

Jan/21



THE



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DEDICATED TO THE RESTORATION & PRESERVATION OF 1932-1963 FORD MOTOR CAR COMPANY VEHICLES



Happier New Year Coming Up



Prez Sez

Happy New Year Early Ford V8 Club of San Diego Members! With few regrets I bid 2020 farewell and good riddance! I hope you and your friends and families had an enjoyable holiday season, however you celebrated it.

Over the course of the last year, we had a huge paradigm shift of how we live our lives, socialize with others, and how the Early Ford V8 Club operates. I suspect the mode we are in now for social interaction will last a good chunk of 2021,

barring any shift in the pandemic, for better or worse. Those of us that enjoy the social aspect of getting out in our cars and driving on tours or drives should take advantage of every time an opportunity to do so is presented to us. While there will probably not be any "Club sanctioned" events held in the near future, members of the Club can put together a drive or event in which other Club members, and non-Club members can participate. I know Tim and Sandy Shortt have put together the first one of the year in January. I am looking forward to it. There will be additional safe activities, involving social distancing and all the necessary precautions, planned for 2021. If you plan an activity in which others can participate, you can send the information to Sandy Shortt or Joe Valentino. Either Sandy or I can send it out to other Club members who might be interested in joining. Unfortunately, I do not see us getting together for a Club meeting any time in the near future...but you never know!

The pandemic has also impacted the Club's ability to execute some duties specified in the Club's Bylaws (you can read the Bylaws on the San Diego EFV8 Club's website: [index.html \(sandiegoearlyfordv8club.org\)](http://index.html(sandiegoearlyfordv8club.org))). To ensure that Club members are aware of these impacts, below is a listing.

The following are variances to bylaws that will occur solely in 2021, due to the current pandemic and our inability to meet as a group.

1. Club Officers that were elected for 2020 will remain in place for 2021.
2. Members serving on the Board of Directors that were elected for 2020 will remain in place for 2021.
3. The full financial report that typically occurs at the general meeting in January by the Treasurer will not occur.
 - The expenses that occurred in 2020 have been limited to paying the Club's annual Liability Insurance premium, the typical expense related to publishing the Fan, approved funding of the Toys for Tots purchases, and reimbursement for the last club tour (totaling less than \$100).
 - The waiving of Membership dues for 2021 has eliminated that revenue that the Club had in 2020.
4. The Annual third-party audit of the Club's financials that typically occurs in February will occur later in 2021. (The absence of activity since the last audit makes this a lower priority than in the past.)
5. The yearly budget that is typically presented for approval at the February general meeting will not occur this year. The approved 2020 budget will remain in place for 2021, unless significant circumstances require it to change during the year. If significant changes to the budget occurs, Members will be notified of that change.
6. 2021 Annual Membership dues for all members already in good standing will be waived for 2021. Please pay your National Early Ford V8 Club Membership dues as usual.
- 7.

Any concerns for the variances listed can be directed to me (Joe Valentino) and I will address them with the Board members and Officers as needed.

Since 2020 set such a low bar for being a year of great fun and celebration, I am confident that 2021 is going to be a much-improved year for all of us. I look forward to seeing all of you in 2021.

Have a safe and enjoyable January. Don't leave your car parked in the garage, it misses you! Get out and drive it!

Best Regards — Joe Valentino

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Huntington Beach 1962



Tuesday, Dec 1, 2020—SD V8 Club Board of Directors ZOOM Meeting.
We've been Zooming our meetings for 8 Pandemic months now, so we're getting used to it. However, that does not mean we're not a little bored with the whole situation. Which may explain why Dennis Bailey carefully made a custom fit tinfoil hat (for better reception, he says) or why Rick Carlton was speaking about a motion for a vote and suddenly stepped away from the camera, and returned a moment later with a "Day of the Dead" horned mask. And while I was giving my report on the Fan, Sandy began cleaning the office behind me. Despite all this, we do the club's business and treat matters seriously. It was good to see Mike Petermann — He had his back operation and seemed to be healing, when he had a post -operation infection. While back at the Hospital he got a mild case of the Covid 19 and promptly shared it with Susan as soon as he got home. Remember... "For better or Worst"? They say they feel ok and are getting better... All Board members have agreed to continue on in the job through next year.



