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# THE MUELLER RECORD

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Winter 1999

## Did Hieronymus make the car?



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This motor carriage is owned by James Renzulli of San Diego and may (or may not) be a Mueller made vehicle. The Museum hopes to have this car on display some time in the future or one made from the blueprints of the motor carriages. Hieronymus Mueller won the first unofficial car race in the country in 1895 and received a \$1500 second prize award in the official race in Chicago the same year. The rear of the car shows a #7 leather plate. Could this possibly be the 7th motor carriage made by Hieronymus Mueller? It certainly looks like one. Please see page 3 for additional story.

## For the Record . . .

by Nancy Jo Batman, Manager

As you will recall in the last edition, I wrote about locating a motor carriage that may or may not be a Mueller-Benz or Mueller Motor Carriage.

Jane Mueller, president of the Board of Directors of the Mueller Museum, sent my brother-in-law, Jim Batman, to San Diego to visit the vehicle and its owner, Mr. James Renzulli. Jim Batman is a mechanic for the City of Decatur and knows more about cars than I do about any subject.

He took many pictures of the car. He sat in the car. He acted like he was driving the car. He examined the cars on his hands and knees.

When he came back, he wrote a report of his visit, with the conclusion: "I don't know."

He did note that Mr. Renzulli's motor carriage had a wooden frame, but all of Hieronymus Mueller's blueprints indicated a tubular frame for his motor carriages.

"That frame bothers me," he said.

The vehicle is beautiful and has been restored with loving care to represent a motor carriage of the 1900s.

But is it a Mueller-made car?

We asked one of the leading experts in the country (only he insisted he was "the leading expert in the world") who said this automobile is *not*--and he repeated it with a vengeance--*not* a Mueller made car, saying, "I know you WANTED this to be a Mueller vehicle. . ."

Last year, John Moma of the Mueller Co. gave the Museum approximately 100 blueprints and drawings of the early Mueller motor carriage which had been stored at the company. The blueprints, drawings and illustrations indicate that Hieronymus made at *least* seven vehicles. We also located the blueprint for "Mueller Carriage #8."

We are hoping to have this motor carriage on display in the museum some time in the future, if Mr. Renzulli will loan it to us.

We'll put a great big "I DON'T KNOW" sign on it. And in small print, ". . . but it sure looks like one." And another big thank you to Mr. Renzulli for loving old cars enough to restore such a beauty.

## New Members . . .

### Benefactor - \$1,000

Ms. Jane Mueller  
Mr. John Scot Mueller  
Mr. and Mrs. William D. Staley

### Sponsor - \$100

Decatur Area Convention and Visitors Bureau  
Mrs. Earl F. Robison

### Support - \$50

Mr. and Mrs. J. William Coffey  
Mr. and Mrs. Claude S. Inman  
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Wheatley

### Family - \$25

Mr. and Mrs. Ray Batman  
Mr. and Mrs. Larry W. Foster

### Regular - \$20

Mr. and Mrs. Robert W. Mallow  
Mrs. Jane S. Shroyer

### Senior/student - \$15

Mr. and Mrs. Donald L. Matthews  
Mr. and Mrs. Orville Spencer  
Mr. Richard Van Nort  
Mr. and Edward J. Vogel

## Turtle talk . . .

Many of our visitors are former employees of the Mueller Co. who have some great memories.

Take Fred Pierce, for instance, who walked through the doors on February 5 and remembered turtles.

Fred, who was Credit Manager for the Company, was an advisor of Junior Achievement along with Lloyd Darnell and Hugh Baker in 1964 and 1965.

"Turtles saved our skin," he said, laughing.

Seems the dozen or so members of the youth program had several not-quite-so-successful business ventures that year, including making trunk latches and "fried" marbles (which were mounted to form clusters of grapes).

"We weren't doing too well financially until someone thought about making chocolate turtles. We worked on Saturdays in our kitchen at home and would take huge chunks of chocolate and melt that and pour it over three pecan halves and some caramel, which we also melted," he said.

"We took orders for those boxes of candy during the Christmas season and were able to return a ten percent profit to the Board of Directors," Pierce said.

