

Remember to pay your 2024 dues!



# the TRAVELER



Volume 21-1

January 2024

P.O. Box 812, Cantonment, FL 32533

## Christmas Dinner at Paula Dean's



Our annual Christmas Dinner was held on December 10 at Paula Dean Restaurant. The dinner was decided by each table. Our table picked quickly as we all pretty much wanted the same thing. The food was excellent.

20 members attended the event. Martha did a great job on the door prizes! It seemed as everyone went home with something.

Officer election was held.

- Charlotte





# Our Club



GCMAC Officers	Name	Phone	Email
President	Allen Braddy	678-499-3370	alnbraddy@yahoo.com
Vice President	Martha Fuller	251-602-1931	waltermern@aol.com
Secretary	Elizabeth Witherington	251-648-5715	mrs.witherington@att.net
Treasurer	Becky Baisden	850-384-5717	beckyb0814@att.net
Newsletter Editor	Charlotte Dahlenburg	256-783-2261	realracegril1@gmail.com
National Rep	Allen Braddy	678-499-3370	alnbraddy@yahoo.com
Webmaster	Becky Baisden	850-384-5717	beckyb0814@att.net
Event Coordinator	Allen Braddy	678-499-3370	alnbraddy@yahoo.com

## January Birthdays

### Birthdays

- 2 Martha Fuller
- 3 George Haughton
- 9 Mike Fowler
- 13 Margaret Lundy
- 15 Jim Quinlan
- 19 Jim Gray
- 28 Janice Warmack
- 23 Elizabeth Witherington



### 28 Chris Hornadz Anniversaries

- 23 Ash & Elizabeth Witherington
- 31 John & Debbie Bright



## Message from ...

Hello all, I would like to start with thanking Mike Fowler for his time and dedication serving as the President.

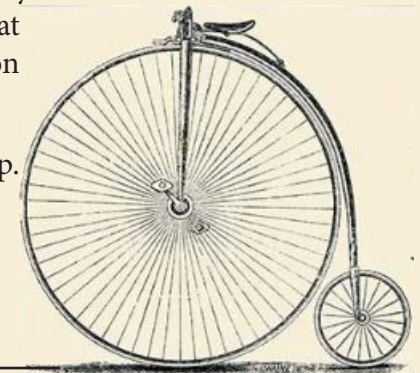
I would like to sincerely say Thank You to all of those who voiced their support to me filling this position. I'm honored that you all chose to elect me. We've got a lot to accomplished to keep this club moving forward, and I would like to start by asking everyone to find an event or cause for us to support as a club. We are going to push for more gatherings aimed at Day Touring, Mini Tours, Tech Talks and community request.

We will grow our membership numbers by being seen around the Neighborhood. You don't always need to pack up your gear and travel for days. There is plenty to explore between both sides of the Bay. It can be as easy as two groups going out to meet up for an ice cream in their Antique Cars or trucks. Enjoy the time, take pictures and send them to one of us to get it onto our media sites. Also, try and get some of the youth involved. We don't exist if there's no one to fill our shoes. There has been a challenge by a club member that we support a person learning to drive a Model A, and then take the driving portion of the test in that car. Can you imagine the coverage we could gain from that?

It will take a little bit of effort, but I believe this will be a good year for this group.

THANK YOU

*Allen Braddy*





# Club Happenings



## Lillian Christmas Parade

On Saturday, December 9, several members of the Gulf Coast Model A Club participated in the Lillian Christmas Parade.

Staging for the parade was at Lillian Community Club. Line up started at 11am. This is a fun time to gather and hang out. The parade kicked off at 1pm with three Model A's decorated for the season.



## Pensacola Breakfast

Breakfast was held on December 2 at Golden Corral in Pensacola. It was a great turnout with 14 members on a rainy day.



## Officer Election Results

**Your 2024 Officers are:**

**President:** Allen Braddy

**Vice President:** Martha Fuller

**Secretary:** Elisabeth Witherington

**Treasurer:** Becky Baisden

Be sure to support them this year!




# Century Christmas Parade



THE MODEL "A" FORD CLUB OF AMERICA IS CURRENTLY LOOKING FOR A VOLUNTEER TO TAKE OVER THE POSITION OF WEBMASTER. THIS PERSON MUST HAVE GENERAL KNOWLEDGE OF WEB INFRASTRUCTURE AS WELL AS A BACKGROUND IN HTML EDITING USING APPLICATIONS SUCH AS DREAMWEAVER. EXPERIENCE WITH PHP, CSS AND SQL AS WELL AS OTHER SCRIPTING LANGUAGES ALONG WITH SFTP WILL BE HELPFUL AS WELL. TRAINING WITH OUR CURRENT PLATFORM WILL BE PROVIDED BY OUR INTERIM WEBMASTER.

