



Fast Fords

Photos and text by Bruce McCalley

With considerable assistance from DOUG LANGEVIN who supplied many of the racing parts and their descriptions.

It is almost a tradition that the fourth issue of *The Vintage Ford* each year be devoted to Model T Ford speedsters, racers, racing and speed equipment and the modern-day events associated with them. A few years back we skipped such coverage and have still not heard the last of the complaints.

The spirit of competition seems to be an integral part of man's nature. Winning one event does not end the quest for victory, it just fires the enthusiasm for the next contest. Those who are not winners seem to take their loss as just one step in the parade of events which can do nothing but lead to an ultimate victory. And so it goes -- since the beginning of time.

There are an unnumbered variety of "contest-type" activities these days. Perhaps beginning with the Hill Climbs when the Model T *hobby* was new, we now have Endurance Runs, Drag Races, Road Races and anything else that can be dreamed up to offer a bit of competition. Many of these have been covered in detail in past issues of this magazine and for this year, at least, we will not go into the particulars. Rather, we will just look at the cars and equipment, with minimum comment.

Most of the photos were taken at the Long Beach Model T Club's Hill Climb and at the Santa Clara Valley Chapter's Speedster Endurance Run, at these events in May and June of 1977.

In addition, we were fortunate in being able to photograph some original racing equipment through the courtesy and assistance of Mark Mahoney, of Anaheim, California, and Doug Langevin, of Costa Mesa. Doug

later supplied the captions for the pictures of the racing equipment.

Descriptions of some of the cars, as well as the names of the owners, are all but impossible to obtain. There is generally so much activity, few care to take the time to go into details. Some of these details might even be "trade secrets." We have tried giving out printed forms before, during and after such events - to be filled in at a convenient time - with very poor results. Perhaps there is a solution to the problem, but we haven't found it so far.

But pictures are worth a thousand words. Gaze on, and drool a little if you like.

