



Thunderbirds OF SOUTHWEST OHIO

Newsletter

JULY 2021



MEETING MINUTES

Call to Order: It is widely believed that certain skills, especially those that are learned at an early age, are never completely forgotten (although those skills might get "rusty" and need some polishing up). No one knows precisely when our esteemed President Brett learned to gavel a meeting to order promptly at 7:00 PM, but even after having 16 meeting slots go by without having any opportunity to swing the gavel, we found that no rust had accumulated under his leadership, and the meeting began promptly at 7:00 PM. A sign that normalcy is returning!

President Brett is not one to brag, but he should, in this case. During the COVID down-time, he built a beautifully lined box to hold the president's gavel. Inside the lid are plates engraved with the names of all our presidents, and the fabric liner (that covers the gavel support) is a nice Merlot color (hmmm.....wonder whose car that matches - any guesses, T-bird friends?). Anyway, it's a striking home for the president's gavel, and will be passed down to succeeding presidents as their names are added to the inside.

Attendees: A total of 16 people attended the meeting (15 members and 1 guest). Members in attendance were Brett & Peg Andrews, Roger & Lisa Hamm, Dave & Deb Harvey, Scott McGaha, Nancy & Julie Blake, Guy & Jan Gifford, Jim Lenz, new members Paul & Sherry Loschi, and Dave Menke. Our guest was James Russell.

Approval of Minutes: Since there was no meeting in March 2020 (and for the next 15 months after that, a total of 16 missed meetings), today's meeting presented the first opportunity to approve the minutes of the last-preceding meeting (which was in the good ol' pre-COVID days, held on February 12, 2020). Because there had been so much time elapse since the previous meeting, President Brett attached not only the agenda for this meeting to his customary pre-meeting email, but also the March 2020 newsletter (which contained the minutes of the February meeting, which are subject to approval tonight). After a short pause, Guy made a motion to approve the February 2020, minutes, and Jim Lenz seconded the motion. Without dissent, the 16-month-old minutes (should they be called "hours" by now, or something else?) were approved.

Membership Update: Special thanks to Lisa for taking the time to prepare individual stick-on name tags for everyone. Those of us who are a bit memory-challenged were surely aided by these tags, and new members Paul & Sherry undoubtedly appreciated the tags most of all.

Paul & Sherry Loschi, new members from Englewood, were welcomed into the club. They have a '94 Pacific Green T-bird. Also, guest James Russell was introduced and gave us some information about himself and his 1956 Fiesta Red T-bird (which is his daily driver for now) that he recently acquired on eBay.

Then, for the benefit of our new members and our guest, each current member told a bit about themselves and their cars. (Note: no test was administered to our new members or our guest to see how much they remembered.... LOL.)

Scott purchased an ultra-low-mileage 2002 Thunderbird Blue Retrobird in March from a seller in FL. Roger sold his white 2002 Retrobird in April and purchased a blue and silver 1986 Thunderbird Elan.

Jim Lenz needs help with a sticking rear window. Brett said he could help with that.

Guy expressed the wish that someone would help him with the brakes on his '66. He put brakes on the car but needs some help with the calipers.

Dave & Deb may need some leads on storage facilities, as their present provider has given them a heads-up that they will be shutting down their facility by the end of the year.

Dave Menke mentioned the possibility of a new member who lives in the Troy area. Dave met him at a car dealership, where they discovered a common interest in Thunderbirds. The prospect requested additional club information which Dave will provide to him.

President Brett reported the loss of 2 members since our last meeting, Kay Lenz (wife of Jim Lenz) shortly before the onset of the pandemic, but after the last pre-pandemic meeting, and E.D. ("Brownie") Brown, our only member to be honored with a lifetime club membership. Both will be sorely missed.

Sunshine Committee Report: As was reported in the agenda, June birthdays were acknowledged for both Dave Harvey and Mark Allen. In addition, both Paul & Sherry Loschi and Dave & Susan Menke celebrated June anniversaries. As always, many thanks were received from the recipients, as well as comments, on the beautifully made cards they received.

