



PEOPLE - MUSTANG'S TRUE LEGACY RACING

By John M. Clor

The best thing about attending one of the now-famed "Mustang Anniversary" events isn't just seeing all those great cars—it's also meeting so many "Mustang people," each with their own unique Mustang "story." In fact, a few years ago I was writing a magazine column about the widespread appeal of the Mustang and mentioned that every single person I know seems to have a Mustang story (... and I'm NOT just talking only about past and present owners here).

That whole concept got me to thinking, and sparked a discussion with some Ford marketing folks on how a "My Mustang Story" contest would be a pretty cool way to help launch the 2010 Mustang. (I had also said that for my money, a collection of personal Mustang stories over the years would make for an innovative Mustang history book. Think of it: "The Story of the Ford Mustang, as Told through the Experiences of Hundreds of People." Hey, I know I'd love reading it—but that came along after I had already penned and published my own attempt at a unique hardcover history, "The Mustang Dynasty"—so don't go stealing my idea for another book!

In any case, the MCA's Mustang 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration in Birmingham, Alabama, revealed a wealth of colorful cars and even more colorful personal Mustang stories, just as I had expected it would. The show itself had many highlights—the Mustang Challenge Series races, the Cobra R exhibition race, and seeing Vaughn Gittin, Jr., "drift" his 2010 Mustang across the entire Barber Motorsports Park racetrack (and even a little bit of the lawn), were all quite memorable. So was witnessing the endless line of Mustangs being staged for the Thursday-night cruise to nearby Homewood, and the Ford Racing Performance Parts installs being done right on-site, and of course getting to meet Ford CEO Alan Mulally as he toured the show.

What's more, I got to camp out in Acme's main Ford apparel tent for daylong book signings and Mustang discussions with literally hundreds of owners—plus I then spent the evenings representing the Ford Performance Group at club gatherings—including dinners with the Mach 1 Registry, the SVT Owners Association and the Mustangs Across America participants. My boss at Ford Racing, Jamie Allison, was the keynote speaker at Sam Haymart's MAA dinner, and he brought along Vaughn Gittin Jr. to share his own Mustang story as well. (I must admit to having a very interesting conversation with Vaughn about his views on the new Mustang and how the car is perceived by today's youth market.) But like I said, everyone I had met during the 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary weekend was quick to share their own Mustang story with me—and there were so many good ones that I wish I had the room to recount all of them for you here.

Of course I know that's not possible, so let me at least share one fun story with you now: It comes from Joseph Scott, who I met along with his dad, "PaPa Joe," during my book signing. Joseph told me that his history with Mustang goes back to his very birth! As he tells it:

"My 'Mustang Story' begins in the summer of 1969 when my proud parents Joe (Papa Joe) and Virginia Scott brought

their new baby boy (me!) home from the hospital in my dad's 1966 Candy Apple Red Mustang Fastback 2+2! My dad had special-ordered the brand-new car back in 1966 from his local dealer (Jack Yarber Ford) in Belmont, Mississippi. He recalls that it seemed to take forever before it arrived, complete with an all-black interior and Firestone double Redline tires. It had the standard 289 V-8 and was truly his pride and joy.

"I can't imagine how hard it was for dad to leave it with his then-fiancé (Virginia) as he headed off to Vietnam in 1967 to serve our country in the U.S. Army. He must have had great faith that she would treat it as he would have while he was overseas—and she did. When he returned they got married and decided to have me—and so yes, my first ride in a car was in a Mustang!



"I guess that must be where my passion for the Ford Mustang comes from.

"As life rolled on, my dad had to sell his beloved '66 Fastback and get a more family oriented car, as many young dads did back then. (By the way, he traded it for a 1969 Ford LTD with the 429 cid big-block!) But the story didn't end there.

"As I grew up, I always had a desire for a Mustang, but didn't feel that I absolutely HAD to buy one until the redesigned 2005's came out—was totally consumed by the look of this car! I had been reading about it for months, but wasn't able to see it in person until the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary show in Nashville in the summer of 2004, and I was hooked! By January of 2005 I found myself driving by Woody Anderson Ford in Huntsville, Alabama, just to see if they had a new Mustang GT. As most of those stories go, just a few hours after I stopped at the dealer for a test-drive, I drove off the dealer lot in my very first new car. I'm not sure who was more excited at the time—me or my seven-year-old son (who was really pumped!) Mustang has touched another generation.

"I wound up with a V-6 model, but I have had fun modifying it to my taste—and isn't that what owning a Mustang is all about, anyway? I thought it was cool that after all those years had passed since coming home in that '66, our family had another Mustang in it! But that just gave my Dad the fever to get back into a Mustang himself. Sure enough, a sweet, red 1997 Mustang GT convertible with only 60K miles on it caught his eye, so he bought it. So for the past few years, my dad and I





have enjoyed participating in and attending local car shows together. And it's also been a great way for me to spend time with my own son, who at just 10-years-old is already a Mustang fanatic! We're not sure if he'll get my 2005 when he turns 16, or how our family fleet will change, but I can't wait to see how my son's own 'Mustang story' will unfold.

"It was great spending the entire weekend with my dad at Barber Motorsports Park for the Mustang's 45<sup>th</sup> birthday show. We reminisced about all the cars and enjoyed all that the show had to offer. I just have to say thanks to Ford for giving us "car guys" a vehicle that stirs up so much passion and connects people and families in so many ways! Happy 45<sup>th</sup>, Mustang!"

Thanks, Joseph Scott—I couldn't have said it better! And

thanks to all who share in the Mustang hobby—you're not only among Ford's best and most notable customers, but people like you help make the Mustang ownership experience like no other car on the planet! (Look for more Ford owner perspective on [www.FordPerformance.com](http://www.FordPerformance.com)—we're driving Ford passion!)

*John Clor*

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