

Montana 500 Newsletter

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Montana Cross Country T Assn.
1004 Sioux Road
Helena, MT 59602

www.montana500.org

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Cover: Ed Towe and Dave Huson. This picture was taken during the fiftieth running of the Montana 500 in 2010.

EDITOR'S PROPAGANDA

Tom Carnegie

There should be one more newsletter before the run. I've got plenty to do between now and then. I need to get the teardown handbook finished. I have it well started, but mid-stream I have decided to change horses as it were which will call for a re-write. I am working on getting carburetor gauges made. I still need to get a CAD drawing of the second gauge. I updated the piston drawing for the rules. It is on the web site. Through a series of events I have managed to blow up my new car. So far this car has been a bit of a disappointment. I had high hopes for it, but up to this point, it hasn't come up with the goods. At this writing, I've got it torn apart, but should have it back together soon. If not, I have a pretty good running T in reserve. A couple of new fellas from Spokane had said they were planning on coming to Butte, but one has already dropped out because he couldn't get the time off. Several Washington-Oregon border type folks have indicated that they will be in Butte. Skeeter Carlson is building a new car. He has given up on the 1914 and is going with a 26-7.

The host city for 2012 is Butte. The hotel will be the Quality Inn, formerly the War Bonnet. 2100 Cornell Ave. (800) 443-1806. There is a special rate for our group of \$80.00, plus tax, I presume. The route has not been settled on yet. Inspection day will be June 17th. The run will be June 18th - 20th

Keep your eye on www.montana500.com for updates.

President's Message



As spring approaches I have been busy with the plans for the 2012 Montana 500. As you all know it will be in Butte this year and the hotel has been selected. You should be getting your reservations soon so everybody gets in. Only 70 days left as I write this. Check out the M.T. 500 web site for a running clock. I have also been going over the route choices with Donald C. and Tom C. and soon plan to have them firmed up.

The folks here in Spokane are getting anxious to try out all the new things (race secrets) that were dreamed up during the long winter. As for me I am very thankful that my car only needs some slight modifications. Oh yeah, and a different head - I am not going to let that happen again.

I think that we should see most of the cars from last year and I hear of a few new ones that will join us this year. 2012 should be a very challenging and scenic course and new to most, as we have not been to Butte in a long time. I hope to see you all in June for a great time.

Mike Stormo

How to Fix Motometer Fluid Separation Tom Carnegie

I have seen a lot of Motometers where the column of indicator fluid has a break in it. I don't know how they get like this, but it is a common problem. My T pickup, which I drive regularly has a Motometer on it, and had the fluid separation issue. I had heard of several cures and decided to try some on my meter. The first one I'd heard is that if you just stuck it into the freezer overnight that the fluid would all travel down into the "bulb" of the thermometer and the break would be gone. I knew that this wouldn't work because my T lives in an unheated garage that at times gets as cold as a freezer. I had heard that you could tie a string to the Motometer and whirl it around and drive the fluid together by centrifugal force. I whirled that thing until I was blue in the face - the fluid remained separated. I had heard that you could spin it in a lathe. Same idea as the string method - centrifugal force, that is. After spinning in the lathe for an hour or so, no change. So, now what finally worked:

Tapping the "bulb" end of the meter onto a piece of hard plastic caused the fluid to move ever so slightly. I found that if you heated the meter with a match, the gap in the fluid would shrink and the tapping method would move the fluid enough to cause it to rejoin.

The (not so) Great (failed) Pyrometer Experiment Tom Carnegie

We keep our ear to the ground for information that might help us to make our cars go faster. We heard of a test that was conducted with a pyrometer, which is essentially a high-temperature thermometer. The theory was that due to the siamese porting of the Model T motor, that cylinders one and four would run at a different temperature than two and three. If you could somehow, perhaps through valve adjustment, or the like, balance all four cylinders and get them to run the same exhaust temperature, then the motor would put out more power. I queried the person that made the test and asked him what his test procedure was. He explained how he had drilled four holes into an exhaust manifold and then measured the temperature of each one, one at a time as the engine ran at a fast idle, I would presume. We decided to take it a little farther and have four pyrometers, one for each cylinder. We drilled and tapped an exhaust manifold and fit it with four pyrometers. Then a four channel oscilloscope was attached so that we could observe the temperature of each exhaust port in real time. We installed the manifold onto a former winning car and took it out for a test drive. On the flat at moderate speed, all four traces moved up and down together in lock-step. There was no disparity between one and two, or three and four. We thought that this may be due to the fact that under a low load

situation maybe the siamese port problem was less of an issue. So, we decided to test it at high speed. At high-speed, all four traces moved up and down together in lock step. We thought that maybe this was due to the fact that the siamese port issue was less of a problem at high speed, and more of a problem while doing heavy pulling. So we decided to climb a hill. While climbing a hill, all four traces moved up and down together in lock step. We thought maybe the test was flawed because somehow each pyrometer was measuring the temperature of the adjacent exhaust port. We tested this by shorting out one spark plug. The temperature of that cylinder immediately dropped. We felt that the test apparatus was adequate. Our next theory was that maybe this well cammed motor didn't suffer from a serious siamese port problem. So, we took the test apparatus off and transferred it to a different car with a more-or-less stock motor. The four traces moved up and down in lock step. At this point we gave up.

