

# The Victoria Bustle

## *International Model A Ford*

## *Victoria Association*

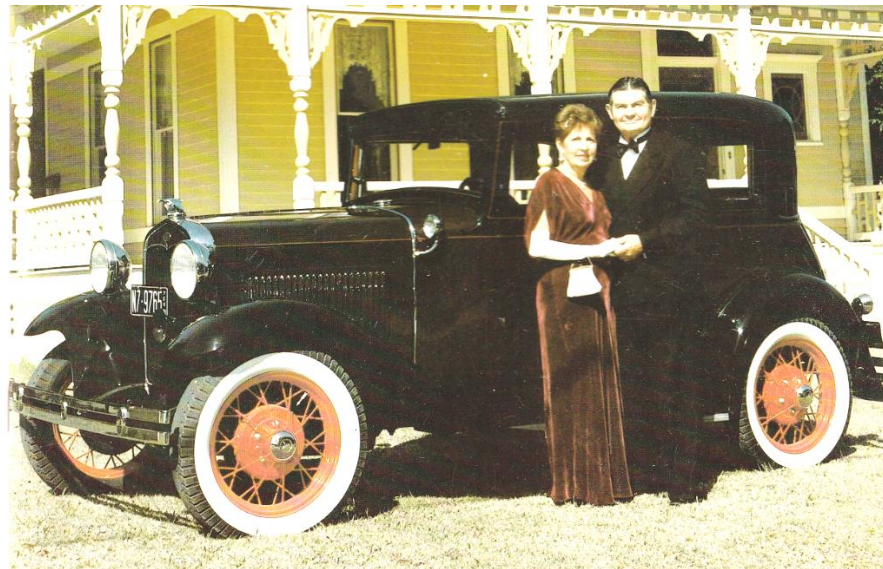
*Founded 1986*

*Model A Ford Club of America – Model A Restorers Club*

**April 2025**

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|                                      |                                 |                              |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
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Charlie Viosca, seen here with his wife Felicia, was the founder of our organization. With his passing, we have lost a true Model A enthusiast and someone whose passion for the Victoria body style has benefited many 190-A admirers and owners.

## **Victoria Association President's Message for April-May 2025**

This issue of the Bustle is highlighting our founder Cranford (Charlie) Joseph Viosca who, we just learned, passed away on December 1, 2023.

I met Charlie at the 1986 First MARC-MAFCA World Meet in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. At the meet, I heard of a breakfast meeting of Victoria owners and attended it. There were over 40 people at the meeting and 32 of them signed up to join the Victoria Association. I was one of those that signed up. After that meeting, there were 62 members in the Victoria Association. After the meet, Charlie worked to form the Victoria Association into a recognized organization.

In 1988 Charlie and his wife Felica attended the Northern California Region Group's Roundup in San Jose. We had 7 Victorias at the meet and Charlie enjoyed talking to each owner.



Charlie Viosca talking to Gene Mandere about his Victoria.

Over the years since then, I have seen Charlie at many of the various Model A meets that I have attended, and I always enjoyed his company. We always talked Model As, so I never knew all the other activities that he was involved in until I read his Obituary.

Charlie always held a Victoria Association meeting at any meet that he attended, and I am trying to follow his example.

### **Victoria Association business**

I would like to thank Travis Short for volunteering to be the Victoria Association Secretary while he was looking for a Victoria. Unfortunately, he found a different Model A body style and has resigned as the Secretary. Travis did a great job and had wonderful input while he was on the board.

The Victoria Association is again looking for a volunteer to become our Secretary. The board meets 4X per year on Zoom and we need someone to keep our minutes. Also, our Bylaws require us to have a Secretary.

**Please** seriously consider volunteering to become the Secretary for the Victoria Association and help lead this wonderful organization. Please contact Bill Cilker (wcilkerjr@comcast.net) if you have any questions.

