
T TIMES

Volume 33, Issue 1

January 2013

Letter from the Editor

Time for a new year to begin! And a new year to Model T enthusiasts means looking forward to another year of working on and driving our wonderful little cars. The last couple of meetings we have heard reports of work in the shops of some of the members. On the MTFCA internet forum it is often advised to new members to make that first T a driver. After a 15 year restoration on my first car, I can really attest to that advice. Also advised is to have room in the stable because this promiscuous little auto's multiply at an amazing rate. Before you know it, there hardly seems to be enough room left to work on them. Take for example my own experience. We only had one T for almost 20 years, but once a speedster materialized from the accumulated collection of parts out back, they just started multiplying before our eyes. Next thing I knew, there was a 1926 Canadian Fordor and now a collection of parts begging to become a 1912 with

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"T-Times" is the publication of the Three Rivers Model T Ford Club and is published monthly solely for its members and exchange with other antique automobile groups. Editorial copy and advertisements should be sent to: Editor, 218 NE A Street, College Place, WA 99324 by the 25th of the month for inclusion in the next month's issue. Email: dpeters0258@gmail.com

The Three Rivers Model T Ford Club is a chapter of the Model T Ford Club of America. Membership is recommended and encouraged. Make membership requests to: MTFCA, P.O. Box 126, Centerville, IN 47330. Annual local club dues are \$20. Monthly meetings are held the third Thursday of the month, places to be announced in the newsletter prior.

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2013 Officers

Club President Larry Coder
m.coder@hotmail.com
Vice President Jim Elenbaas
Treasurer Mike Porter
Secretary Dale Peterson

Newsletter Editor Dale Peterson
dpeters0258@gmail.com

Board Members

1 Year -- Fred Fraser
2 Year -- Jim Elenbaas
3 Year -- Gary Ellingson

Hercules aftermarket tourabout body. That body found its way to my shop All the way from Illinois and the block all the way from Massachusetts. Parts have found their way from other places like Walla Walla (the parts from Bill Betts, that devil, started this one) and Bakersfield.

Sharon has accused me of having a disease on more than one occasion and an addiction on others. Maybe she has an argument here since I just cannot keep away from those piles of tin, transforming into drivable mechanical wonders! But even more enjoyable, is the chance to get out and drive these cars. Anyone that has driven one can relate here. Just owning one of these cars just doesn't satisfy.

Now, I remember where this note was going—tours this year! Already we are hearing of our choices in the next nine months. Jim mentioned an interest in the National Tour with the Hillbillies in Missouri. Bill spoke of interest in returning to the Montana 500. Just recently I heard of the CanAm tour in Vancouver that is of interest to me. The Bakersfield Swap Meet is again in April and I recently read that it is one of the better west coast swap meets (for sure better than Portland has become). One thing about this one is that they include a tour in the weekend.

Talking to Jim Peterson from the Spokane club, we discussed the possibility of a joint tour, maybe Palouse Falls for Father's Day. Come to our meeting with your ideas and let's try to keep each other up on our options and opportunities during this coming year.

New Members

Dave and Dagmar Rose

Richland, WA

528-8593

Email: DRose50@hotmail.com

Model T's

1922 Touring (PR)

1920 Touring (PR)

Birthdays in January

Faye Barnes 1/8

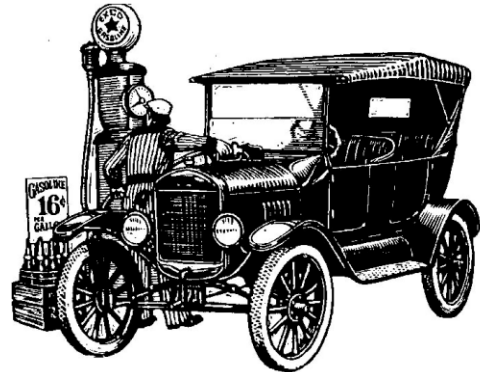
Wayne Williams 1/18

Marlene Coder 1/19

Mary Fraser 1/22

Phyllis Langdon 1/24

No Anniversaries in January



Coming Events

January 17

Monthly Meeting at Round Table Pizza, 3300 West Clearwater Ave., Kennewick. 6:00 PM

February 21

Annual Officer Installation Banquet, location and time TBA

March 21

Monthly Meeting at Round Table Pizza

Me and the Model T

By Bill Sheller

The Knock

Once I got Henry home and started to get to know him, my Model T education grew with leaps and bounds. I still wasn't real comfortable driving the T in traffic, but my former panic stages were certainly easing. Every time I would go for a little spin I would remind myself that I was driving a Model T Ford. I carefully trained myself to pull the emergency brake handle half way back to get me into neutral long before I had to come to a stop or when I was in stop and go traffic. That way when I took my left foot off the low pedal, instead of slamming into high gear it simply returns to neutral. I routinely drive a Model T Ford that way to this day. The more I drove the Model T the more confident I became with its operation. After many drives, I learned to relax and just be completely amazed at this 80 year old machine. To this day I am unable to take Henry out without mentioning to myself ... what an amazing car! Of all the cars I've owned in my life, this Model T Ford is ... hands down...my absolute favorite.