IF YOUR LOVE OF THE MODEL A EXTENDS INTO THE DIGITAL WORLD THEN WE COULD USE YOUR HELP. PLEASE CONTACT ME AT [CHAPTERCOORDINATOR@MAFCA.COM](mailto:CHAPTERCOORDINATOR@MAFCA.COM) OR DIRECTLY AT 405 812 8131 OR ANY CURRENT BOARD MEMBER IF YOU HAVE AN INTEREST IN VOLUNTEERING FOR THIS POSITION.



# Guess What Sabine Bought



Allen Braddy helping Mike Weeks with getting his engine started after painting his truck.

## Club Dues

Club dues are \$25 per year for individuals or families.

We encourage membership in the Model A Ford Club of America (MAFCA), a national organization that promotes the restoration of the Model A and publishes a great magazine, The Restorer, six times a year.

Send a check to: GCMAC, P. O. Box 812, Cantonment, FL 32533



# THE TRAVELER

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# Entertainment

Email to  
Joe Allen Braddy  
alnbraddy  
@yahoo.com

Submission  
date is the  
20th of each  
month

## Car Shows, Events, Cruise Ins & More

Scott Lunsford has created a private, by invitation only, Facebook group, "Todays Model A." This is for members-only to communicate within the group, ask questions, make suggestions or complain about how annoying your event coordinator is. So if you're interested in joining the group, Please contact Scott.

### Club Activities:

#### January

**Jan 6 - 8:30 am** Golden Corral, 2260 Langley Ave, Pensacola, FL

### Model A Activities:

#### January

**Jan 13** Shepherdsville, Kentucky - Model A Ford Winter Swap Meet  
**Jan 27-28** - Turlock, CA 56th annual Turlock Swap

#### February

**Feb 25** - West Bend, Wisconsin 58th Annual Automotive and Vintage Bicycle Winter Swap Meet

#### April

**Apr 19-20** - Greenwood, SC 18th Annual All Model A & Model T Parts Swap Meet

**Apr 28** - Columbus, IN Columbus Region 60th Annual Model A Swap Meet

#### June

**June 13-16** - Texas Tour Nacogdoches, Texas

**June 23-29** - **MAFCA 2024 National Model A Convention** Ruidoso, New Mexico

#### December

**Dec 11-14** - **National Awards Banquet** Salt Lake City, Utah

### Local and Regional, Activities:

#### February

**Feb 3** - 11th Cancer Freeze Car & Bike Show, 4th Street, Florala, AL. 8am

**Feb 9-10** - Valentines Market Car Show, Jernigans Landing, 5165 Willing St., Milton, FL., 11-4pm & 10-4pm

**Feb 24** 12th Annual Port City Corvette Club Open Car Show. Bass Pro Shop 20000 Bass Pro Drive, Spanish Fort, 8-2:30pm

#### March

**Mar 2** - 8th Collard Green Festival Car Show, Evergreen

Regional Airport, 14123 Hwy 84, Evergreen, AL., 9-2pm

**Mar 9** - Wild Irish Fest Car & Truck Show, St. Patrick Catholic School, 23070 Hwy 59 N., Robertsdale, AL. 8-4pm

**Mar 9** - William F Green Veterans Home Car Show, William F Green State Veterans Home, 300 Faulkner Dr., Bay Minette, AL. 9-3pm

**Mar 22-24** - Orange Beach Invasion, The Wharf, 4550 Main St., Orange Beach, AL. (All vehicles require pre-



## Help Wanted

Car Shows? Car Events?

Email to Allen Braddy  
alnbraddy@yahoo.com



Join Us In the 21st Century

www.gulfcoastmodelclub.net

Gulf Coast Model A Club



# Tech Tips

## Battery Primer: How to Maintain Batteries for Reliability

By Mark Barret, Santa Clara Valley Chapter

While I will admit, I know little concerning car batteries, I do understand a little about electricity.

After experiencing issues

with my batteries, I decided to do a little reading. Here is what I found.

The batteries we use in our Model A's are the wet flooded, lead acid type first developed in the 1880s. They have changed little since then except for the modernization of the materials used to construct them. The type we use are made primarily of plates of lead and lead oxide with a sulfuric acid and water solution in a plastic case. This solution is called electrolyte, which causes a chemical reaction that produces electrons.

State of Charge	Specific Gravity	Voltage	
		12V	6V
100%	1.265	12.7	6.3
75%	1.225	12.4	6.2
50%	1.190	12.2	6.1
25%	1.155	12.0	6.0
Discharged	1.120	11.9	6.0

Lead acid batteries do not produce electricity. They can only store a charge from another source. This constant cycle of charge and discharge has a narrow range of requirements for the battery to operate at the highest, most efficient level. The size of the battery plates and amount of electrolyte determines the amount of charge the lead acid batteries can store. We can't control the size of our battery, but we can control how we maintain and charge our batteries to optimize their lives.