### **Bustle Editor, Dean Larson**

This edition of the Bustle is dedicated to our club founder, Charlie Viosca, who has passed away. As I have aged and have lost friends, I have realized that I knew only a small bit about them in life. This is especially true of people I call friends from the Model A hobby. When attending a person's wake or reading their obituary, I have found out so much more interesting facts about the person.

For example, I never knew Charlie Viosca's first name was actually Cranford or that he had been a pilot during World War 2, a commercial airline pilot after the war or that he was a celebrated model aviation model maker. Who knew that Charlie met his wife Felicia in Costa Rica while working as a pilot there. My conversations were always about the club and the latest problem I had while restoring my Victoria over 40 years ago. Perhaps we should all take a minute during a conversation with a fellow Model A friend and ask about his family, what other hobbies they enjoy or what work they did over their careers. You may be surprised what you learn!

I have included information about Charlie that may give you a window into the man beyond the Model A Victoria community. This first bit of information was sent out by Charlie's daughter. We've lost a truly good man.



**Denise Viosca Gary**

Dec 1, 2023 · 

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Today, the world lost a most unique and interesting individual. My 98-year-old father, [Charlie Viosca](#), passed away in his sleep this morning, peacefully and comfortably. He had recently suffered the onset of dementia, which progressed quickly over the past two months. I have never met anyone like my dad. He always stayed true to himself, no matter what anyone thought of him or his actions. He held to a high code of ethics, yet was unconventional and uninhibited. Whil... [See more](#)

#### Obituary of Cranford Joseph Viosca

Cranford Joseph Viosca, (98), of The Colony, Texas, passed away peacefully in his sleep on December 1, 2023. Cranford, known to everyone as Charlie, was born to Percy and Corinne (Staigg) Viosca, Jr. on October 6, 1925, in New Orleans, Louisiana. His great passion in life was flying, and this immense love of flight forever informed his childhood, career, and hobbies. He began building model airplanes at the age of seven, and upon graduation from high school, he enlisted in the United States Army Air Corps to learn how to fly and to serve his country during World War II. After the war, he flew for TACA International Airlines, becoming a captain at age 23. Stationed in Costa Rica, he met his future wife of 54 years, Felicia Sancho, on a blind date. After the wedding ceremony in 1951, Charlie was hired as the



personal pilot of a Baton Rouge, Louisiana businessman, so he and Felicia moved to the States and started a family. Charlie spent the second half of his career with the Southland Corporation in Dallas, Texas, retiring as the chief pilot at age 60. Throughout his life, he piloted nearly every type of flying machine in existence, including being handed the controls of the Goodyear Blimp for a few minutes.

Charlie's love of modeling continued throughout his life. He built a reputation for having exceedingly high standards. About twenty of his museum-quality scale aircraft models are on display in the Frontiers of Flight Museum at Dallas Love Field Airport, where he was instrumental in creating the glass-fronted Model Shop for visitors to observe models being made for the museum. His scale model of three-time Female Aerobatic Champion Betty Skelton's Pitts Special S-1C biplane, dubbed *Little Stinker*, resides in the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum collection. Additionally, Charlie restored seven Model A Fords to pristine condition, served on the Model A Ford Club of America Board of Directors, and contributed many how-to articles to the club's magazine, *The Restorer*. He was especially proud to have established a scholarship program for high school graduates active in Model A restoration work.



Charlie is survived by two of his children, David Viosca, and Denise (Viosca) Gary and her husband Steven Gary, as well as three grandchildren, Michael Gary, Robert Gary and Alan Viosca, one nephew, Paul Mayoral, and two nieces, Madeline Mayoral and Nancy (Mayoral) Airhart. Charlie was predeceased by his parents, Percy and Corinne, his wife, Felicia, his son Robert Viosca, and his sister, Yvonne (Viosca) Mayoral.

The world has lost a most unique and interesting individual with the passing of Charlie. He always stayed true to himself and held to a high code of ethics, yet was unconventional and uninhibited. While he lived a full and exciting life, he also helped other folks in big ways, sometimes in life-changing ways. He will be missed by the many who enjoyed his larger-than-life personality.

