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Ed Barnett, right, shakes hands with Roddy Burry as Steve Burry looks on Thursday in downtown Hendersonville.

PHOTOS BY DEAN HENSLEY/TIMES-NEWS

Club's 'catalyst' celebrated for mechanical knowhow

60 years later, Western Carolinas Model A Ford Club 'still going'

Dean Hensley
Hendersonville Times-News
USA TODAY NETWORK

On Thursday afternoon, people were stopping, staring and even taking photos as Model A Fords ranging from 1928-1931 were lined up in front of the Historic Train Depot in downtown Hendersonville.

It wasn't a car show. It was a meeting of the Western Carolinas Model A Ford Club, which turns 60 this year, and at the meeting, club members shared stories of their cars and trips they had made in the past. But most of the talk centered around the club's last surviving charter member, Hendersonville's Ed Barnett, who turned 92 on May 31. In 1962, the group started with just six members.

"I bought my Model A in November of 1955 and I've had it for the past 67 years. I paid \$65 for it," he said. "I met a lot of nice people and made a lot of friends in the club through all these years, and I'm glad we're still going."

Members echoed Barnett's heartfelt statement and said he's the main reason the club has kept going all these years.

"I remember growing up and my mom and daddy loved A Models," Rod-



Model A Fords are lined up Thursday in front of the Historic Train Depot in the Historic Seventh Avenue District. Some of the Western Carolinas Model A Ford Club members brought their Model As for Thursday's meeting.

dy Burry said. "They called it a 'poor man's hobby.' There was no O'Reilly Auto Parts or anything like that. You'd go to a junkyard and find parts. But my mom and daddy had no mechanical knowledge. That's why they and other members of the club were so lucky to find this man," Burry said as he put his hand on Barnett's shoulder. "He could fix anything. This man was the catalyst of the group and still is."

The group has about 50 members, past club president David Huntley said,

and Barnett is still a member. The Model A was manufactured from 1928-1931, and there were nearly five million made, with production continuing through the Great Depression. It followed Henry Ford's popular Model T.

"I've driven mine down to Greenville several times and will be driving it to our next meeting in Pickens, South Carolina. I always went by what Mr. Ed told me, and that is the more you drive

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Scenes from 2022 early, one-stop voting in Henderson County.

DEAN HENSLEY/TIMES-NEWS

Elections director addresses hacking concerns

Rebecca Walter
Hendersonville Times-News
USA TODAY NETWORK

Henderson County Elections Director Karen Hebb discussed with the board of commissioners Monday night whether or not it is possible to hack local voting machines.

Chair Bill Lapsley said the commissioners have been asked about whether or not hacking the machines is possible. At the beginning of the commissioners' meeting, Henderson County resident Karl Gessler called the election machines untrustworthy and said recent elections have been rigged. He requested that the commissioners "not pay for election-rigging machines."

"One of the questions that we get asked on occasion is does our elections board staff check to make sure no one is hacking into our election machines," Lapsley said to Hebb. "That to me is a very serious insinuation, and I would like to hear from you that you are aware of that charge and that you do whatever is necessary to make sure that doesn't happen."

"First off, there is no way to hack into our machines," Hebb said. "There is no modem, there is no way that you can access the machine."

"Once the machine reads the ballot, it stores the information on a thumb drive. We take that thumb drive out after the polls are closed and upload to a computer that has never been hooked to the internet. The information is then placed on another thumb drive that is taken to a separate computer and uploaded to the state and then that thumb drive is never used again," she said.

"So, there is no way that anyone can get into our machines or get into our coding because it is never hooked to the internet, and there is no way it can be hacked," according to the elections director.

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David Huntley poses with his car. PHOTOS BY DEAN HENSLEY/TIMES-NEWS

Catalyst

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them, the better they run," Huntley, who owns a 1928 Model A, said.

Barnett smiled and nodded as member after member talked about his mechanical knowhow of the Model A. He also spoke up, recalling one special trip back in 1961 when he restored a Model A and drove it all the way to Chicago for a car show.

"We hadn't even road-tested that car. We drove it all the way to North Chicago for that show, and we ended up placing in the top 10 in the nation," Barnett said.

Roddy and his brother, Steve, came to the meeting to get to see Barnett. The Burrys also have a special connection to the club. Their mother, Louise Burry, was the first-ever woman to be a president of a Model A Club in the nation back in 1969.

Darrell Mercer of Greenville, S.C., has been in the club for nearly 50 years and has four Model As, he said.

"I don't have one here today, because I'm having some knee problems, which makes it tough to drive. I've really enjoyed being in the club over the years. Me and Ed and another member have spent a lot of years restoring A Models. We just thank the Lord for Ed," Mercer said.

Glenn and Pat Maxwell are also longtime members and live in Hendersonville.

"I have a 1930 Model A Ford Deluxe

Coupe that I've owned now for 62 years," Glenn Maxwell said. "I've been in the club now for 52 years."

"I just married the car," Pat Maxwell said as all the members laughed.

Hendersonville's William Laughter is one of the newest members of the club.

"I've been in the club now for two months. I have a two-door 1928 model. I've enjoyed being in the club and hope to keep it going," he said.

Larry Harding of Hendersonville brought his 1931 Model A pickup for the meeting.

"Many dollars and hours later, it's running and still running," he said. "I've met a lot of nice people since being in the club, and I've been in the club for about five years now."

April Fowler owns a 1929 Model A that was restored fully by her late father, Phil Harris.

"He finished restoring it about 28-30 years ago. He used to drive it everywhere, and after he passed away, my mom drove it. She recently passed, and now my son, Joshua drives it a lot," she said.

Eddie Eich, who has been in the club for 12 years, has a 1929 Roadster pickup Model A.

"It's nearly complete. In about a week, I should have it done," he said.

Brevard's Donald McCarson is another longtime member of the club, having been a member since 1965. He brought his 1930 Model A Standard Coupe on Thursday and was one of the last members to arrive for the meeting.

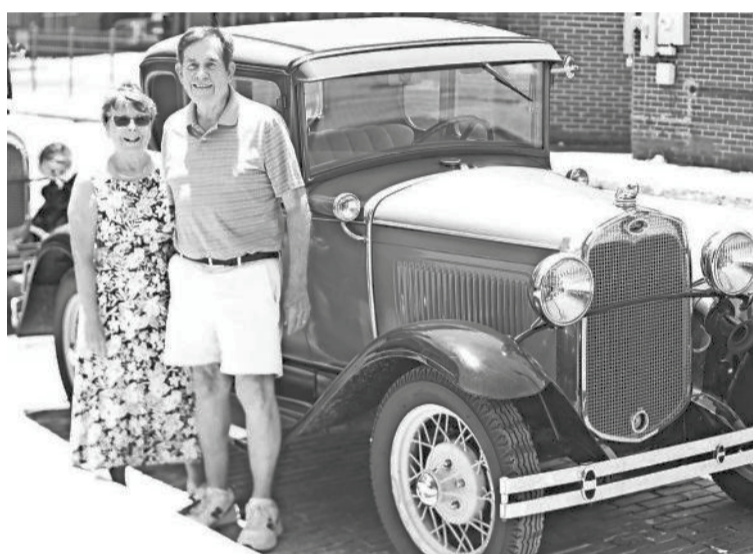
"It was a long drive," he said.



Members of the Western Carolinas Model A Ford Club pose for a photo following Thursday's meeting in Hendersonville.



April Fowler poses with her car.



Glenn and Pat Maxwell pose with their car.

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