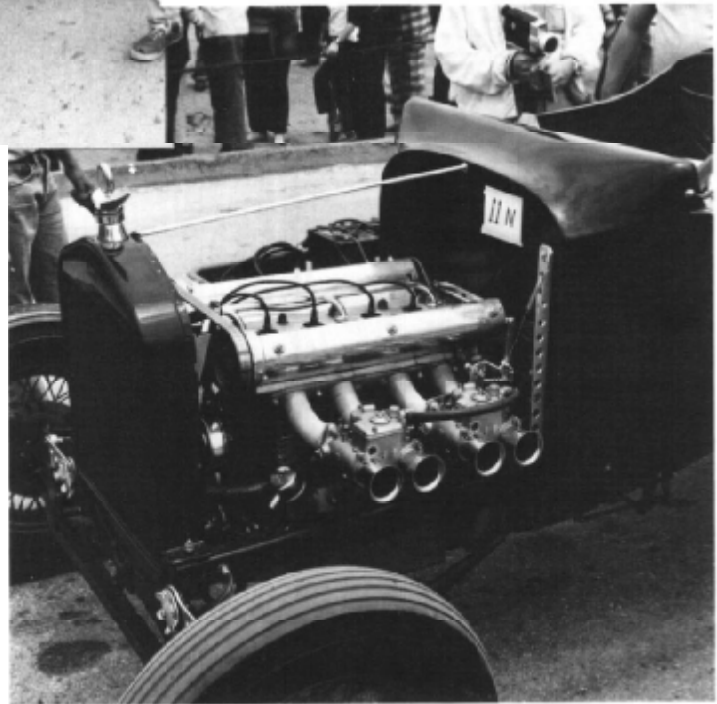


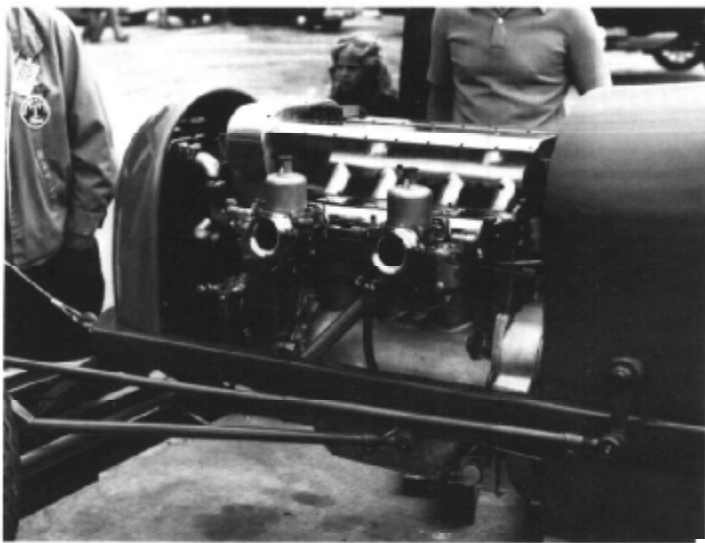
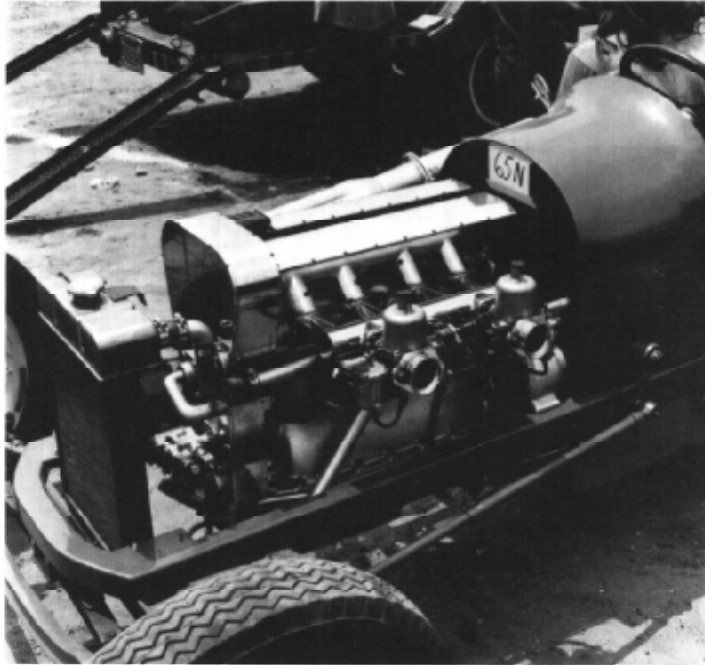




The new "King of the Hill" at the Long Beach Model T Club's Shell Hill Climb is LaRue Thomas, with a record-breaking time of 7.18 seconds!

The dual overhead cam engine is the work of Joe Gemsa and is of Joe's own design. The engine is coupled to the driveline through a Ford C-4 automatic transmission.

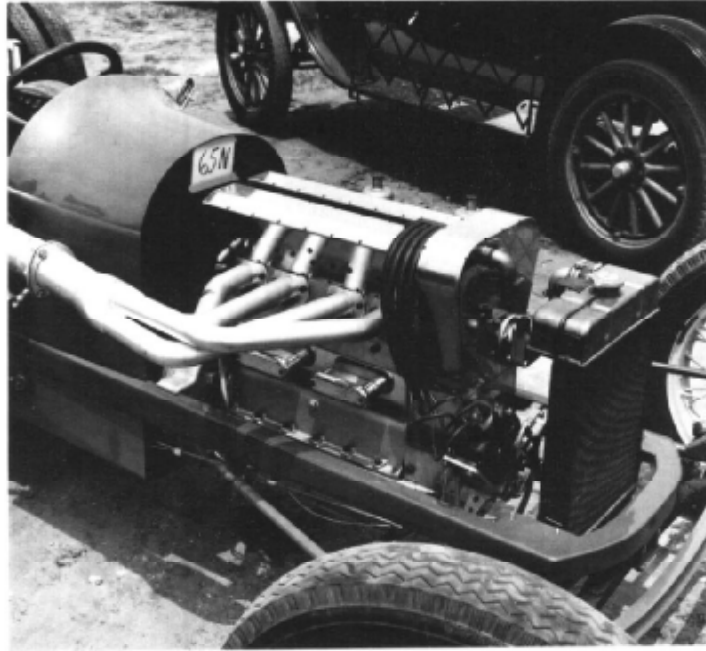




An interesting and very beautiful car was entered in the Hill Climb by Bill Bucher. The engine is of Bill's own design and construction and is about the cleanest appearing car we have seen. The engine is somewhat reminiscent of a Bugatti in that it is so well finished.