I checked back with the person that had originally suggested this to me, and he had no recollection of having ever performed the experiment. Perhaps I just dreamed it?

Obituary of Edward Towe

Edward Towe, a Montana banker, rancher, and entrepreneur, died March 13, 2012, 38 days before his 98th birthday, of natural causes at the home of his daughter in Sacramento, Calif.

Edward Towe was born in Norway, Iowa, on April 20, 1914. His mother and all four grandparents were born in Norway, Europe, in or near the town of Tau.

He was an entrepreneur throughout his life beginning from the time he became the town's only bicycle repairman with a bicycle shop in Paullina, Iowa when he was just 15 years old. As a teenager, he bought old Model T Fords and made them into farm wagons.

Edward Towe worked his way through engineering school at Iowa State College in Ames. He was married to Florence Tow, daughter of a prominent Hereford breeder near Dysart, Iowa, in 1935. In 1937 he, along with a cousin, purchased the Ford dealership in Paullina, Iowa, which he ran for a year before moving to California where he bought a gas station and sold gas for 11.9 cents per gallon. All the gas was pumped by hand.

During the war years, he used his engineering skills on the drawing boards of many

large aircraft companies designing airplane parts. After the war, he went back to farming in Iowa. He took his profits from the sale of the farm and bought a small country bank in Dupree, S.D., in 1950.

In 1954, he purchased The First National Bank of Circle, in Circle, Mont. From there he expanded to Wibaux, Red Lodge, Baker, Fairview, Reserve (later moved to Plentywood), Richey, Roundup, Butte, Superior, Bozeman, Belgrade and Browning, Mont., and Modale, Iowa. He and his partners sold all but the First National Bank of Wibaux in 1973-1974, in which he retained an interest until 1992. His business sense was good and he helped many farmers, ranchers and businessmen prosper. Many people remember him as the banker who came to school bond sales and bought the entire bond issues when no one else would bid on them.

Edward Towe did not like the government telling him how to run his business. Consequently, he got in trouble with both the federal banking authorities and the Internal Revenue Service with whom he did battle for years.

He collected some 300 antique cars, almost all Fords, starting with a 1923 Model T Ford Roadster which he purchased and fully restored in 1954. Along with master restorer Lewis Rector, Edward Towe devel-

oped the finest and most complete collection of antique Fords in the world.

When the collection outgrew the display in the bank basement in Circle, it was moved to Helena, where for 10 years it was housed in the Montana Historical Museum. The cars were moved to the Towe Antique Ford Museum in Deer Lodge in 1979. Some of the cars were moved to Sacramento in 1987 and there continued to be two antique Ford museums until the collection was sold to satisfy an argument with the IRS in 1997. It was the largest sale of antique cars from one collection ever. The cars went to Japan, Holland and many other places around the world. A large percentage, however, were purchased by local buyers which allowed them to be kept in their respective museums and both are still in operation as antique automobile museums today.

Edward Towe was preceded in death by his wife of 71 years, Florence Towe, who died in 2007.

He is survived by his five children: Thomas E. Towe and wife Ruth of Billings; Karen James and husband Wesley of Bryan, Texas; Kristin Updegraff and husband Jim of Sacramento; Sara Horsfall of Arlington, Texas; and Andrew Towe and wife Beth, of Waterton, Alberta, Canada. He is survived by nine grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

End of obituary.

Edward Towe was largely responsible for getting the Montana 500 started. We were blessed to have him along on the 50th running of the Montana 500 which went from North Dakota to Missoula, Montana. The original Montana 500 was run on the same course, but from Missoula to North Dakota. I think we all enjoyed the stories that Edward told to us as we traveled across Montana in 2010. He was a unique fellow and will be missed.



