



# Thunderbirds of Southwest Ohio

Newsletter

June 2022



## MEETING MINUTES

**Call to Order:** Promptly at 7:00 PM, President Roger Hamm gaveled to order the May TSWO meeting, being held at MCL Cafeteria. He greeted the 20 members present, including new members Larry and Jo Doelker. Interestingly, the Doelkers have a yellow Retro Bird, and happened to follow Roger and Lisa (driving their yellow Retro) into the parking lot for tonight's meeting.

Roger then called on Scott for a personal announcement. He'll be going back to Utah to visit his brother, leaving the weekend of May 21. Since he'll be gone for an uncertain period of time, Scott offered up his Dayton Dragons tickets (2 seats each) for games on June 1, June 26, Aug 3, Aug 13, and Sept 4. Anyone interested in any of these tickets was asked to see Scott after the meeting.

**Attendees:** Members in attendance were: Roger & Lisa Hamm; Scott McGaha; Dave & Deb Harvey; Brett & Peg Andrews; Mark & Jackie Allen; Nancy & Julie Blake; Jan & Guy Gifford; Beverly Knauper & Jim Ross; Paul & Sherry Loschi; Jim Russell; and our new members, Larry & Jo Doelker.

**Approval of Minutes:** President Roger then called for a motion to approve the April meeting minutes, as published in the May newsletter. Scott McGaha made a motion to approve the minutes, and his motion was seconded by Sherry Loschi. There being no comments or corrections offered to the minutes, the motion carried unanimously.

**Membership Update/Discussion:** Roger reported receiving in the mail dues for another new member, Michael Bach, whom he met at the Horsepower Farm event on April 30. Michael listed on his application that he owns a 1966 Landau (although he was spotted at Horsepower Farm in a white Retro Bird).

While no one reported that they had bought or sold a T-bird since the last meeting, Guy Gifford reported that he had a "better than new" '62 T-bird for sale (asking \$25K). He described the car's history in great detail, describing all the work that had been done for it over the years.

**Sunshine Committee Report:** James Russell had a birthday on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, and Sherry Loschi had a birthday on May 12<sup>th</sup>. In addition, Dave and Deb Harvey will celebrate their 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary on May 30<sup>th</sup>. (Dave commented that "She re-upped me 34 times, and I was on probation the entire time.")

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Lisa Hamm reported no changes in the treasury since last meeting.

**Club Activities/Events:** Several people attended the Horsepower Farm event on April 30<sup>th</sup>, including Roger Hamm, Dave Harvey and Aaron Scully, Jim Ross & Beverly Knauper, Tom Tirey & Gina Hctor.

This month's event will be held on Thunderbird Appreciation Day, which is Sun, May 15<sup>th</sup>. The event will consist of lunch at Warped Wing Brewery in Springboro, followed by socializing, at least, and possibly a short driving tour.

The June event will be a driving tour to the Bicycle Museum in New Bremen, OH, followed by lunch at a place yet to be determined. After taking a poll of raised hands, the date we settled on is June 25<sup>th</sup>.

The July event is planned to be a driving tour to the Mike Butler car collection (comprised of some 230+ vehicles) in Erlanger, KY. There was some discussion about making this a joint event with the Tri-State Mustang Club. The anticipated date will be July 9<sup>th</sup>, with more details to follow.

The August event will be planned attendance (as a group) by TSWO members at the British Car Show, to be held on August 6<sup>th</sup> at Eastwood MetroPark on Harshman Rd. More details will be announced later.

September's event will be organized around the WACO Fly-In and will be planned by Dave Menke.

**Old Business:** Referring to previous discussions around the possibility of holding our Christmas dinner at the Florentine Restaurant in Germantown. Lisa has confirmed their availability for our standard "2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month" meeting night. Food ordering would be off the menu, and we can bring in our own decorations and our own dessert (cake). If we ultimately decide to meet there for our December meeting, they will need a final head count by our November meeting.

Scott reported that he had forgotten to ask the Miami Valley Car Club at their last meeting if they might be interested in our two Car Show signs. He'll try to atone for this oversight at their next meeting (on Wednesday evening).

## Car Events:

Cruise-In at Vineyard Church (Friday evenings)

Cruise-In at Kettering Town Center (Saturday evenings)

Mecum Spring Classic (starts tomorrow, May 13, and runs through Sat, May 21)

Springfield Cars & Parts Swap Meet (Memorial Day weekend, May 27-29)

Show-N-Shine calendars have only recently been mailed, some have started to arrive

**New Business:** Jim Ross mentioned that his Tri-State Mustang Club recently visited the Salty Dog Museum and suggested this as a possible place for our club to visit. He also mentioned Ford's Garage (a Ford-themed restaurant) has opened recently in Rookwood, near Cincinnati.

