

November Newsletter from Vern Tardel

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Vern Tardel Newsletter ON-THE-LINE



November 2012

Dear Vintage Car Owner and Hotrodders,

It's November and it seems that summer just blew by with so little time to drive in sunny weather, tops down, or windows open. You might be thinking about putting your hotrod away for the winter, or you just might live in Arizona and have plenty of cruising days and nights ahead of you. Regardless of where you live enjoy that ride!

I wanted to share a few more photos from my trip to the Bonneville Salt Flats this year. I hope you enjoy these pics and they show just some of the raw power or just the crazy nature of those of us who drive on the Flats to see how fast our vehicle can go!



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Answering "speakers" will not be specific enough. These speakers are labeled Ford on the fabric. Just another example of the unique items you will find around the Tardel Shop. For a larger picture of the speaker, go to the lower part of the Newsletter.

Some of the vehicles at the Flats are "arrows" (shown in this early morning shot above) with powerplants that look something like the shot below.



Or you will see the contrasting hotrod that is made ready for the Flats and folks just want to see how fast they can make "her" go. Like the Super Bee shown below.



When you visit the Flats you also get to see some interesting rides that folks drive to watch the show. The hotrod below caught my eye.

To check your answer go to the Vern Tardel website by clicking on the link below.

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ANSWER](#)



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Using last month's "What is it?" tool to pull the heads off this 1934 Ford flathead motor.



And of course what would the Flats be without some of the "belly tank lakester" body styles like the one shown below (sometimes called drop tanks). This style of Bonneville speedster build became popular after WWII when surplus airplane drop tanks were plentiful.



Hot rodders raced the dry lakes of California to set new land speed records and aerodynamically neutral belly tanks were everywhere. It didn't take long to make one into a "lakester." According to GM historians, Bill Burke of the [So-Cal Speed Shop](#) first attempted to convert a 168-gallon P51 Mustang belly tank into a "lakester," before switching to the larger 305-gallon P38 Lightning tank (information taken from Wikipedia).

The "belly tank" beauty above has taken the art of building a lakester to a very high level. As you can see, the belly tank or "lakester" is still popular with some Bonneville enthusiasts.



I will close my musings with a pic of #1936. This areodynamically designed speedster has a rear engine and made a few very nice runs while I was there.

The trip to Bonneville is always worth the drive and the inhospitable nature of the Salt Flats is just as it should be. Miles of salt, sun, and heat provide the perfect "track" for high speeds. It is a place where you test what you can get out of your vehicle and yourself!

Vern

Who's Been Spotted in the Shop?



Ed Binggeli at the Tardel Shop.

A regular visitor to the Tardel Shop is Ed Binggeli. Ed was the owner of Bing's Speed Shop located in Santa Rosa beginning in 1951. Ed kept his shop open until 1976. But Ed still works on hotrods in his own shop at his house in Windsor and also spends time in other shops throughout the North Bay area.

Ed is 88 years old and a great-grandfather. When I saw Ed at the Tardel Shop he was helping Vern answer a design question he had about a roadster build he was working on.

Ed is a legend in hot rodding and it has been my pleasure to spend a little time with him at the Tardel Shop.

Also seen in the Tardel Shop were a gang of speedsters that both work in the shop, working on their hotrod in the Tardel Shop, or were there for a visit. The picture below

was taken last September. It was like herding cats to get all these guys to stop working on their projects to get this photo.



Starting at bottom left is Ross Reed, Jack Lowe (see note about Jack below), Kevin Gilfether and back row left is Ed Binggeli, Jimmy Faoro, David Featherston (Vern's Co-Author on his book), and Vern Tardel.

Sad Note: Jack Lowe shown above in front of the Tardel Shop passed just one week after this picture was taken. The hotrod community and his many friends and loved-ones have all lost a super great guy!

While I was at the Tardel Shop this day someone brought in a large circa 1960 living room radio and record player (shown below). It didn't take long before someone found an LP of the Beatles, *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* in the shop. The next thing I heard was someone saying, "crank it up!" For a short time everyone at the Tardel Shop was tapping their toes or wiggling a little to "[With a Little Help from My Friends](#)"...and no I am not kidding. You can't make this kind of stuff up. It was a deja vu experience.



Ed and David Featherston checking out the old "hi-fi" outside the Tardel Shop.

