

# 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.

# 15TH INDUCTEE



Walter O. Briggs  
Inducted 2018

Walter Briggs was an automotive industrialist and a prominent provider of Model A Ford bodies to the Ford Motor Company.

He was born on February 27, 1877 in Ypsilanti, Michigan. At the age of 14 Walter joined his father, a locomotive engineer, at the Michigan Central Railroad. In 1904 he took charge of the upholstery shop for the B.F. Everitt Company, a small Detroit carriage maker. Their main business was the building and repair of horse-drawn vehicles and the supplying of a few early automobile bodies for Ransom E. Olds and Henry Ford. Walter later bought out the Everitt Company and reorganized it as the Briggs Manufacturing Company. At that time, they were providing automobile components and upholstery for several Detroit-based automobile makers – including Abbott, Chalmers, E-M-F, Paige and Ford.

In 1927, just as the Ford Motor Company was ramping up for the introduction of the Model A Ford, a huge fire leveled the Briggs' Harper Avenue factory in Detroit – leaving them with no ability to produce the thousands of automobile bodies they had hoped to sell to Ford. Because their other three Detroit-based plants – Mack Avenue, Meldrum Avenue, and Vernor Highway – were busy with other projects, a deal was made with Ford to lease the 1.65 million square foot Highland Park Model T plant. This facility had been mothballed following the end of Model T production. Walter signed a five-year renewable lease at \$800,000 a year to use the manufacturing space. Remarkably, the lease did not prohibit him from manufacturing bodies for other automobile manufacturers and, for many years, Walter also built bodies for Chrysler inside a portion of the new plant. He later also leased space in Ford's Cleveland, Ohio assembly plant where they built four-door sedan Model A bodies which were shipped to Ford's eastern U.S. assembly plants.

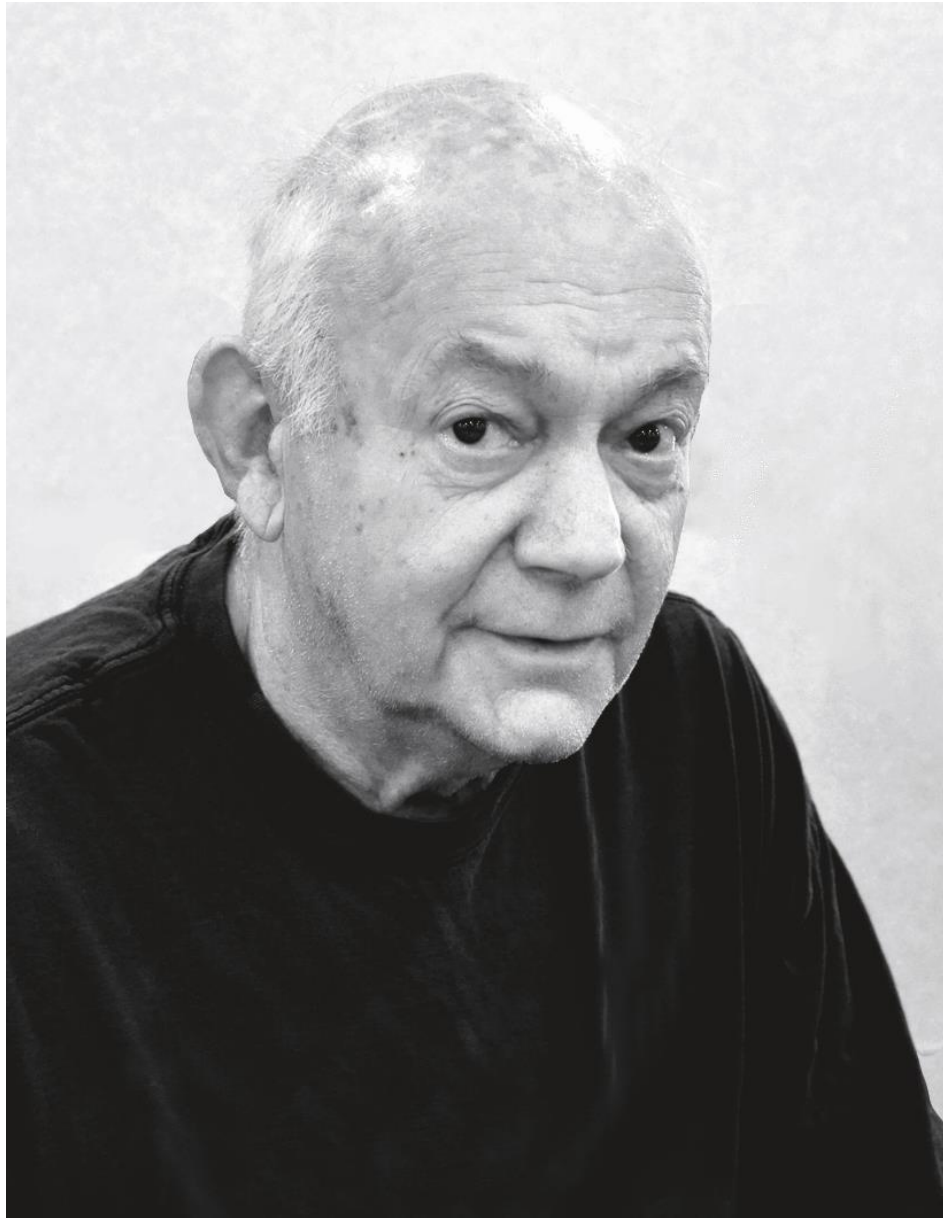
While Ford built most of their own production bodies for the Model A, both Briggs and Murray were outside suppliers of complete bodies – producing all of Ford's Model A Town Sedan and Fordor Sedan bodies. In addition to supplying Model A Town Sedan and Fordor Sedan bodies, the Briggs Company also built the distinctive Model A Town Car, De Luxe Phaeton and Taxicab bodies.