Charlie's family will spread his ashes from a Piper Cub airplane, in accordance with his wishes. A funeral service will not be held. His son and daughter encourage his friends and extended family members to remember him by helping someone in need of assistance, as Charlie was always so willing to do. Donations may be made in his memory to the Frontiers of Flight Museum.

Charlie's call for members for our organization!

September 12, 1985

TO: ALL PARTIES INTERESTED IN A MODEL A VICTORIA BODY  
STYLE CLUB

FROM: CHARLIE VIOSCA

So far, the response to the Victoria Club has brought interest from twelve individuals. I feel that we should proceed for those of us that would like to participate. I also know that as more people find out about the club they too will join.

With this letter, I am enclosing a list of the interested parties and their addresses.

I would suggest that each of you send your telephone number (unless you do not want it given out) so that if something comes up you can be contacted. Also, if you care to put down any other interesting information about yourself, your car, etc., please do so. I will keep it in my file.

Now is the time to contact me about what you think the club function should be. For instance, I think it should be a good place for Vickey owners to go to gather information when they need help in restoring a Victoria. It would be a good thing if each one of you would put down any information as to places you have purchased hard to find items. An example would be Carlin Manufacturing in Beaumont, Texas where my steelback interior and bottom wood was purchased. If you have a leatherback and know where the top and interior wood can be purchased, all this sort of information will be helpful to someone else.

I do not see any need to charge any dues until such time as we might incur expenses. As of now, however, it would be helpful if each of you could send five or ten stamps that I can put in a pool for mailing these letters to each of you and to people requesting information.

I would like to know how many of you are going to Wisconsin to the 1986 World Meet. If enough of us go, we can schedule a meeting during the World Meet.

Please feel free to call or write and by all means give me all the ideas, suggestions and help you can to make this club a success.

I am looking forward to hearing from all of you soon.

Sincerely,



Charlie Viosca

### **How I found my Model A Ford Victoria by Charlie Viosca. Taken from the January-February 1989 article from the Restorer Magazine titled "From Junk to Jewel"**

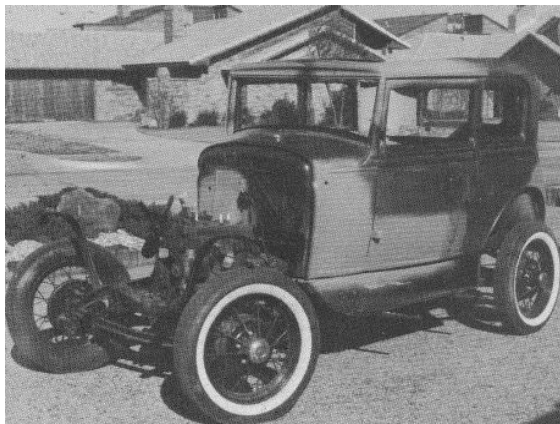
*Ever since I became interested in restoring old cars, I have wanted to own a Model A Victoria. Who knows why some cars appeal to someone, while others don't like them at all.*

*One evening I was looking over a copy of the Restorer and saw an ad for a Victoria and while the ad was a couple of months old, I thought I would call and see what results I would get. I was surprised to discover the owner still had it. I did think the owner was asking too much for the car and after several*

*calls back and forth to Richmond Virginia, I made him an offer. I was told that if he didn't get a better offer within the month, I could have the car for my offer.*

*Shortly after our telephone conversation, I had a flight to Richmond Virginia and I got the chance to look the car over. I told the owner my offer still stood. The car was pretty much a basket case even though it looked fairly good. It came with a complete LeBaron Bonney interior and seats professionally reworked (not installed). It also had all the brightwork completely redone by professionals. All the important and hard to find parts were with the car.*

*By the end of the month the owner told me I had bought the car. In December of 1981 my wife Felicia and I loaded the van, hooked up a car trailer and took off for Richmond. About a week later we returned to Dallas with the Victoria and began a 6-year restoration.*



### **Membership Chairman Ed Greany's Message**

Membership is healthy. We have 200 members. There seems to be a lot of Vicky sales lately but Spring is here so 'tis the season.