On its first run up the hill it made a time of 8.08 seconds but on the second run the magneto failed, ending the day for the car. Bill did pick up the Hard Luck Trophy, so the day wasn't a complete loss.





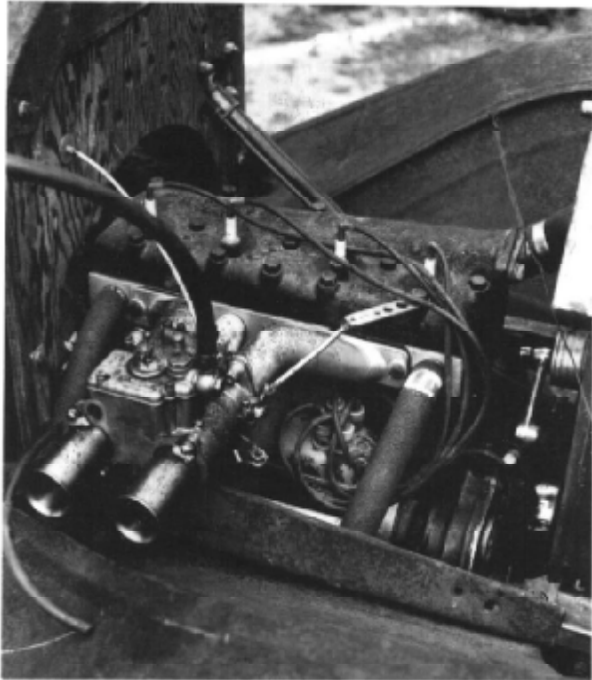
ABOVE, Right; Other views of Bill Bucher's homemade speedster.

BELOW; Hank Becker's record-holding hill climber. Another Joe Gemsa engine, run for the first time on the hill in 1976 and setting a new record then, the car was plagued with ignition problems this year. Its best time was 7.39 seconds.

While the car didn't win, its designer did! Joe Gemsa also designed LaRue Thomas' winning roadster engine.

Becker and Gemsa took the car to the Tulsa (Oklahoma) Hill Climb and walked away as "King of that Hill," setting a new record there.

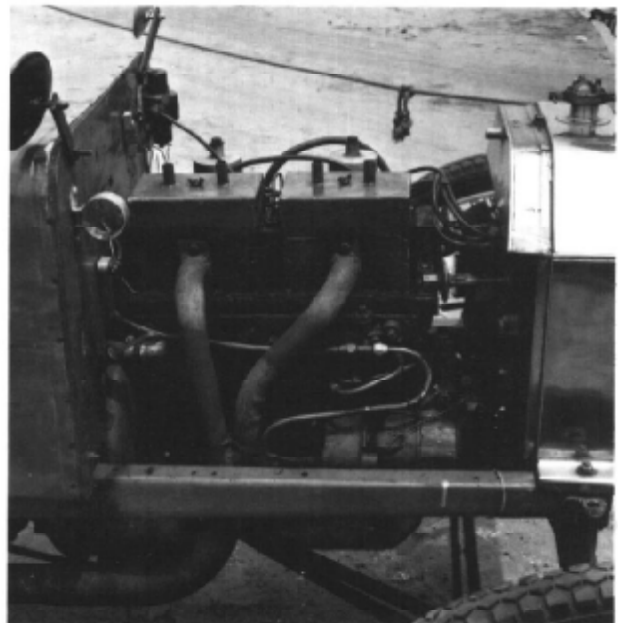
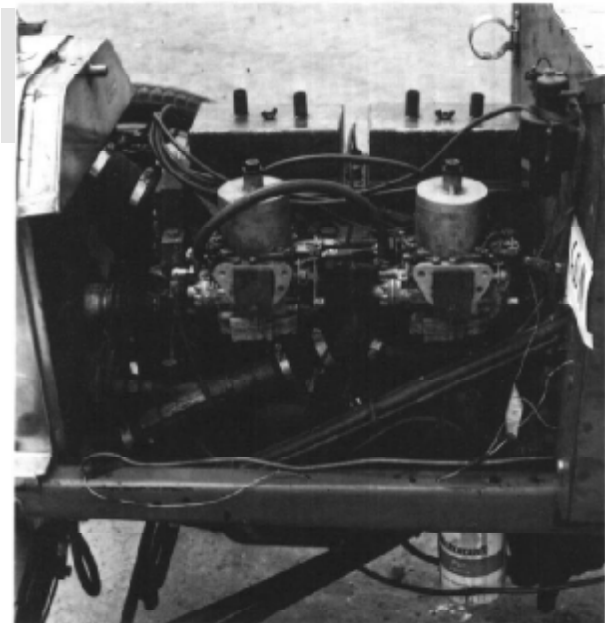




