

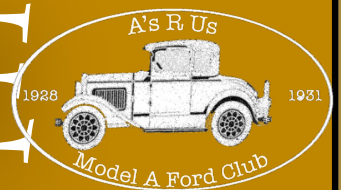


VOLUME 19

ISSUE 1

JANUARY 2014

BACKFIRE



Chicago Southland Chapter, Model A Ford Club of America

<http://www.drivingthedixie.com>



The Corp
Editor in Chief

AS we enter the New-year we seem to be getting payback for a mild winter last year. The temps have dropped to -16 below and we have almost 24" of snow to boot! That got me thinking about this car with tracks would be a blast to have about now. They closed down Dixie highway north and south of town for most of the 6th of January and you know this would have gotten through without a problem. So I looked up the history of this conversion and in this edition you can learn how this came to be. Another use for the model A!
Enjoy, Phil

Header Picture:

1929 A model ford Snowbird conversion.

Presidents Comments

LETTER FROM THE PREZ

As I look outside this January day, the temperature is minus 16 degrees F, can't wait for that special day to come, getting the Model "A" out for our annual shakedown cruise. I guess it's a bit early to make plans on needed repairs to your Model A, but don't wait till the last minute, make your list now.

I hope everyone enjoyed our Christmas gala. It was so much fun stealing and exchanging gifts. Our MC/comedian, Joey Granko stole the show with his trivia and jokes....Well done Joey. Even Wally met his match when the Coe brothers took their father's stolen gift back. Thanks to everyone who worked on planning the Christmas party.

I must announce, one more A's R US member passing in 2013, Herman W. Senkpeil. He will be sadly missed.

As president this year, I hope I can live up to your expectations. Hope to see you at the January 15th meeting; Phil and Nancy Serviss will be our hosts at 220 Poplar Lane, Beecher, Il.

Irv Darnall



**A brief history of The Model T Ford Snowmobile
The Snowmobile Company, Inc. – West Ossipee, NH
(Story Source Credited to Model T Ford Snowmobile Club**



INNOVATIVE BEGINNINGS

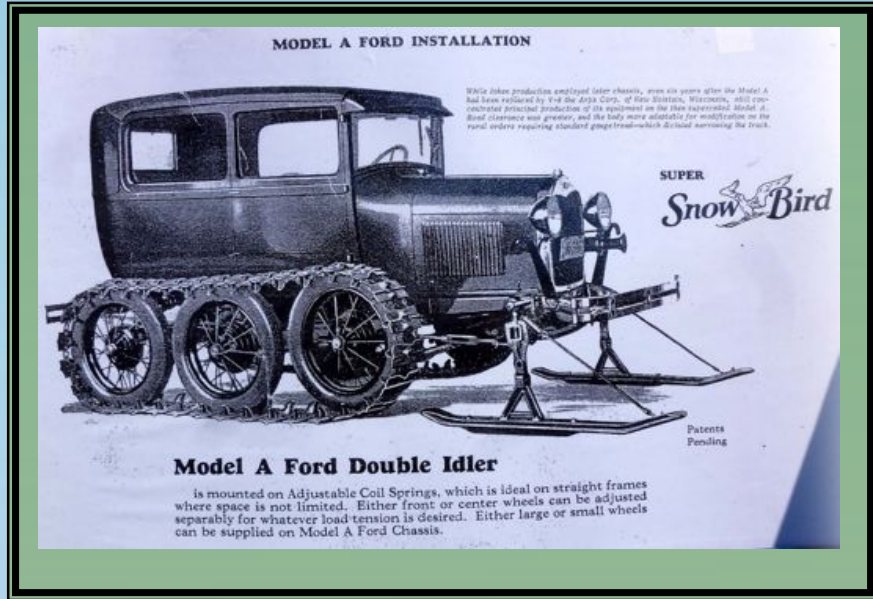
In 1917 Virgil D. White received a patent for an attachment designed to convert a Model T into a 'Snowmobile,' a name coined and copyrighted by White. White, a Ford dealer in Ossipee, New Hampshire, built his first snowmobile attachment 1913.

He put it on the market during the winter of 1922 after 'perfecting it in every detail,' selling the attachments exclusively through Ford dealers. The Snowmobile attachment consisted of the complete package necessary to convert a Ford into a reliable snow machine. Skis made of metal and wood and rear mounted tracks were the most noticeable differences.

The standard passenger car rear axle and driveshaft, rear spring, and radius rods were removed and replaced with a 7 to 1 Ford truck worm gear drive line attached to the frame by a pair of cantilevered semi-elliptical springs. Special heavy-duty wheels to fit the TT rear axle were provided along with anti-skip chains.

