International Model A Ford
Victoria Association

Model A Ford Club of America - Model A Restorers Club

Founded 1986 - Frisco, Texas

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Newsletter

President: Charlie Viosca
Editor: Tom Endy
Publishers: Bob & Karyn Sitter

Properly Oiled!

Charlie Says!

by Charlie Viosca

Good Things!

There are some very nice things going on in the Victoria Association that you, the members, will be pleased to learn are happening.

Old Newsletters!

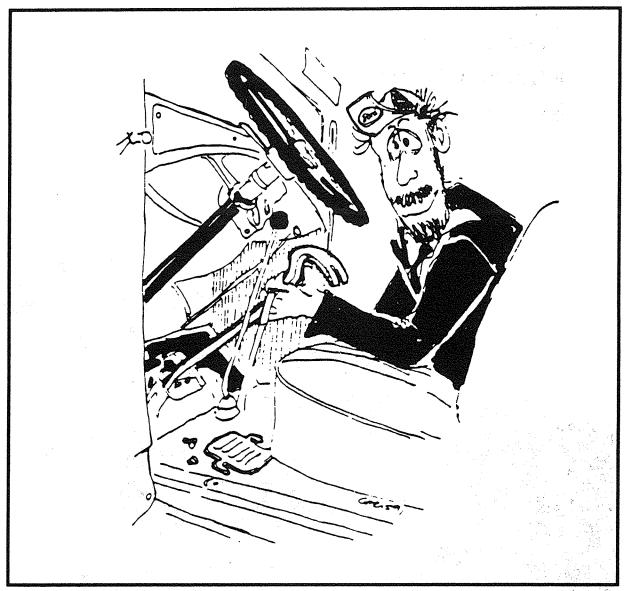
For some time now, we have been out of the back issues of the old newsletters. I am happy to inform you that we now have complete sets of the newsletter back issues, thanks to the efforts of John Icenhower. John is our treasurer and he took the time to make up 25 sets of the newsletters. The sets come with a complete up-date of the newsletter INDEX, thanks to Kay Lee, as well as an up-dated copy of the DATA SHEETS on all VICTORIA Model A"s we have on file, thanks to Bob Bidonde. If you would like to order one of these sets, please send a check for $30. made out to the VICTORIA ASSOCIATION, c\o John Icenhower, 1613 Ryan Rd., Sulphur Springs, Texas 75482. (The price includes return postage to you.)

Victoria Stuff!

In the near future the Victoria Association will make available to the membership categorized information specific to various sections of the Model A Ford Victoria. The information is being compiled from the previous newsletters. When the project is completed it will be made available to the membership. Here is a list of the people and the sections they are working on. Tom Endy - SEATS, Bob Petithomme - STEELBACK VS LEATHERBACK VICTORIA WOOD, Gene Taylor -WINDOW GLASS & WINDOW REGULATORS, Dale Higgs - INTERIOR & EXTERIOR PLATING, Michael Lane Sr.- VISORS & SHADES, Charlie Viosca - CORRECT VICTORIA PAINT (colors, combinations and trim), Ed Greany - WOOD GRAINING & EXTERIOR PLATING. The project is being coordinated by John Icenhower. We plan to make this information available to the membership as individual sections, or as a complete packet of all the sections.

How Do You Get The Seat Out?

We need a knowledgeable person in the membership who can describe in detail how to go about removing and installing the slider control type front driver's seat from a Victoria. There is a Victoria Association member who is anguishing over how to properly remove and install the seat without bending everything out of shape. If someone would be so kind as to write up detailed instructions, we will print it in the next newsletter so that everyone will know how to do it. We will keep secret the name of the person who is asking the question, and who is not smart enough to figure out how to get the seat out.



Yo! Charlie, The seat is in the way!

An Old Carpet!

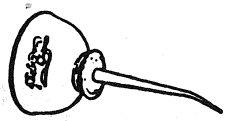
Association member Walt Ramsey is looking for an original Victoria front carpet in any condition. He wants it for determining an accurate pattern, the correct material and type binding used. Contact Walt at 253-852-3228.

In This Issue!

This current issue of the Victoria Association newsletter is a special edition. Normally we publish three newsletters per year (January, May and October). The purpose of this August publication is to feature a series of articles written by Ben Hadd that appeared in the Orange County Model A Ford Club newsletter the ***Distributor*** during 1994, 1995 and 1996. ☺

On The Cover!

Properly Oiled! The elusive Ben Hadd is seen properly oiling his Model A Ford Victoria. ☺



Properly Oiled!

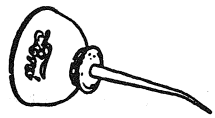
by Ben Hadd

Restoring The Bell Housing!

The pedal shaft, the clutch shaft and the associated brass bushings are many times found worn out on a typical Model A Ford bell housing. Worn shafts and bushings are cause for sloppy clutch and brake pedal action. New shafts and bushings are readily available from your favorite Model A parts store. With the bell housing removed from the car the restoration project appears to be straight forward. **But wait! Henry set some traps for you.** You will need some special tools. You can get the old bushings out of the pedals and the bell housing by splitting them with a hacksaw blade and then driving them out with a screwdriver and hammer, but to install the new bushings you will need a bushing pusher-in'er (which can also be used as a pusher-out'er). You can have one made by someone who has a lathe. A piece of round stock is turned down so that it fits through the bushing and has a collar that fits against the end of the bushing. You can then install, or remove, the bushings by driving them in, or out, with a hammer. Once the new bushings are installed you'll find that the new clutch shaft won't fit because the new bushings have to be **reamed!** You can buy the required reamer from Bratton's Antique Auto. The part number of the reamer is A7508-R and it is of sufficient length so that the two clutch shaft bushings in the bell housing are reamed so that they will line up with each other. The reamer can also be used to ream the new bushings installed in both pedals. **But wait, there's still more!** When you go to drive the old pedal shaft out of the bell housing you'll find that you can't swing a hammer against a punch inside the bell housing very well since there is not enough room, and some of the original pedal shafts are in there **tight!** You can make up a simple tool that will sometimes work from a length of 3/8" threaded stock and a length of 1/2" water pipe. With a nut on the threads pressing against the water pipe it is used as a mini-press to force the shaft out of the housing. If the shaft is really tight it doesn't always work. You may have to saw it off and then drive it out toward the inside of the bell housing.

The last Henry trap is to try to get the new pedal shaft installed so that the hole in the shaft lines up with the locking pin hole in the bell housing. **Good luck!** If you miss, don't try to turn the shaft with vice grips, you will only succeed in scoring it. It won't turn! You will have to push it back out from the inside of the bell housing. Another problem is the folks in Taiwan who make these shafts sometimes drill the holes off center and they won't line up with the hole in the bell housing. While you're at it, don't go pounding on the end of the pedal shaft with a hammer because you will mushroom the end of the shaft and you won't be able to get the pedals on. You should use a press. One last thing that you might encounter which can add some amount of frustration is that when the project is finished you may notice that the clutch and brake pedals do not line up with each other. This phenomenon occurs when the holes at either end of the new pedal shaft do not line up with each other. This causes the hole in the end of the pedal shaft where the pedal shaft collar (p\n A7507C) goes on to be out of position. The collar that gets pinned to this hole provides the stop for the clutch pedal return. If it is out of position it will not allow the clutch pedal to return to the same position that the brake pedal returns to. The return of the brake pedal is controlled by a stop that is part of the casting of the bell housing. There are two ways that you can overcome this problem. One is to try a new collar if the one you are using is badly worn. If the problem is truly an out of line collar pin hole it won't solve the problem. The other thing that can be done is to weld some material onto each end of the two stops on the collar and then file off the excess material until you get a proper fit. It is a lot of trial and error and it is time consuming, but it will resolve the problem. ☺

Orange County *Distributor*, December, 1995



Properly Oiled!

by Ben Hadd

Brake Adjustment!

