

# IN SEARCH OF MUSTANGS

As of this writing (April 11, 1981), participation and enthusiasm have picked up quite a bit. We now have nearly 1000 participants! Still and all, there is room for improvement and that is what we are going to do. By fall of this year, we will have sent notices of our project to *Mustang Monthly*, *Super Ford*, *Hemming's Motor News*, etc., as well as *Hot Rod*, *Motor Trend*, *Car Craft*, etc. Whether we are able to get the cooperation of all these publications is anyone's guess, but we promise this: we are going to give it our best effort. By asking the help of readers of other publications, our project will be more widely publicized, along with the MCA.

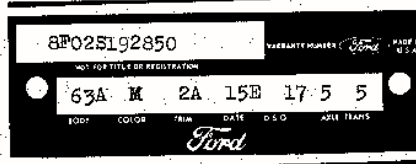
Did you know that Mustang production stopped at Metuchen, New Jersey, during the 1971 model year? I have only a very few 1971 Mustangs with the "T" code for the Metuchen plant. All of them are early 1971 Mustangs. You may wonder why production ceased then. Mustang sales were very low by 1971 and during that year the new Ford ponycar Pinto was making its debut. In 1971, Pinto production began at Metuchen, New Jersey, as well as a Canadian plant. Another interesting fact is that I have no 1971-on San Jose, California, built Mustangs. From all of the vast information I have to date, Dearborn, Michigan was the only plant from mid-1971-on that built the Mustang.

Many of you have written and called inquiring about this project, wanting to know what it is all about. "In Search of Mustangs" began over a year ago with the December, 1979, issue of *Mustang Times*. The goal is to find all of the unique and not-so-unique Mustangs, the Shelbys, and prototype Mustangs built from 1965-73. This is to be accomplished by a listing of serial numbers, build dates, and DSO numbers from all of the 1964½ thru 1973 Mustangs and Shelbys. With this list, you can see Mustang production from start to finish! Of course, not every Mustang built will appear; that is probably impossible. But we can cover a healthy percentage. I would like to include the day of the week that each Mustang was built (for those that included a build date or date code). This is accom-

plished by my visiting a local library and getting copies of calendars from 1965-73. The final listing is improving all the time. You'll see it works.

Now, for a little VID education! Many of you have asked what the VID plate is. This is the "Vehicle Identification Plate" located on your driver's door. From 1964½ thru 1965, it is a plate about two by four inches across. On 1966-69 cars, it is a narrower plate about one inch by four inches across. 1970-on vehicles had a vinyl sticker on the driver's door that contains all the same information except a date code. 1970-on had the month and year that your Mustang rolled off the assembly line. The information that we are looking for to make this project "tick" is the warranty number (see below), date or date code, and the DSO number (Domestic Special Order). The DSO number tells us where your Mustang or Shelby was sold new. It does not tell the dealer name, but it does tell us in what area your Mustang was sold.

Below is the VID plate from a 1968 Mustang fastback. The first position in the warranty number is the model year,



"8" as in 1968. The second position indicates the assembly plant, "F", which is Dearborn, Michigan. Others include "T", which is Metuchen, New Jersey, assembly plant, and "R" which is the San Jose, California, assembly plant. The third and fourth positions are the body serial code, in this case, "02" is fastback. The fifth position is the engine code, in this case, "S" is the 390-2V V-8 engine. The last six digits are the consecutive unit number beginning at 100001. That makes this Mustang the 92,850th unit off the Dearborn line in the 1968 model year.

To continue, 63A is the body code (63 means fastback and A is standard trim). Color M is Wimbledon white. Trim 2A is black vinyl. Date 15E is the build date May 15, 1968. DSO 17 for 1968 is Washington, D.C. Axle 5 is 3.00:1 ratio. Trans 5 is a four-speed. All of this

information covers this 1968 Mustang only. VID information varies from year to year and from Mustang to Mustang.

Again I urge you, especially those of you out west, to consider renewing your MCA membership and encouraging new members to join MCA. You folks in California, Nevada, Utah, Washington, Oregon, the Dakotas, and New Mexico are encouraged to start! We need the support and enthusiasm out there. MCA isn't just Georgia and Tennessee, as many of you have mentioned, it is nationwide and worldwide. To the sun and surf folks out west, let's see your Mustang mania build! MCA has regional groups in nearly every state; why isn't there one in your state? Just sitting back won't make it happen.

Now is the time to get a regional group in the works in your area. Now is also the time to visit your local wrecking yards to get that vehicle ID information for the "In Search" project. I'm counting on every single MCA member to get out there and obtain this information. One member in Wichita, Kansas, sent nearly 150 vehicle ID numbers; can you top that? Even if the VID plate is gone (driver's door), you can still get the warranty number, right? It is up to every MCA member to help us out. Don't say, "Well, what's in it for me?" You'll be helping fellow Mustang enthusiasts by taking the time to send in the information, even if it is just off your own Mustang/Shelby. I'm down on my knees to you; can I please have your support?

In visiting your local junk yards, you'll find that many drivers doors are missing. No problem. The warranty number is on the inner fender apron on the left side (driver's) top of the engine compartment. Look for it. If the apron was replaced, for 1968 and up Mustangs there is still another location for the VID number. For 1968 Mustangs it is just under the bottom of the windshield at the dash pad on the passenger side. For 1969-on, it was moved to the driver's side in the same location.

Keep your eye of the *Mustang Times* for future developments!

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