



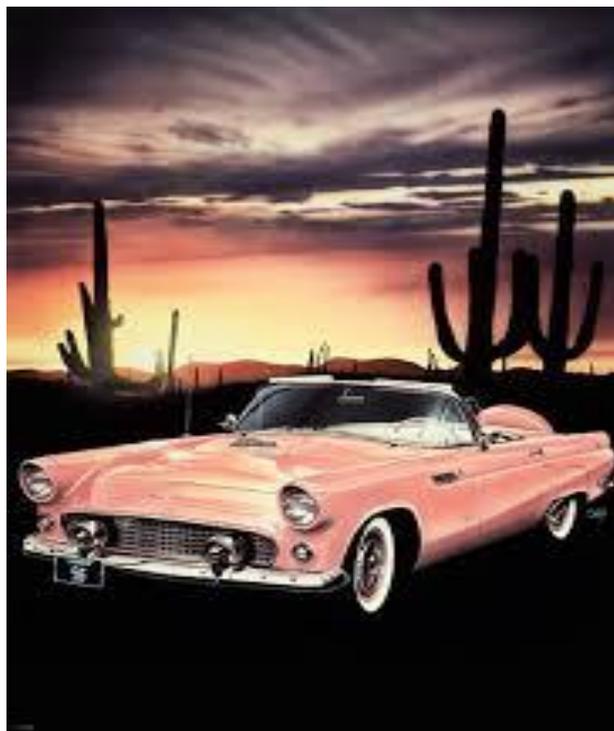
February 2026

*Thunderbird Owners of
New York*

*Thunderbird Owners of New York
Webpage*

Website <https://thunderbirdownersofnewyork.godaddysites.com/>

Member Classic Thunderbird Club International – Chap. 49



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Next Club Meeting

Thunderbird Owners of New York

Feb 9th, 2026

Arrive early – 6:45 The meeting will begin at 7:00 PM.

**Bethpage Library
47 Powell Avenue, Bethpage, NY 11714**

(Up-coming meetings: March 2, April 6; May 4)

*Newsletter Message from
Allen Leon
February 2026*

As your new President, I aim to broaden our club's activities and make everyone's experience more rewarding.

Over the next year I will be organizing recurring monthly events in addition to our regular meetings. Your input and participation will be invaluable to the success of these initiatives.

Building on previous efforts, I will continue to deliver technology-focused presentations and intend to invite guest speakers to contribute their expertise during select sessions.

It bears repeating that the strength of our club is rooted in the commitment of its members. I encourage everyone to engage actively as we pursue our mission to share knowledge about our “Baby Birds” and foster strong camaraderie within the group.

I am looking forward to a great next year for our club!

HOLD THE DATE

Saturday February 21st

Breakfast (Optional)

Technical Presentation/Demonstration by a Professional Service Provider The details are still in the development stage so be aware that an Email send to our members will follow soon!

Newsletter Message from
Sal Perrotta
February 2026

Message from the Car Club to the Outgoing President

On behalf of all the members of the Thunderbird Owners of New York, we extend our heartfelt thanks to Stan Matusewicz for his years of dedicated service as club president. Stan, under your leadership, our club has benefited from your commitment, and your leadership. This has been evident to all of us at our events and gatherings.

I understand that you were unable to attend this year's holiday party, which would have been your final event as president. I was away on vacation but did have the opportunity to speak to several members who all told me that the party was a testament to your ability to bring people together and create memorable experiences for all our club members.

Stan, it is important to know that we all know that you are stepping in as our president when no one else stepped up was outstanding and it speaks volumes about the man behind the job. Stan over your term as President you set a high standard for future presidents. The membership deeply appreciates your tireless efforts, your diligence, and your unwavering support for club activities. You have left a legacy, and we are grateful for the positive impact you have had on our club.

Thank you, Stan, for your years of service, your friendship, and your passion for classic Thunderbirds. We wish you all the best in your future endeavors and look forward to seeing you at future club events as a valued member.

