The Victoria Bustle

International Model A Ford Victoria Association

Founded 1986 – Frisco, Texas

Model A Ford Club of America – Model A Restorers Club

January, 2008 **Volume 23, Issue 1**

Founder & Past President	**Charlie Viosca**	**Charlie@cjv8.com**
President	**John Icenhower**	**johnike@suddenlink.net**
Treasurer:	**Brian Martin**	**forda2@aol.com**
Editor:	**Tom Endy**	**tendy@socal.rr.com**
Technical Director:	**Bill Barlow**	**babarlow@bendcable.com**
Membership Director:	**Vern Schwebke**	**vern190a@cox.net**
Secretary:	**David Ziegler**	**daveziegler@sbcglobal.net**

The Dust Bowl

Victoria Association E-mail Addresses January 2008

Absher, Clark, caamodela@aol.com
Agnifilo, Louis & Susan, suelou67@optonline.net
Allen, Hubert, erice@tampatank.com
Anderson, Robert, anderford@juno.com
Andrews, Les, lesmoda@jps.net
Baldwin, Bob & Beverly, vze3bkxb@verizon.net
Baney, Mike, mbbaney@msn.com
Barlow, Bill, babarlow@bendcable.com
Barrett, Richard, rbarret3@rochester.rr.com
Bashford, Paul, kobbeni@bigpond.com.au **BAD**
Beck, James & Anna, anbjeb@windstream.net
Beers, Bob & Lois, beers.b@comcast.net
Behm, Ronald, redbehm01@charter.net **BAD**
Bengel, Jerry & Marlys, jerbengel@comcast.net
Bergstrom, Olle, olle@moser-textil.se
Bewley, Thomas, Donna May, tdbewley@comcast.net
Bicknell, Justin, JustinBicknell@inspire.net.nz
Bidonde, Bob, modela1931@aol.com
Black, Michael & Marilyn, n6egn@snowcrest.net **BAD**
Bockman, David & Karen, davidb@cos.cc.ca.us **BAD**
Borel, Bracy, Mary Lynne, bohollow@fidnet.com **BAD**
Bowen, Bill & Jerri b35bowen@aol.com
Brady, Pete, kwb236@aol.com **BAD**
Britcher, Joe & Charlotte, gashouse@alltel.net
Brutcher, John, kbrutche@twcny.rr.com
Bryson, Steven & DeEtte, skbryson@hotmail.com
Burgess, Lee, lee.burgess@comcast.net
Burkes, Jeff & Joanne, ejb@ipass.net
Butler, Ron & Melinda, ronmelinda@bellsouth.net
Calendine, Kip, kipcal968@aol.com
Carey, Sherman & Treva, scarey@vnet.net
Chandler, Steve & Karen, dzinerkjc@msn.com
Chiabotti, Paul & Geneva beniciaflyer@aol.com
Christensen, Charles & Helen, chuck95ret@aol.com
Cilker, Bill, wcilkerjr@comcast.net
Coleman, John & Betty, v8coleman@earthlink.net
Conger,Richard, rc@silverballranch.com
Copetti, Lou, louc@maitland.nsw.gov.au **BAD**
Cramer, Norman & Marilyn, mr29a@mc.net **BAD**
Current, Wayne, current@ece.ucdavis.edu
Curtis, Jack & Melissa js_curtis@hotmail.com
Davis, Allen & Trish, apdavis2@bellsouth.net
Davis, Bernard & Eileen, bdavis@wolffsamson.com
DeSchane, Dick & Jean, rdesc@earthlink.net
Didomenico, Frank, Holly,saltlady@sbcglobal.net
Dinius, George, Sally, gldinius@yahoo.com
Dobney, Greg & Brenda, sneakyboo62@yahoo.com
Douglass, John & Gerry, jdouglass@hauns.com
Drown, Walt, wandadrown@yahoo.com
Eckhoff, Phiip & Alice, philal@usfamily.net **BAD**
Ekre, Jerome, pjekre@rrt.net
Ekstrom, Walter & Katherine wally@raeco.com
Fahlgren, Gordon, gords_sales@msn.com
Fowler, Sandy & Lynne, sfowler@comteck.com **BAD**
Frazee, John, jcfrazee123@aol.com
Frazier, Buddy, bcfraz@earthlink.net
Gadwa, Gary, ggadwa@ruralnetwork.net
Garrison, Lew & Judy, judy48lew@comcast.net
Gill, Roger & Judy, rnjgill@sbcglobal.net
Gonzalez, Pablo & Irma, pgs@uniexcel.com
Gosa, Dale, dalebassman@bellsouth.net
Gough, Sid, sagough@efirehouse.net **BAD**
Granquist, David & Jan, dave@redlineoil.com
Greany, Ed & Robin, crest25@verizon.net
Grubb, Don & Carol, ellgrubb@cs.com
Guinty, Scott, 29coupe@cox.net
Haddon, Bob & Rachel, rhaddon7@yahoo.com **BAD**
Hall, Richard & Louise rickandlouise@socal.rr.com
Hammermeister, Leonard, lshammermeister@aol.com
Hanvey, Larry & Pam, larry@hanveyconstruction.com
Harrington, Bill & Jeanine, wj1957@aol.com
Hart, Steve, shart31@juno.com
Henderson, Randy, maryannrandy@hotmail.com
Henert, Larry & Jan, henert@xta.com **BAD**
Hescheles,Charles, chescheles@comcast.net
Hildwein, Ed, buzzehh@aol.com
Hill, Clark & Linda, clark.hill@hchinc.com
Hodge, Jeffery & Diane, ironcreekreunion@msn.com
Ingrao, Joe & Jean, pilegal204@aol.com
Johnson, Aldie, modela.mail@verizon.net
