

Harry Fleming



I was sitting here the other night thinking about the racing days and who I was going to do an article about and in an instant; there I was, standing in the middle of Flemings Auto Parts.

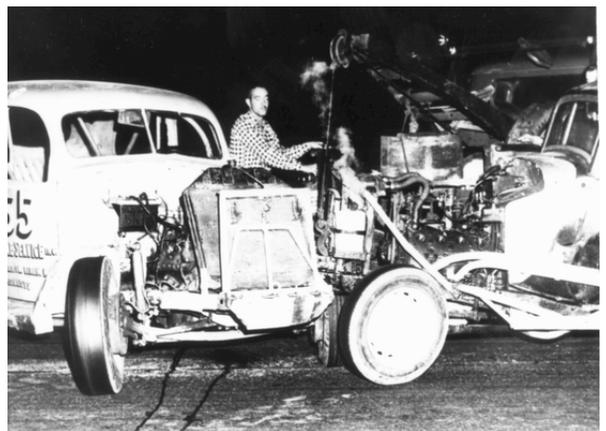
Back in the '60's and '70's Flemings was a vital source for parts if you owned a stock car and there was a hidden beauty about the place among all of the rusted, twisted metal, truck and car bodies, but as we all know things change with the times as this writer would find out 4 years ago.

My first car was a 1950 Ford from Chidsey Motors on Albany ave. where I worked in 1960 and there was always something that needed fixing or replacing, so Saturday was the day I'd spend at Flemings looking for that special something that was going to improve or fix my car.

So the ritual was, you'd go to the front office, tell Harry what you needed, he'd tell you if he had it, and where you could find it because it was a pretty big place, then you would drive your car into the yard (Yes you could do that back then) and search for your treasures. Then it was back to the office to show Harry what you found, pay him, go home and fix your car.

Harry was the envy of any young kid with a car, 'cause he had all this neat stuff! It was neat to watch Harry get a particular car or part that was buried in a pile with the different pieces of equipment they had back then.

I was talking to Harry on the phone about 3 or 4 years ago and told him I remembered that he had a green '55 or '56 Chevy with the roof cut off so it looked like a convertible. It had a V8 in it with no mufflers and that was Harry's jalopy for getting around the yard and it wasn't an uncommon sight to see Harry run out of the office, jump in the Chevy and burn rubber all the way up to their house which wasn't far and return to the office lighting up the tires once again.



Harry also operated a tow truck at Pleasantville Speedway to help with the inevitable wrecks.

Now I'll tell you from my own experience about Harry and what kind of a person I found him to be.

I would go to the yard, tell Harry what I was looking for, I'd get the parts I needed and go to the office and ask him what I owed him and most times he'd look at the stuff and say "don't worry about it" or if he did charge me it wasn't much money at all and I've heard he was that way with all the guys that had race cars.

Some people may ask," what's the big deal about that" well the big deal is this, when you're running a race car on a limited budget every penny you can save helps to keep your operation alive and functioning.

So, that being said thank you Harry for helping us racers fulfill our goals by your acts of kindness, you are a true class act!!

If Harry is reading this right now, he's probably saying, "It's nothing, I didn't do anything" but Harry doesn't want to be in the spotlight, that's just the way he is. When I asked him for photos of himself he said the photos would scare the rats out of the attic and I told him, that's a good thing, I'll kill two birds with one stone .At least he did laugh at that comment.



Harry also funded a two cars for Charlie Angerman jr. ,the A4A cars, which stood for "All For America". Earlier in this article I said things change, well I hadn't been back to Jersey in over 25 years so you can imagine how I felt when I saw the changes to the South Jersey area including Flemings, not how I

remembered it.

When I was winding up the phone interview with Harry the other day, he said that I should do an interview with someone more interesting than him and I told him that he was right I should do that.....after I did the article on him.

I asked Harry how he and Will Cagle developed their friendship and he told me Don Carty took him to East



Windsor Speedway and they were walking through the pits after the race, Harry had said to Don that he'd like to meet Will Cagle. So they get to his car and Harry sticks his head in the car to take a look and Will yelled at him to get away from the car and that if they wanted to buy the car they could touch it all they want. So Harry says to Don, "I don't like that SOB anymore, the hell with him".

So Don went to Will and told him that Harry really liked him as a driver and he had all these parts that most guys were looking for, such as axle housings, Buick brake drums etc. and then Don says he wanted to help Will out with these parts; Will told Don, make sure you tell him I apologize and I'd like to talk to him and from then on they developed a friendship that is still in place today.

Harry has done a lot with the land that was once Fleming's Auto Parts, he puts on one of the largest antique car shows on the east coast, which also includes restored race cars from the '60's and '70's. They also have a stock car museum, a beautifully restored diner and all kinds of memorabilia on the grounds. If you've never gone you owe it to yourself to go at least once. It is usually held the first weekend of November on Saturday, hope to see y'all there!



All of us racers thank you Harry for all the help you gave us, we really appreciate it.

raycer27