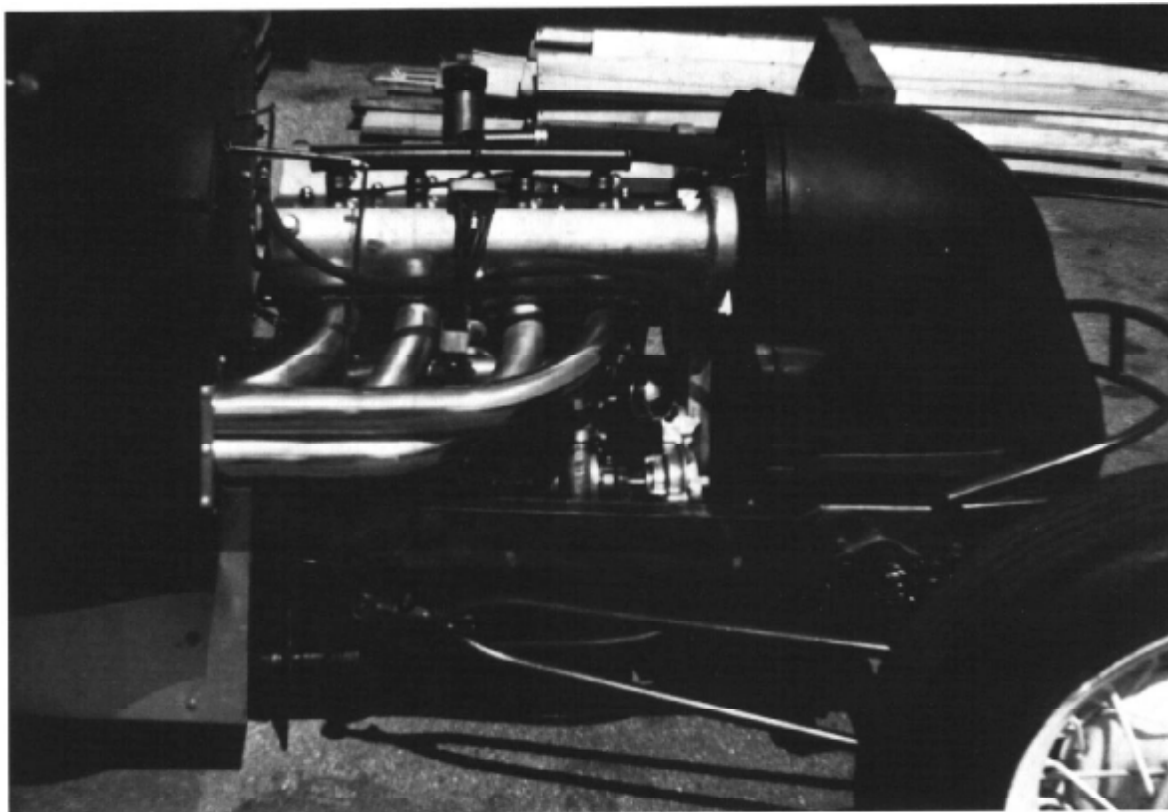
Like guiding the lily. Or something about a silk purse from a sow's ear. Anyway, here's a \$200 carburetor and a side-drive magneto on a pile of rust.