Johnson, Stan & Roz, fordyhorses@aol.com
Joslin, Dvid & Katherine, dbrucejoslin@aol.com
Kaatz, Harry, hlk3188@msn.com
Kane, Tom & Christine, kane-t@sbcglobal.net
Keenan, Robert & Betty Joan, rpkhilltop@aol.com
Keplinger, Dave, A3131@isp.com
Kissel, William & Doreen, wgk@juno.com **BAD**
Klamm, Ron, ronklamm@sbcglobal.net
Knapp, Frank, frknapp3@aol.com
Kring, Don & Joyce, ddkarmann1@comcast.net
Kriebel, Howard & Martha, kriebel12@verizon.net
Larson, Dean, bumppo72@comcast.net
Lawrie, Ralph & Phyllis, AO43513@allstate.com **BAD**
Lowry, Bill & Virginia, vdlbfl@earthlink.net
Lundell, Les & Norma, lvlundell@sleepyeyetel.net
Lynch, Peter & Faye, paflynco@bigpond.net.au
MacDonald, Peter, pjmac.ostii.com **BAD**
Manninen, Ken, kmannin31@yahoo.com **BAD**
Manning, Charles melrose3@earthlink.net **BAD**
Marsellos, Dick & Janice, msranch@prinetime.net **BAD**
Masters, John, johnnym7@juno.com
Menard, Susan, chn_320@yahoo.com
McAdams, Don, Nancy, forda31@cox.com **BAD**
McCart, Victor, Charlotte vlimac@wbsnet.org
McKinney, Larry & Gerry, lgmcspeed@verizon.net
Mickaelian, Mark, mbmmick@comcast.net
Milholland, William, wdmetc@aol.com
Miller, Ken & Irma, vickyman@xtn.net **BAD**
Miller, Roger (Iowa),millagsrch@aol.com
Miller, Roger (AZ) rogermil@aol.com
Morley, Lloyd & Margaret, ifmorleyii@aol.com **BAD**
Morse, Richard, ironmountain@xtra.co.nz
Mozingo, Glen, grmozingo@aol.com
Naber, Harold,vnaber@aol.com
Neff, Richard & Sharon, rneff@starband.net **BAD**
Nelson, Ken & Linda, austin.nelson@att.net
Overbaugh, Tom & Kathleen, tomo@zoom-dsl.com
Palmer, Lew, agnes40b@hotmail.com
Pell, Jim & Phyllis, ppell3@tx.rr.com
Petithomme, Bob & Clelia, petithomme@caltel.com
Phillips, Tom & Betty, tom.phillips@uhsinc.com
Polley, Allen, Connie, bigal18@sprynet.com
Pratt, David, pratt_a_99@yahoo.com
Quaranta, Vito, Ethylnn, vitoqmi@comcast.net
Quigley, Tom aowner@cox.net
Ramberg, Anders & Melissa, 31vicky@sprintmail.com
Ramsey, Walt & Donna, wram718@aol.com
Reynolds, Bill & Becky, wlrey@att.net
Rodriguez Uriate, Juan,
estudiorodriguezuriarte@speedy.com.ar
Rogers, Jerry, mjrogers@swbell.net **BAD**
Romine, Tom & Liz, allproci@juno.com
Ross, Don & Irene, rossie@gnet.com **BAD**
Roub, Ralph & Madge, ralmadr@emeraldis.com **BAD**
Russell, Ray, rrrr42@comanchetx.com
Seay, Speedy & Jill, speedyseay@msn.com
Scheer, Gary & Barbara, gcs8938@msn.com
Schoelen, Jim, jimbet@hotmail.com
Schwartzer, Thomas, teschwartzer@aol.com
Sheldon, Joel & Joni, jesheld@hotmail.com
Smith, Brad & Catherine cbsmithgarden@comcast.net
Smith, Keith R, keithramsey2@earthlink.com
Solheim, Geoff, gsolheim40@yahoo.com
Stone, Ginger & Tim, gstone@socal.rr.com
Sullins, Jill jsullins_ny@hotmail.com
Sundstrom, Alan, tucker@pacific.net
Temple, Francis & Olive, fotemple@svcable.net
Thomason, Derek & Judy, antiqueford@xtra.co.nz
Thorsell, Lee & Linda, leethorsell@yahoo.com
Tamarit, Amadeo & Gabriel atamarit@speedy.com.ar
Ulmer, William, razzmtazz@earthlink.net
Vagasky, Don & Teta, aandtman@hotmail.com
Valauri, David & Jill, david.valauri@mssm.edu
Viosca, Charlie, charlie@cjv8.com
Wagner, Will, wwagner@wagnermd.com
Watson, Keith & Margaret, kwatson@value.net.nz
Watt, Jack & Cydnie, caworjhw@mts.net
Webber, Ben & Shirley, wewebber@frontiernet.net
White, Lee & Phyllis, frescarc@fuse.net
Wierman, Michael, mikeanddiana.wierman@comcast.net
Wikkerink, Bob & Kitsy rwikk@almegaonline.com **BAD**
Wilkinson, John & Linda, johnlinda72@aol.com
Williams, Bobby, bobbywilliams1940@yahoo.com
Wilson, Richard & Marcella, richmarci@aol.com
Wilson, Terry & Freda, modeladrive@shaw.ca
Winkler, Norm, circlew2@verizon.com **BAD**
Winslow, Bruce & Janet, shunpiker1@sbcglobal.net
Woodberry, Lee, Martha, I_m_woodberry@msn.com **BAD**
Woods, George, Alice, gtreezz1@cox.net
Young, Frank, jopuddy@cs.com **BAD**
Young, John & Kasha, gumball83@sbcglobal.net
Zetterberg, Bob & Carrie, bzett@goldrush.com
Ziegler, Dave, daveziegler@sbcglobal.net
Zito, Rocco, rocz@earthlink.net
Zubal, John & Irene, ijzbl@aol.com

