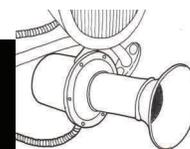




# THE KLAXON



October 2014



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The Newsletter of the

**Delaware Valley Model A Ford Club, Inc.**

**Founded in 1958**

**Who are we:**

**The Klaxon is the monthly newsletter of the Delaware Valley Model "A" Ford Club, Inc. and is circulated to all club members and other interested clubs. The club meets on the first Thursday of each month at 7:30pm at Daley's Service Center, 2749 Bristol Pike, Bensalem, PA 19020.**

**If you wish to contribute articles for publication in the Klaxon please do so by submitting them to the editor Steve Organ. Other pertinent information can be obtained from the officers.**

**Technical and historical questions are encouraged and we'll do our best to get the answers. Questions can be submitted via E-Mail at: [Sorgan@themaxwellgroup.org](mailto:Sorgan@themaxwellgroup.org).**

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<b>Treasurer – Don O'Hara</b>	<b>215-338-6368</b>
<b>Editor - Steve Organ</b>	<b>215-840-1259</b>
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<b>Activities/Parades – Ted Etling</b>	<b>215-802-8622</b>

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**HAPPY HALLOWEEN**

## President's Message



**Greetings:** It was great to see everyone at our annual Model A Day picnic. The rain date worked out well. Thanks to Dave and Shirley for hosting the picnic as well as everyone who supplied food

for the event. Next year we need to plan a rain date ahead.

This summer zipped by very quick. Here it is time for the Hershey Show already. I have my shopping list ready. For the last 32 years I have always enjoyed seeing the large assortment of antique vehicles and parts at Hershey. EBay and online shopping is nice however seeing the items in person before buying is always more assuring.

Car displays are a good source of income for the club that I feel we could expand upon. Keep an eye out for display opportunities for the club. The displays are very easy to organize. The Veterans and nursing home residents are very appreciative and it is easier on our cars than parades. See you on the 2nd!

*Jim*



**Editor's Message Hi All:** It's hard to believe that October is almost here. It's almost time to think about putting the cars away for the winter. More about that in the next issue.

We are coming up on the time of the year we almost all dread....Election of new officers. This about serving the club. While it involves that dirty 4- letter word— WORK it is fun ad enjoyable. Think about serving as an officer.

We are also coming up on something new for the club. We voted at a meeting last winter to charge a "surcharge" to lifetime members who still receive the Klaxon using the USPS. This will go into effect with the Feb issue which comes out in late Jan. We will be sending an invoice in the Klaxon to those members who are life members and receiving the Klaxon in the mail. As always, there will be NO surcharge if you receive the Klaxon using E-Mail. The cost of postage, ink and paper continues to rise and the \$10 charge will not cover the entire cost. If you are not a life member and receive the Klaxon in the mail there will be NO surcharge. Sorry but it had to be done and the club voted on this at an open meeting. See you all soon.

*Steve*

## Up Coming Events

**10/2/2014 Monthly Meeting at Daley's Service Center**

**11/6/2014 Monthly Meeting at Daley's Service Center**

## Happy Birthday for

### October 2014

Delores Kubis	1
Al Kubis	2
Tony Zampirri	6
Richard Winans	11
Joe Chamberlain	12
Sonny Sciarretta	12
Pam Foltz	20
Kathy Korhonen	15
Bernard Brzoza	22
Donna Daley	25
Bob Stankiewicz	26
Pam Foltz	26
Len Davidson	31

**Watch for pictures from our Annual Banquet next month**



## Keepers of the Flame for Ford's Model A

By Bill Griffith—Boston.com Correspondent Permission granted for Reprint from Author



If you go to most classic car shows or cruise nights, you're likely to notice that the crowd skews to an older demographic.

The reason seems obvious: All of us tend to collect, restore, and drive the cars from our youth. A prime example is the astronomical prices Baby Boomers are paying for muscle cars from the 1960s and '70s who now are able to buy the cars they yearned for in their youth.

