
From The Saddle...



Jim Smart

Editor

Mustangs, Memories, and a Future To Share...

I just returned from the Mustang Club of America Grand National in Greenville, South Carolina and I've never felt better about the hobby and its people. It's feeling a sense of maturity in the hobby, especially with familiar faces seen again and again throughout the past 16 years.

I joined the Mustang Club of America in 1978, just two years after the club's founding in 1976. I've been a Mustang enthusiast since 1974 when Dad bought Mom an aging '67 coupe from the original owner for \$400. They had no idea what they were starting back then. That same Mustang remains with me today - 20 years and 100,000 miles later. Like a lot of us with a passion for the marque, I grew to deeply love and respect the most successful nameplate in Ford's history. Understanding what the cars were all about became an obsession that ultimately led to my

profession as an automotive journalist and historian. I can't imagine what life would have been like had my father never brought that Mustang home in the first place.

In 1984, Donald Farr of *Mustang Monthly* fame invited me to edit the most respected magazine in the Mustang business. I was stunned when he called me. I moved to Florida from my native Maryland in 1984 and spent the next three years learning the ropes of automotive journalism, often the hard way. I credit Donald with much of what I learned during those early years. He gave me my start in this business long ago when few even knew who I was.

Since that time, I have written for a variety of publishing houses, written two automotive books, and done a stint with Petersen Publishing Company in Los Angeles (*Mustang & Fords, Muscle Car Classics, and Car Craft*).

These days, I call West Tennessee home where I serve in a sales and marketing capacity with a soft parts supplier to the automakers. It's a fascinating business, especially if you love automobiles.

All in all, I've spent 16 years researching and writing about Mustangs, and I've never tired of it.

Most of you know me from reading *In Search of Mustangs* in the *Mustang Times* over the years. Others of you may remember me from *Mustang Monthly* or perhaps one of the Petersen specialty magazines. To say the least, I've been a lot of places in 16 years.

When I joined the MCA, the *Mustang Times* was little more than a stapled together newsletter. I can remember the enthusiasm that went with the *Mustang Times*' first glossy color cover in 1979. This monthly magazine has experienced

a few facelifts and subtle changes since then, but it hasn't progressed sufficiently enough to achieve the membership growth levels the MCA is looking for. So the MCA is taking a closer look.

Plenty of us have criticized the MCA's leadership through the years, often without extending a hand to help find solutions. Being critical is easy. Finding solutions is the real challenge.

Earlier this year, I asked the MCA what I could do to help get the *Mustang Times* off of life support and into a position that served MCA members effectively.

They (Jim Osborn) responded with a valid question I wasn't prepared for. They asked me if I would be interested in editing the magazine.

It took several weeks and a couple of visits with Jim and Sue Osborn to help me arrive at a decision. I feel honored that MCA's leadership thought enough of my character, experience in the business, and knowledge of the breed to ask me to be your editor. As a result, I feel driven to breathe new life into our magazine.

Change in the magazine won't come all at once, but gradually, beginning with some subtle changes in this issue. In the months to come, positive change will be an integral part of the program. For 1994, we're planning a new look for the Mustang's 30th birthday.

What's more, we're planning informative and entertaining editorial content that will leave you

watching the mailbox each month. In short, we want the *Mustang Times* to be the magazine it has never been before - a magazine bent on serving Mustang enthusiasts.

Certainly the *Mustang Times* will never be a *Mustang Monthly*, nor a *Mustang & Fords*, because that's not what this magazine is all about. Forget the six page color spreads and mega fold-outs because you'll probably never see them here. But we do intend for the new *Mustang Times* to be more informative and entertaining than it has ever been in its history. We think you'll like what you see in the months and years to come.

If you know anyone who was once an MCA member, we ask that you invite them back. What's more, we ask that you be a cheerleader for the MCA, especially in 1994, the year of the Mustang. And please let us know what you're up to. The end result will be a larger and stronger organization we can all feel proud of.

What the reader and MCA member thinks matters most when it comes to planning future issues of the *Mustang Times Magazine*.

As a result, we invite your letters and telephone calls when it comes to what you'd like to see in the magazine.

In this issue, we're asking our readers what they would like to see via the Reader's Survey on page 57.

We invite you to fill it out and send it to:

**Mustang Times
Reader's Survey
P.O. Box 447
Lithonia, GA 30058**



Mustang Owners!

Jesser's Auto Clinic is offering distinctive keys especially for your Mustang. Jesser's found the 10-karat white gold plated keys by accident (the original manufacturer stopped production 20 years ago) and negotiated a deal to purchase the remaining inventory. Supplies are limited, and when the keys are gone ...they're gone!

1964-1966 \$14.50 each

1967-1993 \$21.95 each

- Specify year
- Include phone number
- Red, Black or Blue Emblem
- Matching leather key fob \$9.95

**JESSER'S AUTO CLINIC
26 West Street dept. MCA
Akron, Ohio 44303-2344**

C.O.D. (216) 376-8181

Phone orders 7 days, 9 am-9 pm EST
★ N.O.S. & OTHER COLLECTABLE KEYS AVAILABLE ★

