



# GOING PLACES



## Web Site

[www.modelacolumbus.com](http://www.modelacolumbus.com)

## December 2011

Membership meetings are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sat. of the month unless a change is announced. The meetings are held Sept. through May, at Ryan's Steak House on US 50 West in Seymour. The meal will be at 6:00 p.m. with the meeting following at 7:00 p.m.

## 2011 Officers

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### Newsletter

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### President's Corner

At the board meeting we decided that we want a club reporter. His or her duties would include checking with the tour masters and get a report from them after the tours to publish in the News Letter and would also send in a

Regional Correspondents to MARC every two months. So we are looking for a volunteer to do this. Please contact one of the officers or board member if you would like to do this.

The officers for the year 2012 are. President: Ronnie Lawson, Vice President: Linda Sullivan, Secretary: Nita Bridges, Treasure: Phil Sutton, Board of Directors are: Gerald Alexander, Wayne Arnholt, Larry Morlock, and Jack Sullivan Sr.

The Edgewater New Jersey, Ford Factory located at 309 River Road in Edgewater, New Jersey, Ford's new 400,000 square foot assembly motor plant was opened in 1930 to build the Model A Ford and was noteworthy for its ability to **assemble the vehicle in 48 minutes** or less from one end of the pier to the other.

I ran across the article below that I would like to share with you on Champion Spark Plugs. I will have a follow up in the next newsletter on this. Enjoy.

## Champion Spark Plug: The First 20 Years

By Rich Street



Albert Champion formed the Albert Champion Company in 1905 with Frank D. and Spencer Stranahan. On June 24th Certificate # 1 in the amount of 51 shares was issued by the Albert Champion Company to Albert Champion with Albert signing as President and F.D. Stranahan signing as Treasurer. The Stranahans knew how to run a business, while Albert did sales and design. The Albert Champion Company started in Boston's South End, in the Cyclorama Building, presently headquarters for the Boston Center for Fine Arts. A bronze plaque outside the Cyclorama Building marks the spot.

The Albert Champion Company started selling imported ignition items and began manufacturing their own. It did well enough for the Stranahan brothers to put a younger brother, Robert, through Harvard. Albert Champion, the company's namesake, left the

company in late 1908 to move to Flint, Michigan and begin the Champion Ignition Company (later to become A-C).

The Albert Champion Company introduced the "X" spark plug in 1909 while still in Boston, but never used the "word mark" of "X" on their plugs until early 1911. The simple CHAMPION name was used on the early plugs. This simple all capital letter logo looks suspiciously (almost same font) like the "CHAMPION" logo first used commercially in 1894 by the Stark Brothers Nurseries & Orchards Company and trademarked in July, 1905. Did they steal the company logo off an apple crate? With an ego like Albert Champion's it just might have happened.

In the winter of 1909 Robert A. Stranahan became manager of the Albert Champion Company, in partnership with his two brothers Spencer and Frank. Spencer handled manufacturing and Frank was the finance man. The first year's spark plug production was less than 50,000.

Spencer died in winter 1910 and the following spring the remaining two brothers moved the plant to Toledo, Ohio to be closer to the Willys-Overland Auto Company. The move to Toledo, required by the Willys contract, was into the second floor of the Holmes Snow Flake Laundry building. Robert Stranahan later described the move, "We came to Toledo with spark plug manufacturing equipment loaded in two box cars and saddled with a \$22,000 debt."

The Champion Spark Plug Company became incorporated on July 2nd, 1910. The first 3 share certificates were issued to Fred Baker, Burton Ames and Randolph Frothingham. Fred Baker signed as president and Frothingham as Treasurer. On July 10th, Messrs. Baker, Frothingham and Ames signed over their shares to Robert Stranahan, Frank Stranahan, and Charles Walker. The company grew as did the Stranahan's shares, but on January 31st, 1912 Elizabeth Whithall Stranahan, mother to the Stanahan brothers, was issued 1000 shares, making her near equal to the holdings of her sons.

Within a month James D. Robertson applied for Champion Spark Plug's first patent on August 5, 1910. The application was for a terminal clip design. It was issued on July 18, 1911 with the number of [998,304](#).