Have you ever wondered if the oil really did flow in the T engine? This owner apparently did and to make sure he put a clear plastic cover on the transmission. One thing for sure; you can watch the bands wear out.



Orville Enyeart runs this T block with a Chevy head adapted to fit by the use of a steel adapter plate. (Maybe it's an Oldsmobile head.) This combination is mated to a Ford C-4 automatic transmission. Typical of most of Orville's cars, this one also has four-wheel hydraulic brakes.



Double overhead camshaft Gallivan racing engine on a Model T block. Owned by L. M. Shannon of Salinas, Calif. (1969) Photo courtesy Briggs Cunningham Museum, Costa Mesa, Calif.

THE GALLIVAN ENGINE

The Gallivan head, and complete engines are almost legendary. Appearing late in the Model T era, they never made the impression the Frontys did, yet stories keep cropping up about their fabulous performance. To date we have little information on them but did receive copies of two letters from the Briggs Cunningham Museum in Costa Mesa, California.

Both of these letters are addressed to a Mr. L. M. Shannon of Salinas, California. One is unsigned and undated; the other is dated November 15, 1961 and is signed by J. E. Gallivan himself. Both make interesting reading and are reprinted here:

Dear Mr. Shannon:

In reply to your letter of November 6th, the writer was the designer and manufacturer of the "Gallivan D.O. Cam head for the Model T Ford.

A few of these units were sold separately to customers to build their own engines, however as the Model T crankshaft was not heavy enough we built most of the units into complete engines with large crankshafts and tubular connecting rods machined out of solid steel billets.

These engines were very successful in racing during the 20 s. The first ones were built in 1925 and the last one in 1929. Later on, some of them

were converted to fit the Model B block and won the majority of races they were entered in at that time.

These heads required a very special high-domed piston and we believe that we were the first to use domed pistons that were relieved to clear the valves.

There are a couple of other engines that we know of but the owners do not wish to part with them.

Expressing our appreciation in hearing from you we are

Very truly yours
J. E. Gallivan (signed)

The second letter, as mentioned, is undated and has no signature. We have no idea if it is fact or fiction but it is interesting --

Dear Mr. Shannon:

I hope by now you have received all of the Gallivan parts and have had time to inspect them thoroughly.

In your note you asked me if I knew the whereabouts of any more Gallivan parts. I am sorry, but I can't be of any help here, because I have checked with everyone I know that has been familiar with the Gallivans and have been unable to locate anything.

I do have a little bit of History that I would like to pass on. Most of it is hearsay but it will be

interesting I am sure.

Jack Gallivan (Rantoul, Ill.) was employed by Curtiss Wright Corp. and did considerable work on the development of the Curtiss Aircraft engine of World War I fame. After World War I he developed and made the Gallivan engine while in the employ of the U.S. Government, using government time and material. For this act he was severely reprimanded and did time in the government prison at Joliet, Illinois. However, Mr. Gallivan did produce seven engines.

Of the original seven engines one was sold to "Cokee Fuller who was a wealthy Indian sportsman from Muskogee, Oklahoma. Cokee Fuller was murdered during the Roaring Twenties and his engine came into the hands of Murry Earle.

Murry Earle as car owner and builder, and Walter Barnett as driver, proved to be a good combination and won many races in Nebraska and Kansas during the late Twenties. Both Murry Earle and Walter Barnett are now deceased.

Murry Earle sold his engine to John Mauro (Denver) who in turn sold it to Vic Felt (Denver).

Vic Felt did quite a bit to the engine to improve the breed by using the Wills St. Claire crankshaft. Vic Felt owned and drove the Gallivan with good success on the Fair Grounds of Colorado, Nebraska, Kansas and Iowa. In the early Thirties, with Vic Felt as owner and Lloyd Axle as driver, this engine competed at the old Ascot Speedway in Los Angeles. Vic Felt then sold his engine to Bill Harding (Doniphan, Mo.), and Bill Harding to Jack Lovely (Omaha, Neb.).