# Museum Gift Shop Items

**“Mueller Co.’s 75th Anniversary Revisited”**--a 45-minute video taken from approximately 140 lantern slides produced in 1932 for employees and their families at the Annual Picnic held July 16, 1932. The slide show is a historical treasure and features not only scenes from the Mueller Co. and its employees and families, but also scenes of buildings, homes and persons in Decatur, Illinois. Price: \$20.

**Fire Hydrant Pins**--created exclusively for the Museum by local artist Shirley Kramer, whose work may also be found in shops around the country. These pins are all unique and feature the Mueller hydrant or the shoe logo used in the “Steppin’ Out” exhibit featuring the clothing of the Mueller and Staley women. Price: \$15. (Indicate a hydrant or a shoe; styles will vary.)

**“Historical Homes of Decatur, Illinois”**--written by local author Jasper DeVidal, this book features 10 historical homes in Decatur, along with that of Henry and Ora Mueller. Price: \$20.

**Hieronymus Mueller T-shirts**--white with black drawing of Hieronymus Mueller on front; guaranteed to evoke a “What’s a Hieronymus?”; Size X-Large only. Price: \$9.95.

**“Lasting Class” T-shirts**--white with black drawing of Hieronymus on front and fire hydrant on back. A unique item for fire hydrant collectors! X-Large only. Price: \$11.95.

**Notecards**--featuring two reprints from original advertising of Mueller products. Each box contains six cards and envelopes. Price \$5.00.

**Mugs**--great for the mug collector. We guarantee you won’t find one of these anywhere else in the whole world! Classy white with black print featuring Hieronymus Mueller. Price: \$6.95

**“Mueller Story” books**--originally printed in 1980 in hardback, this red softback edition contains pictures and the history of the Mueller Co. and family; written by O.T. Banton in collaboration with Frank H. Mueller. Price: \$5.

**Books by Nancy Jo Batman, Museum Manager:**

**“Yeah, But How Would She Look Beside the Go-Kart Trophy?”**, 1990, Chalice Press, St. Louis; features 20 humorous essays illustrated by nationally-known cartoonist Skip Williamson; signed by the author. Price \$10.

**“It’s Not Polite To Play Dead at the Supper Table,”** 1992, Chalice Press; features humorous essays and original artwork. Price: \$10.

*Note: Museum members receive a 10 percent discount on all items except books by DeVidal and Batman. Sorry, we do not accept credit cards. For more information on any of these items, please call 217-423-6161.*



## Order Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Member? Yes or No (Please circle)

<u>Item</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Price</u>
“Mueller Co.’s 75th Anniversary Revisited” Video (\$20 or \$18/members)	_____	_____
Pins: _____ Fire Hydrant _____ Shoe (\$15 or \$13.50/members)	_____	_____
“Historical Homes of Decatur, Illinois” (\$20)	_____	_____
H. Mueller T-shirts (\$9.95 or \$8.95/members)	_____	_____
“Lasting Class” T-shirts (\$11.95 or \$10.75/members)	_____	_____
Notecards (\$5 or \$4.50/members)	_____	_____
Mugs (\$6.95 or \$6.25/members)	_____	_____
“Mueller Story” Book (\$5 or \$4.50/members)	_____	_____
“Yeah, But How Would She Look Beside the Go-Kart Trophy?” Book (\$10)	_____	_____
“It’s Not Polite to Play Dead at the Supper Table” Book (\$10)	_____	_____

Note: If merchandise total is less than \$50, add \$5 for shipping.  
 If merchandise total is more than \$50, add 10% of merchandise total for shipping.

Merchandise Total \_\_\_\_\_  
 Shipping & Handling \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tax IL residents add 7.50% sales tax. \_\_\_\_\_  
**TOTAL Enclosed** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail check to 61 S. Country Club Rd., Decatur, IL 62521**

## A Plug for the Mueller Museum



These pins featuring Mueller fire hydrants were created by local artist Shirley Kramer expressly for the Hieronymus Mueller Museum's Gift Shop. We also have a few remaining "Steppin' Out" pins which feature the shoe used in the logo for our exhibit featuring the clothing of the Mueller and Staley women. If you are an artist or craftsperson, please send us a sample or a photograph of your product if it features a fire hydrant. We may be interested in selling them in our gift shop.