There are many issues that can drain your battery and affect the life. Batteries that sit too long between charges and batteries stored without some type of energy input are probably the biggest culprits to decreased battery life. This is due to the amount of driving time (meaning charging time) our cars receive. A common lead acid battery typically loses 4% of its charge each week when it sits idle. Without a full charge,

Tech Tips from Santa Clara Valley Chapters

**The Ford Battery**  
Designed and Built by  
*Ford Motor Company*  
FOR THE FORD CAR

Genuine Ford Products and Authorized Ford Service are your guarantee of complete and lasting satisfaction with your Ford car.

The Ford Battery is a 6-volt, 13-plate, 80-ampere hour battery, built to exactly fit the Ford electrical system.

Built to deliver maximum power through the Ford starting motor.

Built to turn the engine over rapidly.

Built to quickly accept the charge from the Ford generator.

There is no comparison between the Ford Battery and batteries which are built merely to sell at a low price.

You can buy the Ford Battery—like any other genuine Ford part—with complete confidence.

Every Ford Battery is backed by the reputation of the Ford Motor Company and service facilities of over 9,000 dealers.

**Price \$15.00**



**Observance of the following rules will lengthen the life of your Battery and insure satisfactory service.**

1. Every two weeks check the level of the acid solution in each of the three cells in the battery. This solution should cover the metal plates by approximately one-half inch. If not, add DISTILLED water. (CAUTION: Do not use hydrant, well, or spring water.)
2. Keep all connections and terminals tight (particularly the hold down clamp bolts which hold battery in carrier.)
3. Keep the battery terminals clean and free from dirt. (Apply vaseline (petroleum jelly) to the terminals occasionally to prevent corrosion.)
4. Have the authorized Ford dealer nearest you inspect your battery once a month.

Buy Genuine *Ford* Parts

this deficit slowly eats away at your battery's maximum capacity. Also, "deep cycling" a battery without an immediate recharge will shorten its life.

Examples of this are trying to start a stubborn car or letting a parasitic drain discharge the battery without fully charging it back to its capacity. An incomplete charge does not reactivate the entire electrolyte, resulting in sulfation. This is a deposit that forms on the lead plates that acts as an insulator instead of a conductor inside the battery. Excess heat and cold effect batteries as well as a low electrolyte level and parasitic drains. Proper maintenance can help eliminate many of these problems.

Maintenance is an important issue in the longevity of the battery. The battery connections should be clean and tight to give the best electrical connection and to eliminate the chance of any corrosion forming that would interfere with the flow of electricity. The battery should be cleaned with a baking soda and water solution if the dirt



and corrosion are light. If the corrosion is heavy, you may need to remove the cables and wire brush the mating surfaces of the cable ends and battery posts. The electrolyte level also needs to be above the plates inside the battery. Be careful to not overfill or splash when checking the level or filling. Checking that your generator output is correct ensures the battery is receiving its proper charge. For daytime driving that most of us do, 8 amps (7.2 volts) will be sufficient to charge the battery, while night driving with headlights requires 12 amps (7.5 volts). If you do some of both types of driving, 10 amps would be the sweet spot.

The most accurate method of testing your battery is a measurement of specific gravity of the electrolyte and battery voltage. To measure specific gravity, use a temperature compensating hydrometer. To measure voltage, use a digital D.C. voltmeter. In order to accurately test your battery, you must fully charge and then remove the surface charge. Remove the surface charge by letting the battery sit for a few hours or by turning on the high beams for a couple of minutes.

The results of your testing should be as follows; hydrometer readings should be as shown on the chart and should not be more than .05 difference between cells. Digital voltage readings should be as shown in the chart. When in doubt about battery testing, you can

call the battery manufacturer. Many batteries sold today have a toll free number to call for help.

Just because you've validated the generator output, doesn't mean you are charging your battery

back to capacity. The length of time needed to charge the battery depends on the amount of discharge. The key is to replace the energy you have used immediately. What I've learned is that short hops through town, or tours with many stops, do not allow a full charge on a battery that has been sitting for a few weeks and has had a few starts. I've started to use an electronic trickle charger to bring the battery up to the full charge while sitting at home.

Regardless of how you charge your battery, as electricity flows through the water portion of the electrolyte, H<sub>2</sub>O is converted into its original elements, hydrogen and oxygen. These gasses are very flammable and are the reason your batteries must be vented outside. Gassing causes water loss and therefore lead acid batteries need to have water added periodically. If you don't monitor your water level, irreparable damage can occur.

So, take care of your battery to maximize its life, and your investment. You don't want to discover your battery is dead just before a tour, or worse, get stuck somewhere with a dead battery. If you get stuck, you'll be a prime candidate for the Edsel trophy!