In 1911, Ford bought 200,000 spark plugs from Champion and by 1919 Ford was purchasing 3,500,000. Also, in 1911 a law suit was filed by Albert Champion, GM and Durant against the Champion Spark Plug Company over the Champion name. The case was later settled in the 1920's in Champion Spark Plug's favor.

The first production Model T Ford was assembled in Detroit on October 1, 1908. With it came Henry Ford's intrusion into spark plugs. DeDion had previously set the standard threads for plugs at 18 mm and at the same time the first Model T rolled off the line the American Licensed

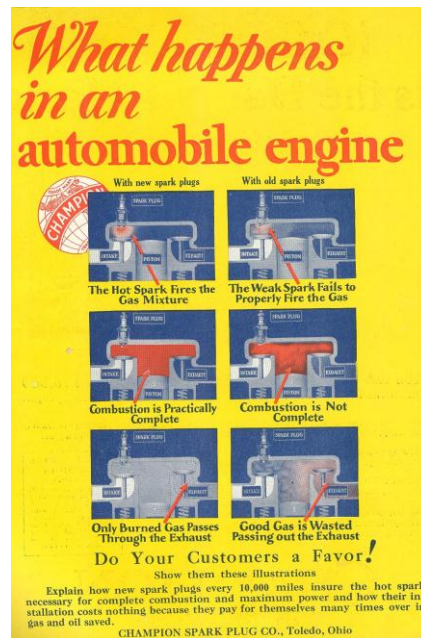
Automobile Manufacturers (ALAM, forerunner of the SAE) chose the 7/8-18 thread as the standard, but Henry had a dislike for metrics and the ALAM so he introduced the ½ inch pipe thread spark plug in the Model T.

Ford spark plug records are not available, for 1908 through mid-1912. Beginning in Mid-1912 Ford archives show purchase contracts from both Champion Spark Plug Company and Champion Ignition Company. Between 1912 and 1915 Ford used four different brands of plugs. According to the Model T Ford Club of America, Mezger Spark Plugs were used during 1913 and 1914, AC Spark Plugs between 1912 and 1913, Mosler Spark Plugs in 1914 and the Champion “X” Spark Plug from 1912 on.

The early Champion X plug was straight sided porcelain with a simple locking nut and knurled thumb nut on top. It lacked the “double-ribbed” insulator with brass top that was included on later plugs and on modern reproductions of the Champion X and 3X. The “brass hat” style insulator on the Champion X was not introduced until 1915 or 1916. This coincides with Champion’s purchase of the Jeffery-DeWitt Company, a small spark plug manufacturer, in 1915. Part of the reason for purchase was the expertise held by Dr. Joseph Jeffery and his brother Benjamin. Dr. Jeffery was an expert in insulator research and Benjamin was the one who designed production equipment. The crimped on “brass hat” is first seen on Jeffery’s patent 942,646, applied for in 1906. It

was Jeffery who discovered the Sillimanite mines in California for Champion.

Around 1912 Champion spark plugs were being exported to Europe from first the United States and subsequently Champion Spark Plugs Canadian subsidiary. In 1922 the Champion Sparking Plug Company Ltd. was set up in the United Kingdom. In 1927, the same year as Albert Champion’s death, Champion Spark Plug designed a Number 3 spark plug and in January of 1928 the new Champion 3X spark plug, designed specifically for the Model A was introduced in the automotive press.



### Board Meeting

The next board meeting will be at Jack Sullivan Senior’s house, January 19 at 7 pm.

### Membership Meeting Minutes

1. Call to order on November 12, 2011

2. Welcome new members and/or visitors present. New member Jack & Marjorie Schmeckeber and Dale Key. 56 members were present.

3. Secretary report: any additions or corrections.

4. Treasure report Beg Bal \$2322.37 income \$10.00 expenses \$459.31 ending Bal \$1873.06.

5. Officer’s reports.

6. Special dates: MARC YOUR CALANDERS  
 (A) November 17, 2011 Board Meeting at 7 pm at Wayne Arnholt home, Seymour IN.  
 (B) November 19, 2011, Fred Thompson's Estate Auction. It will be held at Fred's home at 506 N. Franklin Street in Edinburg, Indiana, commencing at 10:00 a.m. Antique clocks, household goods and cars will be auctioned. The cars include: a Blue '28 Model A, a Green '30 Model A w/rumble seat and a '30 Model A in process of being rebuilt, ie. parts and engine. Also a '65 Mustang convertible w/49K miles, original 3 speed.  
 (C) December 3, 2011, Christmas party.