Zoom ThanksGiving Family Dinner



Tours

**Any tour at this point is
Unsanctioned by the
V8 Club National.**

**January 20/21
Sandy and Tim will lead a tour to The
Garden Center**

Birthday and Anniversaries

January Anniversaries

1/04 Ignacio & Annette Castaneda
1/26 Al & Stephanie Tarkington

January Birthdays

1/02 Don Pettee
1/02 Bob Brown
1/02 Ignacio Castaneda
1/05 Augustin Martinez
1/07 Judy Gladden
1/07 Marty Ries
1/09 Dennis Bailey
1/10 Maureen Colvin
1/19 Raphael Hargrave
1/20 Ken Tibbot
1/21 Webb Smith
1/23 Lois Pierson
1/23 Sheryl Carlton

January Club Birthdays

Dick & Barbara Martin	21 yrs
Walter Anderson	7 yrs
Ron Shedd	2 yrs
Duane Edwards	1 yr

Membership Paula-
Welcome new members-
Sunshine Judy- Mike Petermann and
Suzan Graves tested positive for Covid.



Both are having mild symptoms
and are in Quarantine.

Former v8 members, "Swede" Renberg
and Karen have some worries: Swede
has had a stroke and is now
back home, recovering.

**Mask Up. Wash Often.
Stand Back.**

STAY HEALTHY
Happy New Year, Everybody

**Last Month we Thanked our
Veterans. We should also thank our
Front Line Medical Heroes:**

The backbone of effective health systems—Doctors & Nurses Put their lives on the line everyday

Since its emergence, severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), which causes COVID-19, has become a global health threat. As of July 22, 2020, more than 15 million cases of COVID-19 have been documented worldwide, with nearly 618 000 deaths. In the UK and the USA, Black, Asian, and minority ethnic communities have been disproportionately affected. With ongoing community transmission from asymptomatic individuals, disease burden is expected to rise. As a result, there will be an ongoing need for front-line health-care workers in patient-facing roles.

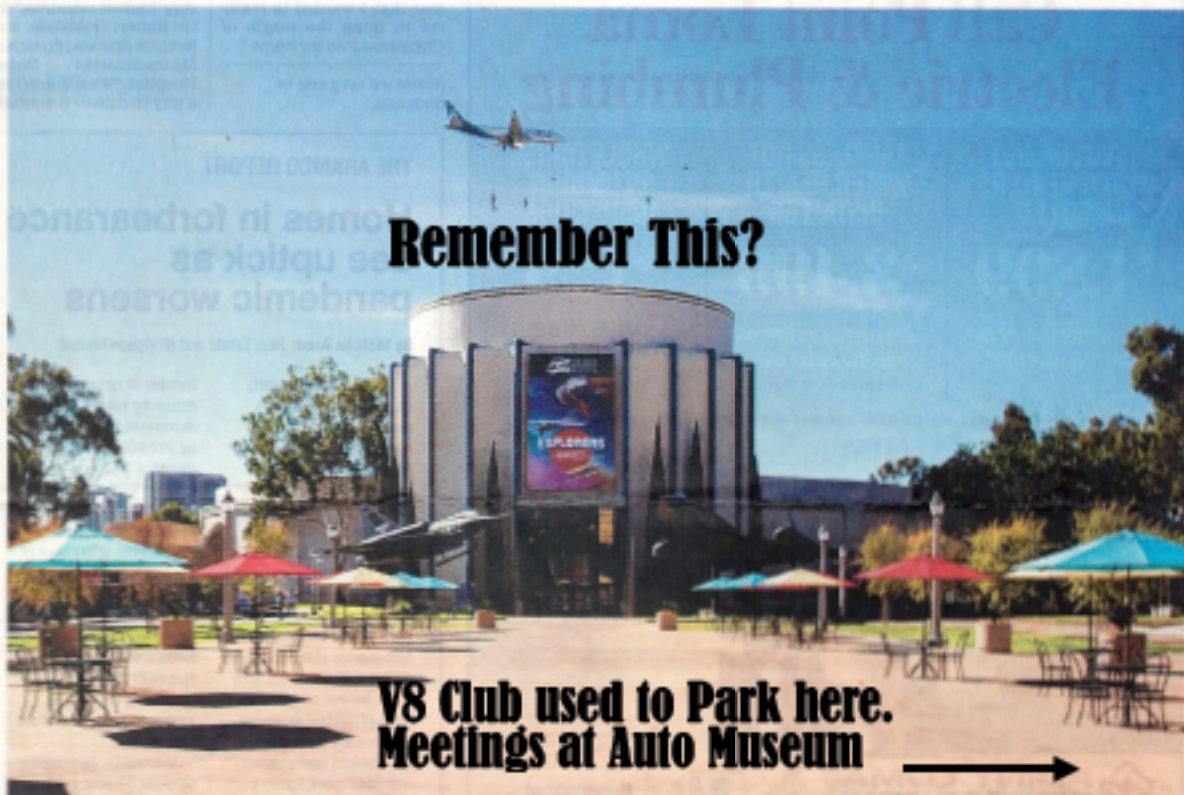
Because this work requires close personal exposure to patients with SARS-CoV-2, front-line health-care workers are at high risk of infection, contributing to further spread. Initial estimates suggest that front-line health-care workers could account for 10–20% of all diagnoses.

