

CAR NEWS

Five Minutes With Edsel Ford II

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The PBS documentary *American Experience: Henry Ford* details the icon's vision, drive and personal contradictions.

By: Eric Tegler on 2/06/2013

If you watched the PBS documentary *American Experience: Henry Ford* last Tuesday night you likely enjoyed it and learned a few things you didn't know about the American icon and **Ford Motor Company** founder. Alternately laudatory and critical, the documentary detailed Henry Ford's exceptional vision, drive and personal contradictions, touching on his relationship with his son Edsel and his views on labor.

The prime living link to the documentary, Edsel B. Ford II, was at the Washington Auto Show this week where he presented a \$500,000 contribution from Ford to the Smithsonian's Museum of American History and received a lifetime achievement award from *Automotive News* and Crain Communications chairman, Keith Crain. We took the opportunity to ask what he thought of the documentary.

"Overall, I enjoyed it. It was largely a fair representation," Ford said. "Like everything else, there were good parts and bad parts. There were good and bad parts of my great grandfather's life. I enjoyed it a lot."

"To see him [Henry] and to see my grandfather, Edsel, presented was something. I thought the interaction of some of the pieces they took was...interesting."

Not surprisingly, seeing his ancestors as the center of a somewhat psychoanalytical documentary was a different feeling, he says.

"Yes, it's very odd," Edsel laughs, "You know, I've grown up with it and I've seen a lot of it. I have lots of footage myself but when you see it on television as a produced program it takes on a different quality. There's a different view."

Asked whom he related to more -- his great-grandfather (Henry) or his grandfather (Edsel), he replied, "Neither. They were both dead before I was born [in 1948]. I would feel closer to my grandmother or father or other uncles. But seeing them on film sort of gave me goosebumps. It's just interesting."

Interesting indeed.

[American Experience: Henry Ford](#) can be viewed online here.

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