

Northern
Virginia
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Group



Value Clatter



Northern Virginia Regional Group - Early Ford V-8 Club of America

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Ken Burns - Editor

SPRING HAS SPRUNG!

2013 NVRG Poker Run and Scavenger Hunt

By Keith Randall, photos by Keith Randall

The players assembled in the usual location at the Fair Oaks Mall at 9 AM on Saturday, April 20th. The organizers for this year's run (Jim Labaugh, John Sweet and Keith Randall) were concerned about the weather cooperating. However, the weather guessers in the reading of *their* cards were right on target for a change. The final throes of a wet and rainy period were forecast to end in the wee hours of the morning on the 20th and they did! We awoke to clear blue skies and a sunny, if somewhat chilly day. A perfect day for touring some of 'Virginia's Scenic By-Ways.'

We had seven teams this year: Wayne and Jane Chadderton, David Blum and Bill Selley, Jim and Char McDaniel, Hank and Cindy Dubois, Leo and Kathy Cummings, John and Shelly Sweet; Jim Labaugh and Keith Randall.

Just before we were ready to begin the run, a Fairfax County Patrol car rolled up and pulled alongside Jim McDaniel's 1951 Ford with Florida Sheriff Department markings. At first, Jim was thinking, oh no, here we go again! It was just a few months ago that Jim was stopped on the Fairfax County Parkway by a very serious, newly minted female patrol officer. She didn't seem to appreciate the historical significance of Jim's car. But, no problems this time and the officer even climbed into Jim's Ford to have his picture taken behind the wheel!



Jim's interaction with county law enforcement – smiles all around.

After Jim Labaugh gave a briefing on the 'Rules of the Run' the McDaniels were the first team to hit the road. The other players followed in intervals of five to ten minutes. The 60 mile run began at Gilbert's Corner and ended in Purcellville followed by lunch at Magnolia's Restaurant. Along the way we cruised thru Aldie, Snickersville Gap, Philomont, Hillsboro, Lovettsville, Taylorstown, Waterford and Hamilton.

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Up Front with the President



May 2013

Hooray! Hooray! The 1st of May! Outdoor fun begins today!

It's a little ditty I first heard in England back in the late 1980s, and while the outdoor fun of the NVRG seems go year round, the merry month of May is when the car show season really starts in earnest in the Northern Virginia area.

Starting the month of May off right is a combined Lincoln Owners Club /Lincoln-Zephyr Owners Club meet in Westminster, MD from May 2nd through May 5th. If you're into Lincolns, (the big Ls and Ks as well the Lincoln-Zephyrs, Customs and Continentals) I hope you'll be able to visit the combined LOC/LZOC GOF 44 in Westminster. The concourse will be held Saturday morning, May 5th and promises to be a great time with a phenomenal array of cars! For more information, check out LZOC.org under the events section.

Closer to home is our very own Fairfax City meet on Saturday, May 18th. Meet chair Dave Westrate organizes a fantastic event every year filled with fun, family and, of course, a great selection of local cars from all over the area. In addition to all the fun, this meet also raises money for a very worthy cause: the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Washington, D.C. So please be sure to join us for what promises to be another great Fairfax City Show. For more information, check out the NVRGs web at <http://www.nvrg.org/>.

Also, now is the time to be thinking about those June meets as well. As is the NVRG's tradition, please join us at the annual Sunday Fathers Day Car Show at Sully Plantation hosted by the George Washington Chapter of the Model A Ford Club on Sunday, June 16th. This is always a great, family-oriented event that is one of the most enjoyable you and your family can attend, so be sure to join us under the trees at Sully Plantation to see old friends, make new ones and enjoy a fun time. For additional information and how to register, please check out the George Washington's chapter web site at <http://www.gwcmodeleda.org/events.asp>.

Of course, the signature event for the Early Ford V-8 Club this year is the Grand National Meet in Lake Tahoe from June 17 through 21. With a picturesque location, a cross-country caravan, a huge turn out of Early Ford V-8s and lots of neat events, the Golden Jubilee of the EFV8's Grand National Meet will be talked about for years to come. Even if prior commitments preclude your attendance, you can always take part by donating a Virginia made item to the NVRG 96 Gift Basket that will be raffled at the GNM. You may have already seen several emails from Vice President Jim McDaniel asking for donations, so please contact Jim with your contribution. For those who have already donated, many thanks. If your planning to head out to the GNM, I hope to see you there, if not, I hope you'll be able to make a contribution to the gift basket.

In the meantime, have fun, drive safe and see you on the road.

John

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A couple of interesting card stops on the tour included the Philomont General Store which has been open for business since 1913. Walking thru the door is like stepping back in time. There is even an old 'Post Office Cage' inside the store that is still open for business. A poignant moment occurred at another stop when it was recalled that Dick Lebkicker had been laid to rest in the Hillsboro Cemetery. Dick was a longtime member of NVRG #96 and was a great supporter of touring with your old car. All agreed that Dick would have approved of our touring on this beautiful day.



David Blum's '39 Zephyr is partially obscured by the Dubois' nearly vintage explore at the exit from the Hillsboro Cemetery.

The big winners on this year's Poker Run were Hank and Cindy Dubois. A meal at Red Robin and a gift card to Home Depot are sure to be enjoyed.

So, if you didn't make the Poker Run this year make plans to do so next time. Drive your modern car or your vintage wheels; but join us for the adventure and camaraderie. You can try your luck at cards (instructions & rules are provided) and test your powers of observation all while enjoying some of 'Virginia's Scenic By-Ways' or, just come on out and enjoy the tour and lunch with friends.

Jim LaBaugh adds: Participants were indeed fortunate to be traveling some of the same roads as the Iroquois long ago, as well as George Washington. Both journeyed along Snickersville Turnpike, and Washington traveled the route many times between 1748 and 1788. While the Dulles Toll road and the like appear to be modern inventions, Snickersville Turnpike at one time had 3 toll gates, the last one operating up to 1915. Flowering dogwoods, redbud, forsythia and other signs of spring were evident everywhere on the route. The tour was a reminder not only of the many historic towns in this part of

Virginia, but also how much of the landscape is still rural with many horse farms along the highways and byways.



The road warriors enjoying lunch at Magnolia's in Purcellville
And the Winners were:

Poker Run

- 1st Place – Jim and Char McDaniel
- 2nd Place – Hank and Cindy Dubois
- 3rd Place – John and Shelly Sweet

"Scavenger Hunt" Questions

- 1st Place – Wayne and Jane Chadderton
- 2nd Place – Hank and Cindy Dubois
- 3rd Place – Leo and Kathy Cummings



A final group shot before folks headed their separate ways.