Comes time to put new brake shoes on the ole Model A and you need to figure out how you're going to adjust them. Ask a number of your fellow club members how to do it and you'll get as many opinions as there are Model A's running around with miss-adjusted brakes. The original Ford Service Bulletins, page 202, describes how the brakes should work after they are correctly adjusted, but it doesn't tell you how to go about getting there. An excellent procedure was documented in the May/June 1994 issue of the Restorer by Peter Crosby of Huntington, Vermont. Crosby took the Ford Service Bulletin procedure and figured out a way to implement it. What he did was take a 1 X 3 piece of wood and notched one end in a stair step fashion and cut the overall length to fit between the bottom front edge of the driver's seat and the front surface of the brake pedal. The idea is to brace the wood against the seat bottom base and set the brake pedal in each notch as you check for the correct amount of wheel drag for each notch. I made up a notched stick and tried it and it worked very well. I was so impressed with the procedure that at the next club meeting I told fellow club member Glenn Johnson about it. When I finished describing how the procedure worked, Glenn said that he adjusted his brakes exactly the same way except that he didn't use a notched stick, he had his wife Sharon hold the brake pedal at the various positions described in the service bulletin while he checked the wheel drag. I said that the stick would be more accurate as it would hold the brake pedal in the exact same place each time. Glenn replied that Sharon did a pretty good job and that she could also cook and clean. I had to agree that these were certainly desirable features, but I pointed out that the stick never complained and it didn't cost anything to keep it. Whichever method you decide to use, the stick, your wife, or Sharon, you need to accomplish the intent of the service bulletin. If you use the stick method you have to tailor make the stick for a particular Model A since the distance to the seat from the brake pedal will vary from one Model A to another. If you have five Model A's like Glenn has, you will have to make five sticks. Or have five Sharons! ☺

Orange County *Distributor*, January, 1996

Properly Oiled!

by Ben Hadd

U-joint Anguish!

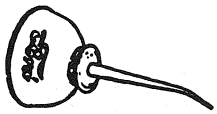
Your planning to replace the transmission in your Model A with one you rebuilt that is sitting on your work bench waiting to go in. But hold on! Henry has set a trap for you. Four parts that make up the assembly that houses the U-joint and attaches the torque tube to the transmission must all match. ***And not all of them do!*** Back in 1929 Henry Ford and his number one henchman Harry Bennett were sitting around one day trying to think up ways to antagonize people when they came up with the idea of changing the bolt pattern on these four parts. This was a great idea and it has served them well over the years.

Take a look at the gasket set you bought and you will notice that the two identical gaskets that go on the end of the transmission and on the inner U-joint housing cap have two of the six bolt holes elongated. This is a first subtle clue that there are two bolt hole patterns. The four parts that must all have matching bolt hole patterns are the transmission rear bearing retainer, part number 7085, the U-joint inner housing cap, part number 4513, and the U-joint outer housing cap (two pieces), part number 4520.

If you are not paying attention, you will step into Henry's trap just like two anonymous Orange County Model A Club members did. After they had installed the rear end including hooking up the drive shaft spline into the U-joint, and connecting up the rear spring shackles, brake rods, wheels, etc., they discovered that the U-joint housing bolt holes in the three housing cap parts did not match up to the rear bearing retainer on the new transmission. The rear end had to come out again so that the bearing retainer from the old transmission could be installed on the new transmission.

So before you even begin to install that new transmission, take these four parts and check that you can see daylight shining through all six bolt holes so you will be able to get bolts through them when all is installed. If you don't, somewhere Old Henry and Harry Bennett will be snickering. ☺

Orange County *Distributor*, April, 1994



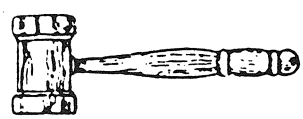
Properly Oiled!

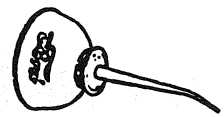
by Ben Hadd

Water Pump Fan Removal!

If you have ever tried to remove the fan from a Model A water pump, you may have noticed that it is not a straight forward task. The fan is mounted onto a tapered shaft in the same manner that the brake drums are mounted onto the rear axle shafts. Getting them apart usually requires some amount of persuasion. You can't use a standard gear puller because it will damage the backside of the fan pulley and it's not a good idea to go hammering on the threaded end of the pump shaft because all you will do is damage the threads. So how are you going to get it off? One of our fellow club members, Larry McKinney, sometimes known as "McSpeed", has known all along how to remove the fan without damaging anything. Larry even went and made up a tool that he calls a "water pump whacker". But, he wouldn't tell anyone about it. Yeah-Boy, he keep it all a secret. It wasn't until several club members chased him down one day and twisted his arm before he finally agreed to tell how it's done. What you do is get a bolt about three of four inches long (the length is not important) that has the same threads as the ones on the water pump shaft, which is a 7/16-20 (National Fine). A hardened bolt works best. Get two nuts with the same threads as the bolt. Run the two nuts onto the bolt. Remove the cotter pin and nut from the end of the water pump shaft and place the threaded end of the bolt belly to belly with the threaded end of the pump shaft. Run the bottom nut on the bolt down to where the nut threads are half on the bolt and half on the pump shaft. Run the other nut down against the first nut and tighten so that both nuts are locked together. Hold the fan in one hand while allowing the pump to hang free. Smack the hex end of the bolt briskly with a hammer. The fan should disengage from the pump shaft without any damage inflicted to either pump shaft or fan. If that doesn't work have Larry McKinney come over and hold the pump and when he nods his head you hit it briskly with a hammer. ☺

Orange County *Distributor*, September, 1995





Properly Oiled!

by Ben Hadd

Model A Pitfalls!

Having had the opportunity to work on a number of people's Model A's, I've noticed a number of pitfalls that Henry came up with, and over the years people have consistently stepped right into them.

A common one concerns the nuts and bolts that hold the front wheel backing plates on. They are supposed to be installed so that the bolt head is inside the drum and the castellated nut is on the outside, inboard of the wheel. This is backwards to the way the rear backing plate bolts and nuts are installed. Stands to reason Henry would do it this way. If you install the front backing plate nuts incorrectly inside the drum, the hub will contact the outer edge of each nut and grind them down as the wheel rotates.

The two rear emergency brake mechanisms also seem to collect their share of abuse. They are assembled with four special thin headed clevis pins. The head of the clevis pin is supposed to face out, toward you. This puts the cotter pins on the inside where they won't score the drum when you put it on. A lot of people seem to want to get this one wrong.

Pay particular attention when you install the rear backing plates. It is possible to tighten the nuts down to the point where they appear to be tight, but they may have bottomed out on the end of the threads on the bolts without pulling the backing plate tight against the end of the axle housing. If this happens the backing plate will be loose and will "rock" back and forth each time you accelerate and brake and eventually elongate the bolt holes in the backing plate and ruin it.

It is not clear why this can happen. One of our chapter members wrote to the technical experts at the National and they didn't know the reason either. In any event check it closely. If it looks like you're nearing the bottom of the thread travel on the bolts, add some washers to shim it. Using shims will also allow you to align the castles on the nut with the hole in the bolt so that the cotter pin will do some good. ☺

Orange County *Distributor*, October, 1994

Properly Oiled!

by Ben Hadd

The Gas Gauge!

The gas gauge on a Model A has been touted as the ultimate in simplicity; a cork on the end of a pivot. It can also be a very frustrating assembly to install and a task that should not be approached lightly. Do it wrong and you could end up with a gas leak at the gauge that could be disastrous to a car parked in the garage with a water heater pilot light nearby. Being faced with the task of removing and replacing the gauge, I purchased a repair kit from a local Model A supplier. Out tumbled a myriad of gaskets, shims, bezels and glass. But no instructions detailing the sequence of the assembly. Observing how the old one came apart was no good, no telling what barn mechanic had been there ahead of me. What was needed was authentic documentation. The Ford service bulletins showed nothing, and the judging standards showed only half of the assembly. Looking through all the "how to" books, only one described the assembly sequence, ***and it was wrong.*** As an after thought I checked Bratton's Antique Auto Parts '94 price catalog. Walt Bratton is not only a Model A parts supplier, he is also a Model A hobbyist and his catalog is as much a shop manual as it is a catalog. And there it was, a description of the correct assembly sequence. See sketch. The important thing to remember is that a gasket seal must be positioned between the gauge assembly and the threaded boss of the tank. The brass shim goes between the gauge assembly and the large flange nut. You also need two special tools to do the job. Most all the Model A suppliers carry them. The originals were brass, the repros are aluminum. The soft metal prevents scratching the very visible instrument panel parts. One last caution, If you're using repro parts, check them carefully, quality and accuracy are not their hallmark. Be sure that you can "bottom" the large flange nut when you tighten it. If you can't, you'll have a leak. You will have to add extra brass shims or install a thicker tank boss gasket to make a good tight seal. ☺

Orange County *Distributor*, March, 1995

Properly Oiled!

by Ben Hadd

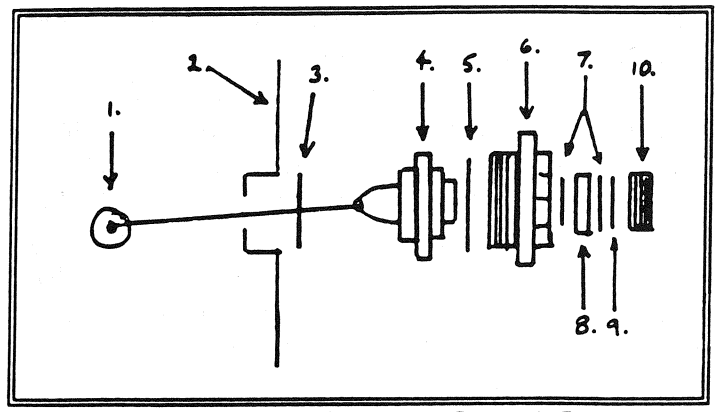
The Clutch Surface!

