

MODEL A FORD HALL OF FAME



Model A Museum
Gilmore Car Museum Campus
Hickory Corners, Michigan



Welcome to the Model A Ford Hall of Fame



The Hall of Fame exists to recognize the people who developed, produced, sold and maintained the Model A Ford vehicles. It also recognizes the many people who developed supporting and derivative tools, accessories and machinery; authored and published articles, magazines and books; and organized and led national organizations devoted to the Model A Ford.

The Hall of Fame is located inside the Model A Ford Museum. It is an evolving element within the museum and is expected to grow in size and importance with each new induction ceremony.

THIRD INDUCTEE



CHARLES EMIL SORENSEN

Inducted 2015

CHARLES EMIL SORENSEN

Nominating Narrative

Charles E. Sorensen (1881 - 1968) was born on September 7, 1881 in Denmark and came to the U.S. when he was four years old. He began working with Henry Ford in 1905, and rose to become a senior official of the Ford Motor Company, his employment spanning a period of four decades. He was the only man who worked with Ford for almost the full history of Henry Ford's management of the company.

Like most other managers at Ford during those decades, he did not have an official job title. However, he served functionally through the years as a pattern maker, foundry engineer, industrial engineer, product manager and executive in charge of all production. By the end of his career, he had become an officer of the company, as a Vice President and a Director. He once said he was "a Viceroy ruling the Production Province of the Ford Empire." In his last years at Ford he was the official who managed the company during the period between the presidencies of Henry Ford I and Henry Ford II.

Sorensen (along with others, notably Walter Flanders, Clarence Avery, and Ed Martin) is credited with developing the first automotive assembly line. They formulated the idea of assembling an automobile by moving it through multiple workstations.

One Sunday in 1910, in the Piquette Plant, Sorensen and Charles Lewis tested his idea. To prove his theory, he towed an automobile chassis with a rope over his shoulders through the Ford plant while others added the parts to the moving car. By the end of the day he determined that adding parts along the way by specialized workers performing repetitive tasks was the fastest and most efficient, and therefore least costly, way to build an automobile.

CHARLES EMIL SORENSEN

Nominating Narrative (cont.)

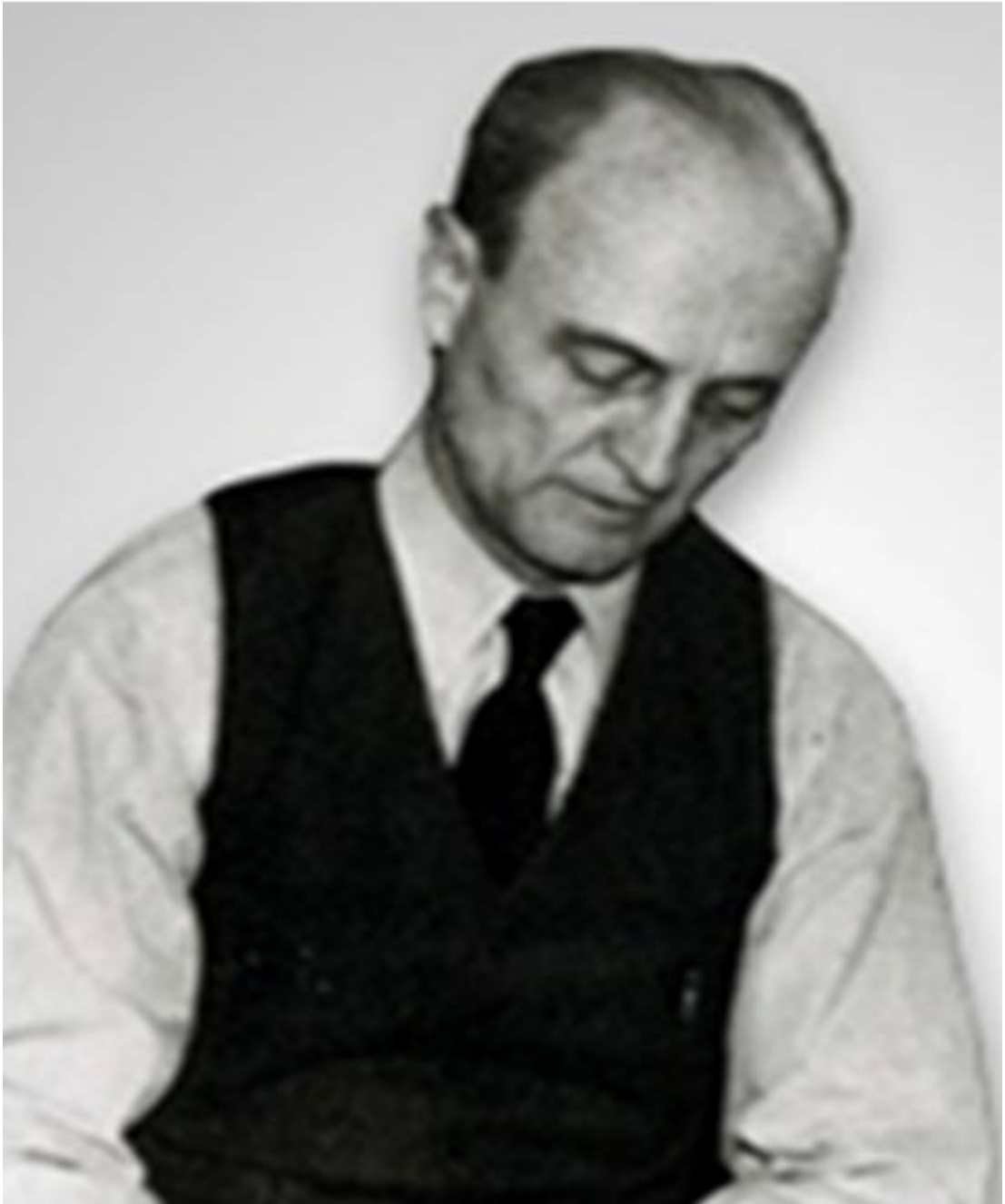
Sorensen used his knowledge to plan the assembly line for the Model A Ford. The Model A Ford was to be assembled in the huge new River Rouge Plant, so a complete new assembly line had to be designed and constructed. In the end, nearly five million Model A Fords were assembled in the plants laid out across the United States and in foreign countries.