Frontline clinicians have become the face of our pandemic. They represent the best of humanity, rising to treat critically ill patients, as well as the collateral damage from America's fragile health care system and disordered government response. Calling them "heroes" doesn't protect them from psychological trauma, and experts warn that a mental health crisis among health care workers could emerge in the virus's wake.



**OK. What can WE do?
Mask Up. Wash Often. Stand Back.**





Remember This?

V8 Club used to Park here. Meetings at Auto Museum

ARIANA DREHSLER PHOTOS

The parking area in front of Balboa Park's San Diego Air & Space museum was transformed into an open space called Palisades Plaza.

PARKING LOT NOW MORE OF A PARK

Car-free Palisades Plaza features colorful tables, chairs, new landscaping

BY JENNIFER VAN GROVE

An asphalt parking lot in the heart of Balboa Park has been reimagined as parkland and is being hailed as an incremental but important addition to the city landscape.

Wednesday city officials celebrated the official opening of what's being called Palisades Plaza. The reworked area directly in front of the San Diego Air & Space Museum, which had been the 144-space South Palisades parking lot, is now a car-free zone with turf, colorful tables and chairs, enhanced lighting



Roger Showley (center), president of the Balboa Park Committee of the BID, gives a statue to Mayor Kevin Faulconer (right) and Mayor-elect Todd Gloria at the opening of the plaza.

and landscaping, an improved train stop and upgraded stairwells. The adjacent North Palisades lot remains intact and has been repaired.

"By restoring the Palisades to its original grandeur, we've turned what was literally a crumbling parking lot into San Diego's next great public space for San Diegoans to enjoy at a time when they need it the most," said outgoing Mayor Kevin Faulconer. "This was a very important first step."

Faulconer said he also supports a long-discussed plan to add a large water fountain that respects the Palisades' 1893 origins to the site, but noted that additional funds will need to be identified.

Envisioned in Balboa Park's 2009 master plan, Palisades Plaza was championed for years by the pres-

STY PERK • CA

The Times- they are a Changin'