On The Cover!

The phrase "Dust Bowl" holds a powerful place in the American imagination. It connotes a confusing mixture of concepts. Is the Dust Bowl a place? Was it an event? An era? American popular culture employs the term in all three ways. Ask most people about the Dust Bowl and they can place it in the Middle West, though in the imagination it wanders widely, from the Rocky Mountains, through the Great Plains, to Illinois and Indiana. Many people can situate the event in the 1930s. Ask what happened then, and a variety of stories emerge. A combination of severe drought and economic depression created destitution for millions. Farmers had plowed up the pristine wilderness and because of their lack of knowledge of soil conservation suffered ecological collapse. Millions of desperate people took to the roads, seeking relief in California where they became exploited itinerant farm laborers. Dust Bowl stories, like its definitions, are legion, and now approach the mythological.

The Dust Bowl of the 1930s lasted about a decade. Its primary area of impact was on the southern Plains. The northern Plains were not so badly affected, but nonetheless, the drought, windblown dust and agricultural decline were no strangers to the north. In fact the agricultural devastation helped to lengthen the Depression whose effects were felt worldwide. The movement of people on the Plains was also profound.

Poor agricultural practices and years of sustained drought caused the Dust Bowl. Plains grasslands had been deeply plowed and planted with wheat. During the years when there was adequate rainfall, the land produced bountiful crops. But as the droughts of the early 1930s deepened, the farmers kept plowing and planting and nothing would grow. The ground cover that held the soil in place was gone. The Plains winds whipped across the fields raising billowing clouds of dust to the skies. The skies could darken for days, and even the most well sealed homes could have a thick layer of dust on furniture. In some places the dust would drift like snow, covering farmsteads.

The most visible evidence of how dry the 1930s became were the dust storms. Tons of topsoil were blown off barren fields and carried in storm clouds for hundreds of miles. Technically, the driest region of the plains was southeastern Colorado, southwest Kansas and the panhandles of Oklahoma and Texas. This area became known as the true Dust Bowl, and many dust storms started there. However, the entire region, and eventually the entire country, was affected.

In the fall, of 1939 the rains came, finally bringing an end to the drought. During the next few years, with the coming of World War II, the country was pulled out of the Depression and the plains once again become golden with wheat. ☺

Stratford, Texas 1935

A victim of the Dust Bowl

John's Jabber!

by John Icenhower

As I write this, it is between Christmas and New Years. Today it is bright and sunny but cold for us in Northeast Texas, in the high 20's, one of the first sunny days in a while. By the time you read this, it will be a cold January for many and a hibernation time for many Model A's. I've seen the posted "Model A of the Day" on the MAFCA website and many of those have been out in the snow with one roadster pictured on a snowy road with the top down! While we don't have much snow here in this part of Texas, there are some fairly cold days for us. Nevertheless driving the Model A is fun on most any occasion.

If you have not sent in your renewal yet, please do so today! Vern needs to get you on the new roster and Tom needs you on the mailing list. If you have sold your Victoria and no longer wish to belong to the association, please let us know. So many times, a member sells their car and we have no idea what happened, only that they didn't respond to the renewal.