To our members:

As we begin the new year and transition into our new club leadership, I have been asked to take on responsibility for the monthly newsletter. I will do my best to keep it going, though my available free time is not what it used to be. I want to be upfront that I may not be able to produce the same type of newsletter I did in the past, but I am committed to sharing updates and keeping everyone connected.

To make our newsletter even better, I would welcome your help. If you have stories, photos, or recaps from club events, please consider sharing them for inclusion in upcoming newsletter issues. Member involvement will keep our club strong and vibrant. By sharing your experiences and perspectives, you help foster a sense of community and make our club even more enjoyable for everyone.

SECRETARY'S REPORT
Meeting Recap January 2026



JOHN CATTONAR, Thunderbird Owners of New York Secretary

CATTONAR'S CORNER

This January we came together to celebrate our annual Holiday party. The event was outstanding and as it has in the past a wonderful time and the amazing food served at the luncheon was amazing.

As in the past, information will be documented in the form of a recap of a meeting and shared as part of the monthly newsletter.

It is my most sincere hope that 2026 brings you all joy and happy days.

Hope to see fellow members finally on the road.

Happy T-Birding!
JOHN CATTONAR, Club Secretary



From the Club

From: Dennis Benfante, January 2026 Holiday Party Photos





CELEBRITIES AND THEIR THUNDERBIRDS:



Natalie Wood & her '55



Sandra Giles w/ fur covered '57

Below is Clark Gable with his retrofitted Supercharged 1955 Thunderbird.



Clark Gable & supercharged '55



Audrey Hepburn and Mel Ferrer admire their new 1955



Clark Gable



John Travolta



Annette Funicello



Tony Perkins



Suzann Sommers



Elvis



Nick Adams



Marilyn Monroe

From: Sal Perrotta, Reprint from Hemmings Motor News

Ford Thunderbird Field Guide: Understanding Model Nicknames

By Mike Austin on Jul 30th, 2020



Photos from the Hemmings archive.

Ford's Thunderbird span 11 generations and several thematic and mechanical variations. Keeping them straight, though, is not that hard because the collective Thunderbird enthusiast community has given each one a nickname. Yes, it is part of the general habit we all have of delving into jargon, which acts as a conversational shorthand (which is good) but also makes it harder for newbies to understand what everyone is talking about (which is bad).

Thunderbird nicknames are simpler than the complex alphanumeric code used for BMW and Mercedes-Benz model generations. If, like me, you are uninformed on the full history of Ford's personal-luxury legend, these appellations give context clues as to what each one looks like and what era it hails from. And with that easy entry point, you can then dive deeper into the details. So, let us take a quick tour of all 11 Thunderbird names and how they got that way.

Classic Bird (aka Early Bird, Little Bird, Baby Bird): 1955-'57



Why: It's the original recipe. "Classic" and "Early" are self-explanatory, while "Little" and "Baby" refer to the fact that it's the only two-seater in the family tree until the 2002 model.

Ford developed the first Thunderbird in response to the 1953 Chevrolet Corvette, utilizing standard parts to cut costs. Buyers did not seem to care, as the first-generation T-Bird vastly outsold the early 'Vette.'

Price range: Starting around the \$20,000 bracket, with a sweet spot just under \$50,000 according to the current listings in the Hemmings Classifieds. Fresh restorations, restomods, and rare options can push prices close to six figures.

Square Bird: 1958-'60



Why: It is boxy but good.

Need to know: Room for five made the 'Bird bigger and less sporty but also a whole lot more appealing to the public. Sales of the second generation exploded to around four times the total of the first generation and increased every year. One 1960 model was also made from stainless steel by Allegheny Ludlum.

Price range: Under \$20,000 up to \$60,000, according to our classifieds.

Bullet Bird: 1961-'63



Why: It's sleek and streamlined like a projectile.

