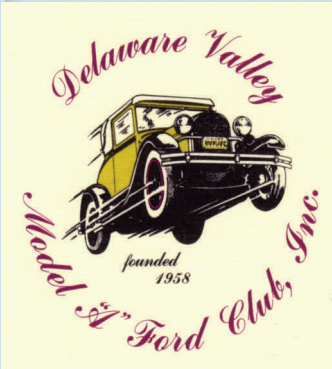




# THE KLAXON

May 2012



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The newsletter of the

## Delaware Valley Model A Ford Club, Inc.

**Who are we:**

**The Klaxon is the monthly newsletter of the Delaware Valley Model "A" Ford Club, Inc. and is circulated to all club members and other interested clubs. The club meets on the first Thursday of each month at 7:30pm at Daley's Service Center, 2749 Bristol Pike, Bensalem, PA 19020.**

**If you wish to contribute articles for publication in the Klaxon please do so by submitting them to the editor Steve Organ. Other pertinent information can be obtained from the officers.**

**Technical and historical questions are encouraged and we'll do our best to get the answers. Questions can be submitted via**

**E-Mail at: [Sorgan@themaxwellgroup.org](mailto:Sorgan@themaxwellgroup.org).**

### Club Officers

<b>President – Stace Leichliter</b>	<b>215-962-9480</b>
<b>Vice President – Jim Maier</b>	<b>267-918-2078</b>
<b>Secretary – Don Fortune</b>	<b>215-698-1256</b>
<b>Treasurer – Don O'Hara</b>	<b>215-338-6368</b>
<b>Editor - Steve Organ</b>	<b>215-840-1259</b>
<b>National Director – Mike Etling</b>	<b>610-505-4504</b>
<b>Activities/Parades – Ted Etling</b>	<b>215-802-8622</b>

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**Greetings:**

We had a nice turn out for our April meeting. There were about forty members present, and Billy Long cooked up some mighty fine dogs. We also had a new member join our club. Her name is Shelly Rosen and she has a 1928 Roadster. Welcome! Members, we're always looking for tech topics or movie ideas. If you think of something bring it to our meeting. And we always need creative ideas for club activities, so let's start thinking of things to do. Summer will be here before you know it. In May we should start to bring our cars to the meetings. Please try to get business card ads for our newsletter. Everyone should try for at least one.

**Please support our advertisers because they pay for this newsletter.**

**See you all on May 3rd.**

**Up Coming Events**

**5/3/2012—Monthly Meeting at Daley's Service Center**

**Please see enclosed listing for more events**

**Get Well Wishes**

**Jay Fissel, Tom Boles' Brother Joe, Mary Jane Creelman, Lou Pfeiffer's Daughter Monica Remer and Charles Simon, Carol Boles**

**GET WELL SOON**

**Happy Birthday for March**

**If we missed your birthday please let the editor know**

Joe Weldon	3
Larry Klopfenstein	5
Carol Ann Boles	6
Mike Etling	12
David Renninger	24
Maureen Kress-King	24
Carl Pfeiffer	26
Barbara Zampirri	29
Bob Kehan	30
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**Stace**

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## The end of the line arrives for Mexico City's once-ubiquitous VW Beetle taxis

(Editors Note— Some club members know I have been involved with London Taxis for a while now. About 250 London Taxis have been on trial in Mexico City for over a year now—more about those later, Steve)

Mexico City is famous for many things; traffic being one of the most notorious attributes of the largest city in the western hemisphere. Boasting an official population greater than 20,000,000 people, Mexico City has a public taxi fleet encompassing more than 130,000 cars, very likely the largest in the world. Just a few years ago, around half of those taxis were Volkswagen Type 1s, the classic Beetle that remained in production in Puebla, Mexico, until 2003. But that run as a taxi comes to an end in 2012 as the city's director of taxi services has declared that the car "has concluded its useful life."

An unlikely car for carrying paying passengers, the *Vocho*, as it's known in Mexico, has proven rugged and durable, with its simple maintenance a boon for owners and drivers, since it was officially adopted as an economical taxi in 1970. No surprise there. But Mexico City also has a terrible problem with pollution and among the laws on the books is one that requires taxis to be no more than eight years old. The air-cooled Bug may have been good on gas, but it's never been a truly clean-running engine in terms of emissions.