If you need to put a new clutch in your Model A, take a close look at the clutch contact surface of the flywheel while you are at it. If its all grooved and knarley looking, its a good idea to remove it and take it to a machine shop and have the surface machined down until its nice and smooth. It will make for a nice smooth operating clutch.

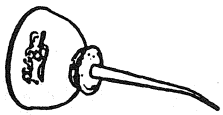
But wait, there's more! The dimension between the pressure plate mounting bolt surface on the flywheel and the clutch contact surface on the flywheel was established at the factory by Old Henry for the proper operation of the pressure plate. So ask the machine shop to machine the same amount of material off of the mounting bolt surface that has to be machined off of the clutch surface. This will retain the factory dimension between the two surfaces.

But wait, there's still more! What if 40 or 50 years ago someone had the clutch surface machined and didn't have the mounting bolt surface machined. Or maybe its been done that way a couple of times. Old Henry's factory dimension has been lost and needs to be restored. But what is it? According to an expert who lectured at a seminar at the 1990 MAFCA National, **the magic number is 1.123".** ☺

Orange County *Distributor*, March, 1994



1. Cork Float, 2. Tank Wall, 3. Neoprene Gasket, 4. Gauge Ass'y, 5. Brass Shim, 6. Flange Nut, 7. Neoprene Gaskets, 8. Glass, 9. Bezel, 10. Cover Nut.



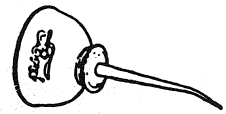
Properly Oiled!

by Ben Hadd

Emergency Brake Lever Springs!

Working on a Model A can be really frustrating sometimes. Take for instance the task of installing a set of emergency brake lever springs. These are the springs that wrap around the levers on the back side of the rear backing plates. There is a left spring and a right spring. They are mirror images of each other. This means the left spring should go on the left wheel and the right spring should go on the right wheel. But the problem is how do you determine left and right. I've seen our club's resident staff of technical experts argue over which was which. It is difficult to describe to someone how to tell the difference. The best explanation is that when the springs are installed they are supposed to help pull the levers back to release the emergency brakes. If you get them backwards they will be fighting the brake release. You just have to get in there and eyeball it and figure out which is the left and which is the right. Once you've figured it out keep them separated. Now that you think you know left from right the trick is to try to install them. It's not an easy task and you will no doubt scratch some paint on the backing plates and the levers. First you have to slip the "correct" spring onto the emergency brake shaft that sticks out the back of the backing plate before you install the brake lever. Once the lever is installed you have to pull the hooked end of the spring around the base of the lever. This is where all the paint scratching happens. The easiest way to do this is to make a simple tool from a wire coat hanger. Cut the hanger so you have a straight piece about a foot long. Form one end into a hook. Wrap the other end a couple of turns around a piece of wood dowel or a screwdriver or anything similar. Use the hook end to grab the hook end of the spring. Using the dowel as a handle, pull on the spring until it is stretched past the brake lever arm, then move it so the hook end of the spring will wrap around the lever. Now that you've done all this, take a close look at how the brakes work and you'll probably find that you have them reversed left to right and you'll get to take them apart and do the job all over again, and scratch some more paint. Henry gottcha again! ☺

Orange County *Distributor*, December, 1994



Properly Oiled!

by Ben Hadd

Headlight Reflectors!

When it comes time to restore Model A Ford headlight reflectors, there are several restoration approaches you can take. You can go out and buy some poor quality repros, have some originals chromed or silver plated, or you can do the job a better way. There is a company called UVIRA Laser Optics that has a process that coats the reflector with an aluminized process that is far superior to the original silver plating. Back in the days before sealed beams, reflectors were silver plated. This worked great until the silver began to tarnish. Then you had to either polish them out or be satisfied with diminished headlight brightness. Sealed beams were a technology development that enabled a reflector to be coated with an aluminized process and then sealed to prevent oxidation. UVIRA has developed a technology for aluminized coating mirror surfaces for the aerospace industry that will resist the elements without having to be sealed in a vacuum. These folks are also old car buffs, so they have created a small side business of re-coating collector car headlight reflectors. Reflectors for re-coating have to be original solid brass, in good condition, and without cracks. The price currently quoted is $35. (in 1995) for a reflector between 4 and 9 inches in diameter. This includes the return shipment, and there is no tax required for out of state residents. You have to allow 8 to 10 weeks turn around because they do them so as not to conflict with their primary business. With reflectors coated by UVIRA, and using a 32/32 or 50/32 cp bulb you will have lights equal to or better than a number 6006 six volt sealed beam light. UVIRA does a good quality job, and they are nice people to do business with. They also include a five year guarantee. ☺

UVIRA
310 Pleasant Valley Road
Merlin, Oregon 97532
503-474-5050

Orange County *Distributor*, January, 1995

Properly Oiled!

by Ben Hadd

Driving Lights!

You may have noticed that a number of club members have installed era after market accessory driving lights on the front of their Model A's. Several companies manufactured them during the Model A era. One brand that you see around a lot in Southern California was made by the S & M Lite Company of Los Angeles. Besides providing some extra light for night driving, it adds a little character to the front end of the Model A. One way you can wire these lights up to your Model A's electrical system without having to install an extra switch in the cab is to use a headlight relay. Six volt headlight relays are readily found at swap meets for a dollar or two. Clean the relay up, test it, paint it and mount it on a piece of angle aluminum. Locate an existing hole underneath the car on the frame and bolt the angle aluminum to it. I found just such a hole on the forward crossmember on the passenger side. The relay assembly tucked up inside the frame and is out of the way and out of sight. I used some 14 gauge reproduction fabric covered wire I obtained from a local Model A parts store to wire everything up. Make sure that the accessory lights are well grounded to the bumper brackets. Run a single wire from the accessory lights (or light) to one side of the contacts of the relay. Run another wire from the other side of the relay contacts to the battery circuit. You can connect it directly to the output of the generator or run it over to the fuse. Now run a wire from the relay coil over to where the light bail is located at the bottom of the steering column. You don't have to use the heavy 14 gauge wire you used for the relay contacts because the amount of current that will flow in the coil circuit will be extremely low. An 18 or 20 gauge wire should be able to handle it. Unhook the bail and locate the contact that is used for the headlight high beam circuit. Solder the wire directly onto this contact. Make sure that the other end of the coil is grounded. Now when you turn on your high beams by using the regular Model A light switch, your accessory driving lights will come on at the same time. The good part is that none of the heavy current being supplied to the accessory lights is running through the headlight switch. It's all going through the relay contacts. ☺

Orange County *Distributor*, March, 1996

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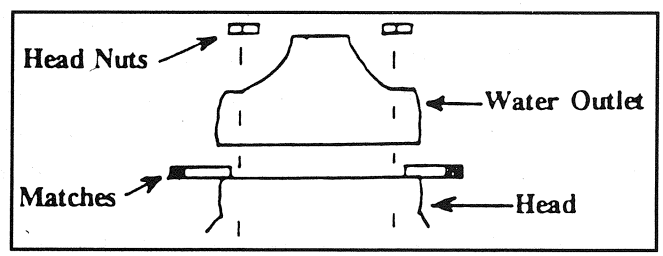
by Ben Hadd

Broken Water Outlets!