(D) MARC and MAFCA JUNE 2012 Meets... June 2012 looks like a lot of fun all tied up in 12 days running...

MARC National: June 11-15, 2012 Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Hotels are full

(E) MAFCA Central Midwest: June 11-15, 2012 Altoona, Iowa

(F) MAFCA Texas Tour: June 14-16, 2012 Marble Falls, Texas

(G) MAFCA Northwest Regional: June 14-19, 2012 Boise, Idaho

(H) MAFCA National: June 18-22, 2012

Marquette, Michigan  
12 straight days of pure Model  
A/AA Ford FUN!

7. Committee reports: (A) Columbus Model A Swap Meet kick-off, MARC driving award Larry Morlock: Larry reported things are moving ahead. Pass out fliers at Brookeville meet. (B) Web Master Larry Riss (C) Touring Committee report Phil Sutton: He has a block of 11 rooms for the Chattanooga show. (D) Technical Sessions Chairman Jack Sullivan steering a Model A. (E) Activity Chairman Gerald Alexander report. (F) Library Chairman Roy Whiteman report: (G) Newsletter Susan Riss report. (G) Nominating Committee report Gerald Alexander and Wayne Arnholt will be dismissed. (H) Christmas party Gary and Connie Lawless and Larry and Susan Riss.

8. Unfinished old business: Phil Sutton made a motion to keep dues at \$5.00 seconded by Ellen McGlothlin and pass unanimously.

9. New business: Vote on Dues for 2012, Election of officers for 2012, your new officers for 2012 are Pres-Ron Lawson, VP Linda Sullivan, Sec. Nita Bridges, Tres Phil Sutton, Board Wayne Arnholt Gerald Alexander Larry Morlock Jack Sullivan Sr.

10. Announcements. Fill out the Membership application for updating.

11. 50/50 drawing was won by Carol Workman.

12. Adjournment.

13. Entertainment: The Lee Roy Hartung Automotive Museum Collection Auction by Ron Lawson. Model Steering by Jack Sullivan.

--Wayne Arnholt, Secretary

### **Museum Update**

The early events for constructing the Model A Ford Museum building are underway. A topographic survey has been done and a site plan is being started. The final design contract will be signed by the end of the month. Meanwhile a MAFFI team is conducting a visual inspection and inventory of existing museum display items.

The fund drive to pay for the museum is continuing. MAFFI now has a broker (Edward Jones) and can accept gifts of stock and if you have an IRA that requires a mandatory distribution that you don't need, you can donate the distribution to the museum and not have to pay taxes on it.

Each club can help and many are. For example, clubs are holding special events to raise money for the museum. Illinois Region of MARC had a swap meet, Grape Country A's had an auction, both resulting in substantial donations. How about your club holding a road rally or a poker run, a car wash, or a brakes inspection day, each with a fee to go to the museum. Other fun events might include a Biggest Loser contest among portly club members with the monthly collections based on promised versus actual weight loss, all going to the museum fund. Another idea is to charge "tuition" for an all-day technical seminar (valve grinding,

transmission rebuild, etc.) with proceeds going to the museum. Perhaps a simple Museum 50/50 at each meeting - no donation is too small and no donation is too big. You'll have fun and also get a museum. MAFFI Trustees

### **Meeting Reminder**

Our next meeting will be Saturday, January 14, 2012, at Ryan's Steak House on US 50 West in Seymour. The meal will be at 6:00 p.m. with the meeting following at 7:00 p.m.

### **A Reminder From Our President**

I ask that all members fill out the Membership Application form (in last month's newsletter) so we can update our roster. There have been several address and phone number changes, and this would make it easier to make sure we have made the changes correctly.

You can mail in the form with your dues, bring it to the Christmas party, or bring it to the January meeting at Ryan's. Thanks!

--Ron