Thanks for update, , Bill Dorr



Big 3 becomes Big Pour



MILESTONE HERE: CONCRETE POUR

300 truckloads to be delivered to stadium site in next 10 days

BY KIRK KENNEY

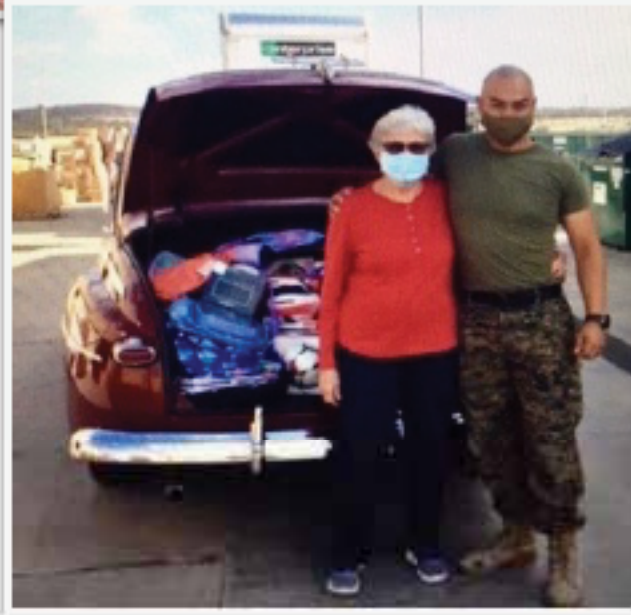
Glamour shots of San Diego State's new Aztec Stadium — the field, stands, luxury suites, club seats, locker rooms and the like —

About

San Diego build its stadium football to open a Sept. 3, now 639 Union-Tri monthly

DEMOLITION DAY AT STADIUM





Once again the club allowed me to purchase a little over \$400 worth of toys to donate to the Toys for Tots toy drive. With the money I was able to purchase 24 backpacks and 18 sports balls. Before we tried to deliver them I called ahead of time and was told that there would be a pod placed at the outside of the base entry gate along with a couple of Marines stationed there to accept the toys. When we arrived there was no pod and no Marines so we called on the intercom located at the gate and told them why we were there. They told us they would open the gate and for us to come on in to the area where we usually drop off the toys. There was only one Marine and a couple of lady volunteers there to help us and I was very pleased that one of the ladies recognized us from previous years of dropping off toys from our club. I explained to her that we didn't have as many toys to donate this year since with the pandemic restrictions we were unable to have our Christmas party when the club members also bring toys to donate but we did encourage our members to drop off their toy donations in a Toys for Tots collection box at their local fire station, etc. They thanked us for our annual donation and said it all helps. After speaking with the ladies we helped the Marine unload our toys and went about our way so he could keep working.—2021 will be a better year so have a good Holiday Season and stay safe!! ——See you next year - Paula



LOOK! GIFTS FOR GROWN-UPS:

1. MOTORS Repair Manual-1949+
2. FORD Repair Manual
3. CRAFTSMAN Tool Bag
4. Polisher Buffer
5. Fire Extinguisher & Mount
6. Tire Inflator-On the Road, (plugs into Lighter or Power Port).
7. Fender Protector- excellent shape.

All FREE! Courtesy John Dow

Just answer this one question:

Who's buried in Grant's Tomb?

Tim 619-851-8927





1988 GREAT RACE

With this damned COVID I had to do something. So I spent time going through some old photo albums and found a few pix from the Great American Race '88. We had big problems with our '34, but we weren't alone. In a '34 Nash were 2 two guys from the Poway area. The Nash threw a rod bearing in Hays, Kansas. They managed to get the rod and piston out of the bottom of the engine but when started, it shook so much he could only drive it about 10 MPH. SO my 'support truck' trailed the Nash to Boston. Then they rode with us through the last half of the trip. They were able to drive the Nash 'very slowly' in the Final Parade in Boston on July 4th. He had a transport haul it home.
 —Walter Andersen



'50 Rag top—Bought for \$200 from City Chevrolet Used Cars, 38k pampered miles. Signature HS Car. Sold 3 yrs later for \$300



San Diego, 1958

I was 17 and fully into Cars. I had just totaled the family hand-me-down Plymouth in Julian. Went shopping two days later. Found my first v8 Ford that I thought might impress a date. The one-owner red 1950 Convertible was just traded in and only had only 38K on it. The sign on the window said, "Pampered". Lots of cruising-at speed down the old 101, my pal Bobby, kidding around, ran a closed pocket knife across the top, it tore and exploded off the car. We were all in shock. Got a new top for \$35 bucks the next day.

