

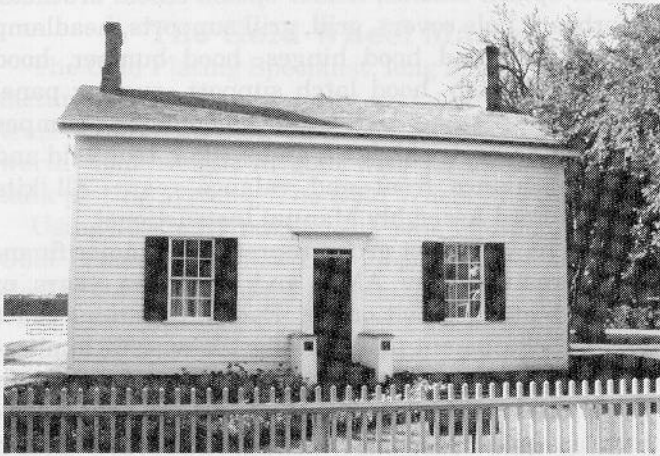
# Dearborn: Home of Ford and the Mustang

by Marianne McDonald

*We recently ran across this travel article in the Gate City Triad Mustang Club (Greensboro, North Carolina) newsletter. We contacted Marianne and she graciously forwarded us these photos and gave us permission to use the piece for your reading pleasure.*

If you are a big fan of the Ford, any Ford, Dearborn, Michigan, is the place to visit. Dearborn may be about the size of Greensboro, but it has a small town feel to it. Almost everyone works for Ford Motor Company and it was rare to see a building or street that was not named after some facet of Ford.

During our stay in Dearborn, we visited several places of interest to Ford enthusiasts. Greenfield Village was the first stop on our tour of the area. The Village is a collection of buildings Henry Ford put together. There are homes that once were owned by Noah Webster, Washington Carver, the Wright Brothers, Henry Ford's childhood home, and Harvey Firestone's childhood farm. Other buildings of interest were the Wright Brother's Bicycle Shop, the workshop of Thomas Edison, and the courthouse where Abraham Lincoln argued cases as an attorney in Illinois. All of the buildings were purchased by Henry Ford, dismantled, and rebuilt in Greenfield Village. Some people collect coins, stamps, or even cars, but Henry Ford collected buildings. One interesting side note to the Village was the ability to see the Ford testing facility located next door.



*This white frame house replete with picket fence is the birthplace of Henry Ford. This building, along with numerous others, is part of a collection put together by Henry Ford in Greenfield Village.*

Our next stop was Ford World Headquarters. We were allowed to look at the cars displayed in the lobby and visit the Ford Store. Another stop included the marketing office for the SVT (Special Vehicle Team) cars. There we spoke with an individual who provides support to the owners of these high perfor-

mance vehicles.

The next day was like icing on the cake. We had been working for several weeks to gain access to the Dearborn Assembly Plant where the Mustang is produced and were finally allowed to tour the facility on Wednesday morning. Jim Seisser was our guide. He is an engineer in charge of interior trim and has worked on the 1999 Mustang. We actually started our tour at the end of the line where cars are started for the first time and where the lights, brakes, and speedometer are first tested. We went on to see every stage of the car's construction with the exception of the painting area. The parking lot/holding area for the cars was a sea of Mustangs ready to be shipped. Most of the components for the cars are made in the Dearborn Assembly Complex which includes a steel mill, a glass factory, and a stamping plant. This was definitely the highlight of our trip.



*"An American Legend" just about says it all about the Ford Mustang. This mural depicting the old and new generation Mustangs is painted on the lobby wall of the Dearborn Assembly Plant.*

The Henry Ford Museum was our last stop. If you thought collecting buildings was strange, you should see some of the other things he collected. One of the most unusual items was "Edison's Last Breath." It was a test tube containing the last breath of Thomas Edison. The test tube was given to Henry Ford by Thomas Edison's son shortly after he passed away. The first Mustang to roll off the assembly line was also on display along with several other rare automobiles including an early concept car for the Mustang. The Museum had a large variety of items from locomotives to furniture from the turn of the century.

Needless to say, this vacation was not our usual trip to the beach. Not only did we get to see a part of the country we had not visited before, but we also learned a great deal about Henry Ford and Ford Motor Company. MT