Another original owner of the Gallivan was Joe Lencki (Maplewood and Chicago, Ill.). Joe

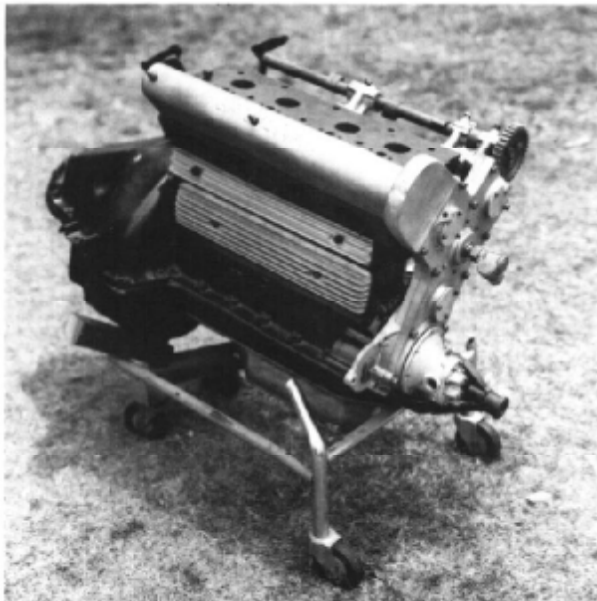
Lencki did considerable work with the Gallivans, and made a five main bearing block for the Model T. He also made a pattern for the Gallivan head. Joe Lencki had a Gallivan entered at Indianapolis with Johnny Sawyer driving. A check in the Indianapolis yearbook may show the results and year of this feat. Joe Lencki (owner) and Johnny Sawyer (driver) continued to run the Gallivan up to 1939 or 1940 when Sawyer set an AAA record at Springfield, Illinois.

I understand that Jack Lovely (Omaha, Neb.) also acquired this engine. Anyway Jack Lovely sold two Gallivans to the Syer brothers (Denver) and this is from whom I bought the engines.

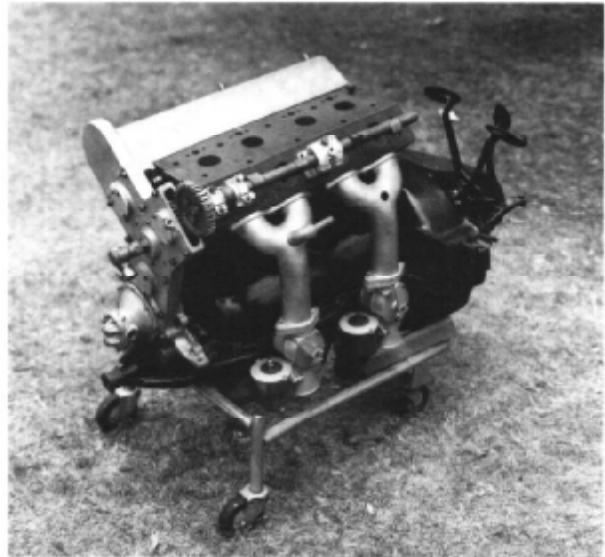
Syer Brothers ran these engines prior to World War II around Kansas and Colorado. Proceeding (sic) World War II the Syer brothers did considerable work in fitting Model A shafts to the Gallivans and had good luck running the Gallivan in the I.M.C.A. Circuit with T. E. Russell driving.

In about 1948 and in conjunction with running one Gallivan, Syers started rebuilding the the second Gallivan by fitting a Model B shaft in the T block and making a set of tube rods and cup system for the cams. This block was never completed. I bought the Gallivans in partnership with John Frank (Denver) in 1951.

I started in the Gallivan business and quite by luck located the new head casting in Illinois from a Mr. Clifton Denny who at that time was running a Hal. I am not sure how Mr. Denny came about the head casting but I know it was the only casting he had or knew the whereabouts of. I also quizzed him for the whereabouts of any more Gallivan equipment with no avail.