Sorensen was the master of Ford's tremendous River Rouge industrial complex during the Model A production years. He was its undisputed "General", being selected over rivals for executive muscle during difficult periods.

The ability to run the production and survive the corporate battles resulted in Sorenson's long tenure at Ford. In short, he was both the political and administrative power who was able to provide the deft management needed during the years after Edsel's death in 1943, to the installation of Henry Ford II as the ultimate successor.

During World War II Sorensen conceived, designed, and built the giant Ford Willow Run plant in nineteen months and then proceeded to turn out eight thousand giant bombers for the war effort. After leaving Ford he served as President of the Willys Corporation for five years in the post-war era. Charles Sorensen died on August 28, 1968 at the Bethesda Naval Hospital, in Maryland.

FOURTH INDUCTEE



EUGENE FARKAS

Inducted 2015

EUGENE FARKAS

Nominating Narrative

Gene Farkas was versatile automotive engineer who developed key components of the Model A Ford. He was born on October 28, 1881 in Hungary and attended schools in Hungary eventually earning a degree in Mechanical Engineering. He was a longtime engineer and key component designer at Ford.

In order to get experience, in 1906 Farkas and a friend left Hungary to travel to the United States. At the time, Farkas knew only 17 words of English. After six months in the U.S., he was hired at Ford. In early 1908 Farkas was working on the design of tools and fixtures for the Model T. He then left Ford for five years. By 1913 Farkas had returned to work for Ford in Detroit.

On October 1, 1915 Charles Sorensen had been asked by Henry Ford to oversee the development of a Ford tractor, a new distinct design separate from the Model T design. Sorensen chose Eugene Farkas as his chief engineer for the project. Farkas was innovative in his designs, for example using a frameless construction for the new tractor. This design feature set an industry standard which lasts to the modern day.

The tractor's three-speed transmission was specifically designed by Farkas for the rigors of agriculture, as was the final drive which used a worm gear for ruggedness and pulling power.

Farkas was involved in the war effort of Ford during the 1914-1918 Great War. In 1918 he designed an aircraft engine and he was involved in early US military tank design. He worked on the Ford X configuration engine, which was a favorite of Henry Ford, but which was not a great success.

EUGENE FARKAS

Nominating Narrative (cont.)

Using expertise honed on such projects Farkas was a key designer of the Model A Ford. He was responsible for the design of the Model A clutch, transmission, axle, suspension and brakes.

Subsequently he worked on designs for the B-24 bomber and a prototype 12 cylinder radial aircraft engine. Farkas retired from Ford in 1947.

After 1947 Farkas enjoyed retirement by playing his piccolo, dancing with his wife Helen, and regular fishing at Laguna Beach. He died on February 24, 1963, and was buried in Detroit's Forest Lawn Cemetery.