Treasurer's Report: Lisa gave her Treasurer's report. Because we hadn't met in such a long time, there was little activity to report (but she did an admirable job in reporting on our financial status - in a word, healthy). Scott questioned the dues situation (for clarity), and

President Brett confirmed that dues that were paid in 2020 were rolled forward and applied as dues for 2021.

Club Activities/Events: Scott explained that our Club has an event every month to get together, drive our cars (that's what the club is all about!!) and visit interesting, fun, and historical places.

Since this may be the first time that many of us have gotten our cars out and about, Scott suggested a trip to Ritters near the intersection of Wilmington Pike and Smithville Road. Positive responses were received, and Scott will send full details soon by email.

Old Business: At the March 2020 meeting we were scheduled to take action to vote for a Board of Directors member to fill an unavoidable vacancy. Since that time, there have been questions raised concerning VTCI versus TSWO bylaws that made it necessary to table this item at this time. Prior to the July meeting Brett will be holding a meeting of club officers and BOD members to address the issues. We should be able to move forward in July with the selection of our new BOD member.

New Business: Officer elections will be held in October and are for 2-year terms. As the incoming President (automatically succeeding from his Vice-Presidency), Roger will be in charge of the elections. Positions up for election are Vice-President (which leads to automatic succession to the Presidency after 2 years), Secretary, and Treasurer. Anyone interested in running for one of these offices must submit a Candidacy letter to the vice president by Sept 9th (which happens to be the Sept meeting date). A copy of the candidacy letter can be obtained on our website in the bylaws section (item 6) or by asking Brett for a copy.

Calendar of Car Events:

- 1) Vineyard Church Cruise-In on Fri evenings, located on Indian Ripple about a mile past 675 on right (this is the former SVG cruise in)
- 2) Kettering Cruise-In on Sat evenings, at shopping area near Woodman and Dorothy
- 3) Rip-Rap Roadhouse on Fri evenings, participants in cruise in receive a 20% discount on food
- 4) Get Air facility on Chambersburg Rd in Huber Hts will have a car show on Sun, Jun 27.
- 5) Americana Car Show in Centerville, July 5th @ 11:00
- 6) Voss Cruise-Ins will be held on Jul 9 and Aug 13
- 7) Xenia Grace Chapel will have a car show on Sep 25

VTCI International Convention will be held Aug 3rd through 8th in Portland, OR.

It was mentioned that Rob Schrader, President of the Nova Club has a great website that lists car events in our area. Website: <http://miamivalleynovas.com>

And.....don't forget our next club meeting on July 8. If you care to have dinner at MCL, please join us around 6:00 PM for food and socializing. Remember, the "gavel czar" (A.K.A. President

Brett) will most-assuredly gavel the meeting to order promptly at 7:00 - he only missed once when his watch was off by a few minutes.

Open Floor: Dave Menke commented that it's nice to be back (he seemed to express the sentiments of the entire group). The club members approved, clapped and at least one was heard to have shouted a "Whooh hooh!"

Adjournment: In keeping with long-standing tradition, Jan moved for adjournment of the meeting. Her motion was seconded by Dave Menke and approved unanimously. The meeting was gavelled to a close at 8:14 PM.

Brett Andrews
President



Birthdays & Anniversaries in July: We have a lot of people celebrating birthday and anniversary in July. Wishing you all a joyous time on your special day.