Briggs also supplied Ford with bodies for several rare commercial vehicles – including the Town Car Delivery and the De Luxe Pick-up. The De Luxe Pick-up vehicle was, at first, only offered to the General Electric Company, but later to the general public. Available only in a closed-cab form, its side panels overlapped the rear cab pillars and were attached to the cab with carriage bolts. The box was topped off with chrome-plated brass rails giving an elegant look to this rare Model A vehicle. A similar body was also built by Briggs for the larger Model AA chassis. This model, the Ford Service Car, featured overlapping body side panels and a sweeping express body that fit flush with the cab.

As an adjunct to his automobile-related career, Walter Briggs later became the owner of the Detroit Tigers baseball team and the Tiger's stadium carried the Briggs name.

Walter O. Briggs passed away on January 17, 1952 in Miami, Florida.

# 16TH INDUCTEE



Hans S. ("Doc") Kalinka  
Inducted 2018

Hans S. (“Doc”) Kalinka was born in Chicago, Illinois on May 20, 1935. He graduated from the University of Minnesota, College of Veterinary Medicine, in 1961. He was a dedicated veterinarian, avid fisherman and Model A Ford expert. Doc was an authority and prolific author on the early 1928 Model A Ford, including active membership in the Model A Restorers Club (MARC). He was both a friend and an inspiration to those fortunate enough to have known him.

Doc, who lived in Chilton, Wisconsin, was a veterinarian for over 50 years. But he also had a passion for Model A Fords. He was known as the very early 1928 Ford expert among his wide circle of friends within the Model A hobby. Doc was well known for his ongoing “*Over The Hill*” and “*Tech 101*” articles in the *Model A News* magazine. Over the many years in which he authored this column he created over 100 articles – complete with exacting photographs and detailed narratives – on the component parts of those earliest Model A Ford vehicles. As such, he built an enthusiastic group of followers who have often stated that the first thing they did when they received their *Model A News* magazine was to turn to check out his latest article.

Separate from his well-known reputation as an author and respected authority on all aspects of the early 1928 Model A, he maintained challenging, but friendly, role as both an educator and mentor to others. He was especially involved with those who were either working on the restoration or approaching fine-point judging activities associated with an early Model A -- or those simply with an interest in the subject. Many Model A enthusiasts reported on the personal interest he took in them and their restoration activities. His specialty was great advice and locating and providing parts to those working on an early vehicle.

Doc was at his best when attending old car swap meets and “holding court” at his booth at these gatherings. He was a “permanent fixture” at the annual Iola, Wisconsin and Hershey, Pennsylvania AACA swap meets and enjoyed the opportunities on these occasions to get together with old acquaintances and meet new restorers – especially if they had a question about an early 1928 Model A. Here, his friends would gather, eagerly waiting to see what new parts he might have brought and the story about each one.

In addition to his ongoing veterinary practice and Model A activities, Doc was a serious fisherman. Similar to his approach in the Model A hobby, he didn't just fish in local streams and lakes. Instead, he often arranged to fly to remote locations to fish for trophy-sized catches. Some of his fishing spots in northern Canada were so remote that he had to register with the local authorities so they would know his location in case they needed to provide assistance.

Doc was deeply involved in the Model A Restorers Club over the years. In addition to his ongoing articles in the *Model A News*, he served as Treasurer, was a member of the Judging Standards Committee, a *Henry Award* winner and served as the head of fine-point judging at MARC National Meets. He will be long-remembered for his knowledge and expertise related to the Model A Ford – and his willingness to share his knowledge with others.

Doc passed away on July 9, 2016 and was survived by his wife, Alice, and their four children – Dawn, Anna, Randee, and Jody. He will be remembered widely and his passing was a real loss for the Model A hobby.