# Get Your Club Gear Here



Spoke with the shirt people. He'll provide a 50/50 Jersey polo shirt.

Polo shirt with club logo - S-XL \$23 each

2x add \$2

3x add \$4

T shirts are \$15

We would need a minimum of 8 shirts. Anything less will

make the set up cost go up. He will do different colors, but he said the Royal blue looks best with our logo. Caps are \$15 with a minimum purchase of 6.

If you're interested please email me so we can put in 1 order together.

Allen Braddy  
alnbraddy@yahoo.com  
678-499-3370

Gulf Coast Model A Club  
Event Coordinator

VP Martha Fuller has patches for sale as well. Contact Allen



Small \$10 4inch  
Large \$25 8inch

## The Model A Ford Club of America MAFCA

*Serving Model A Ford owners since 1955*



Our award winning magazine "The Restorer"

MAFCA is dedicated to the restoration, preservation and enjoyment of the Ford Model A and AA cars and trucks, as manufactured from 1928 through 1931. We are an active, family-friendly organization whose members share a passion for these historic vehicles, plus other aspects of life in that era, such as fashions.

MAFCA is a not-for-profit corporation with members and local affiliated chapters all over the globe. This makes us the largest car club in the world dedicated to one make of automobile. We hope you enjoy looking through our site, and we invite you to join us! Membership in Model A Ford Club of America is encouraged. MAFCA Dues are \$50.00 and should be mailed to: MAFCA Headquarters, 250 South Cypress, LaHabra, CA 90631-5586 For more info visit: <https://www.mafca.com/>



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# Era Fashions



## Sewing Patterns During the Model A Years

By Janet Gundlach

### General Information

The major pattern companies during the Model A Era were McCall, Butterick, Vogue and Simplicity. Also very popular were Pictorial and their subsidiary, Excella. All the magazines and catalogs also produced their own patterns. Several companies started at the end of our Model A Era or just after but no dates are available for New York (late 1931?), Advance (late 1931), Hollywood (1932), and DuBarry (1932).



McCall produced patterns in late 1927 that had a “paste on” colored illustration on the envelope cover. The date of publication was printed on the envelope flap. Some patterns

like men’s wear and young children’s clothes did not change so often had several dates but were the same pattern. McCall held the copyright for cutting and sewing lines printed on the pattern pieces, that makes them easier to use but their sewing directions were minimal.

Butterick produced patterns in beige envelopes. There is no printed date on the envelope but monthly and quarterly catalogs or Delineator Magazine can determine this. The pattern pieces were printed on beige tissue paper and had notches and perforations that make them more difficult to use. However, their pattern-cutting layout and directions are good.

Vogue also used beige envelopes. A date is sometimes found on the envelope or on the pattern direction sheets. It is best to date them by using monthly, quarterly pattern catalogs or the Vogue Magazine. These pattern pieces were printed on beige tissue paper with notches and perforations. The pattern-cutting layout and directions are good.

Simplicity started in 1927. The envelopes were simple, beige and with directions written on the back of the envelope. Later 3 views were shown and sewing directions

were included. Simplicity was the least expensive pattern available at 15 cents. Dating Simplicity is impossible due to a lack of catalogs. Few of these patterns are complete due to the price.

Other patterns included Pictorial and Excella that worked around the McCall copyright by writing instructions on the pattern pieces. Needlecraft, Ladies Home Journal, Superior, Country Gentleman, and etc. all had small beige envelopes with the directions written on the back of the envelopes which makes them more difficult to use.

### Sizes

Women’s sizes were 32, 34, 36, 38, 40... These were bust sizes and were meant for the average height woman during the Model A Era. So if you are tall, check the length before cutting. Misses sizes, which were for the teenage body, were labeled 14, 16, 18, and 20. A 16 is same size as a woman’s 34 but there are differences in length and the shoulders. For most women, you will need to add 2 inches minimum in length, so check measurements before you cut!

### Styles

Consider what style looks best on you. The 1928 dresses

are easier to fit and sew due to a lack of a defined waistline. Often the back of the dress is one piece.

### Sewing

Look in the Fashion Guidelines under "Reproduction" and A Book of Fashion Facts, chapter 12 for information on fabrics and basic sewing information. The fashions section of the MAFCA website is a good source also. Consider looking for original sewing manuals if you are seriously interested in making numerous garments. Sewing was popular during the '20s and '30s; these ladies knew how to sew on their straight stitch sewing machines. Necklines or armhole openings in sleeveless dresses were finished in bias, not facings. Long sleeves closed at the wrist at the seam line. Overlap seams were used in many of the dresses, where flounces, circular drapes, and the bodice attached to skirts, instead of sewing right sides together as we would today. If possible, examine original dresses to show how common this technique was used. To further explain, when attaching a bodice of a 1930 dress to the

skirt, the bodice bottom edge would be turned under 3/8 of an inch and could be pinned, basted or both and ironed. It would then be placed over the top edge of the skirt and again pinned or basted. The two pieces would be attached by top stitching very close to the edge; it also helps to set your sewing machine on a smaller stitch to do this seam. Also long thin darts or gathers were common at the shoulders; some waists also used very thin darts or gathers to designate the waist. The sewing directions in the patterns are often vague on these techniques.