Need to know: Quoting our own Thunderbird expert, Richard Lentinello, in Hemmings Classic Car "The new 1961 models were within an inch the same size as the squarebirds, but they looked lower, longer and wider, with an exciting-looking body featuring all sorts of jet aircraft styling cues. They simply looked fast even when they were standing still." Also, the landau roof was first available in 1962.

Price range: Plenty of options under \$25,000, with nicer examples and those with rare engines and options listed for \$60,000 and, in some cases, above.

Flair Bird: 1964-'66



Why: A more formal, upright design, but with plenty of chrome it was still styling and profiling.

Need to know: The new sheet metal kept the Thunderbird at the top of the sales chart in the personal luxury segment and ended up being the last convertible until the 2002 reboot. Disc brakes were added in 1965, and a new egg-crate grille closed out the model run in 1966.

Price range: Slightly more of a value play than the Bullet Bird on the low end, you can find options in the low teens while fresh restorations come with asking prices around \$50,000.

Glamour Bird: 1967-'71



Why: While predating the glam-rock era by a few years, this Thunderbird dropped the sporty façade and went fully into large luxury boat territory.

Need to know: The aviation-themed dashboard from this generation is pretty cool. There was also a model with rear-hinged rear doors. In 1970, the flush hidden-headlamp grille gave way to a pointed snout. Not loved as much as other Thunderbirds, this generation has a lower survival rate, making them rarer today.

Price range: That rarity is reflected in the few for sale in the Hemmings Classifieds as of this writing, with prices from \$10,000-\$20,000 that are in line with recent auction results.

Big Bird: 1972-'76



Why: It's the biggest and heaviest Thunderbird, but does not, as far we can tell, live on Sesame Street.

Need to know: It's more than 18 feet long, over 2 feet longer than a current Ford Explorer. The Big Bird shared its body and underpinnings with the Continental Mark IV. Restyled just a year after its debut, in part to meet the new bumper standards, by 1975 the emissions-hobbled T-Bird was still cushy, but, down to 218 hp, also incredibly slow.

Price range: Another rare bird in the Hemmings Classifieds, \$10,000 and below seems to be the going rate for most examples.

Torino Bird: 1977-'79



Why: No longer a sibling to the Continental, this Thunderbird was based on the Ford Torino.

Need to know: Shorter in wheelbase but not appreciably smaller than its predecessor, the move to a midsize platform (and a price cut) resulted in record sales. Ford moved more than 300,000 copies in the first two model years, and nearly that many for the third.

Price range: You can get all the Torino Bird you want for \$15,000 or less, although you don't see many for sale.

Box Bird: 1980-'82



Why: Square and slabby, like a hexahedron.

Need to know: It is the first Thunderbird on the Fox platform, and the downsizing to an intermediate form meant room for four instead of the previous six. Sales dropped in half in 1980, dwindling to just over 45,000 in 1982.

Price range: This and the previous generation are the nadir of the Thunderbird line, with availability and pricing that reflect a lack of collector interest. As before, they seem to go for under \$15,000.

Aero Bird: 1983-'88



Why: An aerodynamic shape that caused a stir in the showroom and put Ford back into relevance on the NASCAR track.

Need to know: The top-of-the-line model was not the Windsor V-8 but the Turbo Coupe, with its turbocharged 2.3-liter four-cylinder. In 1987 the aero look went a step further with flush headlamps and an output increase to 190 hp to match the style. Sales rebounded in this generation, averaging 150,000 a year across the total run.

Price range: When you can find one, they seem to go for \$10,000 or more. Given the increasing popularity of cars from the 1980s, we would expect to see more examples and climbing prices in the future.

Super Bird: 1989-'97



Why: Adapted from the supercharged Thunderbird Super Coupe (or SC) model available in this generation.

