



RON ACCORNERO (pictured with his special love, Melinda Hayes)

Written by Pete Goodson:

Born on a 200 acre ranch between Livermore and Pleasanton, Ron belongs to the rare group of native Californians. His family moved to Oakland when he was 7. He attended Fremont High School and the University of California, Berkeley where he majored in Industrial Management and minored in Engineering. He is the father of two sons and spent 32 years employed by Ford Motor Company. It was during a trip to the Henry Ford Museum (Dearborn, Michigan) that started his interest in the Model A. Early Fords had always intrigued him, but he decided the Model A was his favorite. He spent time at the Ford Archives learning as much as time would allow, about the Model A. He first restored a 1928 Tudor, followed by a 1930 pickup. The pickup was placed in the showroom of Mal's A Sales in Pacheco and was sold so that he could purchase a 1931 Town Sedan, which he also restored. The Town Sedan received a 1st Place in Touring Class at the 1990 MAFCA Nationals in San Diego. He started collecting Model A parts and built his current 1931 Deluxe Coupe from those spare parts. It was finished in 1994 and was first judged in 1995. It took 1st place in Touring Class at the NCRG Roundup two times and also at the Northwest Regional in Yakima, WA. To say that Ron is really into Model A's is an under-statement. He has given a great deal of his time and energy to making the hobby better. He is a Master Judge and has served as Chief Judge. He has served as Secretary of NCRG, was a MAFCA Board Member in 1994-5 and served as Chapter Coordinator and Advertising Director of MAFCA. He has also written technical articles for the Restorer on door and deck handles, engine rebuilding and commercial paint colors. He joined the Diablo A's in 1974 and served as President (1983), Vice-President (1978, 1981, 2007), Representative to NCRG (1993, 1999), Secretary (1996), Chairperson of the 2001 NCRG Roundup hosted by our club, and will be President in 2008. Ron served in the Army and although a commissioned officer, spent 3 years as an agent in the Counter Intelligence Corp. He told me that if I asked him exactly what he did during that time, he'd have to kill me. So I moved away from that topic. When I asked him if there was anything he would like to do that he hasn't already done, he replied: "I have to answer that differently. I never played the 'could'a, would'a, should'a game.' I've done everything I wanted to, with no regrets." The most exciting or thrilling things he has experienced: "The birth of my two sons and meeting Melinda Hayes." Something I don't think anyone knows about Ron – while in college he swam around Treasure Island.

Ron passed away in April of 2014. The May 2014 MotoMeter contained the following write-up highlighting Special Memories of Ron written by Herb & Marilyn Neumann:

Many of you have your own special memories of Ron Accornero. We have ours too and hope they'll bring comfort to those who are mourning the loss of this great person. Marilyn met Ron at one of her first tours with the club. In the summer of 2000 Ron led a tour to the San Pablo Reservoir and Dam. He called it "That Dam Tour". Everyone brought food and we had a sumptuous picnic on the grass overlooking the Reservoir. After we ate, some of us rented boats and rowed out on the lake. It was early in our relationship and Herb wanted to take me out in one of the boats. It was a lot of fun. I remember thinking how Ron seemed to be having a good time while at the same time being in charge. Ron also worked at the Dam part time following his retirement. It wasn't long before I realized that Ron was also in charge of the club's endeavor to host the 2001 NCRG. The Roundup was almost a year away, but Ron already had a solid committee in place, and was chairing a monthly meeting to make sure everything was where it needed to be. Ron's enthusiasm and strong organizational skills seemed to make everyone want to make the Roundup the best one we could. The first day of the Roundup came, and we were ready with bells on and all of our club members seemed to be having a great time. People still talk about what a great Roundup it was. In December of 2000 Herb and I got married. We invited several couples from the club, including Ron and Melinda. Herb and I were walking around the tables at the Reception, thanking everyone for coming. We came to where Ron and Melinda were standing, looking at us as we came toward them. I will never forget the sweet smiles they had on their faces as they watched us walk toward them. They were genuinely happy for us and told us what a thrill it was to be there. The day after Ron passed away, Melinda called me from Hawaii. In the course of our conversation, she told me that she and Ron were so happy that we had found each other and loved coming to our wedding. The memory of seeing their happy faces that day came back to me. Over the past 14 years, Ron and Melinda have led some great tours: Point Reyes (remember the oysters?), Peerless Coffee in Oakland, and Filoli Mansion were among my favorites. In 2006 Ron made a decision to come back on the Board, wanting to serve the Club one more time. First, he did an outstanding job as Tour Coordinator. Then, in 2007 he served as Vice President and in 2008 as President (for the second time). I believe it was Ron who came up with the For the Good of the Order segment at the end of each club meeting. With both hands he would snap the paper and say "Fresh from the Internet". He always managed to come up with the best stories from the internet and his delivery was superb. We always knew when Melinda came up to the microphone with Ron, it was going to be hilarious. It was a great way to end the meeting.

