with its burnt orange color made quite an impression. This same model was immortalized in that famous chase scene in Steve McQueen's movie, *Bullitt* (1968).



Even with the new trends in auto design and taste, it often became difficult to find a buyer for certain vintage cars. I remember (Continued on page 6 – column 1)

(The Ford – continued from page 3) When their first child was born in 1946, they brought me home from the hospital in the Ford.

Dan and Dale eventually returned and resumed driving their own cars. Their mother, Ida Babcock, shared the 1939 with Dan during the late 1940s. When Dan finally bought a new Ford in 1950, Grandma Ida took over sole use of the 39 but it remained titled to Dan. I remember riding on the parcel shelf with my mother and grandmother up front on the seat.



My grandmother was the original "Little Old Lady from Pasadena." My parents joked that she only knew two throttle positions: idle and floored. In the late 1950s, the Ford was not running well. The mechanic at the gas station said the carburetor needed to be "boiled out." Grandma did not have the money so at age 12 I volunteered to do the job myself. I took the mechanic literally, disassembled the carb on the kitchen sink, and put the pieces into a pan of boiling water on (Continued on page 7 – column 1)

(Collector Cars – continued from page 5) guy in Columbus trying to sell his pristine 1935 LaSalle convertible coupe—a rakish yellow soft top with sidemounts. He initially priced his car at \$1,200, but soon learned that negotiations, even trades, would be necessary to “unload” this gem. I was part of the company of “tire kickers” hovering around such deals, but this LaSalle was outside my price range—I was content to stay with the lower end Fords.

In high school in the late 1950s, I became a devoted Ford enthusiast. There were few Chevys at that time to capture my fancy. My affinities for Ford products had been mirrored early on with the acquisition of my 1948 Mercury convertible. This sleek black beauty took me to the edge of poverty with a price tag of \$225. I just managed to collect the necessary sum to purchase the Mercury with savings from my work at the super market and a timely loan from my father. After college, in the 1960s, I did indulge myself with the purchase of a sequence of old Ford cars. My first one, justified at the time as cheap transportation, was a nicely preserved '37 Ford coupe—I picked it up for \$250.



I do recall with great fondness my 1933 Ford, which I found in Akron, Ohio. It was an odd car, a pleasing mix (at that time) of original and non-standard components. The previous owner had rebuilt the engine, installed hydraulic brakes, added a new hood, and painted the car with little attention to authenticity. The interior was left undone. The car was a real driver. I used it in good weather during my

first year in graduate school at Ohio State University. My old high school dream had been to own a 1940 Ford convertible. The '33 Ford became a timely trade for me to acquire a '40 Ford convertible, a car that I would own for over three decades.



Seeing these old slides offered me a nostalgic trip back to the decade of the 1960s. We all lament the many cars we left go during that decade—the 1933 Ford is at the top of my list.



Another '33 Cabriolet “back in the day”

(The Ford – continued from page 5) the stove. Luckily for me, when I put it back together again after my first foray into car mechanics, the flathead ran perfectly and I got to drive the car up and down the driveway "testing it."

A series of small strokes caused Grandma to stop driving in 1960. (Her last driver's license is in the glove box of the car to this day.) The 39 sat for a year and then Dan decided to give it to me. A family friend offered to drive it from Southern to Northern California, but did not heed the advice of Dan's mechanic to change the oil. Sludge clogged the screen on the oil pump intake and a rod came through the block halfway up the mountains between Los Angeles and Bakersfield.

When the car eventually arrived on a truck, I had no choice but to learn about mechanics. For \$25 I bought what was supposed to be a good 59AB, but when I got it in the car and tried to fire it up, I found it had no compression in six of the eight cylinders. After replacing all the pistons which were embedded with broken rings, I got it running well. But the guys with small block Chevys were quicker. So I got another 59AB, bored and stroked it to 296 cubic inches, installed an Isky 400 cam, and an Edelbrock manifold with three twos. With the extra horses, the car could beat all but the most built up Chevys, but tended to overheat unless you kept it moving.

The first time I took Eileen out for a date in the car, she expressed jealousy over the amount of attention I gave the car. The Ford responded by frying its wiring harness! It also took to vapor locking when she was in the car although it did not do so otherwise.

Eventually the two of them got over it and I figured it was safe to marry her. I drove the Ford to my bachelor's party; it drove me home. My friends put me in it, set the hand throttle and it just chugged

along with me pointing it occasionally.