The earliest units sold by White included tracks made of metal cleats joined by a heavy fabric. White later switched to all metal tracks consisting of stamped steel shoes connected by chain links. Additions to the Snowmobile attachment in later years included a special box attached to the left frame for the battery displaced by the idler axle. A cast iron step sporting the Snowmobile insignia took the place of running boards, which were removed to allow room for the track system. The "Ford on Snowshoes," was offered in three different gauges.

For those living where automobiles were standard 56 inch gauge was recommended. A narrower 44-inch gauge allowed driving the Ford in the tracks of horse-drawn bobsleds. Thirty-eight inch gauge was offered for Ford owners where narrower sleigh tracks were standard, such as in parts of Canada. A special slip-on body of hard maple with four coats of paint was included as part of the narrow gauge packages.



The Snowmobile became an indispensable convenience for the person requiring rapid, dependable transport in all kinds of weather. Country doctors and rural mail carriers were the largest users of this type of vehicle. Other customers of the manufactured Snowmobile included public utility companies, lumber companies, traveling salesmen, fire departments, school bus and taxi drivers, undertakers, grocers, milkmen, truckers and cranberry growers. When the father of President Calvin Coolidge died on March 18, 1926, a Model T Snowmobile led the Coolidge funeral

procession over the snow-covered hills of Vermont.

Makers of the attachment claimed the ability to travel over two and a half feet of unbroken snow at an average speed of 18 miles per hour. Those who had a Snowmobile certainly used it with great satisfaction. The conversion kits were quite expensive. The attachment in 44 inch or 38-inch gauge for mounting on a roadster, or the 56-inch gauge for all body styles prior to 1926, listed at \$395.00 F.O.B., West Ossipee, and New Hampshire. A 56-inch gauge attachment for the one-ton truck was less expensive at \$250.00 because no special driveline and suspension were needed. Heavy duty 30 x 30-1/2-inch - wheels were still provided to mount on the rear axle, however.





With skis removed and front wheels installed; the Snowmobile became a Sandmobile, useful for transport through deep mud and heavy sand. A number of units sold as Sandmobiles were used in South Africa, Algeria, Egypt, and the Florida Everglades.

In 1923, White produced only about 70 units. By 1925, manufacturing rights to produce snow automobile attachments were sold to Farm Specialty Manufacturing Company of New Holstein, Wisconsin, which began to market its version of the product in 1926.

Farm Specialty Manufacturing Company later bought the patents of the Snowmobile Company and sent its managers to run the factory in West Ossipee. From 1924 to 1929, the Snowmobile Company manufactured about 3,300 units per year in its plant at West Ossipee and had a branch warehouse at St. Paul, Minnesota. The Snowmobile Company closed in 1929, and the factory mysteriously burned down shortly thereafter.



DIXIE HIGHWAY HERITAGE

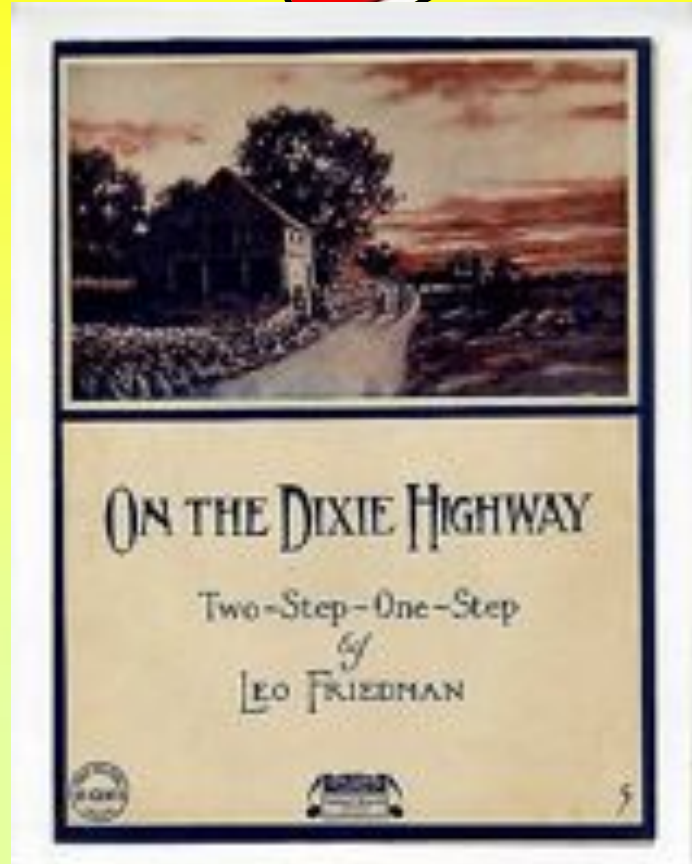
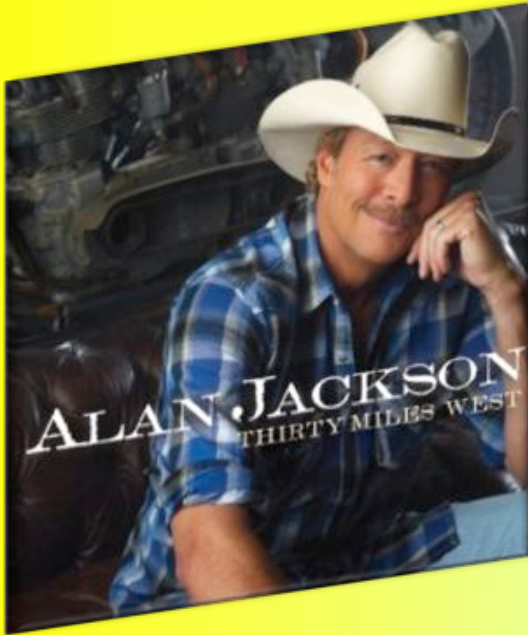
By Jim Wright



