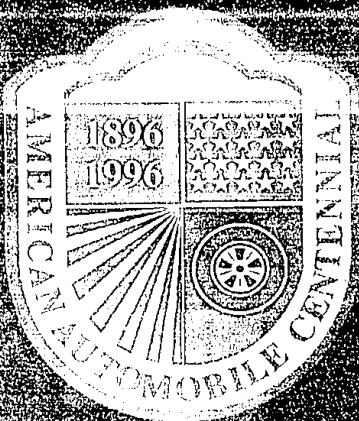


Celebrate!

By Renee M. Skoglund and Mary Quinley, Special Writers



When Charles and J. Frank Duryea produced a series of 13 vehicles in their Springfield, Mass. workshop in 1896, little did they know that they had set in motion the wheels for great sociological change across the country.

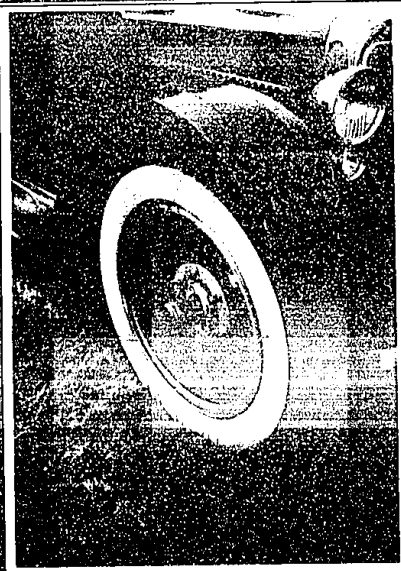
Detroit soon made the fledgling car industry hers. In 1904 Ransom E. Olds produced 5,000 cars in his Jefferson Avenue plant, nearly a quarter of all cars built in the nation. However, it was Henry Ford whose name became synonymous with the industry for decades.

In 1910, Henry Ford's Highland Park plant established the moving assembly line. Soon thousands of unskilled laborers flocked to the city. Not only did these workers build the Model T Fords, they bought them, thanks to Ford's \$5 daily wage initiated in 1914.

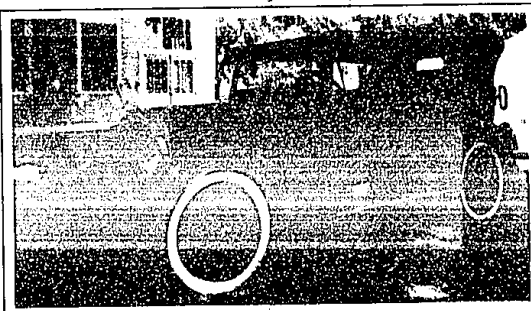
Car ownership led to mobility. No longer dependent upon street car lines, auto workers could now live outside the city. The suburbs were born.

Travel back and forth to work — as well as some Sunday joy riding — led to road building. Better roads led to increased commerce and gave rise to a number of "roadside" industries: gas stations, motels, and restaurants, including today's drive-through variety.

For better or worse, we are a society on the move. Around the bend lies our future, and most likely the automobile will take us there. This is the year to celebrate what J. Frank Duryea started and pioneers like Henry Ford, Ransom E. Olds, William C. Durant, Charles W. Nash and Walter P. Chrysler perfected: the American automobile.



PHOTOS AND PAGE DESIGN BY JENNIFER MILLER



Plan a centennial celebration road trip. But before you hit the highway, get your car checked out at your dealership. And when it comes back all washed and shiny, say "thanks." It's all part of today's car dealers' extra service to their customers.

How to celebrate:

No birthday party is complete without a cake — and the automobile's 100th is no exception. Share a slice at the birthday bash located at the Michigan State Fairgrounds. June 16-23 has been designated American Automobile Centennial Week — and celebration options are plentiful.

Looking for an evening trimmed with glitter and gold? Cobo Center hosts a Gala Dinner party with Jay Leno as guest. Dinner tab: \$200 per person.

Perhaps high society elbow-rubbing is not your style. Why not head for the nearest Daly's or A&W drive-in and treat the gang to a 1950s-style, carhop-served dinner.

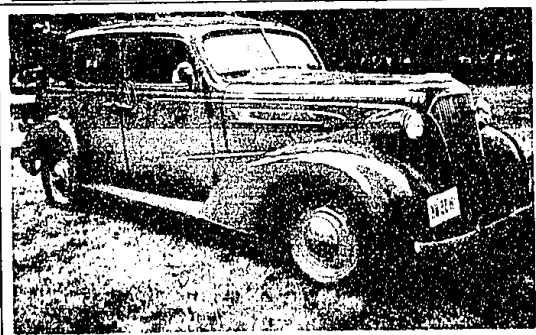
Then turn up the radio and search the neighborhood for a "Cruise Night" gathering of street machines.

Take a date, the kids, or the grandparents — summertime cruisin' appeals to all age groups. Save some energy to watch a movie at one of a dwindling number of drive-in theaters.

Later during the week, discover racing vehicles at the Motorsports Hall of Fame in Novi; check out the Henry Ford Museum's 1896 Duryea Motor Wagon (remember, there were only 13 made) or turn the crank on the Model T replica to start the engine at the Detroit Historical Museum. Get a taste of the auto-baron lifestyles and tour one of four area mansions.

For the couch potato, leave the car parked in the garage. Check the TV for car-related automobile documentaries or turn on the computer and search the World Wide Web for auto-related trivia, anecdotes and events.

Happy 100th Birthday, Automobile Industry!



THE
Observer & Eccentric
NEWSPAPER

Thursday, June 13, 1996