July Birthdays

- 2nd: Susan Menke
- 3rd: Jim Lenz
- 4th: Karl Eby
- 13th: Jackie Allen
- 20th: Tom Tirey
- 29th: Meritta Eby

July Anniversaries

- 1st: Darrel & Ruby York
- 15th: Jay & Bea Walsh
- 29th: Jim Ross & Beverly Knauper



Thoughts from the President:

Well, after 16 months we're finally back together. I must admit after such a long time and especially after experiencing the peak times of the pandemic in Ohio, I'm still feel pangs of apprehension when venturing out and mingling in crowds - my two covid shots notwithstanding. I missed us all being together as a club. I missed cleaning and waxing my t-birds. Even though I could have done that, but why would I? Where would I go? I missed going to cruise-ins/car shows and talking the classics with other automobile enthusiasts. But most of all, I missed the hugs of my children and grandchildren. When that day came after Peg and I and all our children had their shots and we were able to be with them, hold them and enjoy them, it was one of the most wonderful moments we've experienced in a long time. I am a believer in "you really don't know what you had till you don't have it anymore". It was that same feeling you get when you see a sick child that you drastically want to make better, but you're powerless to do anything. Although our family wasn't totally out of sight, they certainly weren't within arms-reach for a long time. Standing on the curb waving and talking or sitting on a cold patio in masks was not our idea of a family

gathering. The separation caused by covid had the potential to weaken, if not break, our spirits. But as I quoted Abraham Lincoln several times in our newsletter, "and this too shall come to an end". As a family we're nearly back to normal. We may not be ready to hit the outside world running at full stride, but we are now at a brisk walk. I can only hope and pray that you all are having the same joyous reunion with family and friends as we are. Our June 10th meeting puts us one step closer to a feeling of normalcy.

Or a few club-related notes, (1) remember we're always looking for articles to publish and suggestions for club activities, (2) if you know someone who has a Thunderbird but doesn't belong to a car club, invite them to our meetings, and (3) it's getting close to that time of year for our annual club picnic, usually in September. Members pitch in by bringing covered dishes, drinks, desserts, etc, but we need a host. So, if you have the room for a crowd and are willing, please let Scott or me know. Have a safe and joy filled 4th of July.

Brett



Umm-Umm Good: Cold Ice Cream on a Hot Day



Early Sunday evening, June 27th, nine TSWO club members ventured out to Ritter's Frozen Custard stand in Kettering for our first club activity of 2021. All were driving T-birds, well except Tom & Gina. Their Principality of Monaco '63 bulletbird was experiencing transmission problems and had to be left at home in the corral. It wouldn't come out of first gear. However, there were five Thunderbirds lined up in the parking lot which included Brett & Peg's '04 Merlot retrobird, Roger & Lisa's '02 Inspiration Yellow

retro(tweety)bird, Dave's Desert Rose '57 babybird, James (our newest member) arrived driving his '56 Fiesta Red babybird, and we finally got to see Scott's new '02, Thunderbird Blue retrobird. The weather was hot and a little mucky with some sporadic cloud cover and an occasional warm breeze. While talking in the parking lot before indulging on ice cream, a light sprinkle fell. There was just enough rain to put hundreds of tiny dust circles on the car paint and windshields - one of a classic car drivers dreaded fears after all the washing and waxing. We slowly meandered over to get our favorite ice cream treat then gathered around two outdoor tables to enjoy a cold, refreshing ice cream treat. After an hour or so of socializing it was time to say our good-byes and ponder what our next club activity may be.



Remembering our Friends E.D. & Leona Brown

(by: Brett Andrews)



On Easter Sunday, April 4th, 2021, we lost a dear friend and the only Honorary Life-Time member of TSWO - - E.D. Brown (Brownie). Having recently celebrate Memorial Day, and during this month of July, when we celebrate our Independence Day, I thought it fitting to remember this World War II soldier and his loving wife, Leona, who were long time members of several Thunderbird Clubs and avid Thunderbird enthusiasts. Leona passed away on July 7, 2016. The story about E.D. and

Leona that follows was first printed in our April 2012 club newsletter. The actual information for the story was assembled by Michelle Cadel, E.D. and Leona's niece, as a surprise for her aunt and uncle. Ms. Cadel had originally submitted the article to a periodical (unknown) that published the story. Brownie later gave us the article to publish during a time when we were doing newsletter stories about various club members. Though not a part of Ms. Cadel's article, it begs noting that Brownie was part of the invasion at Normandy during World War II and the rebuilding of parts of Europe during his stint in the Army. Brownie never talked much about his Army days, at least not to this writer. He was more into his life with Leona after his soldering days. You'll see that in the story below.