We do have a few renewals which have been overlooked so if you're one of them please send your dues in today. We are sending you this issue even though you may be past due so you can see the importance of belonging to a club that exactly represents your Model A Ford - the Victoria. The dues are still only \$10 and should be mailed directly to John Hooper at 1289 Johnson Rd., Canyon Lake, TX 78133. Please do not sent it to me as I just have to forward it to John.

We would like to keep our expenses down so we don't have to increase dues so if you can accept our Bustle newsletter via email that will certainly help us. All International mail is via email now.

If your Victoria exhibits something different from the standard or recognized versions, we would like to have you share it with us with a photo and paragraph explaining what it is. (Example: Right hand drive.)

Now pull that beautiful car out of Winter storage and enjoy it. Until next time, drive safely.

Ed Greany, Membership Chairman

### **Technical Talk with Chuck Christensen**

The first Steel Back was manufactured by Murray. Records indicate that the first Steelback was the 28,185<sup>th</sup> body made. It may or may not have had that number on its Murray Body tag.

Contained in the July-August 1971 issue of Ford Life was this news release from an unknown newspaper:

*DETROIT, May 6, 1931...Victoria types of the Ford Motor Co.'s deluxe line of vehicles are now coming off the assembly line with metal rear-quarters and roof side-panels, instead*

*of the fabric quarters and panels heretofore used. The price of the body type remains unchanged at \$580, list, with special colors of wheels optional at an extra cost."*



## **For Sale or looking for parts**

I received this inquiry from Victoria Association member, Steve Pemberton. Can anyone help him in his search? Steve writes.....

*I am a member of the Victoria Association as well as most of the other Model A Ford organization. I am also a member of the Old Dominion Chapter of the Model A Ford Club in Richmond, Virginia. I currently own three Model A's but none of them is a Victoria.*

*I feel my love for the Model A comes from riding with my grandfather in his Vicky. I have been looking for his 1931 Victoria for years with no success. It is serial number A4349951. I have the receipt for payment when he bought the car new in 1931 at Richmond Motor Company in Richmond, Virginia. He sold the car around 1954 as he felt that upcoming changes in requirements for elderly drivers would not allow him to drive any more.*

*Could you ask the members to check the serial number of their car to see if any of our members own it? I realize it could have been made into a hot rod or destroyed but you never know. Perhaps it is still out there. It was still a nice car when he sold it. He always kept it in the garage and in top shape.*

*Thanks for considering my request to find it.*

I searched the data base of known Victorias that is maintained by Bob Bidonde, but did not find a match. I responded to Steve to see if he had the body tag number or other facts about the car.

## **Victoria Association Services**

**WE NOW HAVE A FACE BOOK PAGE!!!!** Look for the International Model A Ford Victoria Association and join our growing community.

The Association has a Technical Director, Chuck Christenson, who is willing to answer your questions on the Model A and the Victoria. You will find his email address on the front cover of the Bustle.



International Model A Ford

Victoria Association

Dean Larson – Editor

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## First Class Mail

In our next newsletter I will include a search request from member Carolyn Simpson of Wisconsin who is looking for the whereabouts of her Grandfather's Victoria.

The International Model A Ford Victoria Association is a body style chapter of the Model A Ford Club of America (MAFCA) and a region of the Model A Restorers Club (MARC). The association was founded in 1986 at Frisco, Texas by Charlie Viosca. The purpose of the association is to aid the membership in the authentic restoration of the Model A Ford A-190 Victoria body style. To achieve the purpose this quarterly newsletter is published for the association membership. The intent is to furnish accurate and complete information concerning the Model A Ford Victoria body style. Permission to reprint from this publication is expressly given provided acknowledgement and credit is given to the author and to the publication and no changes are made to the original article.