### Fabrics

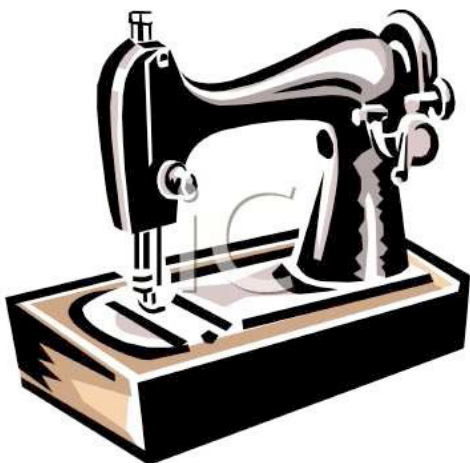
If sewing for entering "Reproduction" judging refer to the chapter in the Fashion Guidelines. For the Model A Era Image entrants and fun outfits, fabric choice is not critical. However, nowhere is it mentioned to prewash your fabrics. This is not necessary with polyester or wool, but cottons, rayon and silks should be prewashed if you do not want to dry clean, especially with the last two fabrics. Cotton shrinks a bit and may also soften; rayon and silk shrink a lot in length and will change in texture and both have more changes if placed in the dryer. Cut two six inch squares of your silk or rayon fabric and hand wash both, then allow one square to drip dry and put the second square in the dryer. Determine shrinkage of the two squares if you want to prewash and how you will dry your garment in the future. Perhaps

you will find you prefer to dry clean your clothes but just don't change your mind after the dress is complete. A label inside the dress may help you remember how to clean it and is helpful if you sell the dress later.

### Other Hints

Consider making your first dress from inexpensive fabric. If you have sewing or fitting problems, the next one will be much easier. Ask other members what patterns they have made. Consider fabric drape if you are making a summer dress with a circular skirt. Think about the type of fabric needed for pleating, some polyesters do pleat, but with difficulty. Steam is a very good friend when sewing and use a pressing cloth (where the iron is not placed directly on your fabric). Many of the iron-on products may make your sewing quicker and easier if you are making fun dresses.

Have fun making your Model A clothes! Enjoy wearing them on tour, club parties, Regional Meets and National Meets.



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Email  
Submissions to  
realracegrill  
@gmail.com

# Classifieds

Submission  
date is the  
20th of each  
month

## For Sale: 1930 Tudor \$19,000



**Model B Engine with Counterweighted Crank  
Built by Bob Bouldin of Bouldin & Bouldin Inc.  
41 Main St Box 496, Belfast, NY 14711**

Inserted engine (B. Model) 8-26-2000.....	\$3,500.00
4 Speed D Trans (Ford) Ft. Worth, Texas.....	\$3,685.00
Oil Filter Oil and Temp Gauges.....	\$319.75
Turn Signals.....	\$187.80
Hood Prop Kit.....	\$41.94
Car cover.....	\$159.00
Seat belts.....	\$53.50
Radiator Stone Guard.....	\$178.00
Spew Plates.....	\$44.95
Floor Mats and Rugs.....	\$1,200.00
16" Wheels.....	\$90.00
Wheels Painted.....	\$800.00
16" Hub Caps.....	\$50.55
High Comp Head (Snyder 6-1).....	\$379.95
Head Bolts.....	\$24.00
New Interstate Battery.....	\$139.50
Electric Distributor.....	\$375.00
12 Volt Starter (Synder).....	\$225.00
	<b>\$10,453.95</b>

This is an excellent driver. Motor rebuilt with insert bearings in 2000. Four speed synchromesh transmission. This is a tour car. David A. Black: Cell 256-339-3234, david\_black@model-a-man.com David Black was president of a Model 'A' Club north of us in Alabama for years and the club was known for all the tours they did with their Model 'A's. Located in Cullman, Alabama

Block Cleaned Bored & Honed  
New Piston And Rings  
Insert Bearings - Mains - Rods  
Drilled Crank  
Pressurized Oil  
Cut Down Flywheel  
Computer Balanced  
Brick Valves & Stellite Seats on Exhaust  
Adjustable Lifters

Windfield Grind Cam  
New Cam Gear  
New Crank Gear  
New Pulley  
Block & Head Decked  
Assembled & Test Run