OUR T-BIRD STORY (Ed and Leona Brown)

This is the story of Ed and Leona Brown and their 1965 Thunderbird. Ed taught himself to drive at the age of 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ when he bought his first car, a 29A Model Ford, for \$25 dollars. At the age of 18 Brownie joined the military and served three years. After returning home from the war, he would eventually meet and marry Leona. They purchased a home in Dayton and Ed soon began his nearly 50-year career as a plumber.

Around 1949 Ed discovered his love for racing cars which he pursued as a hobby for a few years. Although he owned several cars throughout his life, one of his favorites was a black and coral 1956 Ford Sunliner which he and Leona owned for 11 years. It had a Thunderbird engine and was built for speed. Brownie still loved to drive fast and did so whenever he could. One memorable occasion was the trip in their '56 Ford to Daytona Beach. One morning Brownie decided to take the car down the beach and give it a little run. He drove the car at speeds reaching 120 mph up and down beach. Fortunately, he didn't wreck, and they had an uneventful trip home. But from that experience he learned a valuable lesson -- salt and cars don't mix. Soon after returning home, they watched the car they loved so much rust before their very eyes. Ultimately, they sold their beloved 56 Ford.



Now they found it necessary to take the nest egg Leona had been setting aside to purchase a new car. They shopped around for a while, then Brownie remembered he knew a man by the name of Hal Gilliam

who had just opened up a Ford dealership in New Carlisle, Ohio. They stopped in at Hal's and looked around. Hal told them he had just what they were looking for. He handed them the keys to a 1965 Ford Thunderbird and told them to take this car out for the afternoon, just be back by 7 pm. They took him up on his offer and ended up driving the car for most of the day. When they returned, they knew the Thunderbird was the perfect car for them. So, they looked at the color chart and at the various available options. Leona chose a frosty turquoise with a black landau top. One option they selected was the reclining passenger seat. Brownie wanted this option for Leona so she could rest and sleep on their long trips. The order was placed and about a month later, on February 9, 1965 (Brownie's birthday) the Michigan made Thunderbird arrived and was ready to be picked up. Their nest egg was just enough to cover the cost of the car and dinner afterwards.

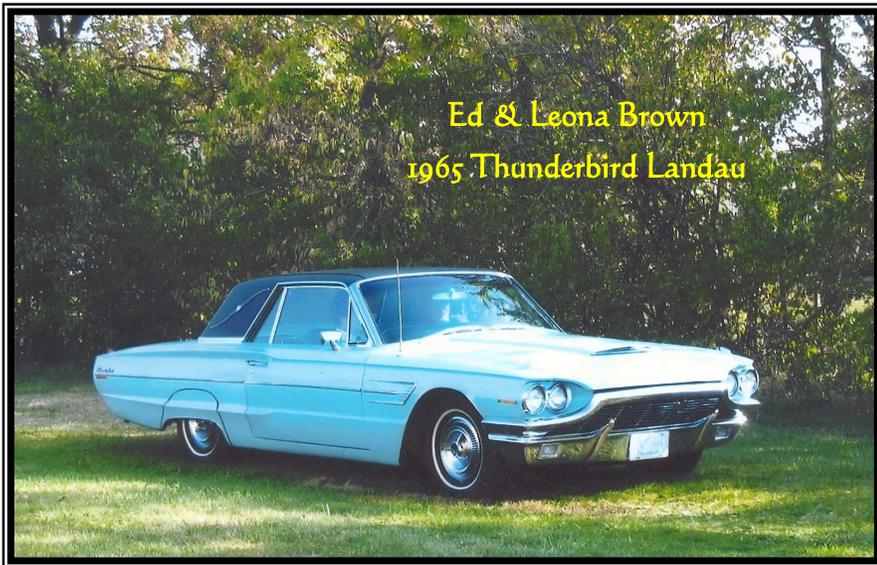
Leona immediately fell in love with the car and drove it every day. If she were out and it got rained on, she'd come home, wipe it off, and put it in the garage. One rainy afternoon she had a small fender bender. A storm grate was loose and when she drove over it, the grate popped up and dented the front fender. Although Leona was not hurt, she was very shaken and heart-sick over what had happened to their perfect car. When Brownie came home from work, a neighbor told him Leona had called about the accident and that she was waiting for him at the car. He examined the car and determined it was ok for her to drive home. Leona was very reluctant to drive. She was still a little shaken up and didn't want the neighbors to see what she had done to the car. He told her that she could ride home with him and he and a friend could come back for the car. She said, "No, I'll drive it home, you just go on up ahead of me and have the garage door open when I get there". So that's what Brownie did.