I hope you and your families have had a great holiday season and my wish for you is that your 2008 will be a safe and prosperous one.

Make your plans to be at the MAFCA/MARC National Meet in Dallas in June. That's it for this time. Take care and drive your Model A at every opportunity.

Vern Speaks!

by Vern Schwebke

The Victoria Association is truly international. Our over 250 members are in 6 foreign countries and 39 states. California has the most members with 48, followed by Texas with 23. There are 15 cities with 2 or more members, but San Antonio takes top honors with 4.

I recently contacted members by e-mail, asking if they had received their October issue. Of 178 e-mails sent, 14 members reported problems with the issue, either not getting a copy, or the copy being wrinkled, badly mangled, or shredded. If you ever have problems with your copy, please contact Tom Endy or me for a replacement.

More importantly, of the 178 e-mails sent out, over 30 were kicked back as "addressee unknown", "mail box unavailable", or "this user does not have a yahoo.com account". If there is no e-mail address, or the word BAD following your name on the second page of this issue, please send me an e-mail with your current e-mail address.

MAFCA Youth Restoration Award

by Charlie Viosca

2008 will be a great year for the Model A Youth Award. Not only are we presenting the youth of MAFCA awards but this is the first year for MARC youth to receive the awards also.

We have also added a "Give-Away- a Model A" to the program. We have two restorable Model A's to present to two lucky winners of the Give-Away program. This will be done at the 2008 Joint Meet in Dallas, TX.

All MAFCA and MARC youth are eligible to apply for the Restoration award as well as the Give-Away program. Better hurry though as the application deadline is May 15, 2008. All previous applicants to the Restoration Award are eligible to continue receiving the award as long as they have not reached the age of 22 or if they are still restoring their Model A. There are separate qualifications and applications for each award. To obtain the qualifications and applications, please contact Charlie Viosca phone 972-625-2922 or write 11084 Windjammer Dr., Frisco, TX 75034-9266.

e-mail charlie@restorationaward.com

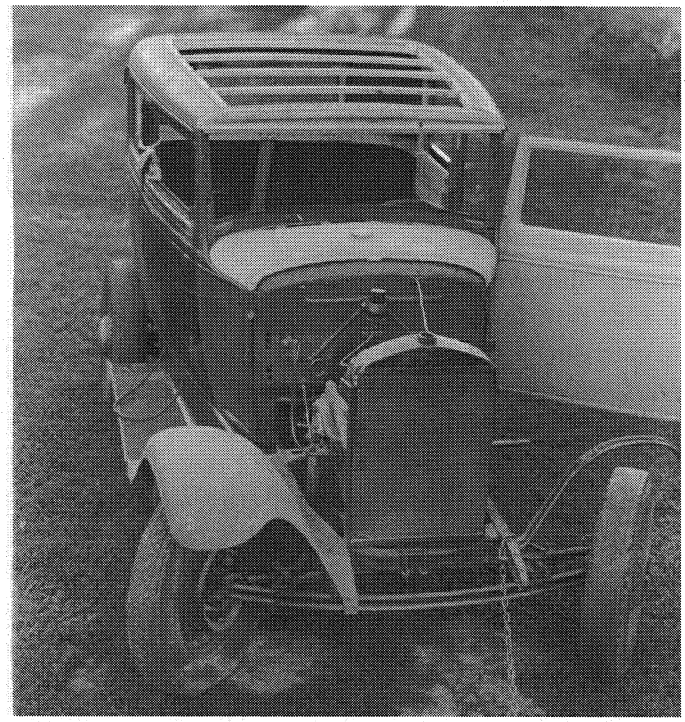
MARC\MAFCA National

The MARC\MAFCA National will be held in Dallas, Texas **June 22 – June 27, 2008**. The Victoria Association will have a table set up to sell raffle tickets for the Lake Tahoe home. We will also sell the maintenance handbooks to raise money for the scholarship program. We ask Association members to help man the table when they have free time like we did in Portland. **Charlie Viosca**

A Priceless Time

by David Ziegler

In my 1st year of college my father Leon Ziegler brought home an old car that caught my eye. It was a 31 Ford Victoria. Excited I told dad let's redo it NOW! Well some 22 months later it was done and on the road. The time I spent with my dad was priceless. I finished college, entered the adult world, and started my career. Dad continued to drive the Victoria to breakfast every Sunday. Then a young lady entered my life and before I knew it a family was started. Twin boys! Brad and Bryan grew up riding in several different Model T's and A's with their grandpa. As they grew up the old cars were just that to them. Old Cars! After they graduated from college their grandfather took ill. The Victoria sat idle in dad's garage for a few years. Their grandfather told them that the old Victoria was theirs. My boys tried in vain to get the Victoria running before dad passed away.