FIFTH INDUCTEE



CLAUDE 'RED' GROW

Inducted 2015

CLAUDE "RED" GROW

Nominating Narrative

Claude Grow was born March 21, 1912 in Oklahoma but lived most of his life in Burbank, California. Red was among the first people to restore a Model A using original parts, and high restoration standards. He was one of the founders of the Model A Ford Club of America (MAFCA).

In the 1950's, Red had a used car lot on San Fernando road in Burbank, CA and you could usually find a few Model A's for sale on the lot. There was a Bob's Big Boy restaurant down the street and the fellows who started the Model A Ford Club of America used to eat lunches there. There are pictures showing the gang at Red's Used Car Lot in an early Restorer.

In a copy of Hemming's Motor News, dated March, 1963, the entire back cover is an ad for Red Grow's Ford Parts - mostly trim items, floor mats, motometers, etc.

Red Grow was famous for the car he restored, a 1930 Sport Coupe which he called "Betsy". He bought the car in 1955 for \$100. With great care, Red began to restore the car. He took great pains to only replace worn out parts with original factory parts. Red painted his Sport Coupe with Cabriolet colors. The following is a quote from Red printed in the first issue of The Restorer, "The most difficult job was painting. The original color, which I believe was Ford Washington Blue, had been obliterated by a solid coat of nondescript gray. However, about the time I was ready for painting I came across an original dealer's color poster picturing a Sport Coupe with a "sporty" shade of yellow. After many hours testing and experimenting the shade was matched."

One of the many accessories on the cars was the rare rumble seat

CLAUDE “RED” GROW

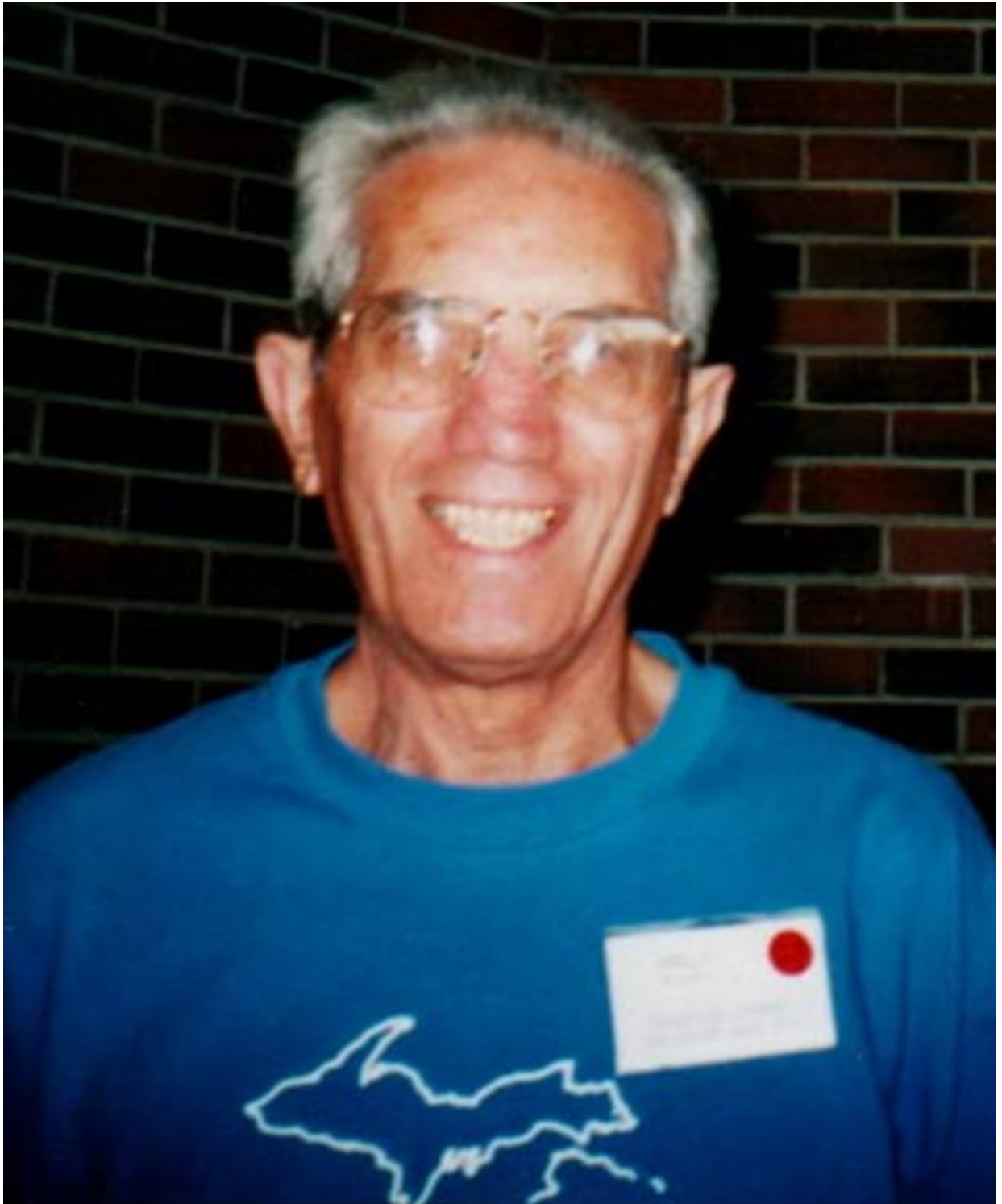
Nominating Narrative (cont.)