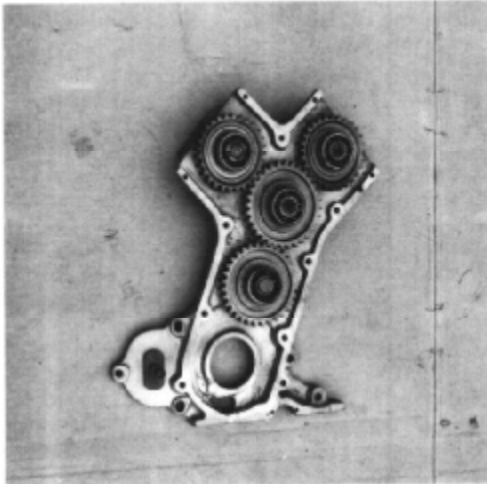


Exhaust side, D.O. Gallivan, showing oval exhaust ports and tachometer drive on the cam gear tower about two-thirds up. A single stage wet sump oil pump is at the bottom of the gear tower.

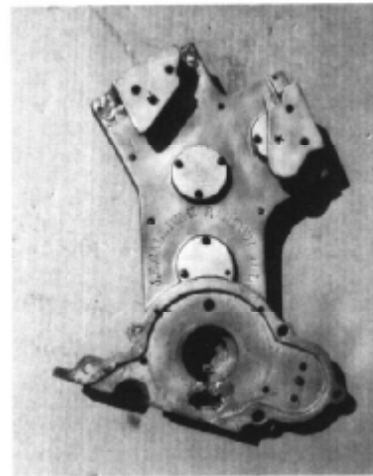


Intake side of the Gallivan, showing central spark plug location, camshaft and bearings (two, anyway), gear drive with tachometer drive, oil pump, original intake manifolds (numbered to match head) and Miller racing carburetors with 1-7/8 barrel valves and bronze float bowls.

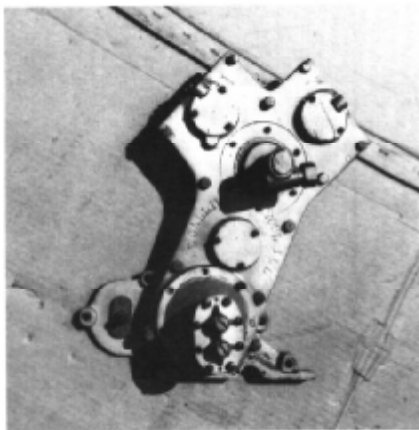
The Gallivan engine parts and accessories shown here are through the courtesy of Mark Mahoney, of Anaheim, California.



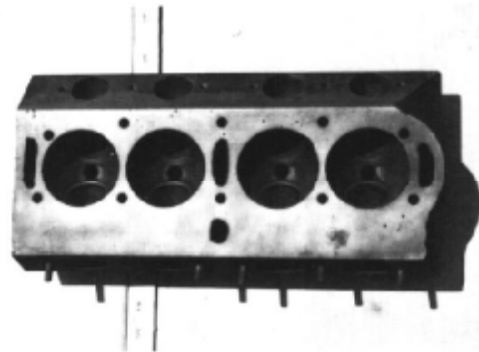
Gallivan timing gear case with the front removed to show the gear train. This is a much better set-up than the Fronty chain drive.



The rear (engine) side of the Gallivan gear tower.



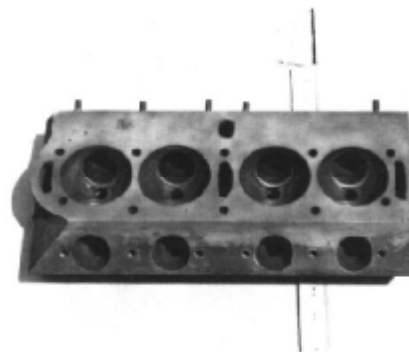
The Gallivan timing gear tower assembly.

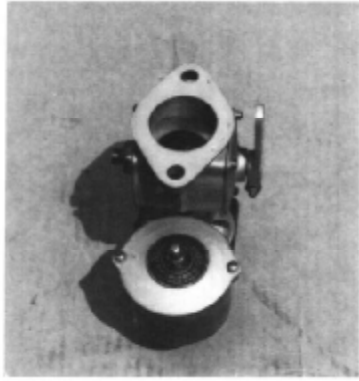


Combustion chamber side of the Gallivan head. Note the large valves and straight-through ports. With the valves removed you can actually look into one port and out the other! The valves have 5/8 diameter stems!

