Henry Ford and the Assembly Line

Matthew Powell
Individual Website
Junior Division
Words on Website: 1137
Words on Process Paper: 500
For my National History Day project, I decided to research Henry Ford and the Assembly Line. Ever since I was little I always was interested in engineering and how things work. I wasn’t really going for Henry Ford in the first place, my first choice for my NHD topic was John Muir. I almost chose this because John Muir was from Wisconsin, and that is the state that I live in, but I chose Henry Ford because I thought Henry Ford was really influential and a really successful man. My family was really supportive of my choice that we actually went to the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan. Another reason I chose Henry Ford was that I can relate to him. All of his innovations greatly affected me and other peoples lives altogether.

I conducted my research by organizing all of my websites, books, and primary sources I found on the web. The first thing I did was find a bunch of websites related to the life of Henry Ford and his assembly line. I put them all in a Google Doc labeled under “websites”. Then I went to the library to find books about Henry’s life and his career, I put that into my Google Doc under “books”. After all that, I found videos related to Henry Ford’s work. When I went to the Henry Ford Museum I took pictures of plaques of information that I thought I might need but it turns out I only needed half of it. After the museum, I continued to gather websites and more primary sources. Overall, my best source was the Henry Ford website because it had many historic photos and documents about Henry Ford.

I created my project with the new website builder NHDWebCentral that the National History Day staff put together. I think it worked pretty well. The first thing I did on my website was to set up my home page. Learning the website builder was a little hard at first but I got used to it. I had a visual representation of what my website was going to look like in my mind so I put
that representation on the website itself. I set up my navigation bar up and linked the pages to it so it would go to the page it was supposed to. I had to write all my information on the builder first then I had to copy them into Google to count the words. When I had my 1,200 words I copied and pasted them into my website. I inserted all the pictures and videos, gave them captions and then I was done.

Henry Ford and his Assembly Line relates to the theme of Breaking Barriers in History because of his idea of the Assembly Line made producing cars faster and cheaper. When Henry Ford introduced his famous $5 workday enabled his employees and other people to buy the cars they built, purchase homes, decorate their homes and support their families.
Works Cited

Primary Sources

Crowd of Applicants outside Highland Park Plant after Five Dollar Day Announcement, January 1914. Jan. 1914. The Henry Ford,
Accessed 23 Jan. 2020. This photo of the crowd outside of the highland park plant for 5 dollar day represented how many people had arrived for the pay.


Ford Home. 1863. The Henry Ford,
Accessed 23 Jan. 2020. This image showed henry ford's home when he was younger.


"Gold Rush" Is Started By Fords $5 Deal. The Truth About Cars,
Henry Ford and Ed Huff Racing. hfha.org,

"Henry Ford Dies." 8 Apr. 1947. The Henry Ford,

Henry Ford's Parents. Henry Ford Heritage Association,


Model T. The Twin Falls Times [Twin Falls], 15 Mar. 1912. Library of Congress,
chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86091218/1912-03-15/ed-1/seq-3/#date1=1908&index=7&rows=20&searchType=advanced&language=&sequence=0&words=FORD+Ford+Model+T+proxdistance=5&date2=1927&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasetext=ford+model%2Bt&andtext=&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1. Accessed 23 Jan. 2020. Advertisement. This is a newspaper ad for a Model T in 1912.

Original Ford logo. corporate.ford, corporate.ford.com/history.html. Accessed 1 Feb. 2020. This image shows the original Ford logo before when Ford first took off and needed a logo.

Portrait of Henry Ford as a Child, 1865-1866. 1865-1866. The Henry Ford,
Accessed 23 Jan. 2020. This image shows Henry Ford as a child. I used this in the early life section of my website.

*Quadricycle. hfha.org, hfha.org/the-ford-story/the-birth-of-ford-motor-company/. Accessed 1 Feb. 2020. This is a photo of Henry Ford's first car, the quadricycle.*

**Secondary Sources**

*Assembly Line. media.ford.com,*


Burgan, Michael. *Who Was Henry Ford?* Penguin Young Readers Group, 2014. This book was a very simple way to show how Henry Ford and helped me write the early life section of my website.

*Corporate Ford. corporate.ford.com/articles/history/100-years-moving-assembly-line.html.*

Accessed 25 Nov. 2019. This Website from the ford company helped me understand how the assembly line functioned and how it evolved over time.


*Henry Ford Museum*. Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn, Michigan. I took pictures of the plaques in the museum because they had very interesting information on the cars and Henry's life.


Reis, Ronald A. *Henry Ford for Kids: His Life and Ideas, with 21 Activities*. Chicago, Chicago Review Press, 2016. This book helped me a lot in the early career section of my website. It gave me a lot of information.


Henry Ford designed his first moving assembly line in 1913, and revolutionised the manufacturing processes of his Ford Model T. This assembly line, at the first Ford plant in Highland Park, Michigan, became the benchmark for mass production methods around the world. More about the Ford Integrated Assembly Line. Videos. Henry Ford. Historical film footage of Henry Ford. Early Assembly Line. Includes Highland Park Model T production footage from 1909-1928. Ford Mustang Promo. Introductory promotional film for the launch of the 1965 Ford Mustang. 100 Years of Moving Assembly Line. Dearborn Campus Model T, the Assembly Line and Henry Ford. The Model T is one of the results of a major supply chain innovation by Henry Ford – the assembly line. Henry Ford Quotes. “Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young.” ~ Henry Ford. “Whether you think you can, or you think you can’t—you’re right.” ~ Henry Ford. “Life is a series of experiences, each of which makes us bigger, even though it is hard to realize this. For the world was built to develop character, and we must learn that the setbacks and grieves which we endure help us in our marching onward.” ~ Henry Ford. “Most people spend more time and energy going around problems than in trying to solve them.” ~ Henry Ford. “Henry Ford combined interchangeable parts with subdivided labor and fluid movement of materials to create his moving assembly line in 1913. The resulting productivity gains and price cuts led manufacturers of every type to adopt Ford’s innovative production methods. This Expert Set was compiled in 2013 to commemorate the 150th anniversary of Henry Ford’s birth. Henry Ford combined interchangeable parts with subdivided labor and fluid movement of materials to create his moving assembly line in 1913. The resulting productivity gains and price cuts led manufacturers of every type to adopt Ford’s innovative production methods. What made this assembly line unique was the movement element. Henry Ford famously remarked that the use of the moving assembly line allowed for the work to be taken to workers rather than the worker moving to and around the vehicle. The vehicle began to be pulled down the line and built step-by-step. At first it was pulled by a rope, and later it became a simple moving chain mechanism. However, while the work of assembling an automobile was now simplified, workers began to leave Ford Motor Company to work for their competitors. The reason was workers found the assembly line work boring as they were now doing only one or two task(s) instead of working to build an entire vehicle. Additionally, workers did not like the strict timing that the moving assembly line required. The first Ford assembly line permitted only very minor variations in the basic model, a limitation that was compensated for by the low cost. The price of the Model T touring car dropped from $950 in 1909 to $360 in 1916 and still lower to an incredible $290 in 1926. By that time Ford was producing half of all the motor vehicles in the world. Spread of mass production. Only a large firm could make the heavy investment in plant and tooling that the assembly line required, and Ford was already the largest single American producer when it introduced the technique. The mass producer in turn enjoyed a cost advantage that tended to make it increasingly difficult for smaller competitors to survive.