

THE ALLEGHENY LUDLUM STAINLESS STEEL 1960 THUNDERBIRD



Origin of the Car

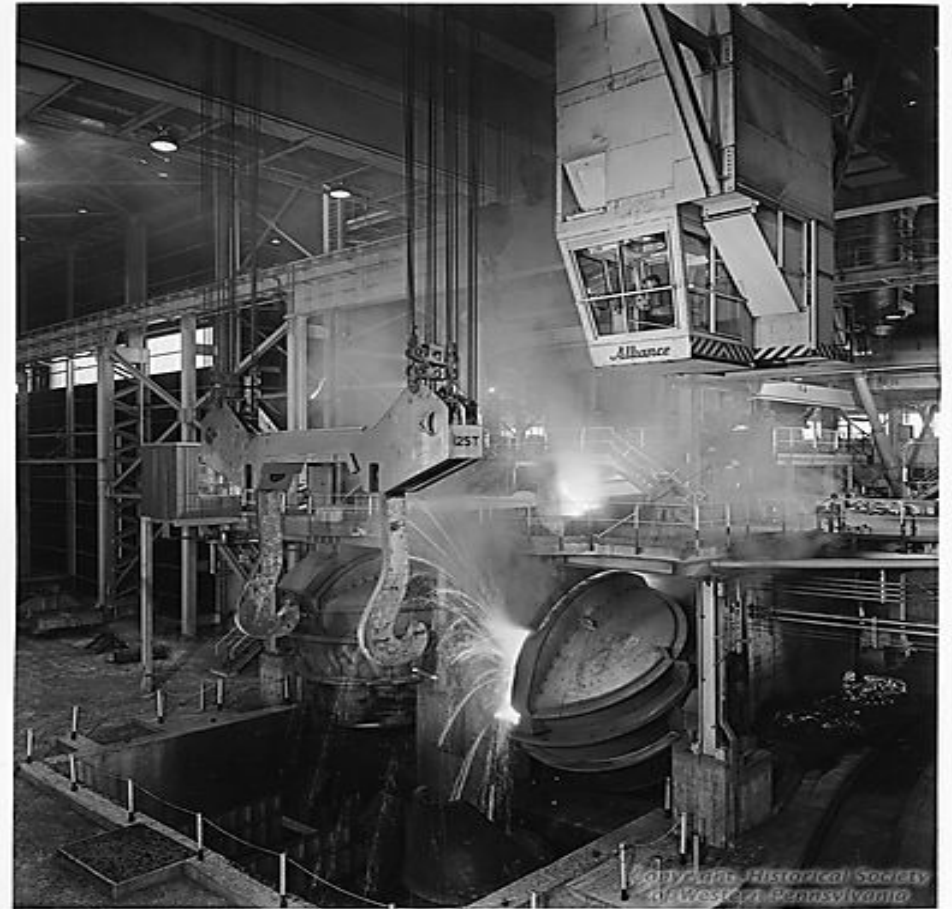
- ❑ Allegheny Ludlum is one of the largest suppliers of stainless steel in the United States of America. In 1960, they ordered two 1960 Ford Thunderbirds to be made using stainless steel so they could use them for promotional purposes.
- ❑ This was the second time they had asked Ford to build a stainless steel car. In 1936 Ford built six Tudor sedans for them using stainless steel panels. The cars were used for a coast to coast promotional tour to demonstrate all the advantages of stainless steel. The collaboration was extremely successful for both companies.
- ❑ 24 years later the two companies would come together for yet another collaboration. The two 1960 Ford Thunderbirds were fitted with skins, grilles, and bumpers from T302 stainless. The material was of such high quality that the two 1960 Ford Thunderbirds both still have their original T409 steel mufflers and T304 exhaust pipes to this day.