Have you heard the old wives tale about putting match sticks between the cylinder head and the upper water outlet casting to prevent cracking it when torquing the #11 and #13 head nuts? This subject has come under discussion recently by a number of club members who have managed to crack several of these outlet castings while torquing the head. Like any wives tale that isn't properly documented, the information tends to get distorted. What is the size of these match sticks, what are they made of, exactly where do you put them, and why? One of our chapter members who lives in Placentia insisted that it's not a match stick at all, it's a Zippo lighter, and you're supposed to put in between your lower lip and your gums. Hoping to locate some authentic documentation, I searched through my library of "How To" books, but found nothing. A search through the back issues of the ***Restorer*** finally yielded some results. The 1987 July/August publication, page 32, has an article by Robert Donovan of Framingham, Massachusetts. Donovan says you use matches from an ordinary garden variety book of matches. You place the non-burning end just outboard of each stud. The idea is it adds an extra amount of supporting thickness to the outboard edge of the casting to keep it from drooping and cracking. Don't light the matches! Just in case you don't have faith in wives tales, find yourself another water outlet at a swap meet and carry it with you as a spare. If you want to try the Zippo lighter method, go ahead, just don't light it. ☺



Don't light the matches!

Orange County *Distributor*, April, 1995

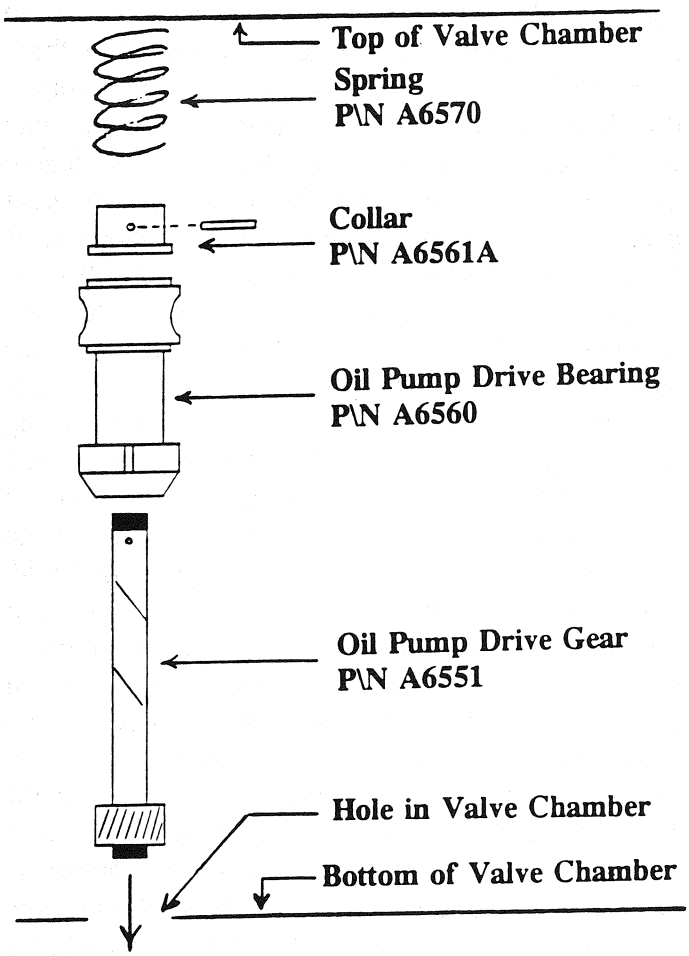
Properly Oiled!

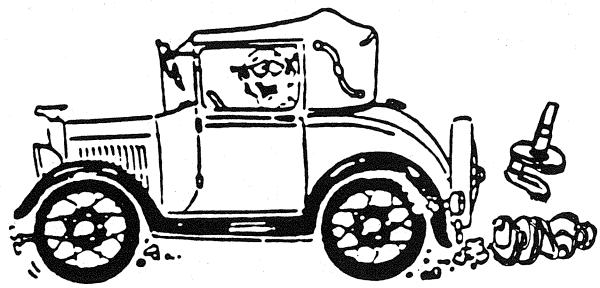
by Ben Hadd

Oil Pump Drive Gear!

Once upon a time I was in the process of building up a Model A engine. I started with a newly machined block and started putting new engine parts in it. It seemed prudent to buy a new oil pump drive gear p\n A6551, and a new collar, p\n A6561A. Then I tried to figure out how they installed in the engine. I reviewed all of my "How To" books and could not find any reference to it. A fellow club member showed me an assembly. The problem I was having is that there is another part you need to complete the assembly and it is not available new as a purchased item. The part is called the oil pump drive bearing p\n A6560, and you have to find an original Henry one. Once you have all three parts you have to assemble them together with a drive pin through the collar and shaft to hold everything in place. You can assemble it backwards, so you need to know which way is correct. Once you have the assembly complete you drop it down the hole in the bottom center of the valve chamber, gear first, so it will connect with the gear in the middle of the camshaft. A large spring p\n A6570 snaps in over the top and holds it all in place in the engine. Now that I know how it goes together it might be worthwhile to provide a sketch in case someone else has the same problem. The other thing you need to know is that like most reproduction parts you buy for a Model A Ford nowadays, they don't all fit very well. The oil pump drive gear and collar that I bought fit so tight into the original Henry oil pump drive bearing after it was pinned together that it would have taken all of Henry's 40 horses just to turn it. I had to disassemble it and grind some material off the face of the collar flange to provide a little thrust clearance. This is something you definitely want to check. Another thing to look for is the direction of the diagonal oil groove in the shaft of the oil pump drive gear. The sketch shows the correct direction it should be oriented to. There are some reproduction parts around that were made backwards. Bratton's Antique Auto has the correct one. The oil pump drive assembly provides two functions. It drives the oil pump and it drives the distributor. The gear in the center of the camshaft rotates with the camshaft causing the oil pump drive gear shaft to turn. The screwdriver like blade protruding past the bottom of the oil pump drive gear engages a mating slot in the oil pump when it is installed in the bottom of the block. A similar screwdriver like blade at the top of the oil pump drive gear shaft engages a mating slot in the bottom of the distributor shaft when it is installed through the top of the head. With the timing properly set and the engine running the oil pump drive assembly provides lubrication and ignition to the engine. ☺

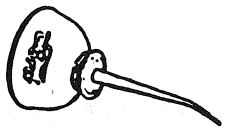
Oil Pump Drive Assembly!





Yo! Merle! Did you remember to install the oil pump drive gear assembly?

Orange County *Distributor*, July, 1996



Properly Oiled!

by Ben Hadd

The Ignition Once More!

On any long club tour sooner or later one of the Model A's will pull over to the side of the road and up will come the hood. The first component to be attacked is the distributor. And it is probably the most likely source of the problem. For this reason it makes sense to carry a spare distributor with you that has been rebuilt with the points already set, and most important, **tested on a running car**. It's a lot easier to swap out the distributor than to fool around trying to determine what's wrong with it and to attempt to change out a bunch of parts. The three most likely things that tend to go wrong with a distributor are the condenser failing, the lower plate wire breaking or shorting, or the point gap closing up. The point gap can be easily set without changing the distributor. Points tend to close up as the rubbing block wears. This is especially true on a new set of points. The points will close up considerably during the first 100 miles, until a glaze is worn into the rubbing block. So if you just installed new points before starting out on the big tour, be prepared to have to reset them sometime soon. After that you only need to reset them at about 1,000 mile intervals. Points are set at .018 to .022, so be sure to carry a set of feeler gauges with you. The wire that connects the upper and lower distributor plates together is also prone to break and\or short out. The arrangement wasn't one of Henry's best ideas. The wire is supposed to be a very flexible 80 strand wire to be able to better withstand the constant movement imposed by the driver's use of the spark advance lever. (Except in the case of Mel Colling's car). Most distributors by now do not have the proper wire installed, and even with the proper wire, they will still eventually break due to the constant flexing. The best bet, and one I highly recommend, is to install the wireless type lower plate that is available from most suppliers. It goes under the part number A12148-WL and sells for about $16. Instead of a flexing wire, a brass ring attached to the lower plate is spring loaded against a brass contactor on the bottom of the upper plate. As the spark advance lever is manipulated, the contactor rides on the ring maintaining the required electrical contact. This new type lower plate has proven to be highly reliable.

