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## Final Mustang Rolls Off Line at Dearborn Assembly Production Set to Move to AutoAlliance International

By Mike O'Neill

DEARBORN, Mich., May 11, 2004 (FCN) – The crowd around the Mustang grew as it moved down the final assembly line at Dearborn Assembly Monday afternoon. The Mustang has always drawn crowds, but this was the final Mustang to be built in Dearborn, and as employees completed their part of the build, many of them followed along to the end of the line.

The red convertible 2004 Mustang GT was driven off the final assembly point by Fred Galicki, a 21-year veteran at the plant who was joined by Oscar Hovsepien, a retiree with 37 years of service, who drove the very first Mustang off the line in 1964.

Over that span, 6.7 million Mustangs have been produced in Dearborn and the vehicle has become an icon. It is an icon that will be moving to the Auto Alliance International plant in nearby Flat Rock, Mich., beginning with 2005 model year Mustang production.



Dearborn Assembly Plant employee Fred Galicki drives the last vehicle built at the 86-year-old plant, a 2004 Ford Mustang GT, off the assembly line. [[Click to enlarge](#)]

"I have a lot of mixed feelings at the moment," said Galicki. "They're closing this old building and we're losing the Mustang, but we're also going to a new facility, which is going to be great." The return to Dearborn Assembly for the ceremony brought a flood of memories for Hovsepien, 79.

"I'm excited. I'm nostalgic. This is a great moment. Its great for the Mustang and great for all the workers," he said. "Personally, this was home for me. The Mustang and Dearborn Assembly made my life."

For Dearborn Assembly and its employees, it was not only the final Mustang, but also the final vehicle to be built in the plant, which began life producing Eagle boats for the U.S military in 1918.

"Since then, we've built tanks, the Model A, T-Birds and, of course, the Mustang for the last 40 years," said Plant Manager Rob Webber, who splits his time these days between the new Dearborn Truck Plant where production of the F-150 has now begun and the Mustang assembly line where production has now come to an end.

"It's been an absolutely fantastic product for this plant," Webber said, pointing out that the success of the Mustang has helped thousands of employees raise their families over the years. In fact, some of their children now work at the plant.

"I've raised three sons off of this money that I've made," said Rosie Gater, a 26-year employee at the plant. "I've put two sons in college and have one son working at Ford."



Some 2,000 employees celebrate end-of-production at Ford's 86-year-old Dearborn Assembly Plant

"There's a lot of heritage to this plant," said Dan Klebe who came to Dearborn Assembly as a Mustang launch manager about 9 years ago. "The people, I think, are outstanding here, the quality of people. And you can see the pride in the car we build, because we build a pretty special car."

Building America's most popular sport car is what employees will miss as they transition across the parking lot to Dearborn Truck. But most are also looking forward to moving from the company's oldest assembly plant to the newest.

"We've got a lot of new equipment, millions of dollars worth of equipment that we are actually learning how to use," said Berzell Page, a 15-year veteran of Dearborn Assembly. "I would say everybody is very, very excited about going over into the new building, the new facility that Ford has provided for us."

"This plant is amazing," said Kelly Browner, a Body Shop team leader, as she stood near the Mustang final assembly line.

"We've made a lot of history here. So, it's a sad thing to see it go and to see the Mustang leave. But we're all excited about the new plant, the new technology, the robotics, the new F-150. It's just amazing," Browner concluded.

Dearborn Assembly and the Rouge complex have made industrial history over the decades. But while a lengthy chapter has now ended, it is a history that continues -- as the oldest assembly plant gives way to the newest in a complex being already being recognized as the epitome of 21st century manufacturing.