"The time I spent with my dad was priceless"

It was only a few days after dad passed away that they had the car running. Since then the twins have driven the car in a few parades and to several local car shows. Now after 37 years, after my father and I restored the car, my boys are taking on the job of restoring the Victoria again with some new modern updates (pressured oil system, harden valves, needle bearings installed in the steering, etc.). Seeing the Victoria apart in their garage brings back warm memories of a priceless time. However, it also tickles me to see some younger men take interest in old cars. I'll keep you all posted on their progress from time to time. ☺

The Victoria in 2006

Dad working on the Victoria in 1970

Younger men taking an interest in old cars

King Pin Geometry!

by Tom Endy

There are many articles written about how to install new king pins in a Model A Ford. However, unless you fully understand the geometry of the Model A front end, there may be an element of doubt concerning whether you did the job correctly. Since I did not understand the front-end geometry, I turned to Les Andrews for a proper explanation. Most of what is written here about the front-end geometry is a paraphrase of Les's explanation.

The weight of the body and frame in the front is resting on the center of the front spring where it is U-bolted to the frame. This weight is transferred out to each end of the front spring where the shackles attach it to the front axle. Therefore all the front-end weight is sitting on the front axle. This full weight is transferred to the king pins. To test the theory, slip a king pin into one end of the axle, without the spindle installed, and install the locking bolt, the king pin is now an integral part of the axle. It is easy to see that the weight of the axle will now be applied to the bottom side of the king pin flange. The king pin is locked in place in the axle and does not rotate.

Directly under the king pin flange a thrust bearing will be installed. The weight will now be on the thrust bearing and it will sit on top of the top surface of the spindle when it is installed. When the wheel is on the car and it is sitting on the ground the front-end weight is pressing down on the thrust bearing and against the top surface of the spindle. The spindle will rotate on the thrust bearing around the stationary king pin.

One would think all you had to do was put the parts together and you're good to go. Unfortunately reproduction parts and 75 plus years of wear enter into the equation. The thrust bearings available today (Timken part number T-83) are not as thick as were the originals (Ford part number A-3123), therefore shims are required for proper fit. The repo dust cover retainers supplied today are incorrectly made and will interfere with the installation. Wear to the mating surfaces of the axle and spindles are also a factor. All these variables must be taken into consideration when installing new king pins.

When installing new king pins the first effort should be to determine how many shims are needed under the thrust bearing. To do this install the king pin, the thrust bearing, and the spindle. Leave the dust seal off. Lock the king pin to the axle with the locking nut and bolt. Rotate the spindle and see how freely it rotates. Note any up and down movement. You will probably have up and down movement so add one or two shims. Check it again. Add shims until the spindle seems to be binding and not turning freely. Remove a shim if that is the case.

The shims will take up the free space that is between the bottom of the thrust bearing and the spindle. This free space is created by the lack of proper thickness of the thrust bearing and any wear that has occurred on the mating surfaces of the axle and the spindle.

Bratton's Antique Auto claims to stock a repo metal dust cover that is made to the original Ford drawing. That may be the case, but it still may not fit properly due to wear to the axle or spindle surfaces. Les Andrews says to leave them out completely. If you are a purest you may not want to do that.

My advice is to go ahead and try to install them. If they interfere, remove them and grind the lip down a little bit.

When you think you have the proper amount of shims installed and you think the dust cover is not interfering, there is a way to test it. With the car still sitting on jack stands, place a floor jack under the end of the spindle near the threaded end and run the jack up to put pressure on spindle. This will simulate the wheel being installed and the car sitting on the ground. With your fingers try to rotate the thrust bearing. You <u>should not</u> be able to move it. Do the same with the dust cover; you <u>should</u> be able to rotate it.

Correct installation of king pins, along with correct adjustment of the front wheel bearings is essential to safe proper steering. ☺

Lola 6

by Frank Knapp

The name "Lola" was given to my Model A's by my wife when I built my first Town Sedan for show. When I asked her why she chose that name she replied, "have your ever heard the song "Whatever Lola Wants, Lola Gets"? Somehow I just couldn't argue with that!

When it comes to the Model A Ford, I have always been a purist! Over the past seventeen years I have bought, sold, restored over a dozen Model A's and every A, with the exception of my Speedster (Lola 3), had to be "just as Henry built it". I have judged Model A's from Greenville, S.C. to Hershey, PA at various AACA events, not to mention several National MARC and MAFCA meets along the way. Somehow, I always wanted the full experience from my antique cars including all of the shakes, rattles and vibrations the original drivers had to deal with on a regular basis. My opinion had always been, if I want a more comfortable ride, I'd take my modern car

On the other hand, after listening for many years to other owners bragging about the many modifications they had made to improve power and comfort, I decided it was time for me to give a few of them a try. So, in order to preserve my "purist" reputation, I set out to build ONE car with ALL the improvements and hopefully end up with the ultimate touring Model A. "Lola 6" is the result of that decision and it is quite interesting how different this A is when compared to all of my other originals!