The car became famous as the best Model A in the world – 32 top place trophies taken in the 34 shows in which the car was entered. That includes two national shows in 1957 and 1962. Overall the car won 39 trophies. It is said that Red Grow’s car "Betsy" was an inspiration in its time. It drove many people to do their best in restoring their car. This urge to do the best restoration possible developed the need for more information about how to do a better job. As a result, the Judging Standards evolved. We can thank Red and the MAFCA founders for their vision.

In 1967 Red sold Betsy to a Ford Car Dealer Dave Grubbs for \$5000, an unheard of price in those days. As a result, Dave Grubb placed the car in a glass cage in his dealer showroom.

Red passed away in February 1978. He was 65 years old.

SIXTH INDUCTEE



GEORGE DeANGELIS

Inducted 2015

GEORGE DeANGELIS

Nominating Narrative

George DeAngelis, was born on November 21, 1920. He was a long-time Ford Motor Company employee and devoted student of Henry Ford, the Model A Ford, and other Ford automobiles. George is remembered for his research, published works on the Ford Model A, and his long service to the Model A Restorer's Club. He was a soldier, skilled tool and die maker, a gifted artist, and expert restorer.

While still a young man, George DeAngelis went to work for the Ford Motor Company as a tool and die maker. When World War II exploded he soon found himself in the United States Army. As a soldier, he employed his automotive talents as a tank mechanic in General George S. Patton's Third Army as it pushed across Europe to victory.

After the war, George returned home and resumed his work with the Ford Motor Company. As the years went by, he became a supervisor in the drafting and art departments. George was employed by the Ford Motor Company for 39 years and retired as the Chief of the Technical Illustration Section.

When the centennial of Ford's birth was approaching, George decided to build a working exact replica of Henry Ford's first car, the 1896 Quadricycle. There were no blueprints of the Quadricycle, so George gathered descriptions and photographs, and then drew up a set of drawings.

The Quadricycle was finished by June 4, 1963, and George drove his replica along the same route Henry Ford took during the original Quadricycle's first drive on June 4, 1896, sixty-seven years to the day, later. When the festivities ended, The Henry Ford museum purchased the replica from George. 2014.

GEORGE DeANGELIS

Nominating Narrative (cont.)

Then nearly 30 years later, George was commissioned to build a second Quadricycle replica. This second replica now can be seen in Greenfield Village, in a reconstruction of the Bagley Avenue shed, in which the original Quadricycle was built

The Model A Ford community owes George a debt of gratitude, because it was George who together with his friend and collaborator Ed Francis took it upon themselves to salvage all of the engineering parts drawings, releases, and other related materials when they were headed for the dumpster during a “house cleaning” at Ford in the early 1980s. The materials they saved include the parts drawings for almost every Ford Motor Company vehicle from the original Model A through the V8 era, including the Ford Trimotor.

George personally stored the discarded drawings for more than a decade until their research value was realized. He then donated the engineering documents collection to the Benson Ford Research Center in the 1990’s. Although this collection’s official title is Accession 1701, most researchers refer to it as the George DeAngelis Accession.

GEORGE DeANGELIS

Nominating Narrative (cont.)

George served as editor of the bimonthly publication of the Model A Restorer's Club, The Model A News, for many years. His wife, Sidonia, was also involved in the Model A community as office manager of the Model A Restorers Club headquarters in Michigan.

George co-authored one of the leading books on the Model A Ford, The Model A Ford, as Henry Built It. As a result, George cemented his position as one of the most knowledgeable people on the development and production of the Model A Ford, and the correct way to restore one.

In later years he returned to his interest in art, continuing to paint, and to restore an old mill. He also continued to do research on the Model A Ford at the Benson Ford Research Library, thus contributing to the knowledge of the Model A and its production.

Sadly, George DeAngelis, passed away on December 14, 2014.