The condenser is susceptible to failure due to heat and inherent poor quality. It is located in close proximity to the exhaust manifold where it is extremely hot under normal conditions. If your engine becomes over heated due to high ambient temperatures and\or running out of water, you could do damage to the condenser. The poor quality of many condensers on the market is the bigger problem though. Look at the end of the condenser where the strap is attached. If it is soldered on, don't use it. Temperatures can get high enough to melt the solder. Look for a condenser that has the strap stake welded on. These are the better quality condensers. Bratton's Antique Auto stocks them. To make it easier to replace a distributor out on the road (or anywhere else), you might want to consider installing an extra long head stud bolt where the ignition pop-out cable clamp is attached. This will allow room to double nut the clamp. You can then remove the clamp by taking only the top nut off, leaving the lower nut in place to maintain the 50 lb torque it was set at. Loosening a head bolt can allow water to run past the head gasket into the oil and it may contribute to a warped head and a blown head gasket. Fooling around with this head bolt out on the road can only compound your problems. A couple of other items that are a must besides the spare distributer is a cam wrench, part number A12210-W. They sell for about a buck, and you can't have too many of them. The other item is a small inspection mirror, like a dentist uses. After you think you have located the timing mark, check with your mirror to see if the hole in the timing gear is really on the mark. One last consideration is the type of distributor shaft installed. There are two types, a long shaft and a short shaft. My recommendation is to install only the short shaft when rebuilding a distributer. The short shaft requires that another shaft of similar length be installed down in the engine block. The second shaft is easy to install, it just drops down the hole in the engine block. The two shaft arrangement provides some amount of U-joint action which is easier on the distributor shaft bushings. It's also a good idea to carry an extra short engine shaft with you (part number A12249). This is in case a fellow club member breaks down, his name is John Riggs, he needs to borrow your spare distributor, and the one in his car has the long distributor shaft. ☺

Properly Oiled!

by Ben Hadd

Oil Pump Retention!

The first time you removed an oil pan from a Model A Ford engine to either replace a leaking gasket or tighten the rod and main bearings, you probably heard a "clunk" and found that the oil pump had fallen out of where it was attached to the innards of the engine. There is a spring on the bottom of the pump that pushes against the inside bottom of the pan to hold the pump in place in the engine. When you remove the pan the pump will want to fall out. As you try to re-install it when it's time to put the pan back you will find that you are not quick enough. The pump will fall out again while you are reaching for the pan. But wait! There is a way to do it with the help of a special tool you can make up. Located on the right side of the engine block down toward the bottom is a small plug with a screwdriver slot in it. The plug has a 1\8 inch tapered pipe thread. Henry identified it as a block oil pump hole screw, part number A6755. You can buy an extra one from your favorite Model A Ford parts store for about 50 cents. And that's what you need to do to make up the special tool. Drill a hole through the center of the extra plug you bought with a #29 drill bit and tap it with an 8-32 tap. Find any old 8-32 screw that is about 3\4 of an inch long. It would be best not to use one that has a phillips head drive slot since it would violate the integrity of the Model A Ford. Thread the screw into the plug you just threaded and screw it into the engine block in place of the one Henry put there. Run the 8-32 screw in until it contacts the side of the oil pump. Tighten it just slightly to hold the pump in place. It's best to do this before you remove the oil pan. Now when you take the pan down the pump will stay where it is supposed to be. After you have re-installed the pan, remember to remove your specially made tool and re-install the standard Henry plug. Put the tool in a plastic sandwich bag along with a note describing what it is. Keep it with your other Model A Ford tools so that the next time a fellow club member comes over to your house to borrow it you will know where it is.☺

Not previously published.

Properly Oiled!

by Ben Hadd

Spring Break!

A lot has been said about the precautions that should be taken when working around the rear spring on a Model A Ford. All the "How To" books advise you to use a good spring spreader whenever you remove the rear end from the car. One even suggests that if you remove the rear end with the spring still attached to the axle housings you should wrap a big heavy chain around the spring and the axle housings before you attempt to remove the spring. I personally feel it is prudent to leave the rear spring in the car when pulling the rear end. This way it won't have the opportunity to go through the roof of your garage if the spring spreader slips off. In the March-April MARC publication of the Model A News there was a letter to the editor describing a near fatal accident involving a rear spring. In the case described the rear end had been removed from the car with the spring still attached to the axle housings. A spring spreader was attached and the spring was being spread when the center bolt that holds the leaves together broke.

The letter is quoted below!

I had the rear end out from under a 1929 Model A Pick-Up truck that we were restoring the chassis on. I had the spring spreader in position to spread the spring to remove the shackles. Everything looked good, the bolt was still in place in the center of the leaves. I started cranking on the spreader. As I was leaning over to apply pressure to the handle, the center bolt broke and the top five leaves took off right past my face. I felt the wind. We have a ten foot high ceiling in the building and they hit it! What a sense of relief that they had not hit me; then I realized that they now had to come back down. I was not hit by any of them. Boy, was I lucky! I looked at the bolt protruding from the remaining spring. Most of the head had been broken from the bolt for a long time. The small portion that held it failed when the spring flexed with the spreader. I **will not** do any work in the future on springs, whether front or rear, without first putting a stout "C" clamp on it to hold the leaves together. I advise anyone else doing this job to use the same caution. It can't happen to you? Well, it did happen to me. **Rick Sturim, Wyoming, MI**☺

Orange County *Distributor*, June, 1996

Properly Oiled!

by Ben Hadd

Shock Links!

The Model A Ford shock link is the little widget that hooks onto each of the four shock absorber arms and connects to the spring perch on each corner of the car. The original Henry shock link is a tubular devise that has a number of moving parts in it and is itself a small shock absorber. Somewhere along the line an after market shock link that became known as a "dog bone" became available as a replacement. The dog bone is a crude looking two piece thing that's shaped like a dog bone and mechanically connects the shock absorber arm direct to the spring perch with no shocking action. A lot of Model A's on the road today have the dog bones installed in place of the tubular shock link. If the original Henry shock links are what you want on your car, complete repo assemblies are available from Bratton's Antique Auto for $14. each. You can also easily rebuild some originals. Bratton's carry all the replacement parts. Usually all that is needed are the rubber seals and the metal seal retainers. The very early Model A's had slightly different shaped seals and retainers. The replacements available are of the later type. Since the shock link sits down near the wheels, they tend to collect a lot of dirt and crud. You should disassemble them completely and clean them thoroughly before repacking with grease and installing new seals. And because there is always the possibility of putting things back together incorrectly, a diagram and a part number call out is provided. ☺

Parts List!

#1. A18063 Tube (Housing)

#2, A18060 Brass Seats (4 Required)

#3. A18062 Spring

#4. A18064 Spacer

#5. A18061 Plug (Threaded Cap)

#6. A18058 Rubber Grease Seal (2 Required)

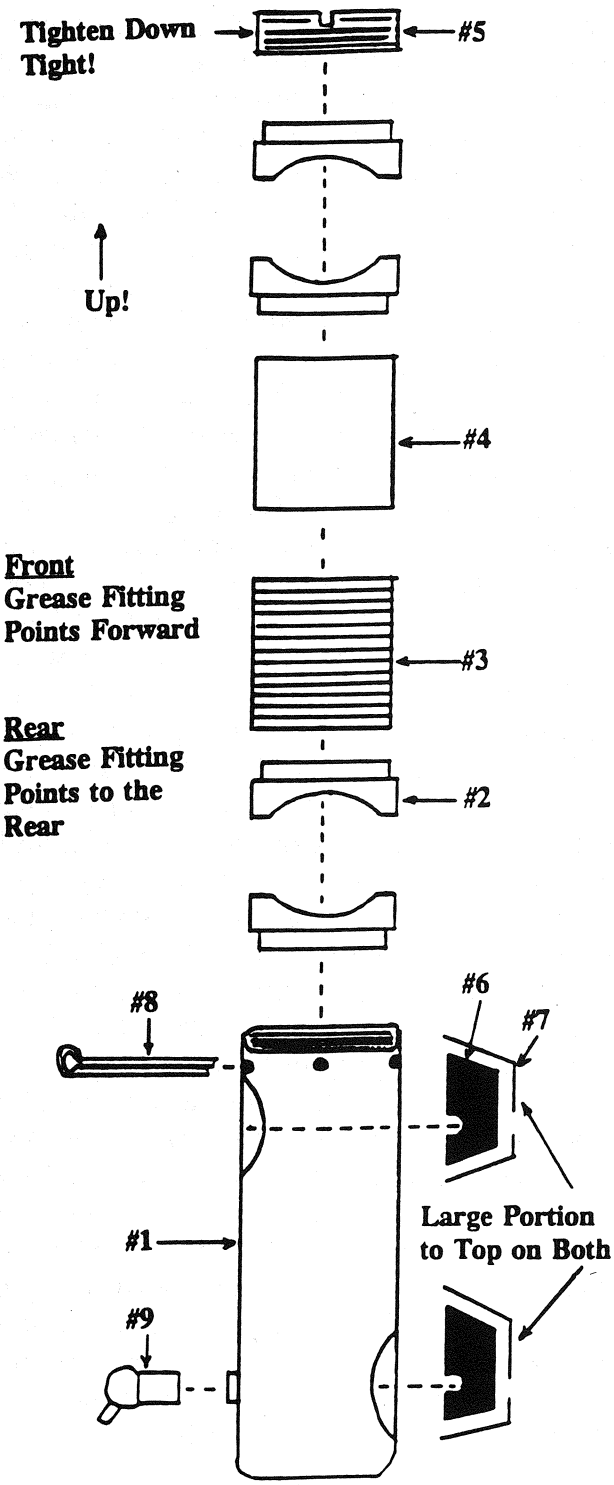
#7. A18059 Metal Seal Retainer (2 Required)

#8. A90052 Cotter Pin

#9. A90140 Grease Fitting

Model A Ford Shock Link!