I drove the Ford to work and to college and law school. Our son Dan would ride on the parcel shelf as I had years before. The car was reliable but still overheated, so I decided to put a stock engine back in it. I still had all the accessories from the original engine and found a good, correct block. Due to a delay at the machine shop, the engine was not built when we moved to Washington, D.C. in 1971. We left the car in a warehouse owned by my father in law, and one of my friends offered to assemble the engine. My Dad and I installed it when I was back on vacation, and I would take it for a drive every time we were in California. Eventually we figured out we were not staying in Washington for just a year or two. Our youngest son Alex helped me load the Ford on a truck in California and off in Arlington in 1980.



The car sat for several more years, and one day I decided to clean it up so I could use it again. I started taking pieces off to make it easier to clean and paint, and soon found myself looking at a bare frame. So I decided to restore it. Every summer for the next six years, my father would come back and spend a week with me cleaning and painting parts. The Early Ford V8 Club had not yet published its wonderful book on the 1938-9, so I extrapolated from the 1940 restoration book. We did all of the work ourselves, including the woodgraining, with the exception of the color (Continued on page 8 – column 1)

(The Ford – continued from page 7)



coats on the body which were done by Bill Price of Brass Age Restorations on the recommendation of Dick Lebkicker. The restoration was completed in 1992, in time to carry our son Dan -- the namesake of my uncle -- to his wedding. After that, a series of overseas assignments kept it in storage a good deal of the next decade.

Dan Babcock died in 1998, still living in the house my great grandfather had built for my grandmother. I came back from Cuba to help make the arrangements to sell the house, and I needed some tools to disassemble some furniture. I remembered my grandmother always kept her tools in the drawer beneath the sink and sure enough there they were -- with the original tool kit for the Ford that had been

missing the entire time I had it. I also found a spare set of tubes for the radio that my Uncle Bob had bought at the outset of the war. But I still have not needed to replace the originals.



My father and mother have a nice picture of the 1939 in their home. Our present for my father's 91st birthday on December 23 is the NVRG 2010 calendar with the 1939 featured for August in front of the World War II memorial.

We enjoyed driving the Ford to the drive-in at Stephens City this summer and look forward to more tours, work permitting. When the time comes for me to put my last driver's license in the glove box with my grandmother's, the Ford will finally get a third owner -- our son Dan.



TUCKER MUSEUM TOUR

(followed by lunch at a local restaurant)

Saturday, January 23rd @ 10:00

216 South Payne Street – Alexandria, VA 22314

This will be one of the most interesting tours of 2010!



- Only fifty one 1948 Tuckers were built. Of those 51, an astounding 47 remain. David Cammack's famous collection includes restored versions covering all three variants, a prototype chassis with a mammoth 589 CID flat 6 engine, a vast literature and memorabilia display from the movie "Tucker" and much more.
- Please join us. We'll depart Fair Oaks Mall at 9:00 to caravan to Alexandria or you can meet us there.
- Contact Leo Cummings {RMPLHC@aol.com or (703) 866-9707 (H) or (571) 212-7747 (C)} to let him know how many for lunch and where you'll join us or if you have questions.

TECH TIP

Sandblast Cabinet Upgrade

Contributed by Dave Gunnarson

A few years ago I built a sandblasting cabinet using gloves, foot pedal, gun and viewing window purchased from TP Tools.

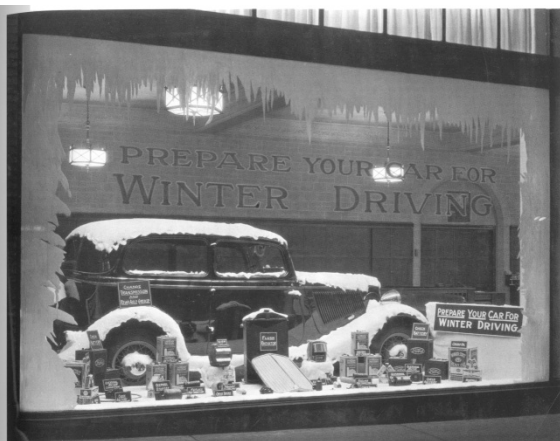


While it worked great, one frustration was having to lean inside the cabinet to periodically wipe the viewing window clean and occasionally replace the protective plastic film on the inside of the window. In both cases, I had to lean way into the cabinet through the door, breath residual dust and get my clothes dirty. Because this was uncomfortable, neither job was ever done well. Eventually the plastic protection film double stick tape did not hold and sand began to etch the glass until it became too fogged to see into the cabinet. It occurred to me