'34 Fordor—Bought off Gas Station back lot- \$15 bucks. Got it running, Primed it, fixed brakes and painted WWW on junk yard tires—sold for \$75 Bucks



**\$100 '37 Fordor-Free-one owner V8-60 —sold for \$200
Free '41 Tudor- \$50- RR Fender torn-otherwise ok ride-
Raced in cemetery- gave it away when radiator blew.**



'31 Coupe- Dual Carbs on 4 banger - \$50 -- Used it like a jeep all over Mira Mesa. 3 months later, sold for \$75 Bucks



'37 Coupe found in woods at Lake Tahoe-5 friends bought for \$4.50 each. Hooked up a battery, pumped up flat tires with compression line off motor and drove two summers-. Winter stored in wood pile-at family cabin . Gifted to San Diego Preacher five years later. He restored it.



My surprise BDAY party was over the top great...

produced by daughter Suzy, the organizer, and Sandy, her mom. They partied up the place with my face on a stick, had sport shirts made with my name, age and High School photo, Hung strings of family shots taken from family albums and a huge banner announcing- "It's my second 40th BDAY (So, Honk!) "...Bill Dorr arranged for a bunch of old Fords to meet secretly and parade past our patio, honking their horns and dropping cards and jokes in a germ-free Pandemic bucket... which resulted in plenty of laughs and loud conversations, which, in turn, brought out all the neighbors. Sandy, Suzy, Kayla, me and Mike settled into the patio for dinner, cake and *BDAY APPLE PIE*. But who can settle in with so many folks walking or driving by wanting to say HAPPY BIRTHDAY? At dark, it was California cold, with a passing drizzle, so we set a fire, organized the umbrellas, handed out jackets, cozy-ed up and played a few games... perfect. Great to see everyone—Happier New Year for all of us —Tim



Founded in 1931 by Walter C. Marmon and Arthur W. Herrington, the company was the successor to the Marmon Motor Car Company, a maker of high quality, costly automobiles from 1902 to 1933.

By the early 1930s, the U.S. economy had taken a severe downturn, and with the onset of the Great Depression, the market for prestigious luxury cars mostly collapsed. To keep his business going, Marmon joined forces with an ex-military engineer in the person of Arthur Herrington in 1931, with a new idea to focus on building all-wheel-drive trucks. And so the company became Marmon-Herrington, initially as the truck production division of the Marmon Motor Car Company, developing military trucks.

Marmon-Herrington (MH) got off to a successful start in March 1931, when the company procured contracts for 33 T-1 4x4 aircraft refueling trucks, powered by 6-cylinder Hercules engines, followed by a variety of 4x4 and 6x6 vehicles for the U.S. and Persian armies, for use as general load carriers, towing light weaponry, mobile machine shops, and wreckers. Reconnaissance, scout and armored cars were also made, some with **four-wheel steering** as well as four-wheel drive. In 1932 Marmon-Herrington built the first all-wheel-drive truck and trailer combination, and the largest trucks ever built at the time, for oil pipe construction in Iraq.^[6] Construction of all-wheel-drive (AWD) vehicles and conversion of existing vehicles to AWD were among the company's products. MH's all-wheel-drive conversions of Ford light trucks were successfully sold to the military of both the U.S. and several foreign governments.

Marmon-Herrington also made multi-stop delivery vans and passenger vehicles. The company designed a military armored vehicle which could be constructed on a commercial truck chassis. The design was taken up by South Africa in 1938, the result of which became known as the **Marmon-Herrington Armoured Car**, which was used by **British** and **Commonwealth** armies in the **North Africa Campaign**.

During World War II the British were looking for a purpose-built airborne light tank to replace the **Tetrarch light tank** but decided not to produce the tank in Britain due to a lack of production capacity. Instead, the American government was approached with a request that it produce a replacement for the Tetrarch. This request was made by the British Air Commission in **Washington, D.C.**, with a proposal calling for a tank of between 9 t (8.9 long tons) and 10 t (9.8 long tons) to be developed, this being the maximum weight the War Office had decided could be carried by current glider technology. The **United States Ordnance Department** was given the task of developing the proposed tank, and in turn, requested designs from three American companies: **General Motors**, **J. Walter Christie** and Marmon-Herrington. The design offered by Christie in mid-1941 was rejected as it failed to meet the specified size requirements, as was a modified design the company produced in November.^[7] At a conference in May 1941, the Ordnance Department chose the Marmon-Herrington design and requested that the company produce a prototype tank, which was completed in late 1941; it was designated the **Light Tank T9 (Airborne)** by the company and the Ordnance Department and later designated **M22**.

