

RAA Rare gift

by Bill Wells

It is commonly known that the then all new 1964 1/2 Mustang was the Official Pace Car of the May 1964 Indianapolis 500. What is not commonly known is that Ford Motor Company had a "special limited edition 1964 Pace Car

commemorative memento" made which was given away as gifts to selected guests and company officers who attended that race as part of the official Ford Motor Company host contingent.

A sterling silver tabletop cigarette lighter was that special (and

very rare) gift. Measuring about 2 3/4 inches high with a 2 1/4 inch round base, the lighter is engraved "Mustang" above a galloping horse inside a circle with the words "Official Pace Car, Indianapolis 500, 1964" on three separate lines underneath the



encircled horse.

The lighter, shown in the photo on the previous page, was a recent gift to me from Herbert L. Misch. Herb, my father-in-law of 30-plus years, and the late Gene Bordinat were the two principal Ford executives who were the creators of the original 1962 Ford Mustang experimental sports car prototype. This mid-engine two-passenger prototype was the "embryo" for the 1964 1/2 Mustang.

In 1962 Herb was Ford's Vice President, Engineering, and Gene Bordinat was Vice President, Design. Almost all of the many Mustang historical books feature the 1962 Mustang prototype with pictures and stories of both Herb and Gene. In fact, the prototype remains on display today in the Henry Ford Museum in

Dearborn, Michigan, along with pictures of Herb and Gene next to the displayed car. Herb and Gene were also key members of the team that created the 1964 1/2 Mustang!

Herb and his wife attended the 1964 Indianapolis 500 as part of the Official Ford Motor Company host contingent where they were given this lighter as a memento. Herb believes that less than 60 of these lighters were made. He has had this rare gift tucked away in safe keeping ever since. How many people who have knowledge of this special gift (until now) and how many of the lighters still exist today is indeed a mystery!

Herb has been very special to me over these many years and has been very supportive of my classic car hobby, especially my restored 1965 Mustang convert-

ible. Now this "rare and special gift" is part of my car memorabilia collection and is equally special to me.

It is once again tucked away for safe keeping.

Our sincere thanks to Mr. Wells for sharing this wonderful story and information on a very rare and unique part of the Mustang hobby.

Mustang Times is always on the lookout for articles and information on both the unusual and the common-place facets of Mustang history.

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