

## ARE YOU READY TO GO ON A TOUR?

The summer season for touring is now upon us and it is time to be sure our Model A's are ready for the road. Just because there were no problems the last time you drove your Model A does not insure there will be no problems when you start off on a long tour. Henry did a very good job with the design and construction of our cars and when properly maintained, the Model A has proved to be very reliable. The problem we face today is that the first Model A's are now 90 years old and the local corner garage is no longer around to perform routine maintenance so for the most part, this responsibility now falls with the owner. One help we do have is the Model A Ford "Instruction Book" that would have been included with your Model A when it was new. This little book has a wealth of information which will help today's owner with necessary maintenance.

Before starting out on a tour, most owners understand that it is necessary to be sure the oil is changed, the chassis is lubed and the fluid levels in the transmission, differential and steering box fluid levels are checked but during the tour, there is ongoing maintenance that should be performed routinely.

When touring, before starting out every morning, you should walk around the car and take a good look to be sure there are no obvious problems. Check the water in the radiator, check the brake lights for proper operation and look at the front tires for excessive wear. Run your hand across the tread to check for "feathering" or uneven wear. This is usually an indication of incorrect toe in or toe out of the front wheels. Excessive toe in will cause very rapid wear of the front tires. This is not difficult to correct and there is always at least one member of the tour that can assist you with adjusting the toe. Raise the hood and take a look at the engine compartment. Check the oil level, check the fan belt for proper tension and look for fuel, oil or water leaks. Look for missing bolts and loose components. Look underneath the car for fluid leaks. This only takes a few minutes and a problem discovered in the motel parking lot is a lot easier to deal with than on the side of the road. For long tours, be sure to lube the generator, distributor and water pump every 500 miles.

For those who are using the original type wet cell batteries, check the water in the battery. Original type batteries can lose a little water especially if an original type generator without a voltage regulator is also being used.

Unlike modern "tubeless" tires, original tube type tires will lose a little air so be sure to also check tire pressures. Some of us can remember working in a gas station when we were a little younger and it was our job to always wash the

windows, check the water, oil, battery and tire pressure when a customer came in for fuel.

One item to absolutely not over look is the lug nuts. Before the tour and then every day or two, check to be sure the lug nuts are tight. If you had any wheels off your car just prior to the tour, check the lug nuts at the first rest stop to be sure they are still tight.

Whether on a tour or just driving around town, get into the habit of routinely taking a look at your Model A with an eye toward maintenance items. Taking care of a small problem early on will often prevent a major problem that can be inconvenient and also very expensive to correct.



## TECH TIP - CLOGGED FUEL SYSTEM

An ongoing problem Model A owners are having is with dirt or rust in the gas tank clogging up the fuel system. Complete elimination of this problem usually requires removal of the tank and having a shop clean and coat the inside of the tank. This process also removes the paint on the outside which requires repainting the tank. Sometimes a tank with rust can be cleaned while it is still installed in the car by using products such as Evaporust or Rust911.

May be a simpler solution to this problem is to install a strainer in the inlet of the fuel shutoff valve. This little strainer presses into the fuel shutoff valve and, when installed, the strainer is inside the tank and filters the fuel before it enters the valve. While the strainer does not eliminate the dirt or rust in the tank, it often will keep it from entering the fuel system. I had a problem with rust in the tank getting into the fuel system with my first Model A. I installed a strainer and had no more problems for the next 4 years that I owned the car.



This little strainer is available from most Model A parts supplier for about \$5.00.