The company also manufactured airport fire trucks, like the Marmon Herrington MB-1 and Marmon Herrington MB-5. They were mainly used by the military, like the U.S Air Force and U.S. Navy. Post-War civilian adaptations, known as "**Brush Breakers**", were also produced.

The company's foray into transit buses began in 1946, when it produced its first electric trolley bus. The end of **World War II** had brought a steep drop in the need for military vehicles, so Marmon-Herrington looked for another area of vehicle

manufacturing in which it might find new business.^[8] Its first "trolley coaches", the more common term for trolley buses at that time, introduced innovative features such as lightweight **monocoque** bodies and strong, double-girder sidewalls, which made the Marmon-Herrington trolley coach the best-selling trolley coach of the postwar era.^[9] Its trolley buses were successful in the fleets of many North American cities, most notably **Chicago** and **San Francisco**, which purchased large numbers.





Thank You VETERANS



About 50 boats with flags flying gathered off Shelter Island waiting for the official start. Bob Brown and battle buddies rode on the lead boat, a Vietnam era Swift Boat. As we all boarded The 'Sun Baby' for the Vets Day Boat Parade, Bill and Sue Houlihan welcomed us with a fever test gun. Once tested, the masks came off and the smiles appeared. When we got the GO signal, we fell into a slow moving line that continued around the Bay past the Tall Ships, The Carrier and the Tuna Fishing Fleet. Overhead helicopters, Seal Team smoke jumpers and a formation of five vintage prop-driven planes buzzed us trailing smoke trails. Downtown San Diego was the backdrop. We had come prepared for cold weather, but the day was filled with only sunshine.



Hot Rod Hill Climb 2018

By Jess (MacKichan) Gasper

It's hard to narrow down what makes the Hot Rod Hill Climb in Central City, Colorado, so great. But here goes my feeble attempt.

The Hot Rod Hill Climb is about celebrating history and paying homage to the good 'ole days of 4-bangers and flatheads. Back when hot rods were likely built by a guy in his one stall garage with basic tools, learned trade skills and with the help of a handful of friends.

This was the fourth year for the MacKichan tribe to attend the Hot Rod Hill Climb, starting with the very first recreation back in 2013, celebrating the 60th anniversary of a small event held in 1953 on Guanella Pass in Georgetown, Colorado.

If you come early, you can test your limits on the Reliability Run the Friday before the race. It's a 100 mile drive up through the mountains of Colorado. In 2014, we experienced rain, sleet and snow. But this year's weather was absolutely gorgeous. We finished the tour with a segment called the OMG route. It's a steep gravel and wash board road with hair pin turns and no railing. But the view is breathtaking. No traffic, no lights, only you, your hot rod and maybe a nut or two behind you in their car. This year a Model A coupe lost its headlight on the OMG run. And he found it! Unscathed! I always love driving my '33 Ford coupe. The mountains make me appreciate how, well, reliable it is. My only issue is from the thin air... my carburetor and I sometimes disagree.

Saturday morning of race day, while standing in the pits surrounded by 140 plus vintage mechanical wonders, you can feel the excitement in the crisp Colorado air. Everyone in the staging lines isn't there by accident. They've spent most of the year thinking about and preparing for the hill climb. Some drove hundreds of miles to attend. A few driving the car they'll race and then depend upon to get back home.

After the national anthem and a few words from Mike Nicolas, the man behind the event, the beautiful flag girl jumps high into the air waving the worn checkered flag and the racing begins!

Car after car races up the hill. Revving engines, screeching tires and cheering racers and fans inundate your senses. A racer squeals off the starting line every few minutes. A sound you can hear for miles.

Finally, it's your turn to position your racer on the starting line. The nerves and adrenaline kick in while you quietly pray to not kill the engine in front of so many people. You watch Amy, the flag girl, like a hawk and recognize the subtle nod when she confirms the hill is ready for another racer. She points at you and asks "Are you ready?" You nod whether you're ready or not. She jumps, waves the flag and shouts "Woooooo!" You dump the clutch and mash the gas pedal and you're off!