Recently, the question came up during an informal conversation, "What's happening with the Model A crowd? Immediately, the image of old Model A's left to molder in old barns came to mind.

It turns out that while the Model A crowd is getting older, these folks are keeping an important piece of American history on the road. More important, they consider themselves "keepers of the flame," and caretakers of a key part of America's history.

The Model A, built from 1928-31, was the successor to the iconic Model T, which was built from 1908-27 and brought the automobile to the middle class.

If the Model T brought mobility, the Model A made driving enjoyable.

We asked a few Model A owners about it at recent cruise nights.

"A lot of Model A owners are old timers who can barely walk, but they still will jump in their cars and go," says Ed Rogers of Saugus, who drove his Model A to the Liberty Tree Mall in Danvers for a mid-week cruise night.

Rogers is 82 now. He began doing valve jobs in the sixth grade during his Chelsea childhood, working at a local gas station in the afternoon after delivering groceries and newspapers. He's been fixing, restoring, and driving cars ever since. He's presently working on a friend's 1929 four-door sedan.

Rogers is from an age when people fixed and kept using things. His 1930 five-window coupe, with 74,000 original miles on it, looks as good as it did when new.

"No one on the East Coast knows more about A's than Eddie," says his good friend Wayne Whitaker, also a customer and fellow member of the North Shore Old Car Club.

"He's an encyclopedia of automotive knowledge," says Model A owner Bob Hudlin of Melrose. "He can tell you how much torque is called for on every bolt in these cars."

What will happen to that knowledge once this generation passes?

"It's a big concern of ours. It's addressed all the time at our club and at the national level," says Nan Linden of Southborough, membership chairman of the Minuteman Model A Club, which meets monthly in Sudbury.

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Our average age is well over 60,” she says. “There are some younger members but not enough.”

Linden, and other Model A aficionados see their grandchildren gravitating to tuner cars. “Young people like the Model A’s, but these cars are too old and go too slowly for them. My husband’s uncle had a collection. That’s how [my husband] got the bug.”

The Lindens can attest to the group knowledge in their club, which has “close to” 150 members.

“My husband always wanted to drive a Model A cross-country,” she says, “so we planned to drive to Vancouver, B.C., for the 2010 national meet. We know that most things that go wrong can be fixed along the way, so we were pretty confident about making it.”

Those plans didn’t include a blown engine. “The engine blew before we were out of Massachusetts. We had a spare back home in the garage. By the time the tow truck got us home, there were seven or eight club members there to make the changeover.”

Unfortunately, the second engine was missing an oil pump, and the Lindens drove only 10 miles before it, too, failed.

“Another member had a spare,” she says. “The third try was a charm. That engine made it cross country and back. Since then, we’ve had the original rebuilt and put back in the A. But that experience gives you an idea of what these clubs are like.”

Club president John Kerns of Framingham is another who ponders what the future holds for the Model A.

“All clubs are wondering what will happen,” he says. “People don’t drive for pleasure any more, and a lot of young people don’t want to drive at all.”

But Kerns sees positives if younger people want to adopt a Model A. “The Model A really is an old automobile with controls that are still familiar today, so you can get used to driving one quickly. In contrast, the Model T really was a horseless carriage and not so easy to operate.”

More good news: Relatively speaking, Model A’s are affordable.

“You can have a lot of fun with a Model A for a reasonable cost,” says Kerns. “If you’ve been watching Barrett-Jackson and other televised auctions, you know what I mean when I say I have Fords, not ‘Can’t Af-Fords.’ ”

The Minuteman Club is a touring club. The members’ Model A’s usually cruise along between 35 and 45 miles per hour, though they can push 60 mph with high-speed differential gears.

“We do about 40 tours a year,” says Nan Linden. “That includes several overnights. The most fun are when we do ice cream tours. It’s like being in a private parade and the most fun to be toward the back and watch as people along the way react to our group.”

One couple on some of those tours is Steve and Donna Smith of Ipswich.