2 Front, 2 Rear, All Identical!



Orange County *Distributor*, August, 1996

Properly Oiled!

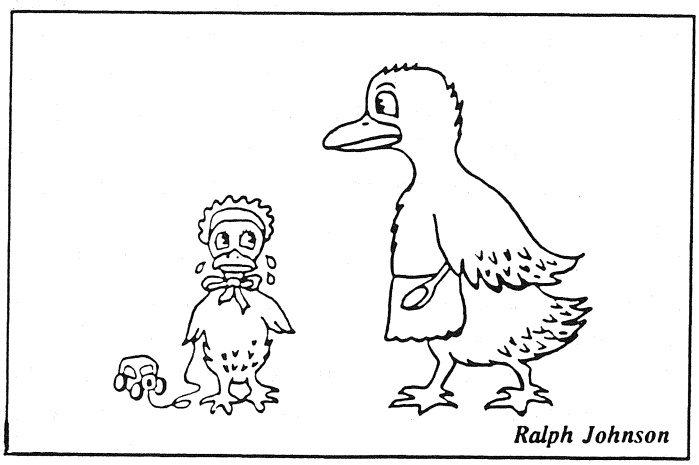
by Ben Hadd

Ahooguh and Grease Fittings!

Did you know that all Model A Sparton horns had a zinc patent plate riveted to the motor cover with two nickel plated split rivets? This is really boring stuff, but important if you expect to win a Blue Ribbon at the National. The reproduction patient plates are pretty good quality and they have a blank space after the "R" serial number. The numbers that go after the "R" should look like they were stamped into the metal and should be the month and year your Model A was manufactured. For example an "R31930" would indicate that the month/year of manufacture was March 1930. Before you rivet a reproduction plate onto a horn assembly take it to a jeweler who does engraving, or to a trophy store and have them engrave the proper numbers on for you. If you don't consider details like this you won't win a blue ribbon at the National.

Another detail you might want to consider is the grease fittings. Henry had them spread all over the car. A lot of Model A's on the road today have a mixed bag of original, reproduction original and modern. The original Model A Ford grease fittings had a check ball inside to keep the grease from running out. Reproduction grease fittings do not have a check ball and you can usually spot a reproduction by the string of grease hanging from them. Beside losing points at National, you will be losing lubrication out onto the road. ☺

The information for this article was supplied by Orange County Model A Ford Club member Glenn Johnson.



Ralph Johnson

"Listen little Dummy, it's Honk! Honk! not Ahooguh! Ahooguh!"

Properly Oiled!

by Ben Hadd

Timing Gear Covers!

A lot of Model A'ers probably don't know that there are three different part numbered timing gear covers around that will fit right on a Model A Ford engine and cause you all kinds of grief if it's the wrong one for your car. It sounds like something Henry Ford and his number one henchman Harry Bennett dreamed up to antagonize people. But that's not the case at all, it was a matter of technical advancement and spare parts inventory control. The Model A engine was originally designed with a manual spark advance distributor. The timing gear cover was designated part number **A-6019** and has a round boss with a hole in the center of the boss for inserting the timing pin to find the top-dead-center (TDC) of the engine so the timing can be set Ford incorporated a centrifugal spark advance distributor on the Model B engine and continued it on for the duration of the four cylinder engines. The centrifugal spark advance needed to be statically timed at 19° before-top-dead-center (BTDC). The timing pin hole had to be slightly relocated in the timing gear cover. Ford didn't want to have to manufacture two completely different timing gear covers, one for spares for the Model A engines and one for the new production Model B engines, so the original timing gear cover was redesigned with an elongated boss to accommodate a hole at either end. The type of distributor used, not the model type of the engine determines which timing gear cover should be used. If a Model A or B Ford engine uses a manual spark advance distributor, the timing gear cover should be the original **A-6019** with the timing pin hole in the middle of a round boss. It can also use the newer alternate timing gear cover with the elongated boss with the timing pin hole located in the **lower** portion of the boss, designated part number **B-6019A**. If a Model A or B Ford engine is using a centrifugal spark advance distributor the timing gear cover should have the elongated boss with the timing pin hole located in the **upper** portion of the boss, designated part number **B-6019**. ☺

Orange County *Distributor*, June, 1995

Properly Oiled!

by Ben Hadd

Hardened Valves and Seats!

If you're concerned about using unleaded fuel in your Model A engine you can install hardened valves and hardened valve seats, which will allow it to tolerate unleaded fuels better.

An engine machine shop can grind a recess where the valve seats are located in the block and press in hardened inserts. I had my engine done at John Hollins' shop in the City of Orange. You have to have the engine out of the car, but you don't have to completely disassemble it.

Hollins Auto Machine Shop
538 N. Cypress St.
Orange, CA 92667 714-538-3926

It's a good idea to install hardened seats in all 8 valve positions along with 8 hardened valves. GMC valves are a good replacement and they are not flared on the end. You can install these along with one piece GMC valve guides, which makes it easier to take the valves in and out. You don't have to knock the guides out each time. You do have to machine about .100 of an inch off the stem end of the GMC valves to make them fit the Model A engine. You also use GMC valve retainers and keepers. Hollins' shop can supply all the required parts. You might also want to install adjustable valve lifters if your car doesn't already have them.

Most any engine shop can install hardened seats in an engine block if it's completely disassembled, but you have to use a portable seat grinder to work on an assembled engine, and not many shops have them anymore. John Hollins did a good job for me, and his prices were reasonable. You can save a few bucks if you chase the parts down yourself and can get a discount. listed below is the parts list. ☺

Valves (X8)	**Power Seal**	**V1558**
Seats(X8)	**Martin Wells**	**G505**
Guides(X8)	**Power Seal**	**VG361**
Springs(X8)	**Power Seal**	**VS71**
Keepers(X16)	**Power Seal**	**1K115**
Retainers(X8)	**350 Chev**	**-**

Orange County *Distributor*, August, 1994

Properly Oiled!

by Ben Hadd

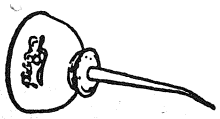
Some Handy Tools!

One of the more frustrating aspects of working on a Model A Ford are those pesky little cotter pins Henry dealt us. They are tough to remove sometimes. But wait, there's a tool! There really is a tool for removing cotter pins. It looks like an ice pick that has had a front end collision. And I have one! Its a good quality tool, and I'll probably lose it before I ever break it. It has a hardened steel shaft that you can smack the side of with a hammer to remove the cotter pin once you have the tortured tip of the tool through the eye of the pin.

Trying to find one is the trick though. I went to a number of tool places looking for one. At the places where the counterman was under 50 he didn't know what I was talking about, nor did he seem to care. I finally found a place where this old white haired guy knew what I was talking about, but he didn't have any. But I finally found a place where you can get one. You can buy a U.S. made Mac cotter pin removal tool, part number SP29A from any Mac Tool Dealer. One I know of is John Path at 6451 W. 84th St. Los Angeles. 310-641-3152, 310-790-0123 (pager). Cost is $12.77 including tax. I spoke with John and he has plenty in stock and would be willing to ship to you. Go get one, you'll like it.

Another tool that is worth having is a brake adjusting wrench. The wrench is a box type with the box part resembling an 8-point star. Some of them have "Ford Brakes" stamped on the side. The box neatly fits the square shank of the brake adjuster at each wheel. Use of this wrench will prevent rounding off the corners of the shank, that is if somebody's grandfather didn't already do it for you years ago. You can generally find these wrenches at swap meets, look for the guys who have boxes full of old rusty Ford wrenches. You have to know what your looking for though. If you are not sure take an old brake adjuster with you the next time you go to a swap meet to check the fit. If you can find one you can usually buy it for two or three bucks. Its a good tool to have, it makes it easier to adjust the brakes because the wrench won't keep slipping off. ☺

Orange County *Distributor*, May, 1994



Properly Oiled!

by Ben Hadd

Veteran's Day 1996!

This month the country will celebrate Veteran's Day. What's that got to do with Model A Fords? Quite a bit! The Model A Ford is a significant part of American history that is still with us today. But fewer and fewer Americans remember the significance of Veteran's Day or how it is associated with the Model A Ford. World War One (1914-1918), known at the time as the "Great War" (the war to end all wars), ended on November 11, 1918. Some romantic decided that the shooting would stop at precisely 11 o'clock that morning. The moment in history was better known and recorded as the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month. The date was commemorated with a national holiday known as Armistice Day and was celebrated every year on the 11th of November. The veterans of the Great War were just emerging into their thirties when the Model A Ford came into production (1928-1931). One can only guess at how many Model A Fords became the family car for these men and their families over the years. It is hard to believe that at the same time in history there were thousands of Civil War Veterans (of both sides) still living. These surviving veterans were then in their eighties and it is probable that some of them also owned and drove a Model A Ford. Today all of the Civil War Veterans are long gone and the ranks of the veterans of the Great War are rapidly thinning. Those still surviving today are well into their nineties. Armistice Day was changed to Veteran's Day after World War Two in order to honor the veterans of that war. This year, as in years past, the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) will be out soliciting donations. When you make a donation they will hand you an imitation red poppy. The significance of the poppy is also lost to many. During the Great War there was a tremendous battle fought in an area of France known as Flanders. Legend has it that the next Spring the area bloomed with millions of blood red poppies. It inspired a poem written by British Army Major John McCrae. The poem was widely quoted in the United States and the poppy became the symbol of the sacrifice of the veterans of that war. The poppy survives as that symbol. The Model A Ford also survives as a symbol of a bygone era.

The next time you climb in the 'ol Model A to go for a ride, think for a moment of the history your car has seen and of those who owned and drove it before you. They may include men who were at Belleau Wood, Chateau Thierry, The Argonne Forest, or maybe even Gettysburg.

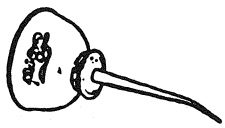
In Flanders Fields

by John McCrae (1872-1918)

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
in Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields. 1915



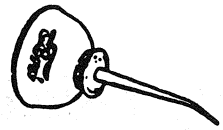
Properly Oiled!

by Ben Hadd

Henry's Wayward Wire!

Volumes have been written about how to adjust the ignition on a Model A Ford. Pick up any of the Model A "How To" books and there is a dissertation on setting the points and the timing. A couple of things though tend to get neglected that can have a bearing on whether you have a strong ignition or not. Take for instance the little wire inside the distributor that connects the upper and lower distributor plates together. Henry knew it would eventually break, that's why he put it there. Most folks will replace it with any piece of wire they can find. Wrong thing to do! Every time you move the spark advance lever you flex this wire, and wires don't like to be flexed, so they break. Bratton's Antique Auto Parts sells the correct wire. It's a special fine 80 strand wire that will better tolerate the constant bending and last longer. If you're not a purest and don't mind a modification, install the new wireless lower plate. It has a brass contact ring that rides on a brass contactor. There is no wire to ever break, and they work fine. They sell for about $15. There are two other neat things that Bratton also stocks that are worth having. The first is a coil polarity tester. This little device slips into the top of the distributor in series with the heavy spark wire. It has two LED's that indicate coil polarity. start the engine and see which one glows. Half of the repro coils on the market are manufactured with the polarity reversed. It's an easy fix, just reverse the red and black primary wires connected to the coil. Your car will run much better when coil polarity is correct. The other neat thing is a voltage tester. It's a widget that looks similar to the polarity tester, it slips into the top of the distributor also. It has a window with a brass slider inside that looks like a safety pin, in fact it is a safety pin. Start the engine and pull the slider down slowly and watch the spark jump the gap. The window has calibration marks along the side. All the way down is 20,000 volts. Both of these testers sell for a little more that $15. each. They are both good things to have along on roadside seminars. They will tell you real quick if Henry's wayward wire broke. ☺

Orange County *Distributor*, February, 1995



Properly Oiled!

by Ben Hadd

Model A Ford Source References!

If you are relatively new to the Model A hobby you probably have experienced the frustration of trying to figure out how an assembly goes together, or what is the proper technique to restore a part. A good source reference library is essential to learning about the Model A Ford. Numerous publications exist and they are not very expensive.

Five volumes of "How To" books have been published by MAFCA that represent the many excellent articles that have appeared in the ***Restorer*** magazine over the years.

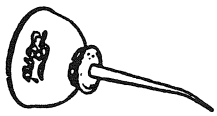
Volume 1, 1967
Volume 2, 1975
Volume 3, 1983
Volume 4, 1988
Volume 5, 1994

There is also another "How To" book, The Restorer's Model A Shop Manual, by Jim Schild. All six of these publications are usually available at your favorite Model A parts store. Bratton's also has them. Speaking of Bratton, be sure to get a copy of his parts\price catalog, it is full of pictorial views of many of the Model A assemblies and it is an invaluable shop manual. The official Model A Ford Service Bulletins are another good source of information. A book of them has been published in later times that is also available at any of the Model A parts stores. The MARC\MAFCA Judging Standards is another important book to have on hand. It can be obtained through the MAFCA Headquarters in La Habre.

Back issues of the ***Restorer*** are also good sources of information. Many can be found at local auto related swap meets and some are still available through the MAFCA National.

A word of caution, not everything in these books is accurate. Most all of the articles, except the official Ford Service Bulletins, represent someone's opinion and it is not always correct. As you read and learn, you will have to judge for yourself which is the best way to proceed with a restoration project. ☺

Orange County *Distributor*, November, 1995



Properly Oiled!

by Ben Hadd

Transmission Oil Leak!

You got oil leaking out of the back of the transmission. So what's the big deal? Oil leaks out of the back of everything on a Model A. But there are a couple of ways to fix it. Oil tends to want to leak from the end of the idler gear and cluster gear shafts. The easiest way to fix it without pulling the transmission out of the car is to buy a transmission shaft seal. Some suppliers carry it under part number 7112 and it costs about $16. This part is a casting that bolts over the end of the shafts where that little cross piece is located that prevents the shafts from rotating. The seal dams up the oil and stops the leak. If you have the transmission out of the car, there is a better way. The ends of the two shafts can be machined to accept o-rings. There is an excellent article that appeared in the July-August 1985 publication of the Restorer (page 13), by Harold Powers of Scotia, California. Harold explains exactly how to do it and even provides the part number of the O-ring. The problem is you gotta have a lathe and a grinding tool to do the job. Once we had a member of the club here in Orange County who had the capability, the willingness and a whole bag of o-rings. Trouble is he moved to Missoula, Montana and took his lathe and all the O-rings with him. Bratton's Antique Auto Parts has since stepped up to provide the service. See his 1997 price catalog. While you have the transmission out it's a good idea to install new front and rear bearings that have a seal on one side. Be sure to face the seal to the outside so that the bearings will receive lubrication from inside the transmission. Your favorite Model A parts place should have them. If not, bearing stores carry them. Ask for an SKF-6208-2RSJ for the front and SKF-6306-2RSJ for the rear. Both bearings have a seal on each side, so you have to pry the seal off of one side before you install them. But wait! There's one last thing. Make sure you install the front and rear oil baffles correctly. They can go in two ways, right and wrong. Both baffles have an off-set and when installed correctly there should be about a 1/16th of an inch space between the outer edge of the baffle and the bearing. ☺

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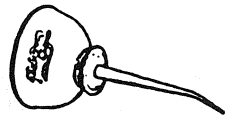

Properly Oiled!

by Ben Hadd

Towing The Model A Ford!