At the end of 1960, two Thunderbirds were constructed of stainless steel for the Allegheny Ludlum Steel Corporation to showcase the decorative use of stainless steel, at a price of US \$35,000 each (\$346,220 in 2022 dollars). Because of the properties of stainless steel, the production dies would be destroyed as a result of the stamping of the parts. This was not a problem for Ford, as the next generation of T-Bird used a new body style. To duplicate the T-Birds 3,957 lb (1,795 kg) normal production weight, body panels were made of Type 302 stainless steel, and trim pieces out of Type 430 stainless steel. At the time of their production, because of the maximum rolling mill width for stainless steel, it only produced stock that was 72 inches (1,800 mm) in width. Both cars' roofs were constructed from two 42-inch-wide sections welded together in the middle. Both T-Birds received mechanical and interior restorations in the 1980s and survive to this day, with one on permanent display at the Heinz History Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Production Process

- ❑ Ford realized that stainless steel was harder to manipulate than conventional steel, so the panels that were needed to make the two 1960 Thunderbirds would have to be made at the end of the production process, so that's exactly what they did.
- ❑ During the production process, the stainless roof panels were the hardest to make. Back then, a roof panel would normally be stamped using a single die, but the material wasn't wide enough to accommodate the width of the roof. The stainless steel roof panels had to be constructed using two separate roof stampings for each of the two cars, then welding the panels together in the middle.
- ❑ When the two 1960 stainless steel Ford Thunderbirds were completed, some of the people involved in the production process thought that the cars were too shiny. The cars then underwent a buffing process that gave them a more brushed look.

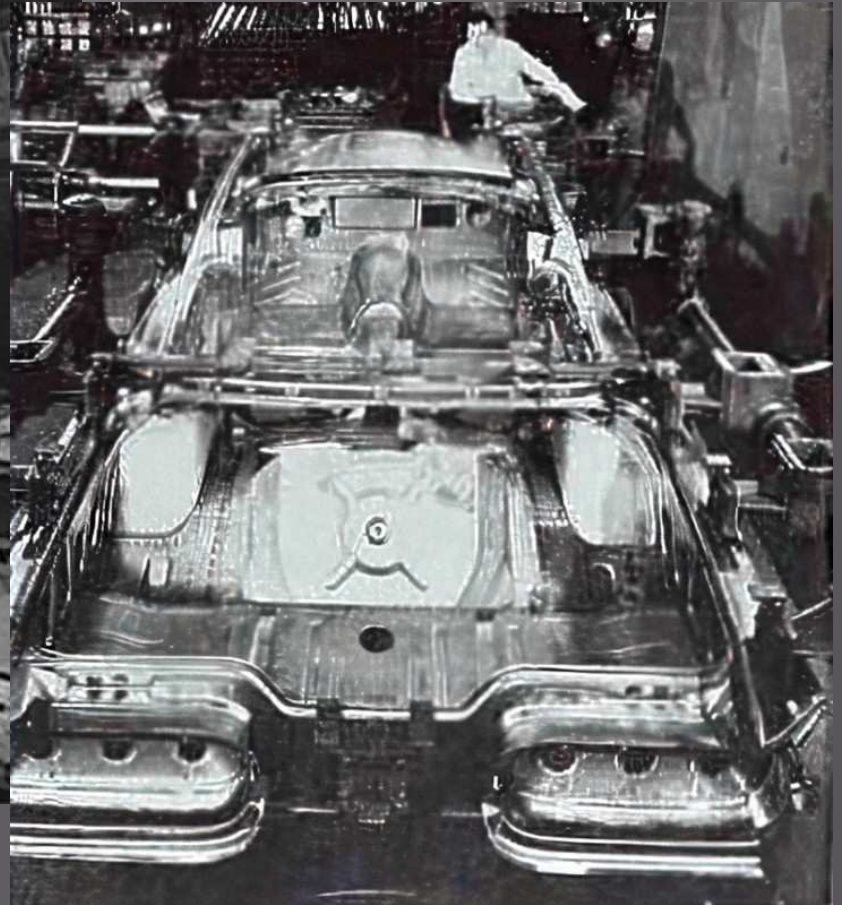
Stainless Steel Foundry





Sheet Metal Production

Stainless Steel Body



The Finished Car

In Gleaming
Stainless Steel



Ready
For
Show



Even
The
Back
End
Looks
Good





A Beautiful Sheen



















On
Tour

The Stainless Steel Fords



The
One
That
Started
It All

The
1936
Ford



What happens when
someone gets carried
away with car polish!



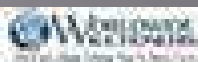
A Mirror
Shine!



The
Allegheny
Ludlum 1966
Lincoln
Continental



Lot 060



The Historic Stainless Steel Trifecta

\$ 950,000

€ 821,465

£ 734,445



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