Later he contacted his insurance company but received little help. He realized this was the City's fault and maybe they would do something about it. He contacted the City Manager's office and after being transferred to several different departments, he finally found someone in the City Engineer's office to listen to him. They agreed to pay for the repairs. He took the car to a body shop, where they fluffed the Thunderbird's feathers out and put a new coat of paint. Soon Leona was back at the wheel.

Sometime later the Browns took a trip out west. During the drive to Colorado, Leona was reclined in the passenger seat napping. She woke up and commented to Brownie that she thought they were going a little fast. Brownie assured her he wasn't and suggested she finish her nap. She looked over at the speedometer and about had a heart attack. The speedometer was reading past 120 mph. Again, she asked him to slow down to which he replied that this Bird was made for speed and with all it's horsepower and no speed limit signs, he was obligated to give it a little run. Of course, Leona didn't buy that, and told him that he was the one who was going to get horse-powered, if he didn't slow down. Later, on a drive up to Pike's Peak, Brownie saw a sign advertising a Pike's Peak hill climb. He asked Leona if he should enter the bird in the contest with all this horsepower, he felt he'd surely win. Of course, that didn't fly, and Brownie and the bird climbed the mountain at a slow and safe speed.

Eventually, Brownie started attending an occasional car show by himself. Initially Leona wasn't much interested in them, but after she agreed to go, she soon realized she enjoyed them as well. They always knew what a jewel their bird was, and they were pleasantly surprised to see the interest others were taking in their car. After using the t-bird as their family car for many years they realized the bird was still in excellent shape, but it was starting to get up in age. They thought maybe they should retire it and purchase another daily driver car, which they did -- a 1979 Oldsmobile. After purchasing the new car, Leona would still leave the new car in the garage and drive the bird instead. Brownie kept pleading with

her to leave the bird at home and drive the new car; but Leona loved driving the Thunderbird too much. Brownie soon rented a 3-car garage close to their home where he parked the T-bird thus forcing Leona to drive the new car.



Brownie and Leona eventually heard about the Heartland Vintage Thunderbird Club of America and instantly knew this was the organization for them. The people were great and shared the same love for Thunderbirds that they did. They had been members of that club for more than 10 years and made some really wonderful friends. After the Heartland club dissolved, they joined the Thunderbirds of Southwest Ohio. They cherish the memories of the endless car shows and club gatherings they have attended. One of their

favorite events was the covered bridge tour their former club would take in the fall. They feel there is no sight sweeter than to see a line of Thunderbirds traveling through the beautiful fall countryside. They have won countless awards with their bird and are very proud of each and every one of them. They hope to remain with the club and continue to attend the various club functions and car shows.



A Day to Celebrate

The coals are red hot
The flag's proudly waving.
The fireworks are popping
And the band's loudly playing.
All over the country
we see the stripes and stars
Today we celebrate
this great country of ours.

Poetry by Sharon Hendricks

CLUB OFFICERS

President: Brett Andrews (937) 237-1131

Treasurer: Lisa Hamm (937) 835-5992

Vice President: Roger Hamm (937) 835-5992

Secretary: Dave Harvey (937) 470-2885