**Open Floor:** Brett Andrews mentioned that we need to bring Guy (our 3<sup>rd</sup> board member, in addition to Roger and Brett) up to date with regard to disposal of "excess" club property. Brett has received a request from Bev Knauper for one of the two tents, to donate to her church. Since the Board had not had a chance to meet to approve the request, Brett had to hold off on giving a tent to Bev, until the Board had a chance to approve the request. Bev commented that she had only requested one of the tents, so as not to preclude anyone else who might have an interest in one of them. If there is no other interest, she said her church could use both of them, and would willingly receive them from the club.

Since all 3 of our Board members were present at this meeting (and after a short discussion, all were in agreement as to the pending disposal), the matter of disposal of the two tents designated as excess club property was deemed to be approved by the Board.

Brett also noted that an estimated value was needed for the walkie-talkie donations from Scott's brother to the club. He said he would get together with Scott after the meeting to officially log these donations into inventory.

**Adjournment:** The motion for adjournment was made by Jan Gifford (thanks, Jan, we've missed you and Guy at recent meetings), and was seconded by Jim Russell. The motion carried unanimously, and President Roger Hamm-ered the meeting to a close at 8:00 PM.

*Roger Hamm*  
President

**NEXT CLUB MEETING REMINDER: June 9<sup>th</sup> at MCL**

**Birthdays & Anniversaries in June:** We have two birthdays and two anniversaries in the club this month. The TSWO membership send a hardy Happy Birthday to Dave & Mark and congratulations to Paul & Sherry and Dave & Susan on their upcoming anniversaries.

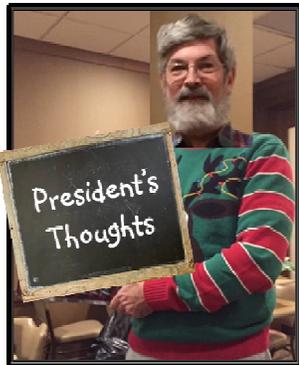


**June Birthdays**

Dave Harvey (18th)  
Mark Allen (29<sup>th</sup>)

**June Anniversaries**

Paul & Sherry Loschi (20th)  
(13 yrs)  
Dave & Susan Menke (23<sup>rd</sup>)  
(43 yrs)



Hello, fellow TSWO members. It is finally the month of June and the weather is finally looking like summer is here. Gone is the cold, miserable days when you have to put on those bulky gloves and heavy coats, just to try to stay warm. Here is the warm day when you can wear short-sleeved shirts and shorts and you can actually work on your cars (for those who can), without your fingers freezing and hurting and tingling while trying to work in the frigid temperatures.

This is also the time when car shows and cruise-ins can be found every weekend, allowing us to get our Thunderbirds out and show them off. I always look forward to this every year, as I enjoy taking one of our Thunderbirds to a car show or cruise-in. I hope all of you can get your cars out and enjoy a nice show sometime during this warm weather. It is nice to just be able to sit by my car or to look at other cars to see how nice some are. Sometimes, I have been able to meet some very nice folks at a car show and talk to them about their cars and how it came to look so nice. It is also enjoyable to talk to them about problems they may have or have had getting it to run nice and places where you can get yours repaired.

June is also the month we use to display our flags on flag day, June 14<sup>th</sup>. Also, on the third Sunday of this month, we celebrate Father's Day. For those who are lucky enough to still have their fathers with them, I hope you can remember to spend the day with him or call him and wish him a Happy Father's Day. For those of us who have lost our fathers, this is a good day to think about some of the wisdom he passed down to us and some of the great times we were able to share with him when he was still alive. I try to remember some of the good days I had with him and I miss those good old days.

*Roger*

## *What Have We Done Recently?*

**Horsepower Farm:** On April 30<sup>th</sup> six club members ventured to the Horsepower Farm in Middletown, Ohio to participate in their monthly cruise-in event. Club members present include Roger Hamm, Dave Harvey, Beverly Knauper & Jim Ross, and Tom Tirey & Gina Hoctor. Roger took some photos of the event which will soon be on our club website.