2011, Conrad, MT

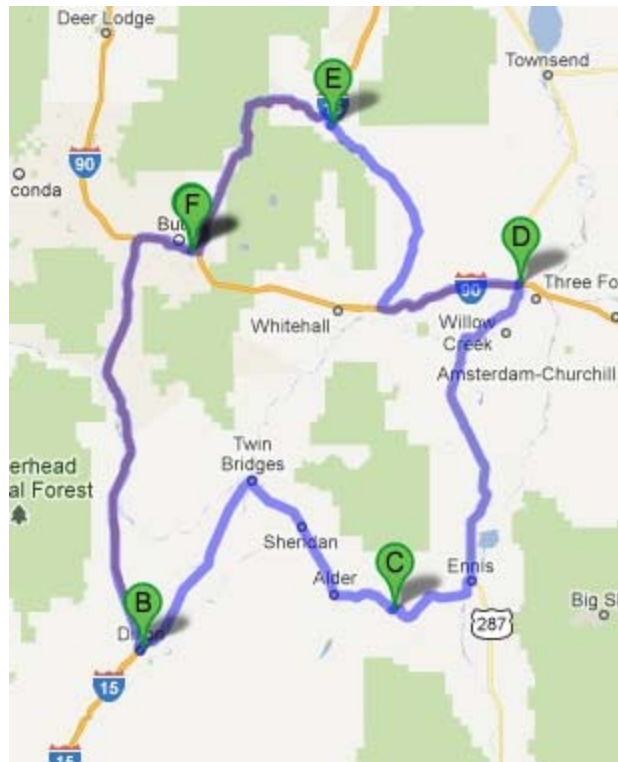


2012, Conrad, MT

Routes:

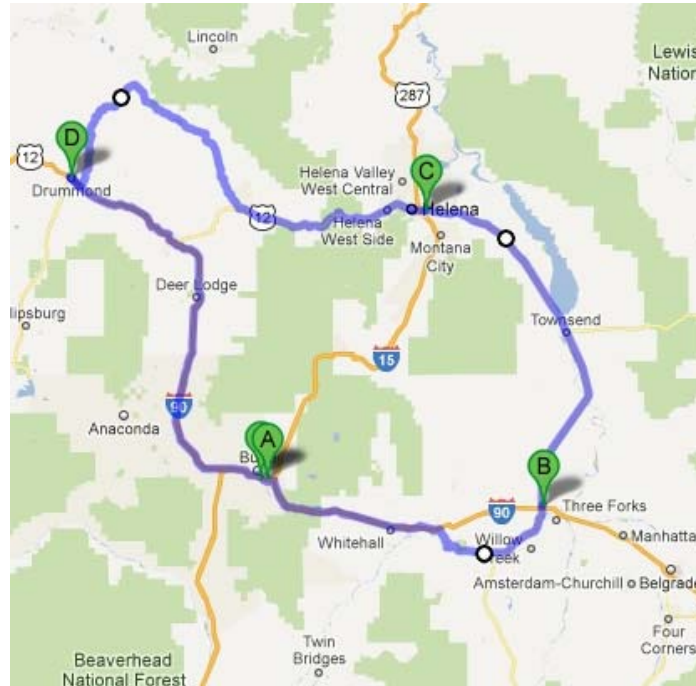
Donald Carnegie and Mike Stormo, along with some help from locals in Butte have been working on the routes for 2012. There are some difficulties when trying to do something from 300 miles away, but Google maps allows us to virtually drive the route. Hopefully it will all work out. Following are the tentative routes for 2012.

Day one:



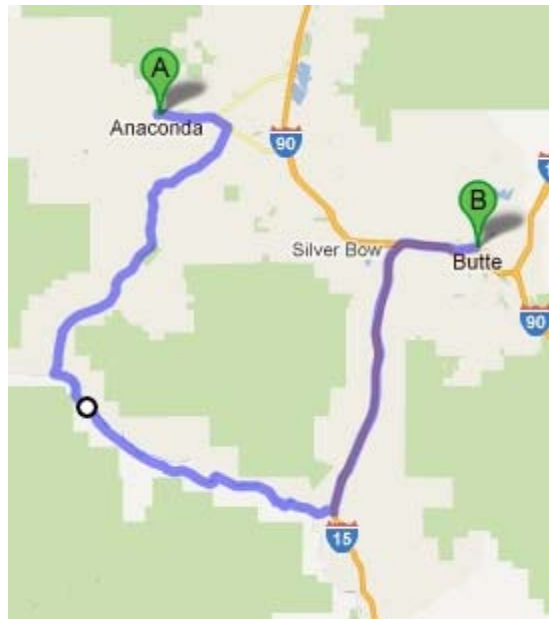
Butte to Dillon for gas and coffee. 61 miles. Dillon to Virginia City for lunch, through Twin Bridges, under time. 55 miles. Tour to Ennis, then from Ennis to Wheat for coffee and doughnuts. 46 miles. From Wheat to Boulder for gas. 52 miles. Then, Boulder to Butte. 36 Miles. Total for day: 250 miles.

Day Two:



Butte to Wheat, via Cardwell for gas. 54 miles. Wheat to East Helena for lunch. 57 miles. Helena to Drummond via Helmville for gas. 77 miles. Drummond to Butte. 66 miles. Total for the day, 254 miles.

Day Three:



Tour to Anaconda. Run back to Butte on Big Hole/Mill Creek road.

70 miles. Total mileage for run, approximately 574.

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