that it would be much nicer to have the glass window tip out for easy cleaning and plastic film changing. I removed the glass window and plastic frame. Using some 2-inch wide 1/8-inch thick flat steel, I welded a metal frame with the same interior dimensions as the cabinet window hole. The window and plastic frame and a new glass kit that I purchased at Hershey last fall was mounted to the metal frame. I installed a piano hinge along the bottom edge and, to keep it sealed, installed some bolts along the perimeter and drilled clearance holes in the frame. Drawer pulls are used to tighten down the frame to the cabinet and two strips of foam rubber maintain a good seal. Now cleaning the glass takes only a few minutes and is done well, making the cabinet much more pleasant to operate and maintain.



(Editor's note: Dave will have another sandblast cabinet Tech Tip appearing next month)



Picture from the collection of The Henry Ford

January Program

Ford Dealerships

Presented by Cliff Green

- View Cliff's large collection of Early Ford Dealer images, literature, and memorabilia
- Bring in your own Ford Dealer artifacts to share with us

A Tribute to the Ladies of the 1940s
& the
29,000,000th Ford Passenger Car Built



The 29,000,000th Ford passenger car was a 1941 Super DeLuxe Station Wagon that was delivered to the Detroit Chapter of the American Red Cross on April 29, 1941 as it rolled off the assembly line at the Rouge Plant in Dearborn. Edsel Ford presented the keys to the car to Mr. A.J. Berres, manager of the Detroit Chapter of the Red Cross. Mr. Berres then turned the keys over to Miss Barbara Rumney, commander of the Red Cross Motor Corps in Detroit. In 1941, Ford Motor Company was also providing "emergency motor mechanics" training to women at Ford's Highland Park plant to train transportation personnel for immediate mobilization in times of national emergency.

LEADS & NEEDS



For Sale – Car Trailer – 1997 Texas Rollback Trailer with 18'bed. This trailer is slick - no ramps. Easy to load cars without help. Bed slides back and tilts to the ground. Very low tilt angle allows cars with very low clearance to be loaded easily. Good condition. \$2,600. Mark Luposello, 703-356-3764. 01/10

For Sale – Ford Engine – 6 cylinder/223 CID engine came out of my 1955 F-100 pickup truck. Had complete new valve job and ran beautifully before removal. Best Offer. Leo Cummings, RMPLHC@aol.com or (703) 866-9707 (H) or (571) 212-7747 (C). 01/10

Wanted - pair of DeLuxe horns for 1936 Ford. Jim Cross, 703-777-8561. 01/10



2010 NVRG Calendars – only five left – I'll have them at the January meeting – still a great deal for only \$15 – when they're gone they're gone! Ken



A Note from the Editor

Well, here's my first issue of the Valve Clatter since I turned over the editorship way back in December, 1993. Boy oh boy! A lot sure has changed since then in putting this thing together. Previously when I was the editor "cut & paste" literally meant to cut something out and paste it to the sheet. The one thing that hasn't changed, however, is my belief that the Valve Clatter is an integral part of the success of the NVRG and that our members are the ones who make both the NVRG and this newsletter among the best in the Early Ford V-8 Club.

Take a moment to reread the articles contributed by your fellow club members. The NVRG is blessed with a number of talented individuals who are willing to share their enjoyment of V-8s and their experiences with us. Why not join them? I'm always on the lookout for new material for the newsletter. Write something up and send it to me. How's your restoration progressing? Do you have a Tech Tip, new vendor, supplier or product you've recently discovered that we should know about? I can work with just about any media you want to send me including keystroking text and scanning photos. As you know, I'm the third consecutive Woodie owner in a row as the VC editor and you probably noticed I've already included some info on the 1941 29th Million Ford Milestone Woodie. I promise to try and give fair representation to all body styles, years and marques but I'm going to need your help.

Thanks in advance - Ken



**YOU ARE INVITED TO
OLD CAR AND TRAIN DAY**

**SUNDAY FEBRUARY 21, 2010
12 Noon to 5 PM**

@

**THE CLEMENT HOME
12106 GARY HILL DR
FAIRFAX VA 22030**

Bring your significant other, kids, parents, and any other train, antique or old car lovers to join in the fun and fellowship of antique trains and old cars.