As you can see in the photo above, Ed Binggeli is getting around just fine at 88 and still working on hotrods!

Who's Working in the Shop?



Vern staging a frame for one of his builds.

I decided to devote this "Who's Working in the Shop?" to Vern Tardel, owner of Vern Tardel Enterprises.

Vern started Tardel Enterprises in 1975 but of course he started working on and driving hotrods when he was a teenager. Tardel Enterprises

has always been located in Santa Rosa, California. If you visit the Tardel Shop you cannot miss the Tardel fashioned mailbox. This "flathead" mailbox (shown below) has become the marker of the Tardel Shop driveway.



Vern Tardel built Ford flathead.

Vern became interested in hotrods when he was a teenager. But I could go on and on writing about Vern and his



Tardel flathead mailbox.

signature builds, but I thought it would be better to have Vern tell you himself about how he got started in hotrodding and Vern Tardel Enterprises. Just click the link below and it will take you to an interview video I shot and put on YouTube. You'll have to give me a break as I am not a professional videographer, but I hope the first-hand interview with Vern will make up for it.



[Interview with Vern Tardel.](#)

It has truly been an honor and a privilege to get to know Vern. He has pulled my butt out of the fire a number of times when I was stuck with an problem on my 1946 Ford Pickup.

Here are just a few more photos of Vern and the Tardel Shop.



Vern and Frank looking over a 1934 Ford flathead motor.



Vern looking over a 1940 Ford speedometer rebuild that was done in the Tardel Shop.



Vern's 1924 Model T.



Vern's Ford Flathead Blown Roadster he runs at Bonneville.



A view of the boneyard outside of the Tardel Shop.

Signs of the Past



Walking around the Tardel Shop I once again used my "Way Back Machine" by checking out the signs and other paraphernalia.

You will find everything from license plates to classic baked enamel signs

throughout the Tardel Shop.

Many of the signs are car related and others are simply funky in nature and are a part of the funny-bone of Vern. Like the Air Raid Shelter sign shown below.



Other signs are advertising of yesteryear like the Star tobacco sign below. In the upper corner you will see the price of a pouch of Star tobacco was 10 cents in those days.



Sometimes you will find signs in the trunk of a roadster. This happens to be Vern's '32 Highboy and the trunk is plastered with stickers from his trips to the Bonneville Salt Flats.



Having a 1946 Ford Pickup myself, I could not resist putting this old magazine advertisement in the newsletter.

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Ford Farming's a business. And, like any other business, farming takes proper equipment. If a man expects to make money at it. On hundreds of thousands of farms, Ford Trucks are handling all the hauling jobs, heavy and light, around the place and in and out of town—all the way in to the big markets with loads of stock, poultry and crops. That's using hardware to save backwork—plus saving time and money!

Why do so many farmers pick Fords and stick to Fords? Simply because, for a quarter of a century Ford Trucks have been standing up under the toughest farm service, at mighty low cost. They've

proved their economy and reliability in all kinds of work in all kinds of weather. They're ideal trucks for farm service.

The new Ford Trucks are the best in Ford history. They're being delivered all over the country, right now—half-ton pickups and stake body trucks, business, heavy duty units—with 100-H.P. V-8 or 90-H.P. 6-cylinder engines—trucks with the newest engineering advancements.

Why not drop in at your Ford Dealer's next time you're in town, and see what Ford engineering has accomplished?

MORE ECONOMICAL • MORE RELIABLE • MORE ENDURING!

Check the exclusive features in the new Ford Trucks! They've got new fuel-and-oil-saving 4-ring aluminum alloy pistons, new longer-lived, steel-cored Silvaloy rod bearings, new cooling system protection to prevent loss of water and anti-flores, new convenience in servicing, new balanced carburetion to add to economy, new moisture-protected ignition—and a score of other important advancements. See the new Ford Trucks!

FORD TRUCKS



MORE FORD TRUCKS ON THE ROAD • ON MORE JOBS • FOR MORE GOOD REASONS

If you live in the North Bay area you are familiar with the town of Cotati. But did you know that Cotati once had one of the best dragstrips in the North Bay area back in the '60s.



I hope you are enjoying this section of the newsletter. I certainly enjoy looking around the Tardel Shop for signs of the past.

