



# *From the Garage*

*by Paul Hunter*

## **Cranking the Model A**

Starting a Model A with the hand crank was once as common as driving one. It seems hand cranking has become nearly a lost art over the decades. Following a few basic rules, hand cranking is perfectly safe and quite simple. The hand crank should be one of the most useful tools in your toolbox!



First Problem: the crank almost never lines up with the engine. Second problem: there is no surplus of space around the crank. Other problems include forgetting to retard the spark or something is wrong, out of adjustment, or the engine is flooded. These types of issues can induce rapid reverse rotation of the crank – a “kicking” – resulting in disastrous injury to your person.

If you **MUST** crank it, do as follows:

Set the hand brake, shift the gear lever into neutral, turn on the gas, set the mixture at rich. Set the throttle at fast idle or slow race and push the spark lever up to full retard. Confirm that the ignition switch is still off.

If you are alone you will have to prop the choke up or keep it closed with twig, or you may enlist the aid of your wife\partner\sidekick.

Next, locate the crank, shift the crank hole cover open with the sharp end of the crank, and finally get the crank engaged with the dogs on the engine crankshaft. With the choke closed, turn the engine about one turn, stopping with the engine on compression. Hopefully the crank will be halfway up.

Don't forget to check the position of the license plate. With some luck, you will miss it when the crank slips and you won't be sliced to the bone. Next step, ask your wife\partner\sidekick to release the choke and turn on the ignition switch.

The last thing is the most important, and that is to grasp the crank handle with your **LEFT** hand with **ALL FOUR FINGERS AND THUMB ON THE OUTSIDE OF THE CRANK, DO NOT GRIP THE CRANK WITH YOUR THUMB LOCATED AROUND THE CRANK HANDLE.** That way, when or if it kicks backwards the crank pulls out of your grasp without hurting you. **ONLY CRANK WITH QUARTERTURNS, PULLING UP WITH YOUR LEFT HAND.**

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*I have tried this method and it does work, and I can not reiterate strongly enough the comments re keeping your thumb out of the way.*

*Here's to safe cranking*