The knock was noticeable almost from the time I brought Henry home. It wasn't a bang, bang, bang sort of sound, but rather a thud, thud, thud. I consulted with Model T friends who had a great deal more experience than I. Model T folks are usually pretty eager to lend a hand and counseled me with sound advice. I went through shorting out one spark plug at a time to try and locate the offending cylinder with not much success. Does it knock when accelerating or decelerating? Perhaps there was a carbon buildup on the pistons and inside the combustion chamber. All the Model T books concerning trouble shooting engine knocks suggested this as a possible solution. Since the car had sat for several years and no one knew its real history, it was time to pull the head and have a look. With the cylinder head removed several things were revealed to me. For one there was no carbon build up just some black soot that was

easily wiped away with a rag. This revealed standard size cast iron pistons. There wasn't any sort of ridge or scoring on the cylinder walls. The cylinder head was reinstalled and the engine started up. I have been working on mechanical things just about my entire adult life, starting at age 15 when I got my first car. When trouble shooting a problem on an automobile, well ... when you discover the problem, it's obvious. So far ... nothing! Once I had Henry running again, I was not at all surprised to hear ... thud, thud, thud!

I had exhausted all possibilities while the engine was still installed, so now it was time for much more drastic measures. The engine and transmission had to be removed and taken apart until the source of the knock could be found. I have to admit I felt just a little "snookered" by the fellow who sold me the sedan. But then again, he had never driven the car, so he would have no knowledge of the knock. One of the things I've come to understand about owning antique cars is that once you get over the initial investment ... why then it's yours to keep. I used to fret about some catastrophic failure happening to the cars. The reality of ownership is that anything short of total destruction of the car can be fixed. When you drive a Model T Ford, because it's such a simple machine, it can be repaired on the side of the road under almost all breakdown conditions. Just about the only failure that will require a trailer to haul you home and absolutely stop the fun (temporarily) is a broken axle or a broken crankshaft. It takes a while at Model T'ing to figure that out. If the T breaks down, well...don't fret about it...just fix it and move on.

So, Henry was due for major work. Removing an engine/transmission from a modern car is very labor intensive. However doing the same with a Model T Ford is really quite simple and although it's more fun to do with a Model T friend, it can be accomplished all by yourself. I had already had some experience with Model T engine remove and replace, because of the Sheller Motor Company replica TT. Working by myself, in no time at all the engine and transmission were being

bolted to the engine stand. I already knew what wasn't causing the knock, so I started by removing the oil pan for an inspection of the "bottom end". The rod caps were pulled and inspected and even plasti-gauged. The bearings looked fine and the journals were ok as well. I removed the head again and pulled the pistons looking for any source of the knock... nothing! I was down to the basic block with only the cam shaft and valves and the crankshaft remaining. When I removed the main bearing caps, **well** ... my thud, thud, thud was before my eyes. The caps had no poured bearing surface adhered to them. Instead the Babbitt bearings remained clinging to the crankshaft journals. When I removed the crankshaft from the block the bearings stayed stuck to the journals. Once I had the bearings in my hand, they were paper thin and had pin holes you could see through. I kept them on display in my house for years. They were great conversation pieces. I still have them but they are out in the barn with some of my other Model T treasures.

Now that I knew why Henry knocked, it was time for a complete engine and transmission rebuild. Since the engine uses poured Babbitt type bearings I took the engine to Rick Carnegie in Spokane, Washington for bearings, engine bore, and whatever other machine work it might require. The transmission was taken to Ford-n-More in Spokane for rebuilding. After all the bearing and machine work was finished I did the actual assembly of the engine myself. It was fitted with a new cam shaft and bearings, new timing gears, new aluminum pistons, new stainless steel valves and adjustable lifters and hardened valve seats just for good measure. The hardened valve seats are usually installed on an engine which used to run on gasoline with lead in it, which is no longer

available. They really are not needed on a Model T as lead wasn't added to gasoline until the late 30's when compression ratio's started to increase. But while it's apart is the best time to do it, and... they surely do no harm. After I had the engine and transmission carefully assembled, I decided to go with a single source ignition system instead of the four individual ignition coils standard on a Model T. In other words I installed a new modern distributor. To cap off my brand new Model T Ford Fordor Sedan, I treated Henry to a brand new Brass Works radiator.

That mechanical restoration was completed in 1998. Henry hasn't missed a beat since! He is the absolutely reliable, take you there and bring you home, Model T Ford Roscoe used to tell me about!

Henry built a darn good car ... Yes he did!

Author's note; Since this article was written Henry missed every beat in 2011 ... as we all know!



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