The most recent Beetle taxis date from 2002 and were given a two-year extension to that eight-year rule, but that will expire at the end of 2012. The authorities also require that new taxis have four doors, another rule that the *Vocho* was exempted from. Quoted from a television interview, Victor Ramirez, the director of taxi services in the city's transportation office, said, "The new norm establishes that the useful life of a public taxi is 10 years and [all taxis] must have four doors and a proper trunk," two qualities sorely lacking in the Beetle.



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With only approximately 3,500 Type 1s left in search of fares, the number of cars affected has grown quite small, but expiration of the exemption marks yet another milestone in the incredible saga of the Volkswagen Sedan that started in the 1930s as a grand plan for Hitler's Germany to produce a car that everyone could afford. After Beetle production started in Mexico in the 1950s, the country quickly adopted the car as if it were its own. Beetles were put into service not only as taxicabs, but also police cars with lights on the roof, olive drab military vehicles and as utility vehicles by just about any entity that needed to move people around.

For years, the taxis roaming the streets of the most urban parts of Mexico City were painted yellow, but that changed to green with a white roof in the early 1990s in a literal green washing by authorities. Today, the public taxis are red and gold, though I suspect most people will remember the *Vocho* taxis in the green or yellow livery. In addition to the public fleet, there are tens of thousands more private taxis throughout the city that are run from permanent taxi stands, called *sitios*, which long ago updated their cars.

Of course, for passengers, the compact two-door Beetle could never be confused with luxury transportation. Taxi owners remove the front passenger seat for better egress to the rear row. There are probably some restrictions on the books regarding the number of people allowed in a taxi, but the locals will jam in as many people as possible, particularly kids, with six or more people – plus the driver – a not uncommon sight.

Most public taxis today are much more modern Renault-Based Nissan Platina or the second or third generation Nissan Sentra, known as the Tsuru in Mexico and – amazingly – still manufactured there even though that latter model was phased out in the late 1990s here in the United States. Well, I guess it's not that amazing when you consider that the Beetle was made from the 1930s through the early 2000s.

While Mexico City is moving on, the sheer volume of Type 1 VW sedans in Mexico means that it will be a long time before the smaller cities and towns see the last of their Beetle taxis.

CHRIS  
SILQUINI  
OPTICIAN



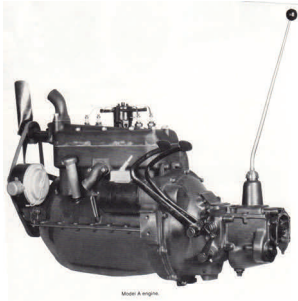
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## Ford Facts

### Model A Engine and Transmission Finish

The color of the Model "A" engine and the finish on its many parts is still a matter of question among many Model "A" restorers. Unlike today's automobiles, the color and general appearance of the Model "A" engine compartment was not determined by the styling people. During the Model "A" production, engine painting and finish was dictated by the manufacturing methods and expediencies at the Rouge Plant, where all Model "A" engines were made. Some parts had more than one possible finish, depending on the source of supply and cost variance brought about by continual technical development. To understand what was done in building the Model "A" engine we must learn something of how and why.

The following information was compiled from historical documents in the Ford archives, engineering specifications, and interviews with retired key Ford personnel who worked at the Rouge Plant during Model "A" production.

During the Model "A" period, the Rouge foundry and the engine machine shop were side by side in the same building. The engine assembly building and the machine shop were divided by the Rouge offices, but were connected by a "high-line" conveyor system which went through the paint department on the second floor of the Rouge offices. In sequence, then, the castings went from the foundry to the machine shop, through the paint department, and then to the engine assembly building. Thus the engine castings were painted after machining but before assembling.

Before leaving the machine shop, all castings were washed in a special cleaning solution to remove every trace of oil or grease. The parts were then transported by a conveyor to the paint department, where they were sprayed with Ford engine green enamel. This color varied slightly from time to time because leftover paint from other operations occasionally was dumped into this color. To keep some machined surfaces free of paint, such as the top of the block and the valve chamber, a Snap-On cover was installed. At the end of the painting operation, a workman removed these covers and at the same time wiped off any over-spray with a thinner-soaked rag.