Build of the Month

The build of the month is a 1934 Coupe owned by Andy DeVilbiss. Andy lives in Santa Rosa, California. Andy has a long history of building and owning various hotrods.



The build of the month - Andy's 1934 Ford Coupe.

We have included a few photos of Andy's previous hotrods just to give a glimpse of his past.

Andy's history in the hotrod world includes working for Kurt and Harry Struse (PRISM), Arnold Berkey, he continued bodywork in the Army, and then worked at Silvera Pontiac until 1982. From 1982 - 92 Andy opened his own business specializing in



fabrication, painting, upholstery and engine work stretching from Ford flatheads to the Crysler Hemi, and a good number of Chevy powerplants as seen below.



Andy DeVilbiss at the Tardel Shop.



Andy's '29 roadster modified out of a Ford Club Coupe.

As mentioned, Andy has worked as a fabricator, car painter, oh...and a nurse. Yup, you read that right. Andy was diagnosed with cancer in 1986 and following his remission he decided to change his career. Andy became a nurse from 1992 -2006 specializing in cancer care for patients in the V.A. During that time this soft natured big man provided care for a number of individuals many of which were dealing with cancer (which Andy new that kind of suffering first-hand). In 2007 Andy was asked by Fred Stoke to paint the pink fire truck (used for fundraising events to find a cure and help those suffering from cancer) parked at the Stoke Ranch in Santa Rosa, California.



The pink fire truck that Andy painted.

Andy was then asked by Fred Stoke to do some work for him. Andy has been working on Stoke builds (Stoke Ranch is just down the road from the Tardel Shop) since then.

Andy has quite a history of building hotrods and more. Some of these include 1968 Camaro RSS, '72 Vega Wagon, '23 T-bucket, '64 Stingray Corvette, a '56 Chevy Pickup (shown below) , and a '29 Club Coupe which Andy modified into a roadster with the massive flames painted on the side (shown in an upper panel).



Andy's nice '56 PU build.

Recently, Andy decided to build what he calls his last build and last hotrod. We will see about that, but this hotrod is going to be very cool. I personally love the lines of a 1934 Ford coupe and have been a fan since seeing Billy Gibbons' (of ZZ Top fame) 1933 Ford coupe.



Andy's '34 coupe will have a monstrous Hemi powerplant built by Gene Gillmore. Andy is working with Vern on building the frame, suspension, running gear and body. The powerplant is a 354 C.I. Chrysler Hemi that has been ported, polished, and balanced and will sport a Hillborn fuel injection system.

This is the kind of build that I feel fortunate to watch come together. Andy is doing a great job building his '34. The fabrication is first class and well it needs to be running this kind of power.

Andy became a member of the Jokers of Marin County/Bay Area in 2008. His uncle was an early member of the Sacramento Chapter of the Jokers (hotrod club) and Andy wanted to join the Jokers for many years. He made it and wears his T's with the Joker logo proudly.

I give this hotrodder five stars for being an excellent builder and a really great guy!

For those of you asking the question: why is there a Hemi build going on in the Tardel Shop? This is a little known secret, Vern has built a number of Hemi powered Fords. But let's not let that get out as Vern is a dyed-in-the-wool Ford flathead guy. Always has been, and always will be!

We will show you Andy's finished '34 Ford coupe in one of the future newsletter issues. Be prepared for another beautiful hotrod hitting the streets in the North Bay.

Larger Picture of the "What is it?"



What is it?

Featured Product

**Vern Tardel's
"Let Me Help You"
Series SEVEN Book Set:**



- [Ford Steering](#): Service Repair and Modification. 23 pages
- [Ford Transmission](#): Service & Repair. 31 pages
- [Ford Brakes](#): Hydraulic Brakes for Your Early Ford. 40 pages
- [Ford Ignition](#): Ignition Systems for Early V8's. 44 pages
- [Dropped Axles](#): 1928 - 1934 Ford Installation Guide. 32 pages
- [Dropped Spindles](#): 1928 - 1948 Ford Creation & Installation Guide. 24 pages
- [Stromberg 97 Carburetors](#): Carburetor Service and Repair. 40 pages

To read about specific details of each individual book please go to the individual book page at the Tardel website link below.

[Vern Tardel's "Let Me Help You" Book Set of 7 for \\$69.95](#)

Vern Tardel Enterprises Early Ford Parts, Repair, and Builds



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