Ron and Melinda loved the Spring Openers and came to a lot of them. One year it was just the four of us and we had such a good time together, really getting to know each other. In getting to know more about Melinda, we discovered that she grew up in Salt Lake City, went to the same high school as my ex-husband, and in fact, had had a huge crush on his younger brother! We all know about Ron's fastidious home and cars, including the Coupe. The year that it was just the 4 of us in Clear Lake, we were supposed to drive our cars to a winery which was located on land where the famous Clear Lake diamonds were plentiful. The problem was that it was a long gravel road to get to the winery, and Ron never liked to drive his car on unpaved roads. So, he parked his car at the beginning of the gravel road, and he and Melinda rode in the rumble seat of our Coupe. And we are so happy now that everyone who went to the 2013 Spring Opener agreed to step out of their comfort zones and become "The Diablo A's Diamonds" where we "strolled" in to the banquet hall two by two and once we got in place, we beebopped and lip-synced the famous hit by The Diamonds, "Lil Darlin". The guys had white t-shirts and blue jeans and "sideburns" courtesy of an eyebrow pencil. When Ron stepped forward for his "solo", holding my hairbrush as his microphone, he nailed it! None of us will ever forget that experience. At this year's Spring Opener, Larry Trimpey was sitting next to me at Saturday night's banquet, and he turned to me and said, "it doesn't seem possible that Ron's not here, he was such a great presence". Herb had the pleasure of teaming up with Ron to do two Technical Videos. For the last two years, Bill Truesdell, Ron and Herb worked on two videos; one on starters and one on generators. What a great congenial team! The videos were done in our backyard. They got together a number of times for each video. Each time when they were finished for the day, Ron would come in the house, go straight over to Little Bit and give her some much needed attention. Then, he would turn to us and say, "Let's go get some lunch, my treat". We would go to Mann's Chinese Restaurant in

the Dana Plaza, have a nice lunch, and come home and Ron would say goodbye to both of us and Little Bit and be on his way. I will cherish those great times. And, we have the legacy of Ron on the videos. He had such a wealth of knowledge about our hobby – you will see it in the videos. About 10 days before Ron passed away, he left a voicemail for Herb and me, telling us he would like to see us and to bring Little Bit. Herb called Ron and told him about our tour to Paso Robles and that we would love to come and see him, but when Ron said “bring Little Bit”, Herb broke down crying because he had to tell Ron that Little Bit had passed away the previous week. I had to take the phone and talk to Ron as best I could. I told him we loved him, and he said “I love you too, more than you’ll ever know”. By the time we were ready to go see Ron, he could no longer see visitors. We’re so happy that Ron’s two sons were with him to the end. I know Ron was a Christian and is in Heaven and we’ll see him there someday. In the meantime, we’re leaving Ron’s message on our machine so we can hear his beautiful, rich voice whenever we want to.

Herb and Marilyn