The Philomont General Store on the 2003 Poker Run

APRIL MONTHLY MEETING

Tire Talk or Tires for Your Ford

By Editor

Whenever you see Cliff Green or John Ryan's name on the monthly program, scheduled to give a presentation, you know you're in for a real treat. Cliff always comes super-prepared to inform us about another facet of our V-8s, Henry Ford and all things Ford; and John is always equally prepared to enhance our technical knowledge of a subject. Their talk at our April monthly meeting was no exception.

Cliff led off the evening with a brief run down of the resources he used to prepare. Most of us can also easily access this info as well. He then lead us through the history of rubber production, the long lasting personal and business relationship between Henry Ford and Harvey Firestone, Henry's failed Fordlândia project, Ford "Script" tire production, tire and tube specs for our V-8s, and finally vintage tire ads.



Cliff not only had a killer PowerPoint presentation but also brought lots of eye candy for our enjoyment.

Rubber and the development of tires – Until the mid-nineteenth century the only way to increase the strength and durability of a wagon wheel was for a wheelwright or blacksmith to girdle it with an iron band.



All that changed in 1840 when Charles Goodyear

invented vulcanization, a chemical process for converting natural rubber (latex sap) into a more durable material by the addition of sulfur or another accelerator. Hard or solid rubber tires, which appeared shortly after Goodyear's breakthrough, absorbed shock and resisted cutting and abrasion but still had disadvantages. The treads weren't very effective and the tires were hard and slick in the winter and soft and sticky in the summer.



An early tire ad for Kelly-Springfield (now called just Kelly) tires.

The first pneumatic tire (a bicycle tire) was invented by John Boyd Dunlop in 1887 and Dunlop Pneumatic Tyre Company was founded in 1889; by 1890 a tough canvas layer was incorporated in the tire to reduce punctures. In 1891, Édouard Michelin introduced a detachable tire that was attached to the rim with clamps instead of glue. In 1893, George Schrader introduced a tire valve system (which still bears his name) that created an air-tight seal, preventing tires from leaking air. And finally, in 1895, André Michelin, Édouard's older brother, is credited with the introduction of the first automobile tires. Lots of familiar names here, right?



Early Schrader valves were metal and were entirely separate from the tube itself.

The agricultural source of rubber was tightly control by the British and Dutch and attempts to create a synthetic rubber that could be used in

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automotive tires began as early as the 1890s. War (or preparation for war) brought additional pressures to bear. By 1935, Bayer, the giant German chemical and pharmaceutical conglomerate, had a workable synthetic rubber and Goodrich in the US produced synthetic rubber tubes and tires during WWII.



A scrap rubber drive during WWII.

After WWII, the next big advance in tire technology was the development of radial tires. They were introduced by Michelin in Europe in 1948 and quickly became the standard equipment tire for European cars but it took many years and many false starts here in the US before we also adopted them as our standard. The advantages of radials are that they track better; have less rolling resistance – thus better gas mileage; and have better tread life. On the down side they are more complex – thus they cost 45 % more to produce; and require a differently tuned suspension. The gas shortage of 1973 brought home to American car manufacturers, American tire makers and American consumers the need to switch to radial tires.

✚ **Henry & Harvey** – Henry Ford and Harvey Firestone first met in 1884 and became close personal friends and business associates. In 1900, Harvey formed Firestone Tire and Rubber Company in Akron, OH, with 12 employees and three years later we all know that Henry established Ford Motor Company. By 1906 Firestone had become the sole supplier of tires to Ford Motor Company. In the same year Harvey Firestone began to ride exclusively in Lincolns, although Ford didn't acquire the Lincoln Motor Company until 1922. Among Ford and Firestone's circle of close friends were Thomas Edison, for whom Henry had once worked and John Burroughs, the noted naturalist. The quartet was well-known for the "camping" trips. During WWI, as

rubber prices escalated rapidly, Edison began trying to find a crop that would grow rapidly and contain enough latex to be an economically feasible alternative to rubber. Edison, Ford and Firestone each contribute \$25,000 to found the Edison Botanic Research Corporation. In another cooperative venture, Harvey Firestone provided much assistance to Henry Ford when he began building his own tire plant in 1936 at the Rouge where Ford "Script" tires were produced from 1938 to 1942.



Left to right: Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, John Burroughs and Harvey Firestone out "camping" in 1921.

✚ **Fordlândia, a rare Ford Fiasco** – In the 19th Century, Brazil had a virtual monopoly on rubber cultivation until Henry Wickham stole 70,000 Brazilian rubber tree seeds. Shortly afterwards, the British established rubber plantations in Ceylon (Sri Lanka), Malaysia, Africa, and Batavia where there were no natural predators to hinder growing rubber trees. Shortly after WWI ended the British and Dutch attempted to establish a cartel to control rubber production and prices. In 1924, to counter this impending economic threat, Ford and Firestone began seeking suitable areas to establish rubber plantations. By 1927 Ford had obtained the rights to establish rubber plantations on nearly 2.5 million acres of Brazilian rain forest. Henry was convinced he could produce rubber using modern, industrial manufacturing techniques and, as we know, Henry fancied himself to be quite the social engineer. So in addition to producing rubber in Brazil he would build his idealized American village to house the workers and their families. From the start the adventure was doomed to failure: when the ship carrying the construction equipment was loaded in the States the bulldozers were loaded first and therefore unavailable for clearing land until all other cargo was unloaded; there was no botanist assigned to Fordlândia; a rigid 8 hour work day and ID tags were

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a totally alien concept to the local indigenous workers; the workers' cafeteria served American food such as hamburgers; the Ford village concept that worked well in the mid-west was a complete disaster in Brazil, as were the snug bungalow cottages built to the house workers. Nor did the workers take kindly to no smoking, no alcohol, square dancing and other Ford pet social engineering ideas.



Square dancing at Fordlândia

Clearing land, planting trees and producing latex sap didn't fare any better. Trees were planted just as close together as they were on British/Dutch plantations – the rub however was that in Malaysia there were no predators – in Brazil there many predators and they spread easily among the closely spaced trees. With no botanist on staff there was no way to effectively combat the pests and diseases. And the list goes on nearly endlessly. The magnitude of the Fordlândia fiasco is breath-taking. The Ford tire plant consumed 100,000 pounds of rubber daily. Fordlândia's first (and only) year of production in 1942 delivered only 15,000 pounds of rubber! Henry Ford never visited Fordlândia during the 15 years he owned it in spite of periodic promises to do so.

✚ Ford Tire Factory – December 1937 to December 1942 – Noted industrial architect Alfred Kahn, along with Firestone engineers, designed the Ford Tire factory which was built on 4 ½ acres of land in the Rouge complex.