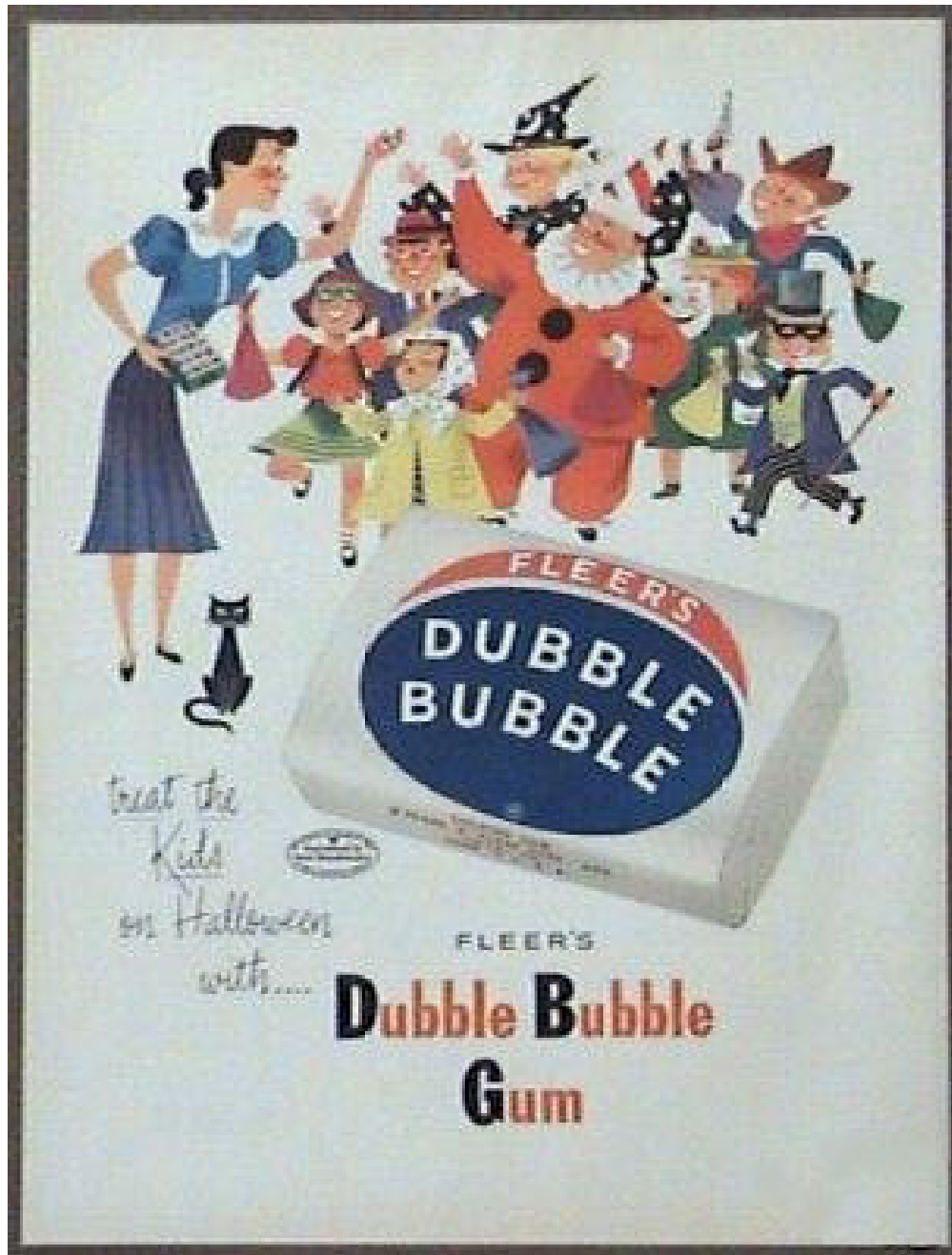
Used Engine Block Included at \$800.00  
Total \$3500.00



Have parts or a car you want to sell? Need a certain part for your restoration? Submit your ad and we'll run it in the newsletter for approximately 3 months. Email your ad with photos to Charlotte at realracegrill1@gmail.com



# Bubble Gum: How Double Bubble was Invented



Reprinted from <https://americacomesalive.com/bubble-gum-how-double-bubble-was-invented/>

By Kate Kelly

Bubble gum was introduced in Philadelphia in 1928 where it was invented by a 23-year-

old named Walter Diemer (1905-1998). Diemer was not a chemist—he was an accountant who worked for the Fleer Chewing Gum Company.

Why was it left to an accountant to create what became a best-selling product?

Others at the company

worked on the “dream project of inventing bubble gum” but it had been 22 years since anyone had even come close. One day when someone asked Diemer to “watch the pot” in the laboratory, Diemer became interested in figuring out how to improve their gum.

## How the Fleer Company Began

What became the Fleer Chewing Gum Company actually began in Philadelphia in 1849 as a company that made flavoring extracts. Frank Fleer (1856-1921) married into the family, joining the business that eventually carried his name.