Need to know: Evolving the aerodynamic look of the Aero Bird, the Super Bird was a legit grand touring machine in SC trim, with a load of torque from the supercharged 3.8-liter V-6 and other goodies like electronic-adjustable shocks. That engine was highly tuneable as well. The Windsor V-8 came in 1991, followed up with the modular V-8, although both were only available with automatic transmission.

Price range: Under \$15,000, although in short supply in both the Hemmings Classifieds as well as the Super Coupe Club of America forum.

Retro Bird: 2002-'05



Why: Ford was getting in on the retro trend when it brought the T-Bird back on a platform shared with the Lincoln LS and Jaguar S-Type.

Need to know: After a strong first year, sales declined every year. There is plenty of blame to go around--a two-year wait from the concept to production and a sedate driving experience are two popular reasons. Or, it was that, like the 1955 model that inspired the design, the two-seat layout had limited appeal to buyers. Today, however, the Retro Bird is gaining a following as a modern, comfortable cruiser.

From: Sal Perrotta:

Newsletter Car QUIZ

*What do you know about the Ford Motor Company?
Complete this quickly.*

1. Henry Ford founded the automaker in Dearborn, Michigan, which is a suburb of Detroit. What year was it found?

- A. June 16, 1903
- B. June 16, 1913
- C. June 16, 1923

2. In 1903, Ford began operations in a repurposed factory with an initial investment of \$28,000 provided by twelve investors. Who were notable investors?

- A. John and Horace Dodge
- B. John Chrysler
- C. William Olds

3. What was the car name in 1903?

- A. Model A
- B. Model K
- C. Model S

4. When was Model T introduced?

- A. 1905
- B. 1906
- C. 1908

5. By 1919, what was the percentage of cars sold in the United States made by Ford?

- A. 25%
- B. 50%
- C. 75%



6. Who succeeded Henry Ford as president of the company, although Henry still kept a hand in management in 1919?

- A. Edsel Ford
- B. Hiram Johnson
- C. Ben Malone

7. In 1927, what model replaced the Model T?

- A. Model R
- B. Model V
- C. Model A

8. When did Ford expand its reach into the luxury auto market through its acquisition of the Lincoln Motor Company, named for Abraham Lincoln whom Henry Ford admired?

- A. February 4, 1922
- B. February 4, 1932
- C. February 4, 1942

9. After Bantam invented the Jeep, the War Department handed production over to Ford.

- True or False?

10. What was the aircraft Ford built at their Willow Run plant during World War Two?

- A. P-51 Mustang
- B. P-38 Lightning
- C. B-24 Liberator

Quiz Answers

<i>Question Number</i>	<i>Answer</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>A</i>
<i>2</i>	<i>A</i>
<i>3</i>	<i>A</i>
<i>4</i>	<i>C</i>
<i>5</i>	<i>B</i>
<i>6</i>	<i>A</i>
<i>7</i>	<i>C</i>
<i>8</i>	<i>A</i>
<i>9</i>	<i>TRUE</i>
<i>10</i>	<i>C</i>

From: CTCI: ARE YOU A MEMBER "NOW WOULD BE A GREAT TIME TO



Classic Thunderbird Club International

Toll Free 800.488.2709 • PO Box 7393, North Kansas City, MO 64116 USA ☐ • Email: ctcioffice@ctci.org

Web site: www.ctci.org

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT:

Name _____ Spouse's

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State/Province _____ Zip/Mail

Code _____

Telephone (_____) _____ Email Address _____

CTCI Chapter Affiliation (if any) _____

- New members please fill out application and send payment (in U.S. funds ONLY*) to the address below.
- Make checks payable to CTCI, or pay by credit card by email, fax or phone.
- Mail to: CLASSIC THUNDERBIRD CLUB INT., PO Box 7393, North Kansas City, MO 64116

Please select one of the following prorated amounts:

- Month Joining One Time Initiation Fee + Dues = Total
- January through March \$15.00 + \$37.50 = \$52.50
- April thru June \$15.00 + \$29.00 = \$44.00
- July thru September \$15.00 + \$19.00 = \$34.00
- October thru December \$15.00 + \$10.00 = \$25.00
- NOTE: Add \$18.00 to select Premium Packet with CTCI Grill Emblem.