You whip up that mountain side, revving high your vintage engine and testing the limits of your transmission. Bracing your body on the hair pin curves you still can't help but smile. Even the toughest, coolest, hard core hot rodding dude on the hill has a sappy grin on his face.

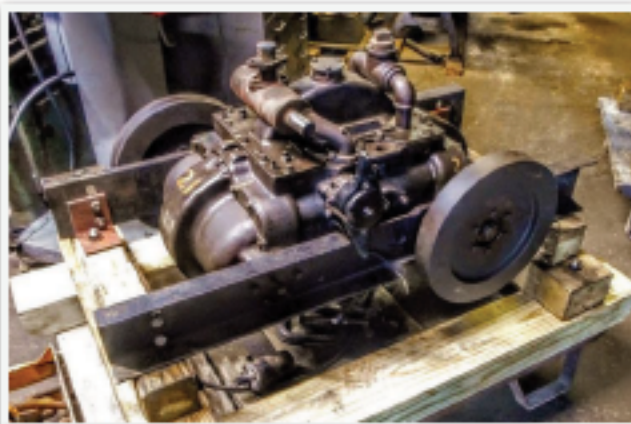
After you get to the finish line at the top you circle back towards Central City so you can get back in line and do it all over again. The MacKichan racers fought electrical issues this year. The '28 Ford sedan with a Mercury Flathead (built specifically for this race) burnt up its spare generator. And after replacing the coil and a mad rush to Denver to retrieve a new ignition module, the '31 Ford roadster with a Model B 4-banger was sidelined with no spark.

Deep sigh. This is hot rodding. Sometimes all the tools and know-how in the world won't allow that normally reliable 4-banger to turn over.

But it's hard to be bummed for long surrounded by hot rod friends and the sounds of others tearing up the hill side. Only 360 days to prepare for next year!

—Hemmings





Found: Henry Ford's experimental opposed-piston engine and another Ford oddity - Daniel Styrohl

For any collector of strange old gas engines, the 1982 auction at Greenfield Village was not to be missed. Ed Rowland, a collector of strange old gas engines, missed it. But nearly 40 years later, he's tracked down both of the experimental Ford engines he wanted to buy at that sale, one of them a prototype opposed-piston engine and an even stranger one that defies brief description.

"I missed it, but I knew where those two engines went," Ed said.

What's more, Ed intends to not only display them in the [museum that he and his son run](#) in Ohio, but also start and run the opposed-piston engine, their most recent acquisition, for the first time in decades.

Ed, a retired machine repair technician for Timken, said his interest in antique gas engines started in 1971 when a nearby farmer nearly scrapped one. "It just caught my fancy," he said. "So we saved it." With a whole shop full of lathes and machining tools at his disposal, Ed set about getting that engine to run. It then led to other engines as well as a network of old gas engine enthusiasts and some rather unusual and unique examples of turn-of-the-century engineering.

"If somebody's not interested in an engine or it's too tough for them, they send it along to me," he said. "So we ended up with quite a lot of oddball stuff." That includes a handful of patent models as well as several experimental engines built to test out new theories on internal combustion. "It was the latest technology at the time,

so everybody had their own idea," Ed said. "Some of the contraptions people come up with were fascinating - a lot of unique ways to get around patents."

So Ed should have been in attendance at the Greenfield Village auction, where dozens of Ford-built experimental engines crossed the block as part of an [effort to shore up the finances](#) of the [Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village](#). Among those engines were some, if not all of the experimental Ford engines [discovered in a Greenfield Village sugar beet mill building](#) that Special Interest Autos cataloged in 1973 - including at least one of [the air-cooled Ford X-8 engines](#).

Ed and his son Nick had their eyes on two of those engines in particular. The one with the number 21 painted on it was one of two opposed-piston engines found in the sugar beet mill. In it, four pistons ran in two cylinders and turned two crankshafts, one at either end of the engine. With a 3-1/2-inch bore and a 3-15/16-inch stroke, it came to a total of 76 cubic inches: smaller than the [massive opposed-piston engine design that Ford proposed for an airplane](#), but Nick said he believes it was still meant for an autogyro.

"I would've hated to be the machinist on it," Ed said.