Every once in a while the need arises to have a Model A towed someplace. One of the things you need to think about when you do tow a Model A is the transmission lubrication. When a Model A is rolling down the road under it's own power the cluster gear in the transmission is rotating and it churns up a lot of oil from the bottom of the case. This action splashes oil all over the other moving parts. Under tow the transmission gear shift lever would be placed in the neutral position. Now the only thing that is turning inside the transmission is the main shaft, the disengaged slider gears, the large output bearing at the rear of the case and the pilot bearing inside the pilot shaft. Neither the front or rear ball bearing is receiving a fresh supply of oil because the moving parts are all above the static oil level. The only lubrication they have is from the oil that coated them the last time the car was driven Several articles have been written concerning this subject. One person suggests that you should disconnect the drive shaft when you tow a Model A. Think about that one for a minute! You have your choice of pulling the engine or the rear end out of the car to get to the U-joint so you can remove it to disconnect the drive shaft, then repeat the process to reinstall it. Forget that one! Another suggestion is to remove the shifting tower and add an extra quart of oil. This would raise the oil level up to where the two bearings would be immersed in oil. I like that idea better. You might even be able to force the extra oil in from the fill plug in the side of the case without removing the tower. The third option you have is to go ahead and tow the car and don't worry about it. If the bearings wear out you get to put new ones in. While you're thinking about the transmission, take a look at the shifting tower in your Model A. There is a small vent hole located in the rear of the tower, several inches down from the top. The vent hole is supposed to keep pressure from building up inside the transmission and forcing oil out through the front and rear bearings. There is a good chance that it's plugged up with crud. Take a small piece of wire and clean it out. ☺

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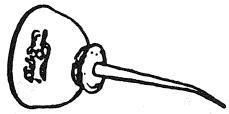


Properly Oiled!

by Ben Hadd

The Overdrive!

If a survey were taken of the number of overdrive transmissions installed in Model A Fords, the Orange County Model A Ford Club as a group would probably account for the largest number. This is due to our extensive use of Southern California freeways, the long tours we go on and our propensity to want to go fast. The advantage of the overdrive is that you can travel at speeds above 45 mph, typically 55-65 mph without overspeeding the engine and vibrating the body to pieces.

What kind are there?

There are actually five different types of overdrive transmissions available. At present there are only four of that number that I am aware of installed in Orange County club member's cars. The first and most widely used is the Borge-Warner conversion.

The Borge-Warner!

This type of overdrive was used in a number of domestic cars with 3-speed transmissions from the 1940's through the late 1960's. Some enterprising fellows figured out a way to incorporate them into the Model A torque tube and drive shaft. Conversions are available from any number of suppliers, but also in a wide variation of quality. The down side to the Borge-Warner is that it has a free wheeling attribute. When you take your foot off the gas when the overdrive is engaged, the car will coast like it is out of gear, an absolute detriment when traveling down a hill. They are the least expensive and they work very well as long as you get one converted by a quality supplier.

The Volvo!

The volvo conversion is similar to the Borge-Warner in that it is installed by modifying the Model A torque tube and drive shaft. The good part is that it has a single control (an electric solenoid) as opposed to the Borge-Warner's use of a mechanical and an electrical control. It also does not have the free wheeling problem. The down side is that it is difficult to check the oil volume. You have to drain and re-fill it to be absolutely sure you have the proper amount of oil in it. There is also a quality problem concerned with the welding of the drive shaft elements. There have been numerous reports of butt welds breaking, which have stranded several unsuspecting Model A motorists.

The Ryan!

The Ryan overdrive is not a conversion, it is made from scratch by the Ryan Company. The Ryan overdrive housing bolts right up to the Model A banjo and comes with it's own torque tube and drive shaft. There is one single mechanical control, no electrical control is involved. They are of excellent quality and are very well supported by the Ryan Company. The down side is that you have to cut a slot in your floor board and carpet to accommodate the shifting lever. The Ryan housing will also interfere with the dropped floor pan on some Model A body styles, and you have to develop a double-clutching downshifting skill for shifting out of overdrive. The Ryan works very well for mountainous driving because you essentially have 6 speeds forward and can use all six for hill climbing and compression braking. The Ryan is more expensive than the previous two mentioned.

The Mitchell!

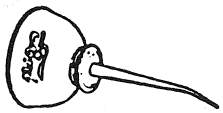
The Mitchell overdrive is very similar to the Ryan, in that it is not a conversion and comes fully manufactured and bolts right up to the banjo. No one that I am aware of in the Orange County Model A Ford Club has a Mitchell installed. The cost is comparable to the Ryan.

The Wilton!

The Wilton is not really an overdrive, it is a complete 4-speed transmission that replaces the standard Model A transmission. The fourth gear is an overdrive gear. There are only two individuals in the Orange County Model A Ford Club who have a Wilton installation, and both are very pleased with it. The cost however, is about twice the cost of a Ryan.

The choice is yours!

The installation of an overdrive in a Model A Ford is highly recommended if you intend to drive it on long tours. You can travel faster without tearing up your car and the smoothness of the ride makes Model A'ing much more enjoyable. The choice of overdrive type is up to the individual. Factors such as cost and convenience are the big consideration. My personal choice is the Ryan. I have owned several Borge-Warner overdrive installations and was very pleased with them, but the Ryan is of very good quality, is simpler to operate, doesn't free wheel and is excellent for mountainous driving. ☺



Properly Oiled!

by Ben Hadd

High Compression Heads!

A During ***Prohibition*** Model A police cars had a hard time chasing after rum runners bringing bootleg liquor into the U.S. over the boarder from Canada where it was still legal. Henry Ford made a special high compression head for Model A police cars to give them more power to chase after the culprits. Two guys down in Texas by the name of **Brumfield & Finley** are now manufacturing a similar high compression head. The heads are cast iron, have a 5.9:1 compression ratio, provide a little better cooling and look just like a stock Model A head. Several of our club members have them on their cars and report that they work very well. At first I was apprehensive about buying one since Brumfield & Finley reside only in a post office box and don't have a telephone. No one I spoke with ever heard of Brumfield or Finley. The names even have a magic ring, kind of like Mutt & Jeff. In fact they may well be one in the same; Mutt Brumfield and Jeff Finley. I wonder if one of them is a tall skinny guy and the other a short bald headed guy with a beard. At any rate I went ahead and ordered one and put it on my car and have been very pleased with it. The 5.9:1 compression ratio is enough to give you noticeably more power without hammering the rods through the bottom of the pan. I can climb hills in overdrive that I couldn't before and I ran it all the way to Tacoma and back last summer without a problem. It turns out that Mutt & Jeff are pretty good guys to do business with. They actually lowered their price when their sales volume increased. Not too many folks willing to do that these days. And they will correspond with you by mail (from their post office box) should you have any problems with their product. The few minor problems that I have heard about were very promptly resolved by them. If your Model A needs help getting out of it's own way you might want to try one of these heads. If you need the extra power to run rum across the Canadian boarder you don't have to bother, ***Prohibition*** has been repealed. ☺

Properly Oiled!

by Ben Hadd

Keep Your Wheels On!

Having just installed new brake drums on all four wheels of my Model A, I was reminded of an incident of a wheel coming off a club member's car while on a tour. The "Book" says that after re-installing rear brake drums, drive the car about 100 miles, then re-tighten the rear axle nuts. Mine were loose enough to turn the nut to the next cotter pin hole at about 80 ft lbs of torque. If left loose, the drum will rock back and forth and eventually ruin the axle key and the keyway in the axle.

Front axle nuts should be tightened just enough to feel a slight drag on the greased wheel bearings. This is an acquired skill. If you get them too tight you will overheat the bearing and possibly seize it up and twist off a spindle. If left too loose the front wheels will wobble when you go over a rough spot in the road or a set of railroad tracks.

Wheel lug nuts have been known to come loose and come off without warning. Just ask Roger Aday. Check your lug nuts with a torque wrench before and after every tour and before you go to bed every night. A torque value of 50 to 60 ft lbs should keep them on without over-tightening them.

Another serious pitfall to watch out for is a bunch of defective reproduction lug nuts that flooded the market back in 1987 courtesy of some folks in Taiwan. The MAFCA National published a warning about it in the 1988 March/April edition of the Restorer. The article appeared on page 7 and was written by Bill Lancaster of Sunnyvale, CA. Bill describes two instances of wheel and hub damage that occurred as a result of these defective lug nuts. The problem was that thread depth was not sufficient. The nuts could be tightened down tight to the bottom of the threads on the stud, but the wheel would not be tight against the drum.

Take the time to check that you have good quality lug nuts, and as Roger Aday is fond of saying, **"Take a few minutes to tighten those lug nuts."** ☺

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The International Model A Ford Victoria Association is a body style chapter of the Model A Ford Club of America and a region of the Model A Restorers Club. 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 periodic 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 or quote from this publication is expressly given provided acknowledgement and credit is given to the author and to the publication.

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