The finish easiest to establish is that of cast parts. All castings exposed to view on the engine and transmission were painted Ford engine green after machining but before assembling. This included the block, head, valve chamber cover, front cover, timing gear cover, water pump housing, water outlet, water inlet, crankshaft pulley, intake manifold, flywheel housing, clutch housing, pedal shaft collar, transmission case, gear shift housing, and the engine half of the universal joint housing. It did not include the axle half of the universal joint housing, electrical castings such as distributor, starter, generator, and the carburettor. At first the exhaust manifold was also painted but this practice was soon abandoned since most of the paint burned off as the cars were driven off the assembly line. The castings were painted in the rough with no attempt made to smooth them. Gaskets which were visible between parts were not painted.

All steel stampings, forgings, and large tubing were painted with black japan enamel, usually by dipping. Included were the engine oil pan, splash pans, clutch housing hole cover, flywheel housing shield, brake pedal, clutch pedal and links, radiator outlet pipe, oil return pipe, oil filler tube, fan assembly, accelerator assembly, wire clips and miscellaneous small steel parts. Many of these parts were produced at other Ford manufacturing plants or were bought on contract from other manufacturers. The major electrical components such as generator, generator pulley, starter, coil, and distributor were finished in black enamel. Some of the "powerhouse" generators had an aluminum end cover which was unpainted; usually this end cover was made of steel and was painted black. The generator cut-out was cadmium plated as was the starter switch, although the latter was occasionally painted black on early engines.

Miscellaneous parts came in a variety of finishes. The oil filler cap was supplied four ways: unfinished, painted black, zinc, or cadmium plated. The starter push rod. Spark and throttle linkage rods were either zinc or cadmium plated, while the oil level dipstick was zinc, cadmium plated, or unfinished. Fuel and vacuum lines were at first brass tubing; soon these were made of "wrap-around" steel tubing, tern plated (a lead-tin hot dip) and supplied with brass fittings.

The spark plugs, which were supplied by Champion, were normally finished in blued steel but in some cases were cadmium plated. The sparkplug connectors were made either of type "A" bronze or brass. Brass was also used for the drain cock on the lower radiator water pipe and for the grease fitting at the rear of the water pump; the front Zerk fitting was cadmium plated. The water pump packing nut was brass on the 1928-29 engines, and zinc plated steel on the 1930-31 engines. During the transition period of late 1929 and early 1930, brass and steel packing nuts were used indiscriminately until all the brass nuts were gone. Radiator hose clamps were zinc plated and hoses were black. The two transmission plugs were unfinished as was the oil pan plug; the latter was sometimes given a raven finish, but never painted.

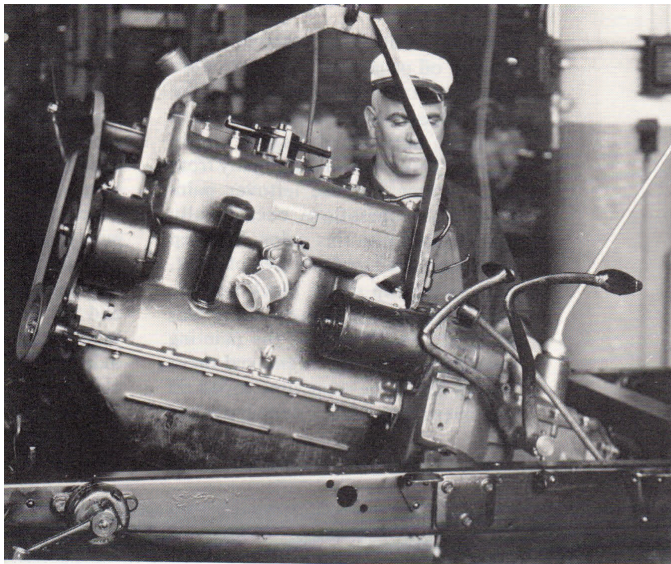
As already mentioned the carburetor body was finished in gasoline-resistant black enamel. The main body bolt was cadmium plated while the fuel adjusting rod and locking sleeve was variously painted black, zinc plated, or cadmium plated. The choke rod was cadmium plated, but the knob was cast aluminum and polished. On early carburetors the exterior fittings (throttle lever, choke lever, fuel adjustment needle drive, etc.) were brass and later changed to zinc or cadmium plated