**Warped Wing Restaurant, Springboro:** On Sunday, May 15, 2022, ten members of Thunderbirds of Southwest Ohio (Brett Andrews, Scott McGaha, James Russell, Dave Harvey, Mark & Jackie Allen, Larry & Jo Doelker, Roger & Lisa Hamm) celebrated Thunderbird Appreciation Day by taking their Thunderbirds (and one Miata) out to show the public. The members all met at the Warped Wing Restaurant in Springboro, Ohio and decided to partake of some of their delicious food. Thunderbirds present were Brett's 2004 Merlot, Scott's 2002 Blue, James's 1956 Red, Larry & Jo's Inspiration yellow and Roger & Lisa's 1986 Blue Elan. After we finished our meals and long conversations, Mark & Jackie, Scott, James, Brett and Roger & Lisa decided to go on a nice drive in the countryside.

We left Springboro and headed east to Waynesville, Ohio and drove through downtown and continued all the way through town and then headed on down the road, ending up going our separate ways once we got onto Wilmington Pike outside of Bellbrook, Ohio. Below are a few pictures from the event. More will soon be on our website.



Mark, Brett, Scott & Dave. Not in this picture is Jackie, our photographer.



Russell, Lisa, Roger, and two of our newest members, Jo & Larry Doelker



# Did you Know? The TurbineBird Was Real

Prepared by: Brett Andrews



Several of you participated in our weekend excursion many years ago to the Gilmore Car Museum in Hickory Corners, Mi northwest of Battlecreek. To date, that has to be the most fantastic auto museum I have had a pleasure of visiting. One car that really intrigued me was the Chrysler Turbine Car from 1965 (pictured at left). A total of 55 were produced (5 prototypes and 50 for a public user program). Though the

concept was novel, it never really got off the ground. It was abandoned in 1966 with Chrysler recalling and destroying all vehicles except nine which are in various museums and private collections.

You may be surprised to discover that Chrysler was not the first American car maker to dabble with a turbine powered vehicle. Ford was interested in the concept nearly a decade before Chrysler. So what did Ford use as their test bed, a 1955 Thunderbird.

Ordinarily, in a '55 Bird you'd find a 292 cubic-inch V8 making just shy of 200 horsepower. But as the gigantic exhaust outlet in the fender of this 'bird suggests, there's something radically different sitting between the fenders. In fact, it's a small gas turbine engine supplied by Boeing.



This turbine engine (pictured below) created 175 hp. As seen in the photo, the Chrysler Turbine car exhaust exited out the back. However, on the Ford design it dumps out behind the front wheels on both sides.



There were some undesirable characteristics about this design which included the sound, heat, somewhat complicated starting procedures and a lag in start-up acceleration. However, there had to be some anticipated benefits to even consider tackling such a radical concept. Those positives included good medium-speed acceleration, smooth operation, decent power-to-weight ratio, and less routine maintenance because of the turbine's simpler design versus piston engines.

Ford spent approximately \$188,000 to create this one-off platform. If built today, that \$188,000 would be \$2 million. Quite a price tag for basically changing out the engine. The body did have some minor alterations that included customizing of the hood to clear the exhaust ducts and componentry which scraped the inner lid and a raised scoop with rear facing louvers to help vent the heat. There were other minor body modifications such as the size and location of the front parking lights and the scoops on the rear fenders. Production cost was a major factor that killed the Chrysler turbine and likely Ford had a similar finding.



I was surprised to discover that Ford had also installed a Boeing turbine in a 1954 Fairlane hardtop, though I was unable to find any further information or photos of this concept car. While these programs went nowhere, it sparked Ford to make their own 701 turbine motor. They kept on going through the 1950s with a 702, a 704 and a 705 turbine. The latter was actually a dual turbine unit which created 600 horsepower when fully engaged or 45 horsepower with only partial operation.

In searching for what happened to that original '55 T-bird test bed, I came across one article that stated Ford had installed an experimental Boeing engine in a very early prototype Thunderbird in October 1953. After testing was completed, the car was scrapped by Ford and no longer exists. I, therefore, must conclude two things. First, the '53 Thunderbird prototype referred to eventually did become the '55 production T-bird leading numerous articles author to date the turbine Thunderbird as a 1955. Secondly, the vehicle identified as the test bed and later scrapped was, in fact, the Thunderbird described and pictured in this article. I found no other evidence that more than one turbine Thunderbird was made, other than the mention of Ford's "One-Off" design mentioned in paragraph 6.

Well, we almost had a "JetBird", or "ThunderJet", or Baby TurbineBird. That would have been cool, but I'd bet engine parts would be expensive today.



#### CLUB OFFICERS

President: Roger Hamm (937) 835-5992  
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