Though not as popular or memorable as *Route 66* by Bobby Troup, the Dixie Highway has also figured prominently in song over the years. Early on there was *On the Dixie Highway* a two-step sold in sheet music form for the piano as early as 1916, the *Dixie Highway*, a Fox Trot popularized by the Broadway Dance Orchestra and released on recordings produced by Edison Laboratories and the *Dixie Highway*, a song from 1922 with lyrics by Gus Kahn and music by Walter Donaldson, both of whom would enjoy long careers composing music for Hollywood.

DIXIE HIGHWAY HERITAGE

By Jim Wright



In recent years, rock group Journey released their song *Dixie Highway*, with lyrics by Carole King, in 1981 and country music star Alan Jackson released his song *Dixie Highway* in 2012 celebrating the road with lyrics like "I was raised on Dixie Highway--no sweeter place you'll ever find."

As the highway nears its 100th anniversary, we hope there may be more songs memorializing the highway. To hear some of these tunes, visit the links below.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sdJlrsx9LeE> (Preview)

<http://www.loc.gov/jukebox/recordings/detail/id/8896/>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O2Srkd378Rs> (Preview)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LrWA1T4vFRE> (Preview)

Sandy Kaleta Reporter on the Know!

THE NEW WOMAN

The late 1920's and early 1930's redefined womanhood. It became acceptable for women to smoke and drink in public, also more common for women to participate in the American work force. Clothing became more practical; undergarments were more supportive than flattening. Hairstyles saw a reintroduction of the "Bob" and new short cuts with finger waving were the rage.

Woman's fashions changed from the flapper era to linen blouses, padded shoulders and longer narrow skirts giving a tall, slim look. Trousers, knickers and breeches became the rage for industrial work, sports and horseback riding.

The 1930 Sears Roebuck Catalog introduced a credit plan enabling women to shop from home and to purchase modestly priced fashionable clothing for themselves and their family. Businesses were becoming more aware of the value of the female customer and were starting to gauge advertising in their direction.

The Automotive industry was very hard hit by the Great Depression. Automotive historians estimate that up to half of all auto companies failed during the 1930's. However, installment selling began in 1926 and Henry Ford offered a weekly purchase plan for Ford customers. The average car cost \$265.00 in the 20's and \$430.00 in the 30's. There were 8,887,000 licensed automobiles the USA in the 1930's. Ford Automotive was also hit hard by the depression and in common with other manufactures responded to the collapse in motor sales by reducing the scale of their operations and by laying off workers. It is not uncommon today to find some 1929 parts when restoring early 1930 Model A's.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF LATE 20'S /EARLY 30'S

*1920's price of a home (depending on size) was \$2,000-\$5,000 / 1930's \$7.000
Apartment rentals: 20's - \$50.00 a month / 30's - \$12.00 a month due to
scarceness of money, the average annual salary being \$1,368.00.*

Gasoline: 20's \$0.22 gal / 30's \$0.17 gal

*Cost of Food: 20's Bacon \$0.52 an lb. / 30's \$0.38 a lb
Cheese \$0.38 " / \$0.23 "
Milk \$0.33 gal / \$0.45 gal*