## Memories . . .

Do you want to know more about a former employee or family member who worked at Mueller Co.? Send us that person's name and we will do a computer search and send you a copy of the page in the Mueller Record in which it appeared. We have a pretty good inventory of the Mueller Records from 1910 to 1985.

## Video available

The video, "Mueller Co.'s 75th Anniversary Revisited" has been produced from 140 lantern slides taken around 1932. The original slide show was shown to Mueller Co. employees and their families during the Annual Picnic held July 16, 1932, at Mueller Lodge. The original show was narrated by Adolph Mueller, long-time President of the company, and son of Hieronymus Mueller. The video is a historic treasure and features many early buildings, persons and homes in Decatur, as well as scenes from the Mueller Co. and the family.

*Psst, This would make a great gift.*

### Annual Membership Information

- Student/Senior Citizen:** \$15  
Free admission for member and one guest, museum newsletter subscription, 10% discount on gift items.
- Regular Membership:** \$20  
Free admission for member and one guest, museum newsletter subscription, 10% discount on gift items.
- Family Membership:** \$25  
Free admission for member and up to four guests, museum newsletter subscription, 10% discount on gift items.
- \*Support Membership:** \$50  
Free admission for member and up to four guests, museum newsletter subscription, 10% discount on gift items.
- \*Sponsor Membership:** \$100  
Free admission for member and up to four guests, museum newsletter subscription, 10% discount on gift items.
- \*Patron Membership:** \$500  
Free admission for member and guests, museum newsletter subscription, 10% discount on gift items, recognition on museum donor board.
- \*Benefactor Membership:** \$1000  
Free admission for member and guests, museum newsletter subscription, 10% discount on gift items, recognition on museum donor board.

Please circle the type of membership preferred.

\* A portion of these membership fees are tax deductible.

Please send this form and payment to  
**HIERONYMUS MUELLER MUSEUM**

61 South Country Club Road  
Decatur, Illinois, 62521  
(217) 423-6161

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

The Hieronymus Mueller Museum is a privately funded non-profit museum and depends upon donations for its operations.

# Do You Remember?

...from the Mueller Record

- ◆ **Lewis Bland**, who works in the Mueller Test Lab, was honored for 45 years of service.--1964
- ◆ **Ethel (Dixie) Thomason** was honored for 45 years of service in 1964. At that time, no other woman could match her years of experience.--1964.
- ◆ Four members of the Pattern Shop bowling team were: **Dick Ferrill, Morey Sefton, John Hackl** and **Max Justice**--1964
- ◆ **Herb Ashmore**, Industrial Relations Manager, is one of 21 Decatur citizens who have been named to the new Board of Education citizens consulting committee.--1964
- ◆ **John C. Dennis**, Office Services Manager, recently received the golfer's thrill of a lifetime by getting a hole-in-one.--1964
- ◆ Dept. 80 edged out the Standards department by eight points in the Mueller golf league. Members of the first round winners were: **Howard Hull, George Deffenbaugh, Bert Sturgis, Bob Davis, Delmar Baum, Bill Brooks** and **Jack Calfee**--1964
- ◆ A number of Mueller employees in Decatur retired recently. **Walter Andes, Ralph Stevenson, Corey Simpson**, and **Albert Griffith**--1965
- ◆ **Don McQuality** of the Shipping Room, **Vince Ermovick** of the Foundry Division and **Gene McKinney** of the Mail Room, submitted cost-saving suggestions which have paid them a total of about \$150.--1966
- ◆ Those receiving 40-year Service Awards in 1966 included: **Leon L. Bethard, Albert E. Butt, Eugene R. Cash, Eldred W. Connors, Otto J. Dannewitz, Ollie Fortschneider, Anne Louise Whitehead**, and **Robert W. Hill**--1966
- ◆ **George R. Lebo**, Manager of Production and Inventory Control for Mueller Co. has been promoted to Manager of Data Processing for all of the company's U.S. plants.--1966
- ◆ **Melvin C. Whittington**, formerly an inspector has been promoted to Quality Control Technician.--1977
- ◆ **Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Walton** of Niantic celebrated their golden wedding anniversary on June 26, 1977.

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## HIERONYMUS MUELLER MUSEUM

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