Smith, a retired teacher, initially went the muscle car route; he's been building cars since he was 16. A few years ago, he got the itch to try a Model A.

"I'd been looking at a 1930 Model A for sale on eBay," he says. "Then it disappeared. It turns out it was bought by the folks from the 'Fast and Loud' TV show."

The Model A didn't fit the show's plans so Smith was able to buy a rust-free car that's now roadworthy and part of history. He's traced the car's ownership back to Mountain View, Calif., and has spoken with two brothers who owned it in the 1960s.

"You can drive these cars anywhere," he says. "You just don't want to go via the highways."

## **A Model A in the Family**

The future is a worry, not only for Model A clubs, but also for individual car owners.

Bob Hudlin of Melrose has a gorgeous 1930 Model A five-window coupe that has been in his family since it was new.

"My grandfather, Charles L. Stone, bought it new from Stoneham Ford," he says. "Then my father, Earl Hudlin, inherited it and had it completely restored. He turned it into a 'Trailer Queen' and took it to shows all over the country. It won a national No. 1 award in 1984."

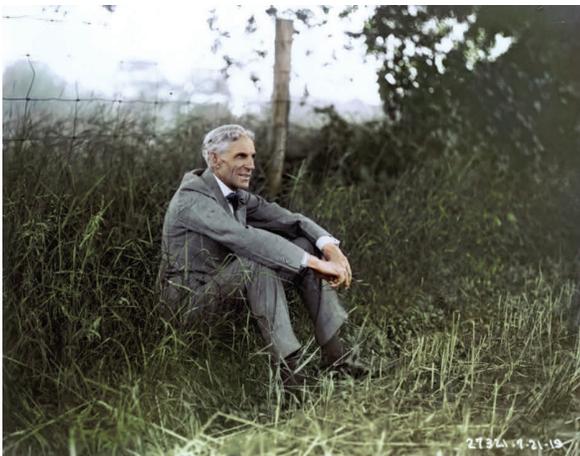
Hudlin eventually took ownership and has had fun driving and maintaining the Model A. He's even written a poem, "Keepers of the Flame," about how today's owners merely are caretakers and guardians of these historic automobiles.

But ask him what's going to happen to the car when he goes and he shrugs. "I've thought about it and worried about it," he says, "but I just don't know. My son isn't interested in it. Now my grandson Cole had some interest. I've been taking him for rides since he was a toddler. As he's gotten older, I've taught him a bit about how to drive it, including how to double-clutch it and the like. But he's 15, a sophomore in high school, and his attention has wandered from cars to girls."

As far as Hudlin's wife Grace is concerned, he could park the Model A on the front lawn with a For Sale sign on it.

"She never liked it, and would be glad to see it out of the garage," he says.

*Bill Griffith can be reached at [WGriff@gmail.com](mailto:WGriff@gmail.com). Follow him on Twitter [@MrAutoWriter](https://twitter.com/MrAutoWriter).*



**Henry Ford, 1919**



# License Plates

*By: Matthew Hocker*

Labor Day weekend is on the horizon and, with it, will come the last major spurt of summer travel. On long drives to family cookouts, children often turn to handheld gaming devices and on-board DVD players for entertainment. Before these amenities became widespread, children of the past needed to find creative ways to avoid boredom. Among the favorite pastimes were playing games involving license plate spotting. With a wide variety of colors and designs, license plates helped break up the monotony on the highway; these differences also helped them become highly sought after collectibles. You might find yourself wondering how on earth they came to be.

The story of the license plate actually predates the existence of the automobile. No one knows for sure when the first registration numbers went into use, but they were definitely used for horse-drawn carriages. For example, hansom cab drivers of Victorian England were issued numbered plates.

The birthplace of the automotive industry was Europe thanks to the introduction of the 1886 Benz Patent-Motorwagen. Motor vehicle registration also appeared to have originated in the Old World. Paris, France issued an automobile permit in April 1891, making it the earliest known example of such a transaction. By 1893, the city enacted a police ordinance in which drivers were required to fix a numbered plate to their vehicle.