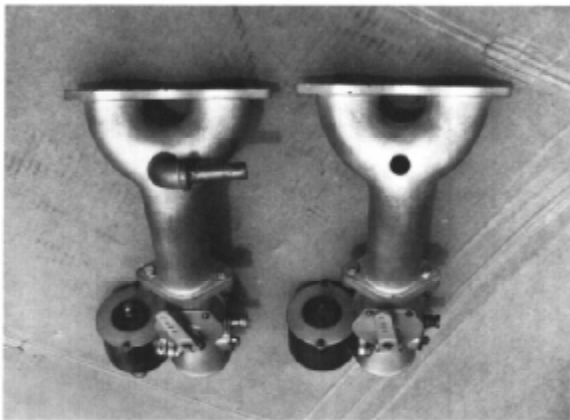
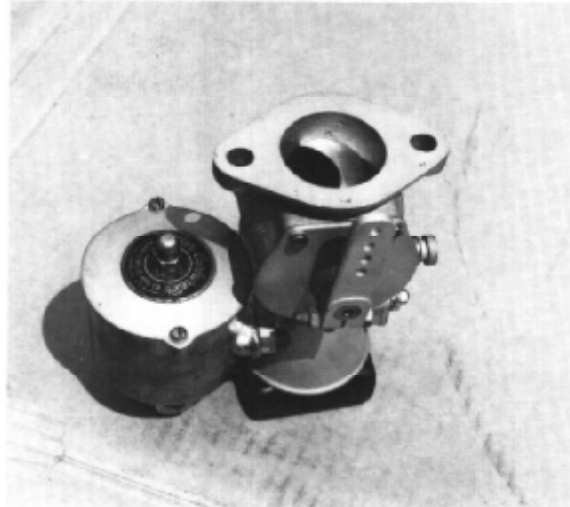


The camshaft cover for the Gallivan.

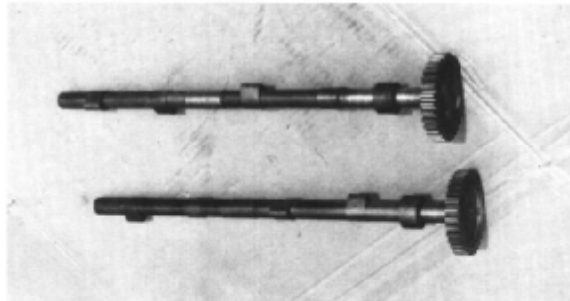




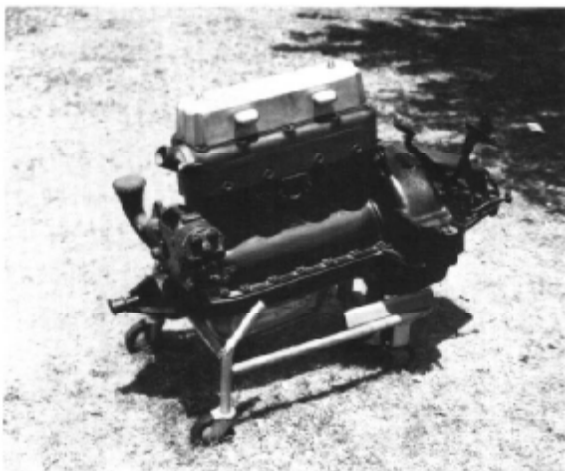
Miller 1-7/8 barrel-valve carburetor. Two were used on the D.O. Gallivan.



Intake manifolds and Miller carburetors for the Gallivan. The manifolds are numbered to match the head.



The camshafts for the Gallivan head.



Spark plug side of a Model C Rajo showing a Columbo magneto bracket with a Bosch ZR-4 dual spark magneto.

THE RAJO

Named after the city (RACine) and the builder (Joe Jagersberger), this overhead valve conversion appeared first as an "F" head about the time of World War I. The "F" head used, the standard Ford exhaust valves and manifold but had overhead intake valves. A major advantage of this arrangement was that the head could be installed without cutting the firewall for clearance.

Early in the 1920 s, the eight-valve overheads appeared in a number of types, and these are by far the most common today.

The engine and accessory photos here are through the courtesy of Doug Langevin, of Costa Mesa, Calif., who also supplied the captions.