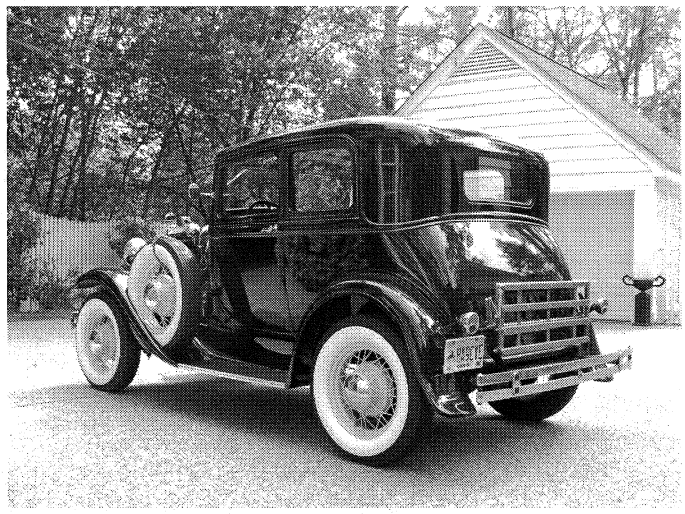
"Lola 6" is a 1931 Model A Ford Victoria Steelback that was literally built from "scratch"! The body and doors are the only parts that were from a single car! All other parts from the frame up were acquired during many trips to Hershey and other swap meets. Due to several other Model A projects I had going on at the time, this restoration took several years to complete but to me it was well worth the wait.

Now, here are the modifications. "Lola 6" is powered by a rebuilt "B" Engine with a V-8 clutch and pressure plate. It has been converted to a 12-volt system with an alternator to support the Halogen headlights, turn signals and the in-line fuel shut-off valve installed due to the indented firewall.

Vibrations were reduced by a set of Float-A-Motor mounts and it runs quietly thanks to a new Aires muffler. A very stable and comfortable ride is accomplished by a set of modern shocks and 17" tires and wheels. Finally, I now have a Model A with a heater. That's a first for me!

I'm looking forward to enjoying all of the "creature comforts" my new Vicky has to offer, but I will always prefer "Henry's Ladies" being restored as close to original as possible.

Now I'm wondering if "Lola 6" wants Air Conditioning! We'll see!



Lola 6

California DMV

There are numerous Model A hobbyist in California who own pick up trucks that have been required to register them as a commercial vehicle, and at a higher fee. This is not a requirement since pre-1937 vehicles are exempt. However, many DMV offices are ignorant of that fact. The following statement was found on the "fordbarn" web site forum.

Pre-1937 truck fees in California:

by Charlie Stephens

During the mid seventies California changed its vehicle code to require all vehicles originally registered as commercial to pay a weight fee based on the weight of the vehicle. The following year they revised the law to exclude "Pre-1937 Year Model Vehicles". Most DMV (and Auto Club) people are not aware of this exemption since initial registration of pre-1937 vehicle is not done very often. This exemption is documented **in section "9401, Paragraph a" of the "State of California, 2002 Vehicle Code".** The vehicle code is available at most public libraries. Much to my surprise my local Auto Club did not have a copy but I assume that the each DMV office would have a copy. If you see a pre-1937 vehicle with commercial plates there is a good chance they are paying a weight fee and would appreciate your telling them about this exemption. **"Paragraph b"** of this section allow you to purchase commercial plates and pay the weight fee if you so desire. I assume this is included so people using a pre-1937 commercial vehicle in their business can take advantage of the parking privileges that go with commercial plates. ☺

Pre-1937 trucks don't require commercial plates

California Girls!

A number of years ago

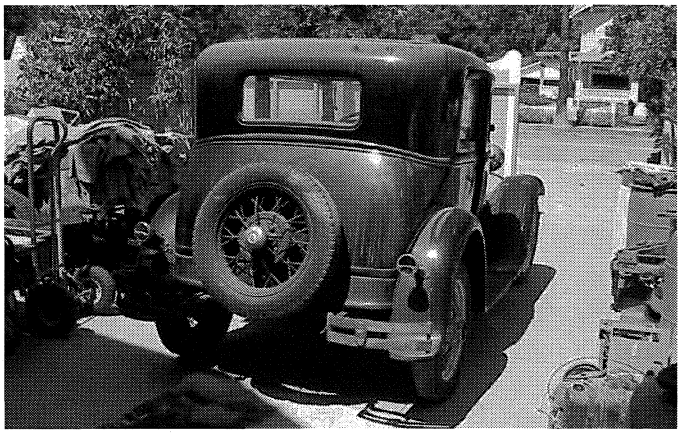
A few years later

A few more years later

Victoria Revival

by Wayne Wiedle

As a young boy I was always interested in cars. Growing up in the early 1950's, I could identify the make of a car by hearing it pass, without seeing the car. In those days, each car had a distinctive sound. I joined the Palomar A Chapter of MAFCA in 1983, when I purchased my first Model A Ford. Later, when I moved to Orange County, I joined the Orange County MAFC of Southern California. As I began my retirement a year ago, I had no idea that I would have an opportunity to restore a 1931 Model A Ford Victoria. In October 2007, it was my good fortune to acquire the original Victoria Steelback (advertised in "The Victoria Bustle") formerly owned by the late Jim Eliot. The Victoria had been dormant for decades. Tom Endy helped make me aware of this diamond in the rough and he has shared his time, talent, and knowledge with me on this project. I owe him a great debt of gratitude.