A Splendid Selection of BLOUSES, SKIRTS, KNICKERS and BREECHES, *Moderately Price*
WE PAY THE POSTAGE

Womens Sizes 14-24
NOTE THE FREE POSTAGE

Contributed by: Ken Chamis



The year was 1948. Herman Senkpeil returns from the war. New cars are in short supply. A for sale picture says a Model A is for sale; inquire at the Silver Cup Restaurant. He must have gone inside and also finds a waitress working there named Mary. And we all know he became sweet on her, which is another story. Anyways, he finds the 1928 Ford Model A Tudor, no interior, needs a paint job, and currently painted two tone green, maybe elk point and Kewanee, and ... no battery. He dishes out \$125 dollars and has got himself a set of wheels. He mixes up some left over paints, and brushes on a new coat of green paint, and he says it looks pretty good. Until he can afford a battery, he parks on hills so he can coast downhill and pop the clutch to get it running. He is up in Ironwood Michigan, chasing his bride to be Mary. Having a battery makes courting easier. He taught her to drive it too. Says that when she got it going he jumped out!

Later he makes his way back to Chicago with his wife Mary. He has got a buddy named Chuck, who he remarked still owes him \$200, and they open up a business on 35th and Lithuania. It's called C&H. Since cars were in short supply they began engine swaps for \$125. They get them for \$35 each already rebuilt, so that's a nice profit. Beginning at just one a day, they soon were able to bump that to 2 a day. Also engaging in bodywork, and sending them to be painted elsewhere business was good. The business only lasted about a year and a half because cars were becoming available again. Living at 5220 South Damen, it was a short drive to work. To keep the Model A going, he would get his parts from a junkyard.

One trip for parts came about as he was making a turn in the A, a wheel comes off and his axel broke. "A couple of bucks" and he was able to keep it going. He did like Fords. He told me that the best car he ever had was a 1935 Ford convertible. Big buck car today.

After his retirement, Bonnie and Randy bought a 1929 Tudor. He must have missed his A so he bought himself a 1929 sport coupe. Many of you know that he and Mary were at all of the club functions. Meetings, banquets, trips, picnics, they did it all. After Mary passed away, I guess he wanted more company with him in the car with him, so he purchased a 1929 Fordor so friends and family could enjoy his hobby too. He sold the sport coupe, and back to just one car.

Herman, Randy, and myself got this story as he was in his rehab facility in Orland Park after his stroke. I thought it would be a fun article for the newsletter, and a bit of his history. I sit here typing this just two hours after his passing, December 31st, 2013. I wanted to get it into the newsletter to show him he was famous. But he didn't need this to be famous. He touched many people, including all of the ladies. He loved them and they loved him back. I remember him talking, a soft-spoken man, with much to say. The stories, the jokes, the limericks, and more. A proud World War 2 veteran. A man who claimed me as one of his sons. 89 years old and no gray hair, (how did he do that?). Every one of us has a story to tell. A fine man, a great friend, and a member of the A's R Us family. He will be greatly missed by all.



A'S R US MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 18, 2013

MEETING LOCATION: Aurelio's Restaurant, Frankfort, Il

CALL TO ORDER BY PRESIDENT TIM BORCHERT AT: 6:30 PM Reading of the November Minutes and the Treasurers Report were waived.

FAMILY NEWS: Ken reported that Herman is at Smiths Crossing recovering from his stroke. It was unanimously decided to send Herman a plant for Christmas. Ken noted that Herman would be thrilled to have visitors after 2:00PM.

NEW BUSINESS: Ken made a presentation Re: Backfire, our monthly newsletter. He asked the membership to be more active in presenting articles, which will make it easier on Phil. The membership agreed and the women were also encouraged to take a more active role.

2014 Slate of Club Officers:

PRESIDENT: Irv Darnall
VEEP: Steve Coe

TREASURER: Jim Wright
SECRETARY: Char Darnall

This Officer Slate was presented, voted on and unanimously accepted by the membership.

Tim thanked the outgoing officers for their year of service: He especially thanked Irv for standing in for him when needed, Sandy for the great job she has done as secretary and Jim for his efficiency as treasurer.

Tech Talk: Deferred due to the holidays

Breakfast: Deferred due to the holidays

Adjourn: Irv accepted the gavel and his first duty, as president was to adjourn the meeting at 6:50 PM. He invited the membership to start lining up for our great buffet dinner and then to participate in the Christmas Grab Bag, narrated by Joey, who always does a spectacular job.