As Fleer worked with different flavors, he heard that in Mexico and the Southern Hemisphere, natives chewed chicle, the dried sap from the Sapodilla tree. (A version of this gum was already being made by New Yorker Thomas Adams who introduced his gum in 1871.) Because of his interest, Fleer led the company’s effort at adding chewing gum to their product line.

## Bubble Gum Attempt Results in Blibber Blubber

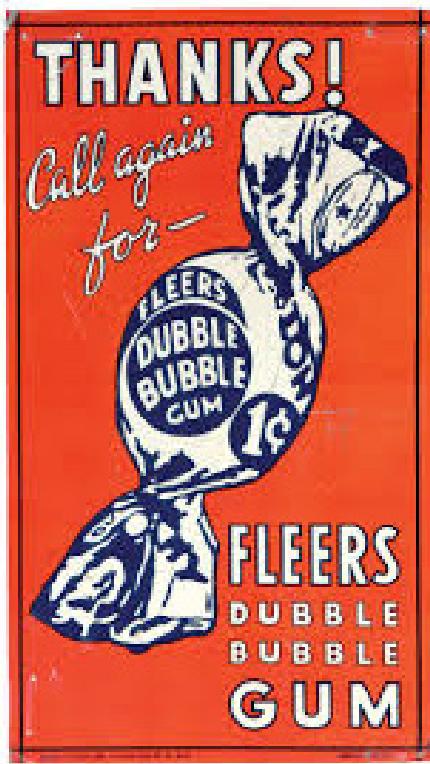
By the end of the 19th century, many companies sold chewing gum. Wrigley came out with a gum; Dentyne was created by a pharmacist who sold it to improve dental hygiene; and another company sold a gum that could be used as a tobacco substitute, to name a few.

The new entries made the



gum market very competitive, so Frank Fler worked on the next “new thing.” He wanted a gum that was strong enough and flexible enough for customers to blow bubbles.

One of his inventions worked well. Calling it Blibber Blubber, Fler began testing it with consumers in 1906. Unfortunately, the gum was too sticky. You could blow bubbles but then the gum stuck to everything. Turpentine was the only thing that would remove it.



### **Bubble Gum First Mastered by Fler Company Accountant**

Creating bubble gum was on the back burner for Fler Company for more than two decades. The company's regular gum still sold well, but they continued to buy their gum base from an outside supplier, which limited their profits on the product.

By 1928, Fler turned the presidency of the company over to his son-in-law, Gilbert Mustin. Mustin wanted to bring costs down, so he set up a laboratory on the third floor of the Fler office building so that he and others could experiment with ways to make their own gum base.

Mustin was on the third floor of the building one day mixing up a new batch of gum base when he was summoned to a phone call. The only telephone in the company was near Mustin's office on the main floor. Mustin popped his head into the accounting office right next door to the lab and asked junior accountant Walter Diemer to step into the lab to watch over the batch Mustin just started.

Diemer was inspired by what he saw. Though Mustin came back to finish with his latest batch of gum, Diemer decided he might see what he could learn about the process at home.

### **Diemer Experiments**

Diemer knew what the basic ingredients of the gum were and began trying a variety of ways to combine them. He finally came up with something he thought would work and



took it to co-workers to test. Though his goal had been to create a base the company could use and avoid having to purchase it, his new mixture even permitted the blowing of small bubbles. Maybe he'd found the secret. The gum tasted good, and everyone was pleased.

The next day, however, it was another story. Diemer arrived at work to check on the gum. To everyone's disappointment, the gum hardened to the point that it was no longer chewable. While he certainly made progress, it felt like being sent back to square one.

Diemer worked for another four months until he found a possible solution. He added a little more latex (a natural substance from rubber trees) to the mixture. This meant that the gum remained elastic and chewable for a longer time.

Mustin was delighted and gave permission to Diemer to teach the factory workers how to make the new gum. As they neared the end of making the first large batch in the factory, they all realized that this big gray mass would not sell. It needed an appetizing color. The only food coloring available in sufficient quantity at the factory that day was pink. Diemer instructed the workers to add pink to the mixture. That happenstance explains why bubble gum is usually pink.

### **Launching the Bubble Gum Product**

Right after Christmas in



"Say, Bub, what are you chewing?" asked Dub. "Wait and I'll show you," and Bub blew a bubble as big as a grapefruit. "Oh, that's Fleer's Dubble Bubble. No other gum blows such big bubbles—and it doesn't stick to the lips." There is one sure way of getting real Dubble Bubble. Look for the Dubble Bubble logo on every wrapper.

1928, the product was ready to go. Employees were excited to see if bubble gum had appeal.