Jim Eliot's original Victoria prior to sale

I purchased the Victoria on October 10th 2007 and moved it to my second home in Idyllwild California, where I have room to work on it. I started removing, inventorying, and restoring parts with guidance, advice, and help from Tom Endy.

When the Victoria was acquired the engine would not turn over and some parts are missing from the car. However, most all parts found on the car are original. The front seats still have the original upholstery, but the door panels, armrests, and headliner are covered with black vinyl. The inside window molding, the hood latches and the engine water pipe had been chromed plated at some point.

The left rear fender is not Victoria, but a separate original Victoria left rear fender was included with the purchase. The original straight fin radiator core was beyond repair and is presently being re-cored.

Some modifications going into the car are an F100 steering box, a Mitchell synchromesh transmission, a Mitchell overdrive, and replacement cast iron brake drums on the rear. One "Rocky Mountain" (four spoke cast iron) drum was found on the right front in near new condition. I was able to find a matching one for the left front. The entire mechanical brake system will be restored.

I plan to work on the mechanicals first and then concentrate on the body, paint, chrome, and interior. I have removed the seats, dropped floor pan, wheels and drums, and everything forward of the gas tank, except front fenders, front bumper and front axle. Many small parts, including the distributor, Zenith carburetor, and the ahooguh horn have already been restored and are sitting on the shelf ready for installation.

My next step is to remove the engine and transmission as a unit. Then I'll remove the front axle and wishbone as a unit. I'll restore and replace those parts and then I'll remove the rear end and drive shaft for restoration and installation of the overdrive.

I have become a member of the Victoria Association and I am very excited about this project and I know I will enjoy every minute of it. ☺

Wayne & Martie Wiedle with the Victoria

The Ammeter!

by Tom Endy

The ammeter in a Model A Ford can be a very useful tool in a variety of situations that will signal to the driver the car's electrical status.

Whenever you park a Model A and are about to exit the car, glance at the ammeter, the needle should be pointing to zero. If instead it is pointing slightly to the left it is telling you that somewhere within the car there is some unauthorized current flowing that is going to drain the battery if you leave it that way long enough.

The cause may be the headlight or dome light switch is turned on. It is also possible the contacts in the generator cutout switch have stuck closed. Another possibility is the brake light switch is closed due to a weak spring in the switch. What ever is the cause you will become aware of it and can immediately address the problem instead of returning to find a dead battery.

When you first climb into the car to go for a drive before starting the engine press your foot on the brake pedal while observing the ammeter. The needle should deflect to the left. This is telling you that your brake light switch works and at least one of the bulbs is not burned out.

When you start the engine and rev it up past idle the ammeter should deflect some distance to the right. This is telling you the generator has taken over the car's electrical load and is also supplying charging current to the battery. If the needle stays at zero or deflects to the left it is telling you the generator is not working.

The ammeter can also be used as a gauge to set the generator output. This is accomplished by moving the third brush in the generator. Moving the brush changes the generator output voltage level and will determine the amount of charging current that flows to the battery. The procedure is to have the engine running at an rpm higher than idle with everything accept the ignition turned off. The generator is then adjusted for a nominal 8-amp output as registered on the right side of the ammeter.

Eight amps is considered nominal, but you can set it for whatever value suits your driving needs.

In 1929 Ford moved the black primary wire that runs to the ignition coil from the passenger side terminal of the junction box on the firewall to the driver's side terminal (reference service bulletin page 390, November 1929). The purpose of this change is to have the ignition current pass through the ammeter to provide a diagnostic tool when starting the engine. If for some reason the car refuses to start while cranking it over, observe the ammeter. The needle should be alternately moving from left to right past the zero mark. This is being caused by the ignition points opening and closing and it is telling you the ignition primary circuit is working correctly and the problem is elsewhere.

If you have replaced the generator with a modern alternator, which has a regulator, the ammeter will tell you a number of things. When you first start the car up and are rolling down the road the ammeter will more than likely be far to the right side of the zero mark. This is telling you the regulator in the alternator has determined that the battery needs significant charging to replace the power that was used by the starter to start the engine. After some period of time the needle will pull back to zero as the battery regains its full charge. If the needle remains far to the right for an excessive period of time it may be telling you that you may have a defect in the battery, such as a dead cell.