The other engine the Rowlands had their eyes on - either engine number 5 or engine number 46 in the sugar beet mill hoard - can best be described as a rotary, but shares no traits with the Wankel-style rotaries. Instead, it has a piston that travels through a 2-1/8-inch diameter torus and slides past a pre-combustion and

post-combustion chamber, both of which are linked via poppet valves (and work in concert with the piston and a rack-and-pinion-activated sliding valve in the torus) to create a compressed charge. Technically, it's a one-stroke, one-cylinder, two-cycle engine with a stroke that measures 29-3/4 inches.

"It's pretty unique, but I don't know how they machined it," Ed said. "If something ever broke and the piston comes around, it'd make a big bang."

While Ed acknowledged that the rest of the sugar beet mill engines had unique designs, many of them were basic derivatives of existing engines, so he and Nick weren't really after anything but these two engines. Even these two engines, he admits, weren't real practical.

Still, they captured Ed's interest, and after 20 years or so, he managed to buy the rotary/toroidal engine. Then earlier this year he and Nick bought the opposed-piston engine out of the estate of the collector who bought it from Greenfield Village. Both engines that remained remained in roughly the same

condition as when they were sold in 1982, and through some forensic disassembly, Ed and Nick determined that both did run at some point based on the carbon buildup in the cylinders.

They've since coaxed the rotary/toroidal engine to life, "popping and banging," Ed said, but the opposed-piston engine still requires a carburetor. "It'll run, guaranteed."

Ed said he doesn't really restore the engines in the collection, but he does go through them to ensure they run as intended. "It ain't no fun if we don't run it," he said. *"Some guys ask me if I'm scared something will break, but we have a pattern shop here, we can get castings made. If we can get pictures of it, we can make it."*



Ford Crestline Sunliner discovered in abandoned South Dakota mine



Years before the ground opened beneath the National Corvette Museum in Bowling Green, Kentucky, and swallowed several Corvettes, a 1954 Ford Crestline Sunliner met the same fate in the Black Hills of South Dakota. No one really knows when the car disappeared—or if, perhaps, it was put there deliberately—but it's safe to say no human had seen the white convertible in decades.

That is until recently, when Adam Weaver and members of Paha Sapa Grotto, a local organization within the National Speleological Society, discovered the car in an abandoned gypsum mine that they assumed was a cave. That assumption made all the difference for Weaver, who volunteered to take his team down to assess the situation when the earth began to swallow houses in April. A dozen have been lost so far.

"We really don't do mines, we explore caves," says Weaver, who holds a master's degree in Natural Resource Stewardship from Colorado State University. "When people started losing their homes, I called the county [Meade County] and volunteered to go down and map it for them. There's a lot of gypsum in that area, so we assumed it would be a natural sinkhole."

It wasn't. The spelunkers realized they had instead stumbled upon an abandoned gypsum mine, which opened in the 1920s and closed in the '50s. They found plenty of historical items, including a mining handcart and even the remains of a calf—which was confirmed by Weaver's wife, a paleontologist—but they didn't expect to discover an automobile.

"I've been caving all over," says Weaver, who is vice president of the National Speleological Society. "And that's a first."

The Crestline isn't the only vehicle the group found inside the mine. "There's a truck down there too, nose down, that's older than the car," Weaver says. "But it's harder to get to and photograph."

Since the abandoned mine is directly beneath the homes that have been lost, the unfortunate situation will ultimately be sorted out in a courtroom. Weaver has been asked to return to the mine and extract water and rock samples, which he says he's planning to do later today (August 27, 2018), accompanied by a South Dakota State University professor and other members of Paha Sapa Grotto—which, in Lakota, translates to Black Hills Grotto.

For obvious reasons, most people outside the community are more interested in the '54 Crestline Sunliner. Weaver isn't surprised. "It is pretty amazing," he admits.

Weaver wonders if the Ford was placed inside the mine before the mine closed, or if it was pushed in through an opening from above in the decades since it closed. Regardless, he says, "It's actually in super good shape, considering ... other than the debris that's fallen on it." Still, he expects the car will stay right where it is. "I don't think it's ever coming out."

**SDEFV8 General Meetings- Auto Museum,
Balboa Park-Cancelled due to Virus**

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