

IN SEARCH OF MUSTANGS

by Jim Smart

As we head into yet another fall and winter season, thoughts turn to mothballing the Mustang or having to drive it on winter roads. Both are choices that most of us have to deal with each year. As the chilly weather heads our way once again, IN SEARCH OF MUSTANGS is slowly but surely making its way to press. After a very busy year of dropping the "bug" in many a Mustang's ear on this project, we are finally on the home stretch. To date, IN SEARCH has netted approximately 6500 Mustangs from all over the globe. Now that's a lotta Mustangs!

As promised, more Mustang facts! Let's take a walk through the time tunnel back to the wee early days of 1964. Dearborn assembly is turning out 1964 Ford Fairlanes, most are your basic grocery getter with a few sporty versions in there. Most folks at the Dearborn plant are aware that Mustang is in the mill and that their plant will shut down on February 7th in order to gear up for both Mustang and Fairlane production. During those days after February 7th, many workers were sent home, but a good many stayed on to get the plant ready. Four weeks time passed rapidly and the big day was soon upon Dearborn assembly workers. Then it happened, March 9, 1964. 5F08F100001 was the first production Mustang to make its way off the Dearborn line. 100001 was followed ten cars back by 5F07K100148, the Mustang hardtop destined for "The Duece," Mr. Henry Ford II. 5F07K100148 rolled off the line minus its interior and other assorted items. 100148 was then shipped over to Ford's Design Center for some super detailing in preparation for delivery to Mr. Ford. More on this Pony in the future as I am still researching its history.

Mustang and Fairlane made their way off the Dearborn line together from March until mid-June of 1964 when Fairlane production ended at Dearborn. Fairlane production loss at Dearborn was added to the Kansas City plant that was already producing Fairlanes.

San Jose, California assembly plant for 1964 Fairlanes, scheduled for delivery throughout the western United States, would soon be a Mustang assembly plant. Mid-July 1964, Mustang assembly begins at San Jose and Fairlane production ceases and is moved to Kansas City. As Dearborn and San Jose turned out Mustangs, Kansas City turned out Fairlanes. The Kansas City plant would be a plant for the future Ford Maverick in April 1969.

In case you didn't know, The Ford Maverick was introduced on Mustang's fifth anniversary, April 17, 1969. First year 1970 Mavericks were a mid-year intro, just like those Mustangs five years earlier. You sure don't read *Mustang Times* to learn about Mavericks, back to Mustangs!

Where does Metuchen, New Jersey fit into the Mustang picture? Mustang demand was more than Ford Motor Company ever realized it would be with only Dearborn planned as a Mustang assembly point in the beginning. It soon became obvious that another plant would be necessary. This is when San Jose entered the picture some five months later after production began. Metuchen, New Jersey entered the picture in February of 1965 when that plant assembled its first Mustang. Metuchen had long been an assembly point for Ford Falcon since its introduction in the fall of 1959. Mustangs soon made their way down the Metuchen line along with Falcons until 1967. Research continues!

Pilot plant Mustangs. What?! Still

another frontier for IN SEARCH! In viewing some Ford photographs, an interesting discovery was made. A vehicle identification number was seen on the left shock tower of a Mustang convertible in one of these photos. The number? 5S08F100008. Not a typographical error. "S" stands for Pilot Plant, known today as Body and Assembly division where they build automobiles before the assigned assembly plant begins. This Pilot Plant theory has proven successful as it enables Ford to get the bugs out of the assembly process before the "real" plant begins production. Body and Assembly, as well as other sources, built some 150 pre-production Mustangs before the official start-up in March. Where are they today? Do you have a Pilot Plant Mustang? That question can be answered by viewing your title.

Though a few Mustangs we have listed say "05C," March 5, 1964 as an assembly date, we have talked to one insider at Ford that says March 9th was the true start-up day, as he was standing there when #1 rolled off. March 9th was a Monday, making the fifth a Friday. We believe that assembly may have begun on a Friday with roll off on the following Monday.

Mustang history is only as limited as we let it be. The information is there, it is up to a good many of us to pursue this history. If you are able to find information, please be kind enough to forward it to IN SEARCH OF MUSTANGS. You will be given credit I assure you and you will be giving the valuable information that will benefit Mustangers everywhere. It will all be there for us to read for years to come!

Contributions from Regional Groups continue. The Foothills Mustang Club was kind enough to submit 22 Mustangs from their membership. One of these Mustangs was a very unusual

1965 T-5 (5F08K760350) that is equipped with a 289 High Performance with automatic transmission. As most of you know, the 1965 Mustang with 289 High-Performance was not generally available with an automatic transmission. This Mustang is owned by Charles Hampton of the Foothills group. Do you have a 1965 High-Performance automatic?

Mustangs from across the pond are many. New Zealand has been responsible for an abundance of Mustangs from the south Pacific! Grant Bradley of New Plymouth, New Zealand was kind enough to submit 109 Mustangs to IN SEARCH. These Mustangs vary greatly and I would like to share them with you. Most of these Mustangs, if not all were originally sold new in the United States and were shipped to New Zealand. One such car is a 1966 GT Fastback 6F09K297929 with a DSO of 33 originating in the Detroit area. Its owner is Shane Baker of Masterton, N.Z. Another is a 1969 BOSS 302 9F02G194313 assembled 29 May 1969 and delivered new to DSO 71, the Los Angeles area. Its present owner is John Jaiemson of Henderson, N.Z. Still another 1969 BOSS 302 9F02G197589 assembled earlier on 15 May 1969 (notice the higher consecutive unit number and yet an earlier date!) and was delivered new to DSO B1 meaning Eastern Canada. The proud owner is John Osborn of Hamilton, N.Z. So you see, Mustangs are as varied and scattered about as their owners. They exist in all corners of the globe!

Grant Bradley is the originator of the New Zealand Mustang Registry, much like our own IN SEARCH OF MUSTANGS. Grant, with the assistance of fellow Mustanger Roger Swetham managed to list 208 Mustangs from the south Pacific nation. Grant estimates that there is approximately 350 Mustangs (64½-73) in New Zealand.

Ah yes those FIRST STATE MUSTANGS! Dick Steinger of that club tells us about a rash of Mustang and related part thefts in the Wilmington, Delaware area. Two Mustangs have been stolen recently, as well as a 67-68 hood (the optional one, naturally) from a local mall parking lot. The message here, watch your Mustang! Mustang theft is a serious problem across the

nation right now and it gets no better. It is up to all of us to prevent it. Thank you Dick for bringing this to our attention.

Finally, if you have been waiting a long time for a reply to your nice letters, first, did you kindly enclose the self-addressed stamped envelope? After January 1, 1983, a requirement was made for the enclosure of one dollar to handle project expenses. Quite a small price to pay and there is a lot of information to be gained. It has been project policy to ask this fee to handle production of IN SEARCH applications, stationary, you name it. IN SEARCH OF MUSTANGS has gone from being a small undertaking, to a mammoth project with worldwide exposure. If you have been waiting a long time, please understand that there has been as much as 500 letters at one time awaiting reply. I developed a standard form letter to expedite the answering of mail. To date, I am beginning to catch up. Each letter is read by me and is filed accordingly. If necessary, the letter is answered as soon as possible fellow Mustangers. It is my policy to answer every letter that includes an SASE. A reply to your letter takes time and when you least expect it, there it will be! Til next month!

Jim Smart
P.O. Box 342
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

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