The Fler Corporation also made saltwater taffy that was hand-wrapped in individual papers. Taking the taffy papers, employees wrapped about 100 pieces of Dubble Bubble. Mustin instructed Diemer to take the product to a nearby candy store where he could demonstrate the product and see if it would sell. The retail price was to be a penny. By the end of the afternoon the candy store sold all one hundred pieces of bubble gum.

With this success, the product needed a name. Someone at the company deemed that it was Dubble Bubble—referring to the fact that the bubbles blew much larger than the previous Fler product, Blibber Blubber.

### Why No Patent?

Neither Diemer nor the Fler Company ever took out a patent on the product. Patent filings must explain the ingredients of a product and how it is made, and this information is made public. The company used this as an excuse as to why they never patented Dubble

Bubble—they didn't want to reveal the secret.

However, Fler patented earlier products. The Fler attorneys were likely concerned about how to handle the situation. Diemer invented the product, but the company probably didn't want an employee holding the patent on one of their major products.

As an accountant, Diemer probably never signed any type of waiver. The attorneys may have felt it was advisable to "leave well enough alone."

Fler, however, recognized Diemer for his major contribution to the company. He left his job in accounting and was promoted to be head of manufacturing for Dubble Bubble and oversaw the product line. He was often in sales meetings or on the road demonstrating how to blow bubbles.



### Bubble Gum Weathers the Depression

Any product developed in the late 1920s ran into challenges after the stock market crash of 1929.

But ironically, a small treat like bubble gum that cost only a penny became an "extravagance" that families were willing to pay for. Throughout the 1930s, gum sales had staying power. By the end of the decade, Americans were spending about \$4.5 million per year on Dubble Bubble. The gum was so popular it was distributed as part of military rations at the outset of the war.

By 1942, the government tightened rationing of sugar and latex, bringing production of bubble gum to an end until after the war.

When Fler began making the gum again, it regained its popularity. For a number of years, Dubble Bubble had the bubble gum market to itself. Then in 1947, the Topps Company came out with Bazooka bubble gum.

### Gum Marketing Through the Years

Pud replaced Dub and Bub. In 1930 the Fler Company changed the gum-wrapping process, inserting a funny paper within the gum wrapping. Dub and Bub, the Dubble Bubble twins, were the first stars of the Fler Funnies. In addition to Dub and Bub, customers also received Fler Fortunes and Dubble Bubble facts on the tiny piece





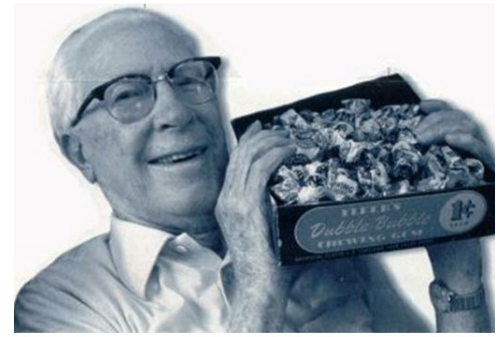
of waxy paper.

At some point during the 1930s, Fleer dropped Dub and Bub and replaced them with stick people comics. In about 1950, a character named Pud and his neighborhood gang replaced the stick characters. By the 1960s Fleer was still relying on Pud but in an attempt to modernize, the cartoonists slimmed him down.

## What Happened to Walter Diemer and the Fleer Company?

Diemer became a senior vice president at the Fleer Company and was also put on the board of directors. He stayed with the company for the rest of his career, retiring in 1970, but remaining on the board for a few more years.

As for the Fleer Corporation, the Philadelphia factory was closed in 1995, and the family put the company on the market. In 1998 Concord Confections purchased the candy division of the company. Concord picked up production of most of the original products and added a bubble gum ball



## Walter E. Diemer 1904 –1998 Accountant, Inventor

In 2004 the Tootsie Roll company bought Concord. Dubble Bubble continues to be manufactured—two of the three plants are now in Canada.



# ABOUT THE GULF COAST MODEL 'A' CLUB

The Traveler newsletter is published for the membership and friends of the Gulf Coast Model 'A' Club. Outings are held monthly at various locations and times. Views expressed in the Traveler are not necessarily those of the Club Officers or MAFCA. Club membership is \$25.00 per year and can be mailed to Becky Baisden at:

GCMAC,  
PO Box 812

Cantonment, FL 32533

Club dues are \$25 per year for individuals or families. We currently have a membership of 40+ families. We believe in doing maintenance on the cars, educating ourselves on the Model 'A', fellowship with other members, showing the cars, driving the cars locally and on tours and having a great time seeing and driving Model 'A' Fords. We have fun and would welcome you as a member whether you own a Model A or not. Come join with us in a wonderful hobby that is historical and worthwhile. You will meet friendly people who are in love with the Model 'A' and love to drive, show and talk about these interesting cars.



## THE TRAVELER

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