All studs used for the cylinder head, water pump, and manifolds were unfinished steel while their nuts were zinc or cadmium plated steel. The timing pin and all bolts of the timing gear cover, front cover, and valve chamber were raven finished; this was a black phosphate and oil coating which provided some degree of rust-proofing. A good rule for the engine is plated nuts and black bolts. Oil pan. Flywheel housing, and transmission bolts were either zinc, cadmium, or raven finished. Lock washers were raven finished, unfinished, or cadmium plated, depending on the supplier. The muffler clamp and muffler were left unpainted.

The muffler clamp bolts were either raven finished or unfinished and fitted with brass nuts.

During peak assembly volume in 1929, the capacity of the Rouge Plant was exceeded and, consequently, some small castings such as water outlet, water inlet, and water pump housing, were made by contract suppliers. These parts, made outside the Ford Company, were painted black and were intended as replacement parts for dealer stocks; it is possible that some of these parts were also used on the assembly lines when occasions demanded. However, to avoid controversy, it is recommended that these items be painted engine color.

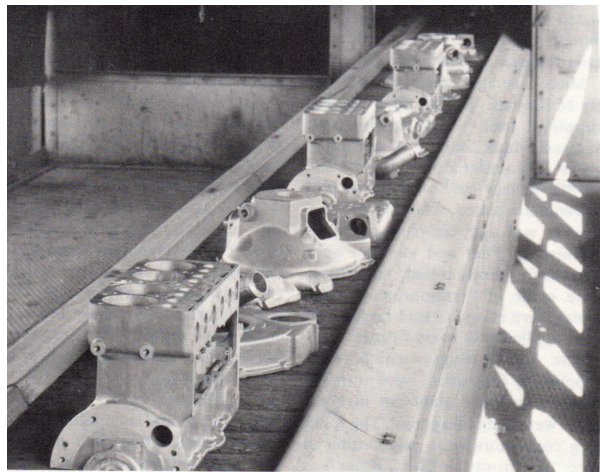
(Reprinted from ANTIQUE AUTOMOBILE)



assembly being lowered onto a chassis. Note that the block was not very smooth and there was dirt on the frame.

**Some Useful Information**

- Point Gap .....018" - 0.22"
- Plug Gap.....035"
- Tire Pressure ..... 35lbs
- Oil Capacity ..... 5qts
- Transmission .....1 pint
- Rear Axle .....1 1/2 pints
- Steering Gear .....7 3/4 oz.
- Fuel Capacity
  - 1928-29..... 10 gallons
  - 1930-31..... 11 gallons
- Water Capacity ..... 3 gallons
- Battery Ground.....(+)
- Firing Order .....1,2,4,3
- Tappet - Clearance
  - Exhaust.....015"
  - Intake.....013"
- Fan Belt. (Gates) .....No. 700
- Head Bolts (Torque).....55lbs



Machined castings on their way from the machine shop to the paint department.



*This section is dedicated space for members who want to sell, buy, trade or just clean out their stuff. If you want a listing on this page contact the Editor 4 weeks before the next meeting for timely printing of your request.*

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**1915 Model T Ford Runabout. Call 215-962-9480**



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### Member's Spotlight



**Jack Fritsch's  
1931 Deluxe Coupe**

I got my first Model A in 1950 for \$160. I was 16 at the time and I drove it day and night, to school and later to work.

After the service I went looking for another Model A. I spotted a green Roadster which belonged to past member Frank Cody. Unfortunately, it was not for sale but Frank did talk me into joining the club in 1959.

I soon found a coupe that the owner used every day. It even had a working radio. After nagging him for 3 months he finally sold it to me for \$85. I drove it everywhere for 2 years and then it was time to restore. 5 years later we were on the road again. Everyone in our family worked on it. The car has been restored 2 more times.

