

Welcome to a new column in the *Mustang Times*! If you haven't already guessed, this column is to be concerned with Mustang literature and lore. We'll be listing articles which appear in other magazines, so you won't have to spend all that time every month poring through all those magazines looking for Mustang articles. We'll also be talking about rare and reprinted Mustang literature as issued by FoMoCo. In a sentence, we'll be talking about any kind of paper with *anything* to do with Mustangs. A pretty wide field? You bet!

Of course, we'll need your help, your questions, your answers, your literature, and your eagle eyes. We're anticipating a lot of interest in this segment of the hobby, for we are told by editor friends that there is a lot of interest in paper ephemera (which is what we call this stuff). Are we going to be disappointed? Time will tell . . .

Our first tidbit was submitted by Gary S. Byrd of Columbia, South Carolina. Gary spotted an article in *Equus* magazine that really illustrates just how far afield car-mania can take one. *Equus* is published for horse-lovers and this particular item concerns the Apaloosa horse that was used in the recent Ford Mustang TV commercials. Originally christened Apache Thunder God, the horse was rechristened Thunder Duck later in his life. He isn't a regular movie horse but was pressed into service when it was discovered that a new Lone Ranger movie had cornered the market in white studio horses! How did they get Thunder Duck to run around like he does in the commercial? They used a cold beer, as a lure shall we say. Yes, this horse is hooked on the stuff!

It's all in the February, 1981, issue of *Equus*, as well as the story of the commercial's filming. And believe it or not, Thunder Duck was used only for the running sequences; a stand-in named Dinky was brought in for the beauty shots!

We just received a press release from Larry Dobbs' Mustang Publications trumpeting the second printing of the title "How to Restore Your Mustang" just four months after its December, 1980, release. This vividly illustrates that the book has been a very good

seller and because of the increased volume of sales, publisher Dobbs has announced that the "list price" will henceforth be \$14.95 per copy, rather than the previous \$19.95 per copy. This is one of the few areas for which this book had been criticized. Many felt that \$19.95 was too much to pay for a soft-bound 160-page book (including covers) with minimal color. Indeed, one notices that the largest automotive bookseller and publisher, Classic Motorbooks of Osceola, Wisconsin, priced their first editions at \$14.95.

To complete a review, we will also say that we have heard that a few areas of the book show the "wrong things" or inauthentic procedures, etc. We do not know whether this is true or not, but feel that it is basically correct if you neglect the various changes that occurred (at different times!) at the various assembly plants. If indeed there are obvious errors, we trust that they will be corrected. But one has to look at a book in relation to its contemporaries. "How to Restore Your Mustang" is running away the best Mustang restoration book in print. And considering the job they did, it's pretty unlikely that anyone else will want to tackle the job.

What happened is this: Larry Dobbs arranged to have a Mustang restored by a professional shop, pictures were taken during this process and used to generate two things: a Mustang restoration series in Dobbs' *Mustang Monthly Magazine* and the book under review, "How to Restore Your Mustang." This is the proper way to go about this sort of thing, i.e. a restoration book on a specific type of car, so it is no surprise that it has turned out so well.

Other than the price and the ever-present wail of incorrect information (which nearly every book of this type has to weather), we find little to fault. The paper quality is pretty good and the photos are certainly acceptable. These latter look rather amateurish, being of low contrast and shallow depth of field at times; but some are quite good and all manage to convey the information they are supposed to, so this isn't really a problem. Graphically, the layout is probably the book's worst feature, as it is jumbled and inconsistent.

Things that we like about this book are the appendices, which list data plate decoding information, as well as color chips for paint and upholstery and carpets (we can't ever remember finding these upholstery specs in a restoration book, at least in color). Exterior color and trim combinations are given, too. Dobbs has even attempted to list detailing colors and finishes for all under-hood components and fasteners and this is probably what we hear all the carping about. Anyone who disagrees with what is printed in this section should write the publisher with his correction and keep quiet because this is a very difficult and shaky area, but one that is important to every restorer. If Larry Dobbs has the courage to attempt this kind of table, he needs all the help he can get as well as everyone's thanks.

Other appendices are tire and wheel combinations by year, complete engine and trunk decal and sticker specifications, and a "yellow pages" section which lists suppliers of Mustang and Shelby parts and accessories. This last table we view with some reservations for a couple of reasons: the repro and supplier business is growing at an enormous rate and at the same time, some suppliers are folding and moving, so the information will be current only for a short time. In fact, we question the validity of this kind of information being included in a book (as opposed to a magazine, which will have only a short shelf life before it is discarded).

All in all, "How to Restore Your Mustang" is an excellent book for the purpose for which it was intended. It isn't the absolute last word on the subject by any means, and experienced restorers will probably find only a few techniques of interest. But for the neophyte or the relatively inexperienced Mustang restorer, it is a goldmine of information, procedures, and techniques. With the price reduction, "How to Restore Your Mustang" now represents good value. Our fervent hope is that Larry Dobbs keeps his promise to print "a supplement or revision" covering the 1969-73 model years as soon as parts and accessories become readily available. We'd have to predict that this will be a best-seller, too.