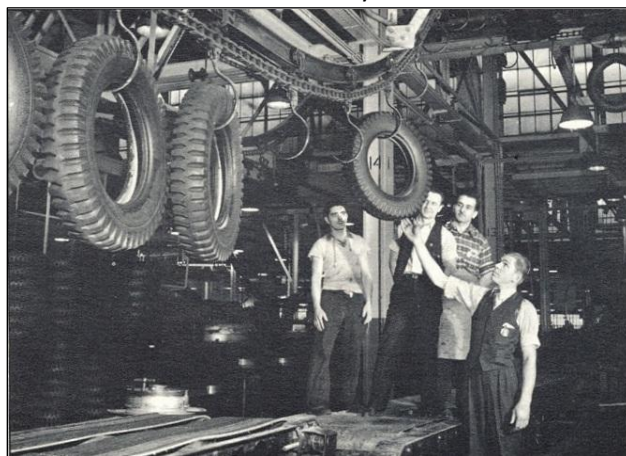
Construction on the plant began in September of 1936 and on July 30, 1937, the first prototype

6:00x16 blackwall tire was made. In January, 1938, full scale passenger car blackwall tire production began followed by initial 6:00x16 whitewall production in November, 1938. Beginning in 1940 the factory added tractor tires to its production line and then the truck tires in 1941.



The one millionth Ford "Script" tire.

War production Jeep tires were also manufactured for Ford produced Jeep. The factory was shut down on December 1, 1942, disassembled and shipped to the Soviet Union as part of American efforts to defeat Nazi Germany.



The last tire was produced at the Ford Tire Plant on December 1, 1942. It appears to be for a Jeep or other military vehicle.

During its five year production run, the Ford Tire Plant produced somewhere between 6 and 7 million tires. Although that seems like a lot of tires, Ford still had to buy OEM tires from other suppliers for many of the Fords, Lincolns and Mercurys produced.

Cliff presented a detailed chart of tire size/rim/ply combinations for 1932 to 1953 flathead Ford and Mercury passenger cars, including station wagons and concluded his talk with a discussion of which whitewalls are correct for your 1938 to 1947 V-8 or 6 cylinder.

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John Ryan concluded the evening by discussing the pros and cons of using radial tires on your V-8 and ways to overcome some of the problems.

Important things to consider:

- ✚ Your buggy spring or shoebox suspension system wasn't designed for radials.
- ✚ Original rims weren't designed to be air tight.
- ✚ Original rims don't have a tubeless safety bead.
- ✚ Original rims flex more than OEM radial rims.



What you can do:

- ✚ Ensure your suspension is in tip-top condition.
- ✚ Use tubes or weld up and seal all rivets.
- ✚ Use a rim with a safety bead if you go tubeless – John Girman is running early Bronco 15" rims on his '53 Victoria. They don't flex as much and full wheel covers hide the slots in the wheel disc.

Paul Gauthier; Clem & Sandy Clement; Sharon & Benny Leonard; KK & Chuck Kunstbeck; Ken & Helen Burns; Cliff & Sandra Green; Art Zimmerli.; Tank (William Edwards); Bruce & Loretta Metcalf.; and Jim & Kathie Gray all gathered to experience this second CDC. Breakfast topics were diverse: Art Zimerli's beaver dam problem on his Amissville farm; the Green's woodpecker problem; Clint Green's presentation on the history of the tire industry; and Paul Gauthier's recent successful surgery. Like I said: diverse.

Clem & Sandy came in their '39 pickup; Cliff & Sandra Green drove their '40 Woodie; Jim & Kathie came in Ruby; Chuck & K.K. came in Honeybun; Benny & Sharon came in Miss Alley; and Tank came in "The Green Pumpkin", a 1964 Canadian-built Chevy Belair.

NVRG's Cliff Green joined the GWC on-the-spot in a membership-for-membership exchange with Benny Leonard, who joined the EFV-8 club. No wonder political candidates visit the voters in diners – apparently folks make commitments more readily over coffee.

Our fine showing of vintage rides got a lot of attention from passers-by as well as from the staff at the diner, including Vinnie the manager who came out and posed with Honeybun.

OUT & ABOUT

Caffeine Double Clutch

By Jim Gray

The second Caffeine Double Clutch was held at the Fair Lakes Silver Diner on Tuesday, April 2 at 9 a.m. Seventeen folks from the GWC and the Northern Virginia Regional Group enjoyed 2 hours of breakfasting and talking. The conversations ranged from cars to grandkids to wildlife to Clem's recent fantastical Sugar Loaf AACA Westminster flea market finds.



Good food & good coffee – photo by Chuck Kunstbeck.



The mini car show included Jim Gray's '31 Ruby, Cliff's '40 Woodie, Clem's '39 Pick-up and Chuck's '31 Honeybun.

After we finished eating, it was time to test one of those Clem flea treasures; first, a genuine "Check-O-Meter," which, when connected to Cliff Green's Woodie showed his engine to be in the "excellent" range. Clem then asked if he could try his brand-new-to-him-from Westminster long crank; it fit! We were all amazed to then watch Cliff crank-start his flathead V-8, something none of us had ever seen before.

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Clem checks his "Check-O-Meter" while Cliff feeds the Woodie a little throttle. The meter actually worked – or at least the needle moved when Cliff move the throttle.



And she runs!!! No one (including Cliff) had ever seen a flathead V-8 successfully crank-started before.

And the bottom line: 2 new GWC members; 1 new NVRG member; and big smiles all around. We'll do this again.

Editor's comment: Are we missing something? None of our V-8s have nicknames.

Small Parts Day at the Merkel Farm

By Jim Gray – photos by Jim, Clem Clement & Editor

Saturday, April 27 brought nearly 60 of us together at Janet Merkel's farm in Bowie, MD, to work on some small parts and socialize in near perfect weather, with dry air, a slight breeze, and temperatures in the high 60s.

Six Model As were there, as were members of the Southern Maryland Model A Club; the Northern Virginia Regional Group (NVRG), members of the National Capital Regional Group (NCRG); members of the Nation's Capital Model T Club; members of the GWC; two miniature horses; several dogs and a pygmy goat. All told, quite a congenial group.



Janet Merkel's neat '50 "James Dean" Merc belonged to her late husband, George, a member of the NCRG.

We were stymied a bit at first by the apparent disobeying of the law of supply and demand: George Jr., who is painting his Dad's tractor, discovered that tractor paint is only \$22 a gallon, contrasting sharply with the cost of automobile paint which sells for something just south of the national debt per gallon. Where's that law now? Is the demand for tractor paint so great that the price has been driven down; or the demand for auto paint so low that the price has been driven up? All the wondering on this issue stimulated many a doughnut taste bud, so a bunch were consumed as the depth of this question was explored.



Another Merkel V-8 is this 1950 F-1 Pick-up

Speaking of food: it was good that we men folk cleared some space on the food tables by eating those boxes of doughnuts, because the ladies kept bringing out more goodies; many of them were nearly as healthy for old men bodies as were the doughnuts. All-in-all, there were approximately 3 billion kilocalories of GREAT doughnuts; plenty of delicious barbeque, potato salad, deviled eggs and (of course) desserts... and oh yeah, Kathie said I had to mention the beans.

