

Book Review

Title: A Book of Fashion Facts – A Resource and Reference Guide of Vintage Fashions 1928 – 1931

Author: Compiled by the Model A Ford Club of America (MAFCA)

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This publication features illustrations from magazines, catalogs and photos of the Model A era. Chapters are dedicated to the basic styling elements in clothing for men, women and children. Information is included on how to dress like people of the Model A era with modern resources, either by making your own clothes from vintage or current patterns, buying vintage clothing or buying current garments that can be worn and accessorized to resemble the era clothing. Distinctions are made between daytime wear, evening/formal wear, wedding and active sports/beach wear. Uniforms and work clothes are also addressed, including aprons. Much attention is given to accessories such as hats, shoes, jewelry and purses.

Dropped waists, layers of clothing, pleats, drapes and flounces dominate that 1928 daytime wear for women. Snug fitting clothes (bell-shaped hats) with small brims were popular. The 1929 styles were very similar with hem lines remaining at the knee. In 1930 more waistlines moved up to the natural waistline and hem lines fell below the knee. In 1931 hemlines fell even more, waistlines were primarily at the natural waist and one piece dresses with matching jackets were fashionable.

Men's daytime wear consisted of primarily suits with straight trouser legs, some with vests, and some with double breasted fronts. Men's fashions did not change as much during these four years and one chapter is used to cover the entire time frame.

The evening wear chapter shows women in a wide range of exquisite gowns and men in tuxedos and top hats. Uniforms and work clothes include a wide variety for both men and women and I found these to be very interesting. The next chapters are on undergarments, hats, hair styles, shoes, socks, jewelry and other accessories.

Construction of garments may use an authentic era pattern, but this is not required and a skilled seamstress can replicate the design using detailed illustrations. Natural fabrics (silk, cotton, wool, rayon and linen) should be used and it points out that zippers were not in common use until the late 1930's. There are suggestions for fitting patterns and ideas for buying modern garments that can be worn and accessorized to resemble era fashions.

The book presents a very thorough and broad overview of the fashions of the Model A era. Some drawbacks are that the illustrations are limited to black and white so popular colors of the era are not demonstrated. Also diagrams seldom show the back or layers of the garment, so it is difficult to determine construction. The references used to create this book are identified, but there are no other resources identified such as web sites or currently available patterns.

Submitted by Nancy Thorkildson