Annual dues renewal will be \$37.50, payable January 1 of each year.

Signature _____ Date _____ Check here if you wish to be listed in the CTCI roster, as of April 1st.

I give permission for my phone number and/or email address to be listed in the CTCI roster.

(NOTE: Phone numbers & email are for office use only, or for the roster if you choose to have it published. Roster addresses may be sold only to T-Bird vendors to be used only for catalog purposes.)

Are you a former member of CTCI? Yes No If Yes, what is your former CTCI membership number? _____

Sponsored or referred by _____ CTCI # (if known) _____

From: CTCI:

Birds on the Bay – 2021 International Convention



From: Gils Garage Reprinted from CTCI Web Site a great instruction sheet re: Seat Belt Instructions

TO REAR OF CAR
BN-708220-A
A
BAA-408206-AW
2.75
1.50
BAA-408202-AW
FIGURE 1

BAA-408214
35865-58
BIA-408216-A
34806-57
33798-58
TO REAR OF CAR
FIGURE 3

SECTION A-A

BRAKE & FUEL LINES
VIEW B-B
OUTBOARD U-BOLT BACKING PLATE
MOUNTED ON UNDERSIDE OF FLOOR PAN,
VIEWED FROM OUTBOARD SIDE
OF LEFT FRAME RAIL

TO REAR OF CAR
OF CAR
5.56 (REF)
2.50
12.69
2.50
2.25
OF BODY BOLT
2.00
.38 DIA 4 HOLES
FIGURE 2
SECTION THROUGH FLOOR PAN BEHIND DRIVER'S SEAT

THUNDERBIRD CAR SEAT BELT
INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS
1955 AND 1956 MODELS, 1957

1. ADJUST SEAT TO FULL FORWARD AND UP POSITION.
2. TILT SEAT BACK FORWARD AND FOLD BACK DROP CURTAIN TO EXPOSE THE REAR FLOOR PAN AREA.
3. DRILL FOUR $\frac{3}{8}$ " HOLES IN THE FLOOR PAN IN BACK OF SEAT, PER DIMENSIONS SHOWN IN FIGURE 2 FOR BELT ON DRIVER'S SIDE. (HOLES ARE SYMMETRICALLY OPPOSITE FOR BELT ON PASSENGER'S SIDE)
CAUTION: USE EXTREME CARE WHEN DRILLING OUTBOARD HOLES ON THE DRIVER'S SIDE TO AVOID DRILLING INTO THE FUEL AND BRAKE LINES, SEE VIEW B-B.
4. INSTALL U-BOLTS TO FLOOR PAN, WITH BACKING PLATES MOUNTED TO UNDERSIDE OF FLOOR PAN; SEE FIGURE 3.
5. THREAD BELT ENDS BETWEEN SEAT BACK AND SEAT CUSHION, BENEATH SEAT ADJUSTMENT CROSS BAR, AND ASSEMBLE TO U-BOLTS. SEE FIGURE 1 AND SECTION A-A.
6. SET BELT LENGTHS TO THE APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS SHOWN IN FIGURE 1 FOR AVERAGE SIZE PERSONS. WHEN BELT IS BEING WORN, BUCKLE SHOULD BE OFF CENTER TOWARD OUTBOARD SIDE, BUT SHOULD NOT REST ON HIP BONE AREA OF PERSON.

NOTE: PASSENGER SEAT BELT INSTALLATION IS SYMMETRICALLY OPPOSITE. THE BUCKLE END OF THE BELT THEREFORE IS PLACED AT CENTER OF SEAT FOR BOTH DRIVER AND PASSENGER INSTALLATIONS.

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