Sharon Leonard's "scratch" made red velvet cake raised many an eyebrow as she 'splained over and over again how she made it, waves of jocularity rolled from the distaff table over to the high-tech Early V-8 distributor work table.

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Edna Cross doubles over as Benny Leonard eggs the ladies on.



Cliff uses his work on Clem's distributor as a teachable moment.

Over at the work table Cliff Green (of both the (NVRG and the GWC) was giving a clinic on the complex process of setting up the #68 and #11a distributors for flathead Ford engines. Working with Clem and Ken Burns (of the NVRG), Cliff demonstrated how to use a "timing fixture" to set the timing on 3 separate distributors, which drew the close attention of Jim Cross, Phil McCormick, and several others – including me. The men folk were intent on their tasks, but kept being jarred from their concentration by the ruckus of the gals which got so bad at one point that hearing aids had to be turned down.



As Cliff works on Clem's distributor; Jim Cross and Ken Burns discuss the process.

Unlike last year, Craig Sawyer was underemployed at his carb jet flow testing table, so after Clem finished working with Cliff on his 2 distributors, he took a model 94 carburetor over for a quick assessment. When Craig saw the vintage screwdriver Clem was using to take the jets out, he lambasted the use of a "wood mangling tool" on something as fine as a flathead Ford carb. This carb pro believes we should use machinist or gunsmith screwdrivers which fit the screw heads precisely. This made me think of something my dad used to tell me about how they got things done in the B-29 in WWII: "You measure it with a micrometer; mark it with a grease pencil; and cut it with an ax." Seems to me that approach has worked just fine on a whole lot of Model As; but on flathead Fords? That may be a whole new story.



NCRG member Tom Terko works on a carb for his Model A. Tom keeps his '41 Deluxe Tudor in a garage on Janet's farm.

Thank you Janet and family; and thank all you experts who helped those of us less expert. Now I get to go upstairs and have the last piece of cake I brought home from Janet's. It will be, just as was Small Parts Day, all good.



Janet's third V-8 is this sweet 1950 Tudor.

A BOY & HIS CAR – A LOVE STORY

The Old Forty Merc Four Door Ragtop

By Clem Clement

Editor's Note: Clem's '40 Merc ragtop is the same car that was featured in an article in the last issue of V-8 Times and also on the rear cover.



When I first met her she was just 16 years old: a worn out, abused, tired girl that had been run hard and put away wet. She was topless and gutless. I was a fresh young innocent 19 year old engineering Frosh at Stevens Tech and we fell in love for life. I named her my FORTYMERC, pronounced as one word.

In the spring of 1956, a fellow Frosh and I were walking to downtown Hoboken for Sunday dinner. We passed a forlorn pile of tired metal and rags parked on a side street. We had not seen it there before. The top was a painter's canvas wrapped around the top mechanism. She was dirty and smelled bad. My bud said why you don't buy this heap for a fraternity car. Having no money, I immediately thought it was a great idea. I picked up a matchbook from the gutter and wrote my name and an offer. A couple of weeks later the hall phone rang announcing my chance to win her. I have no idea how or where I got the \$25 bucks, but I was swollen up with pride and dreams. The first major purchase of my life! The '40 Merc four door ragtop was mine!!

I think we had to back it up the hill to the campus as the transmission and clutch were shot. Daddy showed up sometime later in the spring to tow my prize home to Woodbury, NJ. We had a wire rope tow cable as he was a salesman in fences and wire rope. We tied the rope to his trailer hitch and promptly ripped the hitch off in the middle of downtown Hoboken. I was heart broken. The next try got us better results; tying the rope to Daddy's

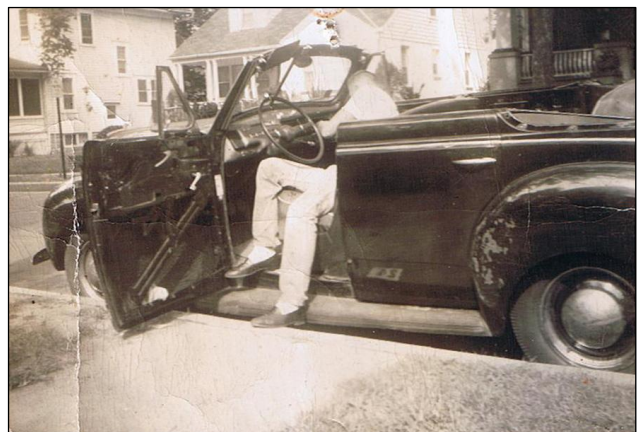
'55 Ford Custom's axle.

I vividly remember Daddy tipping his Stetson hat as we passed the Metuchen Ford Factory. I could plainly see him through the back window of this '55 Custom Ford. The image will stay with me always. We towed by the 30 feet of wire rope with me in the Merc with bad brakes and Maypop tires. This tow trip formed a very special memory for me and my relationship with Daddy. Daddy's whimpy boy was growing up.

Mother was underwhelmed with the Merc and a couple of months later, as I extolled its virtues she, a dear Quaker lady, said "Rich, no matter what you do with it, it is still an old car" (this was the goodbye speech to my Merc.).

My best friend and I worked on the Merc at Uncle Tom's farm in Thorofare everyday for 3 weeks in June before heading to YMCA Camp Ockanickon where we were to work for the summer. We learned a great deal about getting the clutch in wrong, installing a '49 Merc engine, anti-chatter rods and flexible exhaust pipes. While struggling to lift the motor up and out of its place using Uncle's tractor, we learned about the hidden anti-chatter rods and how hard they are to remove. It was a wonderful experience and the start of a lifelong friendship with Bill. Daddy bought me a set of open and closed end wrenches from Sears to work on the Merc. I still have them today. Bill painted his tools black and I painted mine red.

The Merc came to me with a bad front seat. I tossed it and added a seat from something else. It did not fit.



Clem and his FORTYMERC in 1956. Nice door panel!

We took the car to camp and had too much fun with her. I can remember being pulled over by the fuzz for weaving down the road. Actually I was trying to miss the chuck holes but the cop wanted to see

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the 10 girls I had in the thing. Anyway... I had an old canvas ground cloth to which I tied 4 volleyball size steel floats painted red. These kept the canvas tight over the car when parked. While driving they were visible on the boot area. They looked very suspicious.

I was on the way home from Uncle Tom's one evening, heading for a shower and then the local A&W Root Beer stand, when the hood blew up. I could see nothing straight ahead. I looked sideways and guided to a safe stop by watching the curb whiz by. The hood ruptured its springs and bent level over the windshield top. The bent hood's nose was about 2 inches from my head. I cried that my baby was hurt. The next day I went to a local junk yard and bought and installed a new hood for \$15. The paint was better than the old one.