# 17TH INDUCTEE



James N. Ryner  
Inducted 2018

James N. Ryner was an enthusiastic Model A hobbyist and a key member and organizer of the newly-formed Model A Ford Club of America (MAFCA). He served in various positions within the fledgling MAFCA organization – including President, Chapter Coordinator and as a member of the Board of Directors. He also became the long-term Managing Editor, Staff Photographer, and Art Director of *The Restorer* magazine. In addition, he served as a Los Angeles policeman and a pilot in the United States Marine Corps Reserve.

Jim, a resident of Lakewood, California, was the proud owner of a 1929 Model A Coupe and a 1931 Model A Town Sedan. In 1956, he joined the Model A Restorers Club of Southern California, the predecessor to the Model A Ford Club of America. Here he found the opportunity to combine his photography hobby and his interest in Model A Fords to become the Staff Photographer for *The Restorer* magazine – the new club's monthly publication. In 1957, he was named as the second President of the growing organization, succeeding Art Miller. He served in this key leadership capacity during the taxing club reorganization and incorporation activities during 1957 as the club moved to become the separate MAFCA organization. His guidance and energetic leadership during this critical period were an important factor in the successful establishment of the independent MAFCA organization. In early 1958, the newly-organized club held their first official meeting as the Model A Ford Club of America.

Following his term as President, Jim became a member of the MAFCA Board of Directors -- with one of his responsibilities being the coordination of new Chapter applications and charters. He also continued his role as Publications Director and Chapter Coordinator for MAFCA, and as Staff Photographer for *The Restorer* magazine.

He was named Managing Editor of *The Restorer* in 1959 and served in this role until 1973. As Managing Editor, Jim was the executive officer of the publication's staff and directed the planning, production and distribution activities of each issue of the publication. As Commercial Art Editor he promoted the sales activities among businesses advertising Model A Ford parts and services in the publication. He was also in charge of the magazine's photographic department, often personally responsible for the many excellent illustrations appearing in the publication. As Editor, he also wrote the ongoing "*Keyboard Chatter*" column for *The Restorer*. Under his leadership *The Restorer* made dramatic progress in both content and presentation and quickly established itself as a prominent publication serving Model A Ford enthusiasts.

Ryner was awarded MAFCA *Life Membership* in 1974 and, in his honor, the MAFCA *Jim Ryder Photography Award* is presented annually to a deserving MAFCA member.

Jim Ryner passed away at the age of 91 in Prescott, Arizona in May 2015.

# 18TH INDUCTEE



**Laurence S. Sheldrick**  
Inducted 2018

Laurence Sheldrick, born October 4, 1892, served as an engine developer at the Ford Motor Company from 1922 to 1943. He was the Chief Design Engineer at Ford during the Model A Ford development period. While he was initially in charge of the development of the engine and chassis, he was directly involved with many aspects of Model A Ford engineering and became the project manager for the Model A.

Laurence joined the Lincoln Motor Company in 1922 after it was acquired by the Ford Motor Company. Before moving to Ford automobile involvements, he served as layout draftsman, working on Lincoln designs. He later was involved with the development of X-8 engine and military tank and aircraft engines.

In April 1923, Ford announced the construction of a new engineering facility to be built in Dearborn to address the needs for expanded engineering capabilities. This new engineering building, designed by Albert Kahn, was completed in December 1924. It was a dramatic departure from existing engineering facilities with its use of ambient lighting and an open and flexible floor plan. The building housed research laboratories, dynamometers, and drafting, body design, and chassis design rooms that made up the new Experimental Department of the Ford Motor Company. This facility was used by Laurence and other Ford engineers, including Joseph Galamb and Eugene Farkas. Laurence was later to become the successor to Galamb as the head of the automotive body design function.

As the Chief Design Engineer, Laurence was responsible for revising the Ford procedure of often using engineering drawings as the medium for carrying design changes directly into production realities. Without prior parts testing and trials, these procedures often served to delay and stifle production. One of his key involvements with the Model A design components, was his teaming up with Henry Ford to develop an improved design for the Model A rear end assembly. Their efforts resulted in light, but strong, assembly for the new Ford car.

After the May 1927 announcement of the cessation of the Model T Ford production activities, rumors about the new Ford car became rampant. As the development of the new Model A car progressed, spy photographers scrambled to get pictures on the car. As the engine and chassis engineer for the Model A, Laurence often participated in the pre-introduction testing of his engineering efforts. Ford was particularly careful to limit the exposure of the new car and public testing activities for the vehicle – especially on public roads. However, in late 1927, despite their precautions, Laurence was nearly mobbed by curious onlookers during a 300-mile test ride he made in the new car from Detroit to Claire, Michigan. Likewise, Henry and Edsel Ford were also caught out in the open behind the wheel of a Model A prototype model by several Chicago Ford Dealers who'd traveled to Detroit in hopes of catching a glimpse on the mysterious new Ford.

Laurence Sheldrick died in 1981, at the age of 88, in Melbourne, Florida.