Weather permitting, additional antique cars may join us. New additions to the antique train collection are on display and some trains are under power. Bring "show and tell" trains, if you like, and we'll try to run them. If you have trains to be repaired, this is a good time to drop them off.

A favorite appetizer, finger food or dessert brought for sharing would be gratefully appreciated.

Directions: Take Route 66 West to Exit 55 (Fairfax County Route 7100) South to Braddock Road. Turn right toward Clifton/Centreville. Turn left at the first traffic light onto Colchester Road and go 2.2 miles. Cross Popes Head Road (Church on corner), turn left on Saddlehorn Drive (Through the brick entrance-way into Colchester Hunt Village.) Second right is Gary Hill Drive. We are the first house on the left.

Alternate route: Take Braddock Road West off the 495 Beltway. Travel west about 15 miles, cross under Fairfax Parkway and turn left at the traffic light onto Colchester Road and continue as above.

See you on Train and Old Car Day!

Sandy and Clem Clement

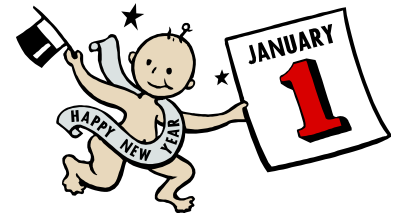
Phone: 703-830-5597 (H) or 571-239-1701 (C)

Email: clem.clement@cox.net





NVRG Calendar



January

12	Membership Meeting - 7:00 pm @ Nottaway Park – Program: <i>Ford Dealerships</i> by Cliff Green see page 9 for more details – Refreshments: Eric Sumner
23	Tucker Museum Tour – depart Fair Oaks parking lot at 9:00 for private tour of David Cammack’s Tucker Museum. See page 8 for complete details. Lunch following tour. This is a tour you don’t want to miss!
29	NVRG Board of Directors meeting - 6:30 pm @ Oakton Library
29	Valve Clatter Deadline - submit items to Ken Burns – helenandken@verizon.net

February

9	Membership Meeting - 7:00 pm @ Clark House, 6332 Barcroft Mews Drive, Falls Church (PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF VENUE FOR THIS MEETING) – Program: <i>What Were They Thinking?</i> by Ken Burns - see pages 5 and 6 of the December 2009 Valve Clatter for a preview - Refreshments: to be determined
21	Old Car and Train Day at the Clements – see page 12 for complete details
23	NVRG Board of Directors meeting - 6:30 pm @ Oakton Library
23	Valve Clatter Deadline - submit items to Ken Burns – helenandken@verizon.net

March

9	Membership Meeting - 7:00 pm @ Nottaway Park - Program: <i>License Plates and Toppers</i> by Dave Gunnarson – Refreshments: to be determined
21	AACA Sugarloaf Mountain 39th Annual Swap Meet – Frederick County Fairgrounds – Frederick, MD
23	NVRG Board of Directors meeting - 6:30 pm @ Oakton Library
23	Valve Clatter Deadline - submit items to Ken Burns – helenandken@verizon.net

Down the Road

TBD – **Shop Tour** – Arlington Armature Works in Springfield. Demo in their shop for rebuild and testing of starters, generators & radiators

April – Annual NVRG Poker Run

May – NVRG-sponsored Fairfax City Car Show

Make a New Year’s resolution
Send in your 2010 dues!
 Make the check out to “NVRG”
 Send it to: David Gunnarson
 10707 Ellie’s Court,
 Fairfax Station, VA 22039
OR
 Pay at the January meeting



BOARD OF DIRECTORS
NORTHERN VIRGINIA REGIONAL GROUP



President: **Eric Sumner** 703-860-1916

Vice President	John Sweet	703-430-5770	FFX Show	Dave Westrate	703-620-9597
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Tours –Primary	Leo Cummings	703-866-9707	At Large	Frankie Martin	703-973-1376
Tours – Assist	Hank Dubois	703-476-6919	Web Site	Rick Parker	301-279-7145
Programs	John Sweet	703-430-5770	Newsletter	Ken Burns	703-978-5939

January Program: Ford Dealerships

Mark your calendar!
 The January Meeting is on Tuesday,
 January 12th at 7:00 pm in the
 historic Hunter House, located
 adjacent to the tennis courts,
 Nottoway Park, Court House Road,
 Vienna, VA



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

FIRST CLASS MAIL