I had a serious girl friend who was working on the boards in Ocean City, NJ. I was too young, as was she, and we did not know how things would work out. So I decide to test her. I drove the Merc to OC and parked it near her apartment. Then as we walked to the boards and passed the Merc I started a conversation about old cars and me and asked her what she thought of the Merc as we passed it. She responded with words that included "junk" and such which cut me deeply. (My stupid idea was super dumb and unfair). We only lasted a few months after that.

By this time I had 4 inch lowering shackles on the Merc. Bill and I took a couple of girls to the beach for the day. The weight and the car's sway cut two tires after dark somewhere in the sticks. Bill and I acquired a sway bar from a '48 Ford from the junk yard. Uncle Raeman welded an attachment to the right axle housing. This helped control and reduce the sway with the extra long shackles.

Sometime during the summer Bill caught the old car bug as well. Bill's dreams included a '36 Ford Roadster in prime. He bought it and he and I were towing it to my home when his folks caught us. It went to his yard and he went to a lecture. My Merc was to be black with a white top and the original maroon upholstery and his '36 was to be white with a black top and maroon interior. Ah, young men's dreams... Some time late that summer we towed his '36 Roadster to our favorite junk yard and cried.

It was a wonderful summer until August 22, 1956, when Daddy suddenly passed on and my world stopped. I leaned very hard on the Merc to vent my energy and anger that Daddy had left us. I

worked on the car every day from dawn to dusk. I didn't care about much of anything. It was then that Bill and I went to Crosskeys junkyard where we were frequent parts buyers and cut a top off of a Ford sedan. We mounted the top on the Merc as Mother couldn't afford a cloth top (RAYCO estimated \$125 for the rag.) We built clips for the top and were working on window tops and improved top fitting. The Merc was all I could think about during those few difficult weeks.



Uncle Raeman ran the only garage in Mickleton, NJ. The town's folk had pressed the Selective Service Board not to draft him as he repaired everything for the town: plows, tractors, trucks, home heaters, etc. He never forgot that and always charged farmers almost nothing to drive out into their fields to weld a broken plow share. He took me under his wing after Daddy died. He was our tech advisor on the Merc.

Daddy's insurance and the family's savings cleared the way for me to return to school, thus work on the Merc stopped. I was to take Daddy's car and get back to my studies. The Merc sat in our two car garage as Mother fought the battles of being an Executrix. Soon Mother said the Merc had to go as she wanted to rent the space for \$10 a month. Uncle Tom said the Merc could sleep in one of his open out buildings, but he could not guarantee its safety. With sadness I sold the Merc to my distant cousins for \$25, the same price I paid for it. For several visits home I would go see the Merc. The hard top came off, the car was painted red from its original black and a better motor installed. For me it was college,

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then off to flying school with the US Air Force and a 23 ½ year career in service of our country.

On one of my few trips home I found that the Merc was gone. My cousin and others did not know where she went. I later heard that the motor went somewhere and the body sat behind a building in Mickleton. Then it was gone.

During my tours in Vietnam we always talked about the women back stateside and our cars. I dreamed many a night of coming back to the '40 Merc being still in my garage. Those car dreams kept many of us sane during that nasty war.

After my service years I returned to New Jersey and a great job with RCA. I determined to find the Merc. Mother, cousins, the guys who bought it from me and neighbors did not know. A Clubber, the late Bill Sutton, declared there was never a black '40 Merc Convertible Sedan in South Jersey. (He knew of a grey one in Delaware.) After trying everything I could think of, including calling my girl cousin's old boyfriend, I figured the Merc was gone. As a last resort I wrote her a letter in Hemmings and Bob Aufderheide called about her. He asked for proof: I said when I had last seen her, she was a faded red. He asked if I could say anything else. I had cut a big hole in the steel back of the front seat for a huge speaker and the I had cut a hole in the floorboards under the driver's seat and installed a '40 Buick under-seat heater. Bob said "I have your Merc." Whatta thrill for me. I was/am so excited the '40 Merc survived.

Great article on the '40 Merc, Bob!

Bob and I have met once and I contact him from time-to-time. I am truly happy the '40 Merc survived and sleeps in a warm garage. Good job saving her Bob! I saved the '40 Merc off the streets of Hoboken and Bob restored her. Sweetness!



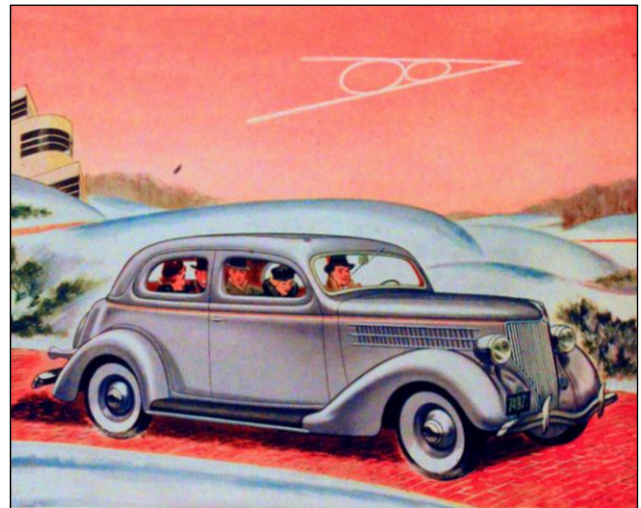
The FORTYMERC at a car show – date unknown.

A LIFELONG LOVE AFFAIR WITH V-8s

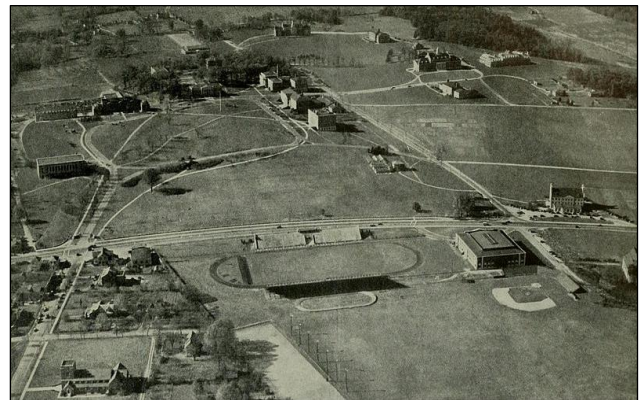
An Oral History – The Recollections of Buzzy Potter
Recorded and edited by Dave Gunnarson. This is the third installment in a continuing series. (Ed.)

Buzzy Potter – The 1936 Fords

✚ **My 1936 Tudor** – I drove the car we used for our tour of the United States to college a little while and on December 7, 1935, traded it for a brand new 1936 Tudor, gunmetal gray. The western roads were all gravel; they weren't even paved in 1935. The gravel roads wore all the paint off the fenders and beat it up, and it didn't cost much to trade a car; so I traded the old 1935 and I got a new 1936 for \$150.



I had some mishaps and accidents with that car. I drove it to Maryland University and beat it up fairly well.



University of Maryland campus in 1938 when Buzzy was a student.

The roads weren't well kept back then and many had three deep ruts. A ton and half truck came up the road in the opposite direction. I tried to squeeze by but didn't make it and damaged the whole side of the car. It tore the door handle off but I made it without getting hurt. So I went to a body shop and for \$15 they hammered it all out. It was cheaper in Buzzy continued on next page

Buzzy continued from previous page
them days, baby!

✚ **1936 Convertible Sedan** – I had a couple of other mishaps with the Tudor and it got fairly well beat up, so in January 1937 I traded it in for a 1936 Convertible Sedan which was the floor showroom model. I got a real deal since it was last year's model and it was January. In January convertibles weren't selling, but June follows January as night follows day. It is a very late 1936 model with chrome spokes in the wheels; not on the hubcap, but in the wheel before it was made. My research indicated you could special order them that way from the Budd Wheel Company for \$2 extra per wheel. The chrome you see now is all simulated by the hubcap. So that was unusual. It has a clock in the dashboard – a new introductory feature. It is the car I used for my first date with my wife, and that was a while ago. I've had it for 77 years and it's still out in the garage.



Buzzy's 1936 Convertible Sedan at our 2007 Eastern National Meet.

I drove to college in that old Ford out there when gas was 11 ½ cents a gallon. The '36 Convertible Sedan was the car I taught my wife to drive. She never drove before then. So we're pretty fond of it. We're lucky it's still with us, considering all of the close calls. It's truly a car with nine lives! (Ginny).

✚ **Stormy Weather** – So the old '36 Ford Convertible Sedan had been on quite a trip, it's like a cat with nine lives. One day I was supposed to meet the folks at Sears and Roebuck to get a new suit. I left the Maryland University and there was a black cloud in the sky. Since I kept the top down, I tried to dodge it between Baltimore and Washington. It kept getting closer and the little black cloud caught up with me – a couple of big rain drops hit on the windshield – uh oh. I went by a Conoco gas station and they had a drive-in grease change and I spun in there and said, "Give me a grease job." They shut the door on the grease parlor and began to work just as the storm hit.

There were two acres of greenhouses directly across Bladensburg Road from where the Conoco station was and the biggest hail storm that ever hit smashed every glass on two acres of greenhouses and the contents. They were golf ball sized hail, tons and tons of them. By the time they got through greasing the car, the sun was out again. I added two quarters to the seventy five cents of the cost of the grease job. I said, "Thanks fellows, that was the best grease job I ever had," and drove off into the sunset. Along the road, the older cars had their tops ripped out. I lucked out on that one baby! I was in the right place at the right time.

✚ **Cliff Hanger** – One time I was in a parking lot with a 30 foot drop at one end at Maryland University. I opened the door and got out of the car standing beside it. One of my buddies hit the rear bumper and the front of the car went over the cliff. I leaped in and grabbed the emergency brake and yanked with all I had and the car stopped with the hind wheels still on the level parking lot and the front wheels over the cliff. It took two buddies with skid chains wrapped around the bumper to get the car back on level. I don't know what would have happened if I hadn't acted that quickly – that was a close shave.

✚ **Chrysler Envy** – With a Fordor convertible it takes about a half hour to put the top up or down. While driving through Gaithersburg about 10 years ago, I noticed a little Chrysler sitting next to me at the stop light. They pushed a couple of buttons and in less time than it took for the light to change, the top was down. Man, that's for me, that's real progress. So I bought one. My wife was in an accident and totaled it but it was insured, so that was the end of that one.

✚ **NOS Parts?** – Back in the early days, turn signals hadn't been invented yet. I was passing a guy down in Washington and he turned left into me. I lost a fender in that deal. I got a new fender from York stamping mill. Everybody was making Ford parts, even then. Later I got another real Ford fender. All the Ford products are still around thanks to bonderizing – all the sheet metal went through a dip process, very strong metal. That's why so many Model A's are still around due to the metal going through that process. So I got another original fender but never put it on.

✚ **Simple Fix** – The springs got tired out on the Ford and they squeaked and rattled. For a quarter, a

Buzzy continued on next page

Buzzy continued from previous page

mechanic sprayed the spring and it stopped making noise. It was a simple and cheap fix compared to replacing the springs.

🚗 **Driving in Style** – I had two buddies help me put the top down. It had six or eight bolts. Two on the windshield and four on the side posts and two over the rear section. I drove it to college that way because it looked good. I had a set of '39 hubcaps and various things. I drove it with the top down and the windows up. In January it was a little nippy, but I drove it anyway, the windows up and the top down with the hot air heater blowing.

🚗 **1936 Town Car?** – For a while I drove it like a town car with the front half of the top down and I left the back half up. There are all kinds of tricks you can do with a Convertible Sedan. With the windows down and the top posts out, it was like a Phaeton, but it was a lot easier to drive with the top section folded down and the rest of it up. I did that for just one season just for the novelty of it – the town car mode. In case of rain you put the top up in a very short time. It was quicker than putting the whole top up - just the front section was a lot easier.

🚗 **Blowing in the Wind** – Two buddies were helping me put the top down, and we were almost there and suddenly I remember this girl on the other end of campus. I was supposed to pick her up about 15 minutes before. “Uh oh, got to go guys, she’s waiting, she will be mad.” I drove 55 mph in second gear and the wind caught that top and it went straight down instead of three ways like it’s supposed to. All my buddies got together and we had it all straightened out by sunset. Another stupid error, not the smartest thing I ever did.

🚗 **Grind Me a Pound** – My old '36 Ford has led a charmed life. I was driving to college and parked on loose gravel in a downhill parking spot. I was ready to go home, put it in reverse and the car went, “hubba, hubba” and stalled. The tires spun in the loose gravel and I couldn’t back up. I tried that three times and finally on the fourth time I floored it and got out and then I went 16 miles back on home. What I didn’t know was I had sheared the teeth of the reverse idler in the transmission. The teeth were floating around catching in the other teeth. By the time I got home, I’d ruined every tooth in the transmission.

I called a buddy who worked as a mechanic at the Bethesda Ford dealer. He said, “I can help you.” When I got there, he took an old laundry bag, it was a pleated bag, and pulled out all the transmission

gears I needed. He had all the transmission gears out of a '37 Ford, the same thing, and sold them to me for two dollars. These gears are still in the car. It turns out that an old man had a Ford 1937 coupe which made a strange noise when he took off and shifted gears. All Fords made this noise, but he had lots of money and wanted to replace all the gears in the transmission. So my buddy saved the gears and I was glad to have them, worked out like a charm. Lucked out again.

🚗 **Smokey** - After a while the Convertible Sedan started burning oil like mad, probably because all I would use it for was short drives and slow traveling around campus in college. It would burn a gallon of oil for a gallon of gas. You couldn’t see behind it when you stepped on the gas. Once I got stopped by a cop in DC, “Where you from?” he asked and I replied “Cabin John.” “Take it back to Cabin John and never bring it back to DC again.” I said, “Yes, sir.” At 50,000 miles it got so bad, it was fouling the plugs.

Another time, a policeman in Georgetown stopped me and said, “If you have a smoke screen attachment on that thing, we are going to take you in.” The car burned so much oil I could have died of carbon monoxide sitting at the wheel. I had disconnected the hot air heater and put a quart milk bottle over the hole to keep most of the smoke out of the passenger compartment. The police man said, pointing to the quart milk bottle, “See, there’s your smoke screen attachment!” I had to talk fast, “that’s not what you think it is,” I said and got out of that one.

In 1939 I got a set of Hastings steel piston rings and installed them in the car. Each piston had an expander behind the piston ring and a narrow scraper on either side of the piston ring. The new rings were so tight, I had to get it up to 45 miles per hour to even get it to turn over. One piston broke this way and I had to put another piston in. After that it went another 50,000 miles and never burned oil again. That cured it. After 100,000 miles and all that drag, the engine became rather loose and noisy. I saw an ad for a 1936 Ford for sale for \$75 with a new Ford factory rebuilt engine in it. I bought it and took the engine out and put it in my car and it’s still there. That was in 1947, and it runs fine to this day. I kept the original engine and had it totally rebuilt, for an arm and a leg, but haven’t reinstalled it in the car, it’s just out there waiting.

To be continued...

OBITUARY

David Cammack – Tucker Owner Extraordinaire!

By Editor

The old car hobby lost a truly one-of-a-kind collector when David Cammack died last month at the age of 84. I use the term “one-of-a-kind” to describe both the man and his collection. Over the past two decades the NVRG visited David and his Tucker collection numerous times in the nondescript warehouse located behind a firehouse in Alexandria. From the outside no one would ever have guessed that the world’s most complete collection of Tuckers, Tucker parts, memorabilia, plans and ephemera existed inside. He also had an extensive collection of Native American arrowheads that he and his family had collected over several generations.



David Cammack (in argyle sweater) last welcomed the NVRG to his Tucker museum in January 2010.

Tucker production amounted to a total of 51 cars, all built in 1948. David owned three of them: numbers 1001, 1022 and 1026. To those of us who are lovers of vehicles manufactured by the man who pioneered mass production techniques it seems odd to refer to vehicles by their production number, serial number, VIN, etc. The production numbers on David’s Tuckers hold a special significance though. They denote that he owned one of each example of Tuckers produced. The first Tuckers used a Cord transmission adapted to rear wheel drive. It proved to be unreliable when hooked up to the powerful, high torque Aircooled Products flat six cylinder engine. Car number 1001 has this transmission. Car number 1022 has the improved and strengthened Cord transmission. And car 1026 is one of only two cars built with an automatic transmission. During one of our visits I asked David if he planned on buying any more Tuckers. His response was essentially “No, I own all the variants that Preston Tucker produced, why would I want duplicates?”

But David did more than just buy the Tuckers and have them restored. He was into everything Tucker. He owned one of two prototype chassis, powered by mammoth 589 cubic inch, traverse

mounted flat six cylinder engine.



Ken Burns, Vern Parker and Hank Amster ponder the intricacies of the truly innovative prototype Tucker chassis with its mammoth engine, torque converter transmission system, independent 4 wheel suspension and 4 wheel disc brakes.

Dave Gunnarson has visited the Ford archives and obtained copies of numerous Ford engineering drawings. David Cammack certainly did him one better. He acquired over 50,000 original Tucker blueprints covering nearly every part and component of the car. The scale of the effort and expense required to produce this vast array of engineering drawings convinced David that Preston Tucker was entirely serious about going into mass production regardless of what Francis Ford Coppola implied in his movie *Tucker: A Man and His Dream*.



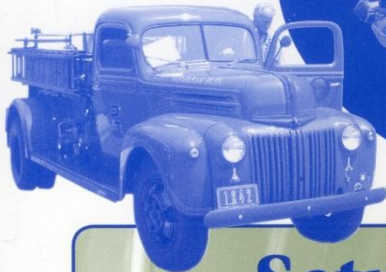
All those banker boxes are filled with Tucker Blueprints.

David Cammack saw the prototype “Tin Goose” at the Mayflower Hotel in the District 65 years ago but didn’t become interested in collecting them until he bought number 1001 in 1972. Over the next four decades he devoted considerable time, energy, effort, passion and money to preserving all facets of this unique piece of American post-war automotive history. Fortunately for all antique car lovers, several years ago David made arrangements for the Tucker collection to be housed and displayed at the AACA Museum in Hershey, PA.



City of Fairfax

Antique Car Show



Old Town Fairfax



Saturday May 18, 2013

10:00AM - 3:00PM

LOCATION: CITY HALL

(Between Rt. 123 & University Dr.)

10455 Armstrong St. • Fairfax, Virginia
Historic Old Town Fairfax—A Sense of Place

Live Bluegrass Music & Food!



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FAIRFAX VA



Presented by:
Northern Virginia Regional Group
of the Early Ford V-8 Club

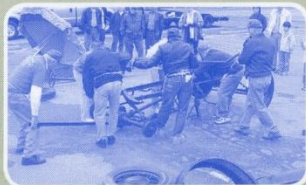
City of Fairfax

Downtown Fairfax Coalition

Old Town Fairfax Business Association

A portion of the
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to the Armed Forces
Retirement Home
in Washington, DC

Come See the Model-T Ford Reassembled in 15 Minutes!



Disassembled 1926 Model-T Ford...



Getting it together...



SHE RUNS!

Saturday May 18th at 1:00 PM

Don't Miss this Extraordinary Demonstration!

For more information go to: www.visitfairfax.com or www.nvrg.org • email: info@nvrg.org



For Sale – 1951 Ford Victoria with stock flathead V-8, 3 speed with overdrive. Sea-foam green with a raven black top. Red's Headers, dual and aluminized exhaust. Non-original Continental Kit. Engine runs well but not sure when it was last rebuilt. Paint in good condition - a few chips. Chrome/stainless good. Very good tires with optional wheel disks over original "dog dish" hub caps. Interior was re-done - not original materials – original headliner. Radio makes noise/static – needs to be repaired. Retrofitted fully electric clock mechanism. One weak sheet metal spot – hood at the hinge on driver's side fatigued. Hinge loosened - no further damage. Car needs weather stripping. \$15,000. Car located in MA. **Dean Larson.** bumppo72@comcast.net or 781 982 8983 (after 7 PM) 02/13



For Sale – 1934 Ford Roadster. It's a good one!!! Never apart, no rust ever, early repaint, loaded with NOS parts, runs and drives perfectly. Somewhere close to \$60K. [Click here](#) to see more. Located in Charlottesville, VA. Allen Ponton. 434-293-4400 or allen.ponton@gmail.com 02/13



For Sale – 1951 Ford F1 Panel Truck – If you're interested or know of someone who might be, please get back to me. Thanks. **Allan Edwards,** P.O. Box 2215, Front Royal, VA 22630 – 540-635-6865 (P) or 703-408-8372 (C) 11/10



For Sale – 1949-50 overdrive transmission - fits passenger cars (not convertible or station wagon). Includes control cable, new-in-box kickdown switch, and driveshaft – no wiring harness although old harness partially there. \$185 – located in Northern Neck. **Richard Thompson.** 804-453-4528 or AATNNECK@GMAIL.COM 12/12



MEMBERS – JUST A HEADS UP! – I have rebuilt over 20 distributors, upgrading them to the 1941 11A

weights and shaft. I have only four weights remaining and my source is exhausted. I have called around the country and there are none out there. Yes, Mac's advertises them, however, they are in fact NOS 68 weights. My customers all have been satisfied. The only difference between the 85 HP and the 90 HP are the distributor weights!! Take advantage of this cheap performance upgrade while I still have the parts remaining. **Cliff Green** 703-426-2662 or cliffgreen@cox.net 12/11



Wanted – for '49 F1 6 cyl: Crank handle (40-17036) with 13/16 lug nut socket on one end and a 4-sided provision for extension at other end. Also Crank extension for 6-cyl (51A 17040) - 26 3/8 inches long. **Jason Javaras** 540- 786-5819 03/13



Wanted – 1935 Front Perch Bolts – **Nick Arrington - nta1153@verizon.net** 11/11



Wanted – 1938 Ford sedan delivery. Nice original; older restoration or project with decent sheet metal. **Bill Potter** 301-466-2610 (C), Thanks. 03/12



Wanted – 1) 49-53 wide belt crankshaft pulley. 2) '42-48 front brake drums/hubs (drums mount on the inside of the hub). Prefer worn out drums because I'll replace them with new repro drums. Have lots of '49-53 engine parts to trade or sell. **John Ryan** john@ryanweb.com or 703-281-9686 (H) or 301-469-7328. 12/12



Wanted – two good, rebuildable Stromberg 94 carbs. Marked 21-29 on one side and Ford on the other. **Ray Lambert.** 703-491-4471 (H) or 703-595-9834 (C) 08/12



NVRG Donates "MADE IN VA"

Raffle Basket
to

Golden Jubilee Grand National Meet

We'll be collecting raffle basket items at the May Meeting. If you've signed up to donate an item please bring it to the meeting. If you haven't yet decided what to donate, contact Jim McDaniel to see what we still need.

jim.mcd@cox.net or 703- 569-6699



Father's Day Car Show

at

Sully Historic Site

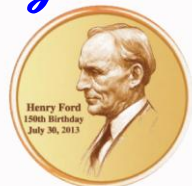
in

Chantilly, Virginia

Sunday, June 16, 2013

10 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

The Early Ford V-8 Foundation & Museum Proudly Presents a Commemorative Coin Celebrating the 150th Anniversary of Henry Ford's Birth



Each Coin comes in a special, sealed, colorful 10½" x 5" trifold that contains highlights of Henry Ford, his career, accomplishments and his iconic Rotunda. These limited edition coins cost \$9.95 each plus a small shipping and handling fee. To learn more visit:

<http://www.henryfordcoin.com/>



NVRG Calendar



<u>May</u>	
9	Caffeine Double Clutch #3 – join us for breakfast and great conversation at the Fair Oaks Silver Diner at 9:00 AM. See Jim Gray’s report on the April DCC event on page 7. Weather permitting, drive your V-8 – there will be parking spots reserved for us. Contact Ken Burns helenandken@verizon.net or Clem Clement clem.clement@cox.net if you plan to attend.
14	Membership Meeting – 7:00 pm – Nottaway Park – Program: The 1938 Fords and Lincolns – Keith Randall and John Sweet – Refreshments: David Blum
18	NVRG/City of Fairfax Car Show – open to all vehicles 25 years and older. To volunteer to help contact Dave Westrate dlwbaw@aol.com or (703) 620-9597. Sign up to help at our May 14 th meeting and show up to help at the show.
28	NVRG Board of Directors Meeting – 7:30 pm @ Country Club of Fairfax. All members welcome to attend.
28	Valve Clatter Deadline - submit articles, want/sell, etc. to Ken Burns – helenandken@verizon.net
<u>June</u>	
11	Membership Meeting – 7:00 pm – Nottaway Park – Program:Ice Cream Social and Art Show – Bring those Ford, Lincoln and Mercury artistic masterpieces to share with us. Other automobile artwork is also welcomed. Refreshments: Dave & Sarah Gunnarson
16	Sully Plantation Father’s Day Car Show – a great multi-generational event – bring the whole family and join us for a picnic under the trees. See page 14 for more info.
17-21	Early Ford V-8 Club’s Grand National 50th Anniversary Meet – Lake Tahoe CA.
25	NVRG Board of Directors Meeting – 7:30 pm @ Country Club of Fairfax. All members welcome to attend.
<u>July</u>	
9	Membership Meeting – 7:00 pm – Nottaway Park – Program:Grand National Meet Diamond Jubilee Recap – Refreshments: Dave Westrate
TBA	NVRG Picnic – Art and Sarah Zimmerli’s tranquil farm in Amisville. Details and map to follow.
30	NVRG Board of Directors Meeting – 7:30 pm @ Country Club of Fairfax. All members welcome to attend.
30	Valve Clatter Deadline - submit articles, want/sell, etc. to Ken Burns – helenandken@verizon.net
30	CELEBRATE THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF HENRY FORD’S BIRTH! Order an Early Ford V-8 Foundation Commemorative Coin – see page 18.

Down the Road



- ✚ August – Motorfest V – Sauder OH
- ✚ Workhouse Art Show/Occoquan/Clifton
- ✚ September – Drive-In Movie Night
- ✚ October 19th – Centerville Day



Board of Directors
NORTHERN VIRGINIA REGIONAL GROUP



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At-Large	Keith Randall	703-913-5655	Newsletter	Ken Burns	703-978-5939

May Program: The 1938 Fords & Lincolns

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



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Post Office Box 1195
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