In America, it wasn't until 1901 before New York became the first state to pass official legislation for motor vehicle registration. Drivers were required to have plates on their cars with their initials. Eventually realizing this system would be unable to accommodate the growth of automotive transportation, the state began issuing numbers in 1903. Numbers were printed on a small metal seal and intended for placement on the rear of the car.

Unlike the plates of today, American license plates of the early 1900s lacked standardization and came in a wide array of shapes and sizes. More often than not, drivers assumed responsibility for having the plates created. Those who needed assistance turned to blacksmiths, woodworkers and even shoemakers. The average plate consisted of tin numbers affixed to a stitched leather pad (See photograph of Charles Duryea's leather plate below). Some drivers simply painted the numbers on the body or bumper of their cars.

In the early 1900s, traveling between states often required a plate for each state! From 1915 through the early 1920s, Maryland insisted travelers from D.C. purchase Maryland plates. Maryland rationalized that, because the capital was so small, D.C. drivers were more likely to frequent the Old Line State's roads. Virginia took note, briefly enacting similar regulations in 1915 and 1916, so some cars needed three plates! Not even the White House fleet was immune.

The 1920s witnessed the emergence of symbols and slogans which have continued into present day. In 1928, Idaho became the first state to use a graphic design on its plates with the image of a giant potato surrounding the numerals. Wyoming's famous cowboy astride a bucking bronco first appeared in 1936. New York even promoted its World's Fairs by issuing special themed plates in the late 1930s and mid-1960s.

(Con't on Page 8)

With America's entry into World War II, the military's thirst for material had a significant impact on license plates in two ways. First, scrap drives witnessed legions of patriotic drivers donating their old plates toward the war effort. Second, metal shortages meant states would have to find alternative materials for which to use. One common method was to issue small aluminum year tabs to be placed on the old license plate. In other cases, windshield stickers were used.

Some states used soybeans to fabricate fiberboard plates. Illinois even continued manufacturing such plates during the first few years after the war had ended. Stories were abound of animals with an appetite for fiberboard. In 1947, an Illinois man reported "...he caught his collie yesterday zestfully gobbling up the rear plate on his automobile." Illinois would return to making steel plates in 1949.

Flash forward to the present, in which silk-screening has allowed for more elaborate designs, and state websites now accompany slogans of old. Despite changes in appearance throughout the ages, the popularity of the license plate as a collectible is a testament to its timelessness. More than just a series of letters and numbers designating our place in the transportation system, they have transformed into symbols of our heritage and cultural identity.



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# International Model A Day September 13, 2014

**The club celebrated International Model A Day on Sunday September 14, one day late because the weather didn't cooperate.**

**As has become the practice, the club celebrated with a picnic hoisted by Dave and Shirley Sadowl. As you can see below, Dave worked so hard setting everything up. (see below).**



**We had 17 Model A's and 1 early Ford V-8 (at least it was a Ford!) along with about 30 members. The food was great as always and this year we had a large assortment of side dishes and deserts brought by the members. Some of our regulars were missing (Jack Fritsch!) and we had some new members show up. A great time was had by all and you should plan on attending next year. I understand Willie runs a great BINGO Game.**



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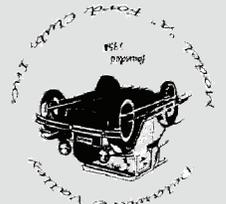
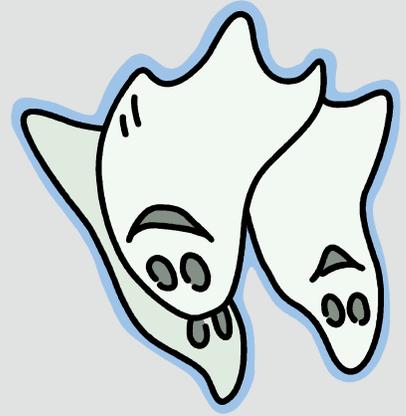
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