On a long trip the ammeter needle should be sitting on zero indicating that the battery is fully charged. However, it may also be an indication that the alternator is not working. An easy check is to momentarily turn the headlights on. If the alternator is working properly it will immediately pick up the additional load. You may see the ammeter needle flicker slightly, but it should remain on zero. This tells you the alternator is working. If the needle deflects to the right significantly and stays there it is telling you the alternator is not working and the battery has picked up the additional load.

The ammeter is a great tool. The more you pay attention to it the more you can determine what is going on with the electrical system. ☺

A Unique Seminar!

by Tom Endy

A couple years ago I was technical director of my local Model A club. During my tenure I came up with an idea for a unique seminar that I would like to pass along for those who might want to duplicate the effort.

I had accumulated about 20 or so transmission towers. I am convinced that they have the ability to multiply when left sitting around. Over a period of time I took them all apart, degreased, bead blasted, and painted the housings. I also bead blasted all the salvaged shifting forks. I asked two club members who are experienced welders to weld up the worn areas in the fork slots. They agreed to take on the task and I divided the work between them. I then asked another club member who has a mill in his garage if he would mill out the welded areas of the forks. He agreed and we located a fork that had little or no wear so that he could set his mill up correctly. While all this was going on I also bead blasted all of Henry's killer springs and retainers I had removed from the towers.

When all the work was finished I announced the plan for a seminar at a club meeting. The idea was for club members to bring their towers to the seminar. We would exchange their tower housing, the two forks, and the killer spring for a set that had been refurbished. Prior to the seminar each participant had to determine what he wanted to do about other tower hardware that may be worn. They could purchase new reproduction shift rails along with the two bullets and the small spring, or they could go with what they found in their tower when it was disassemble, or they could root through the junk box I put all the hardware in I had collected from the towers I had taken apart.

They would also have to determine what they wanted to do about the shift lever that more than likely had the ball on the end worn square. They could purchase a new reproduction shift lever, or go with what they found in their tower when they disassembled it. Another option was that the two welders would be on hand at the seminar to weld up the levers as they came out of the towers. Each person would then have to grind or file his lever to the proper .490 round dimension.

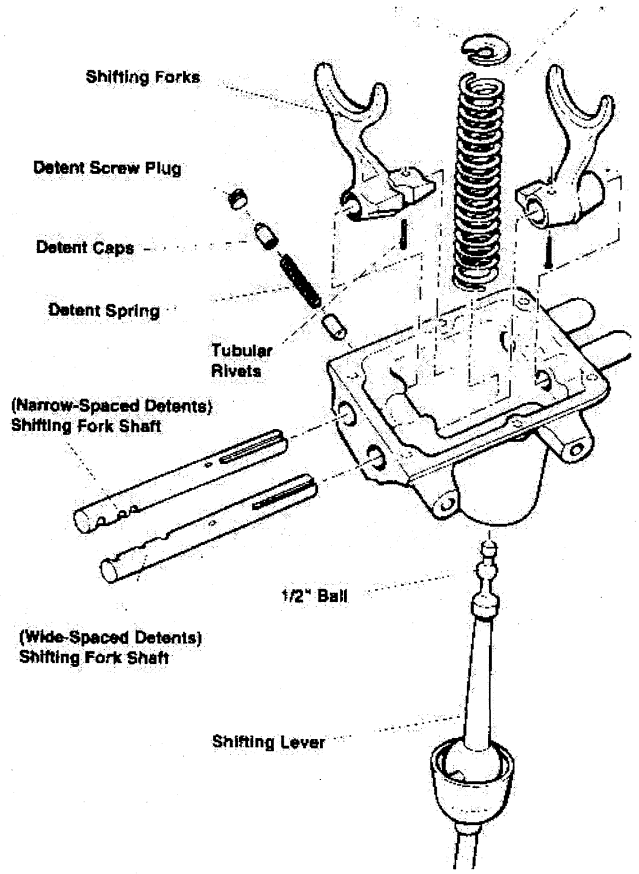
On the day of the seminar club members showed up either driving their Model A or with a tower or two in hand. We set up an assembly line for disassembly and another for assembly. I had several killer spring compression tools available for use.

I salvaged all the fork locking pins and along with my own accumulation we were able to straighten and grind the ends of enough for suitable reuse.

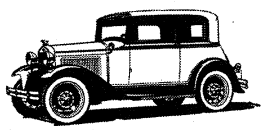
I had enough assorted towers that we were able accommodate the exchange needs for both the early and late tower styles.

At the end of the seminar we had restored about 15 towers. The dirty greasy rusty exchanged towers are now sitting around at my house and I am convinced they have since begun multiplying.

It was a very worthwhile seminar. It was interesting how severely worn many of the towers were when we got them apart. Our club (the Orange County Model A Ford Club of Southern California) is now probably the best shifting club in the country. ☺



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 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



International Model A Ford Victoria Association

Tom Endy - Editor
5881 Iroquois Rd.
Westminster, CA 92683

First Class Mail