Next months mtg: JANUARY 15, 2014 our first meeting of the year at:
Phil & Nancy Serviss home, 220 Poplar Lane, Beecher, Il

PLEASE NOTE: WE NEED ONE MORE HOST FOR THE MARCH MEETING AND THE CALENDAR IS COMPLETE.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED: SANDY KALETA
SECRETARY

MEETINGS FOR 2014

JANUARY: PHIL & NANCY SERVISS

FEBRUARY: IRV & CHAR DARNALL

MARCH:

APRIL: TIM & CONNIE BORCHERT

MAY: BOB STEINMETZ

JUNE: BOB STEINMETZ

JULY: STEVE COE

AUGUST: KEN & DALE CHAMIS

SEPTEMBER: AL & SANDY Kaleta

OCTOBER: IRV & CHAR DARNALL

NOVEMBER: CHUCK & LINNEA FRITZ

DECEMBER: TO BE DECIDED

Remember to up-date your medical form for next year. A new form is on page 14 of the newsletter.

A's R US Confidential Medical Form

Date Filled Out: _____

Last NAME: _____	First Name: _____
DOB: (mo/date/yr): _____	Age: _____
SSN: _____	
Name of Emergency Contact: _____	
Phone of Emergency Contact: () _____	
Name of Primary Health Physican: _____	
Phone Number of Primary Health Physican: () _____	

List Medications and Dosage Below

	Name	Dosage in Mg	How Often Taken
#1	_____	_____	_____
#2	_____	_____	_____
#3	_____	_____	_____
#4	_____	_____	_____
#5	_____	_____	_____

List any Allergies or Medications of Which You are Allergic Below:

#1	_____
#2	_____
#3	_____
#4	_____

List Any Serious Diseases That You Have (Diabetes, Cancer, Heart, Thyroid, Etc) Below

#1	_____
#2	_____
#3	_____

It is understood that the information contained within this form is to be kept confidential UNLESS a medical situation develops during the course of an activity being conducted by the A's R US car club that necessitates the release of this information to medical personnel.

Signature: _____

Up and coming 2014 Events:

January Meeting @ Phil and Nancy's:

Wednesday Jan 15th 7:00.

220 Poplar lane Beecher, IL 60401



Looking forward into 2014

Ronald McDonald House

Teen Bridge Center

Shake Down Trip

Spring Trip

Veterans Home

Camp Quality

58th. Annual Hesston Steam & Power Show 2014

Labor Day Sept. 1st

Exposure Trip 2014

Tentative / September 6th through the 14th

Newport Hill Climb

October 3rd – 5th

Fall Trip

A's R Us 2013 officers and Staff

- President – Irv Darnell
- Vice President – Steve Coe / Treasure – Jim Wright / Secretary – Char Darnell
- Newsletter – Phillip Serviss
- Member Relations – Ken Chamis
- Web Page – Joe Krygowski
- Parade Coordinator – Wally Ekstrom
- Director of Safety – Ron Bonneau
- Nat'l Rep. – Marlene Krygowski
- Historian – Ken Chamis
- Sgt. At Arms Steve Coe
- Motor Medic - Jon Isota

Please send **Backfire** articles or items of interest to:

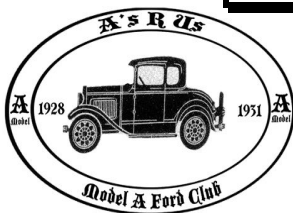
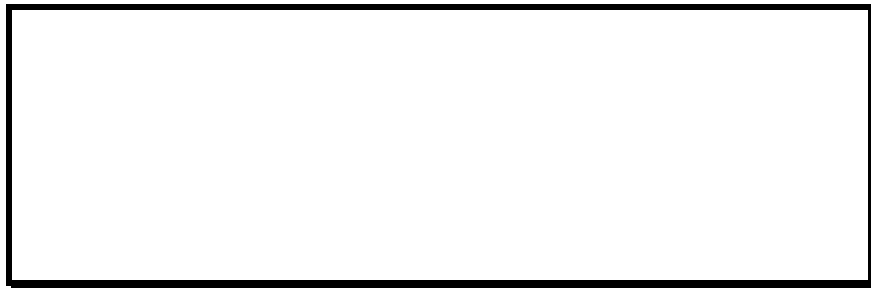
E Mail to: taxserviss@att.net

Santa's Helpers at the Christmas party in Frankfort.



BACKFIRE

P.O. Box 3
Crete, Illinois 60417



Mail To: