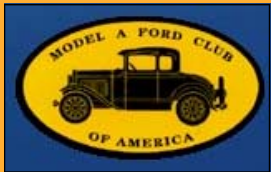


THE 4-BANGER

VOICE OF THE NAPER A's

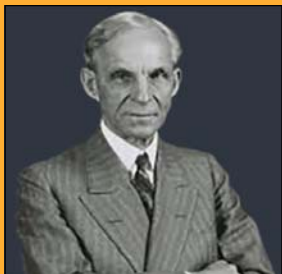
THE 4-BANGER VOLUME 7, ISSUE 2 ★ SUMMER, 2020

AFFILIATED WITH THE MODEL A FORD CLUB OF AMERICA



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HENRY SAID, "Vision without execution is just hallucination!"

Finding A New '31 Model A

*1931 Ford Model A
Murray Town Sedan
Model 155C
VIN #51293NEBR*

By **ALAN PETRIK**

On February 1, 2020, I noticed a short post on Facebook about this car. Though the advertiser, a Mr. Cliff Hesterman, had owned the car since 2003, it had not been driven much by him over the intervening years.

The odometer read 00867 miles, which appeared to be usage since restoration. 1988 records documented the expense of a speedometer rebuild, and the rebuilder had no doubt set the odometer back to zero. The car had been stored under cover in an aircraft hangar at the Sandwich Airport until its seller had recently moved it to his home in Glen Ellyn.

On my first visit, I saw a very solid car looking to be in great condition. Lindy Williams went along with me to take a look, but



MODEL A "FIND" CLOSE TO HOME!

the battery was dead, so we just reviewed the car's apparent condition. But we did pull the plugs to add a bit of oil to each cylinder, to promote some success in our planned later starting efforts.

Then, in following days, a second visit armed with better battery power gave us the opportunity to try starting the car. We rocked it in third gear, and found that the engine was free. Upon the first starting attempt, there was no spark at the points. Upon further investigation, we pulled the distributor. Lindy took it home and

found the points totally fried and the condenser weak. After a "Williams Shade Tree Mechanic" rebuild, we went back and installed the distributor. We attempted to start the car and it started but would only run on starter fluid. Apparently, the carb was plugged up.

Our last visit was on Valentine's Day, the coldest day of the year so far. Lindy replaced the carburetor with one of his loaner units while I mixed some premium gas into the tank along with a fuel filter change. The car started just fine! After 15

Continued on Page 5...



PRESIDENTIAL RIDE. IN A NORMAL POSE



Photos & Story By GENE EGERT

Jim, Gene, Allen, Gar and Kay, Ron, Bill, Tom, and Lindy, were participated in our May 1st "Distance Tour" to Long Grove Forest Preserve in Kaneville. We left from the Speedway station at Kirk Road and Wilson Avenue in Batavia at 10:00 AM and each car brought along bag lunches. The tour lasted about an hour and eight cars had a nice mid-day drive and a tasty sandwich!



WHO ARE THOSE MASKED MEN?



The six masked men tested two carburetors, then two generators and then three starters. They ate donuts and drank coffee until noon. Yes, they were the Naper A's Gang, meeting on My 22nd at a secret location to try out The Leader's engine test stand. They go by Ray, Gene, Jim, Lindy, Rich, and Ken. You can tell them by their skinned knuckles, grease rags, timing tools, and coffee cups. Wanted in every state for their Model A crimes!





Story & Photos
By GARY SUTFIN

Our Dad, Roger Sutfin, was and old car lover with a creative bent. He was handicapped from a work-related accident, but that did nothing to curb his automotive enthusiasm. He just went ahead and built himself a unique handicapped-accessible Model A Speedster... with much help from his Naper A's friends.

This was accomplished largely through the supportive help of Lindy Williams, Noel DeLessio, and Mike Johnnic, among others in the club.

We brought Roger's car down to Texas after he passed away from Pancreatic Cancer in 2018. Both Austin, Texas, area clubs have

since provided great fellowship and support to us and Dad's car. The speedster is running great. It even ran in a downtown Austin Memorial Day parade last year.

Our family thanks Roger's many Model A friends who spent so many hours modifying and working on this car. The low height and bench seat made it accessible for someone who has trouble walking. Hooks on the custom roll bar accommodate a wheel chair, for easy use once a destination is reached. As an advocate for special needs folks, Dad called his car "The Handicap Special."

To multiple oogah horns and a wolf whistle we have added a 1960's era police siren. It was found in his garage and was once used by him when he was a volunteer firefighter in Itasca. These accessories make the car a one-man parade!

Roger and his wife, Jan, began their married life together in San Antonio, so it feels right to have this car running around Central Texas nowadays.



ROGER'S "T" & HANDICAPPED SPEEDSTER

Before Roger built his 1930 Model A Speedster, he restored and drove a 1927 Model T Tudor, which was an Illinois barn find from a gent named Martin Schuster. The car was traded for roofing work on an old farm house and he treated it to a body-off restoration.

Dad intended to keep that car, but in a parade in 1985, an older gentleman in the crowd tracked him down, insisting upon on buying the car, at an exorbitant price. It turns out that this guy went to his wedding as a young man in the same year/model car, and same colors. Going to the church, the groomsman behind the wheel laid the car over in a hard turn. The groom and groomsman, in tuxedos, were trapped! Both doors were jammed, one facing earth. A Barlow knife came out and they went to work on the stiff fabric top. Then those boys crawled through the hole they cut, dusted themselves off, flagged down a passing car, and made it to the wedding on time.

More recently, Roger's son Gary and Grandson John attended a Georgetown, Texas, Model A Club tech session (below) and tore into their Zenith carburetor at home (left). At left, the car was briefly stranded on the road home from a parade before its loose wolf whistle was fixed.



NICK'S CORONA VIRUS GARAGE WORK PROGRESS REPORT

In the spirit of directing positive thoughts and making progress during our cloistered time as we all endure the current pandemic, I wanted to share a few photos of my Corona-Garage work. I've been working on taking out the windshield, cowl trim, gas tank, and hood to remove all of the surface rust and then priming the cleaned surfaces. I've thus accomplished more in the last two and a half weeks than I would have in 3 months of normal weekends!



TRIM OFF



HOOD OFF



TANK OUT



NEW ROBE CORD FOR THE '31 MODEL A

Story & Photos by ALAN PETRIK

Following Nick's e-mail about "stay at home" garage projects, one of mine upon the recent acquisition of our '31 Town Sedan, was restoring the robe cord on the backside of the front seat. The interior of this car is quite pristine except that the robe cord was falling apart. The photos depict before and after shots of this little project.

I searched the internet for a week looking for replacements, but found none that would look right. Also spoke with Riggs Brothers (the interior company that worked on Rich Volkmer's and Dr. Kilburn's cars), but they had no ideas other than the "out of business" LeBaron Bonney company. So the search went on to Bratton's, Mac's and others, but still no success.

The robe cord as originally made actually consists of strands of smaller rope braided around a 1/4" diameter spring core. You can see a little bit of the spring core in the middle picture, far left. The spring keeps the rope tight to the back of the seat and keeps it from sagging. So I decided that my best option was to re-fabricate this piece on my own. In doing so, I found and ordered macrame cords of several diameters and types along with several Rit Fabric dye colors, ordering cotton-based cord stock so that it would dye easily.

After trial and error and making adjustments to RIT color chart mixing options, I was able to dye the white macrame cord to the desired color for our '31, then braided four cords around the spring to create a finished robe cord. It may not be a perfect match, but it looks quite authentic and only really finicky judges would notice any difference from the original.



BEFORE



AFTER

ALAN'S NEW "A"

Continued from Page 1...



minutes of warm-up, the exhaust smoke cleared and I closed the deal, driving the new '31 home with Lindy in trail.

The car still needed some work. Other than cleaning and polishing for appearances, it wanted king pin bushings, some front engine mount adjustments, new tires (I don't favor 30-year-old rubber), and a fender ding to be ironed out. These checklist items were for starters.

The paint was great and the interior was in excellent shape. But I made plans to change out the hoses and all fluids, and to add certain items, (like a water temperature gauge for example) among other desirable improvements.

The best part of this was the price. When I found the listing, this car was offered at "\$18,000 or Best Offer." I offered \$13,000 after learning that the best previous offer was \$12,500. To my surprise and amazement, I was able to acquire the car for my offered price...a rather unbelievable bargain for such a great car.

In recent months, we've completed many improvements. The list is long but includes a front end rebuild from sector shaft through the kingpins, powder coating the wheels and new Firestone era tires, a new exhaust manifold and Aries stainless muffler, a temperature gauge, a leakless water pump, repairs on the fender, a modified the front seat adjustment mechanism, new turn signals and wiring, a power cutoff master switch, and countless small adjustments,

cotter pin replacements, and a general clean up. I'm now very proud of this car and its condition.

Tracking the provenance of your car is always very interesting. I have now researched the Last 32 Years of this vehicle, based upon the data and documentation that was included with the purchase and discussions with the restoration garage owner and the most recent owner. So, we've pieced together an intriguing history of this old car.

It came through an estate sale in Massachusetts sometime before 1988. In early 1988, a Dr. Robert Swerczek of Omaha, Nebraska, then acquired it from an Omaha-based car auction house.

In February 1988, a company called Antique Auto Repair, owned by a Mr. Don Graves, was commissioned to commence a complete body-off restoration. The restoration continued through April of 1989, documented by progress invoices detailing parts cost itemizations and labor expenses. This billing evidenced wood coach parts, engine-related parts, chassis parts, and a complete LeBaron Bonney interior kit. Those invoices totaled \$11,324 in parts and tracked over 350 hours of labor. Adjusting the invoice total for inflation to current times, it would exceed \$24,500 in value, but these expenditures may be incomplete as Sears Roebuck tires were also installed and there is no identification of the cost other than a photocopy of the catalog page. One can surmise that at least \$25,000 (in today's money) was thus spent on this restoration.

Since drafting this story, I've also enjoyed conversations with Don Graves. He remembered working on the car and sent two post-restoration photos taken at his shop. He is still active in the Omaha-area Meadowlark Model A Club.

Our research also revealed a curious turn of events regarding the odd VIN number. In July of 2001, the car was acquired by a Roger Sabo, but we have no information on

that owner other than a letter. The letter documents the new VIN number, which deviates from Ford practice as based on engine serial numbers. Apparently, the Massachusetts title that was transferred to Dr. Swerczek was badly worn, damaged or illegible, so the Secretary of State in Nebraska issued a new (and still current) VIN number as 51293NEBR and a Nebraska title. With a little guesswork to decode that alphanumeric designation, it makes sense that 5/12/93 was the date of that title issuance, and Nebraska's policy is when old title VIN numbers are not clear, they just assign a new number ending in NEBR.

In August 2003, the car was either sold by Sabo or otherwise put on consignment to Crown Point Classics in Wisconsin, near Minocqua. There was a Hemmings Motor News listing of the car for sale at that time. The car and title were transferred to Wisconsin on August 19, 2003. And on August 29, 2003, the car was sold by Crown Point Classics to Cliff Hesterman of Glen Ellyn, Illinois for \$16,900. The title was again transferred, and a fresh Illinois "51293NEBR" title was issued to Cliff. He is a retired TWA Airline pilot now in his mid-80's and his family offered the car for sale this year through a family estate sale, wherein we bought it. Yes, indeed, the car has quite a checkered ownership history!

Thanks to Don Graves and Cliff Hesterman for all the background information used to prepare this article, and many thanks to Lindy Williams and Ray McMahon for their help in our various visitations to see the car and get it running. I still owe Lindy for that Zenith rebuild....



2020 SAFETY CHECK

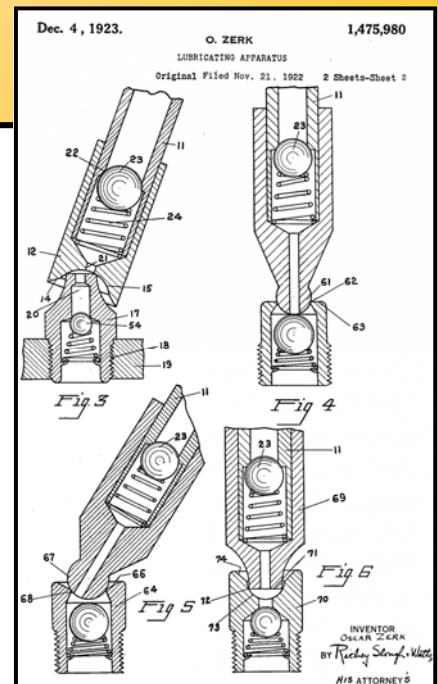
Voegtle's Garage in Warrenville
June 6, 2020

Story By RAY McMAHON / Photos By RAY McMAHON & RICH VOLKMER

Thanks to all who made the safety check such a success, and under more trying conditions this year! Gene - as usual - found several things during the safety check that could have become very serious had failure occurred on the road. Ron's checklist was great, and everyone received a record of what was found. Fluids were topped off, grease flowed like water, and of course the pastries again were just great with few leftovers. The turnout was terrific, in spite of everyone dutifully wearing their Covid-19 masks.



ORIGINAL ZERK FITTING PATENT DRAWING, 1922



THE MODEL A SOCIAL DISTANCING v. GREAT GRAVEL DAY ADVENTURE



Story & Photos By PAUL HERBERT

The Naper A's had scheduled its next Social Distancing Tour for May 15th, so I thought I'd go along in my modern car as the chase vehicle as my Model A is still in Virginia waiting out the Covid quarantine! We planned to meet at 10 AM that day and drive about 35 miles out to Shabonna Lake State Park, have a picnic lunch, and then drive back. Sounded simple! We'd be back by 3 or 4 PM, no sweat.

Except it was raining Friday morning, so we put off our planned launch to to 11 AM. We had a good forecast, just wanted to let the roads dry out. But then a couple guys dropped out, so we decided to forget the picnic, and just meet at 1 PM. OK, we did, myself in modern iron and three Model A's driven by Al and Diane Petrik, Lindy Williams, and Fearless Leader Gene Egert.

We had an uneventful but circuitous drive to our destination, traveled in gorgeous weather. Shabonna Lake is . . . a lake. Its facilities were closed but we enjoyed resting there for about an hour in mellow sunshine, discussing Model A's, and talking about seeking a shorter route back.

The gang observed social distancing etiquette while exploring several route-shortening possibilities. Then, at around 3:15 PM or so, we headed out of the park and east toward home. For a mile. Then all roads turned to gravel, not our favorite thing. So we turned around. Back to and then past the park entrance, first taking a left south to drive around the park, then going east on a good road for maybe 6 miles to encounter...more gravel! At least we had made some progress heading east.

Gene made a quick call to head north for about a mile, past a farmhouse from which the nice folks waved, to a junction with an eastbound road...oops, that was gravel, too. We conferred again . . . perhaps our first road was not gravel? Or not bad gravel? Someone pointed out that US 30 was only a mile or two north but no one really wanted to travel on US 30 with its fast cars, trailer trucks, etc.

So, it was back past the farmhouse. Another wave . . . And back to our original (no, scratch that, our second) eastbound road. Looked pretty much like gravel, but let's see . . . headed down it 300 yards or so. Sure enough: gravel! Another conference. South of us there seemed to be an eastbound road - worth a try! Off we went, turned left, headed east again, and found gravel AGAIN!

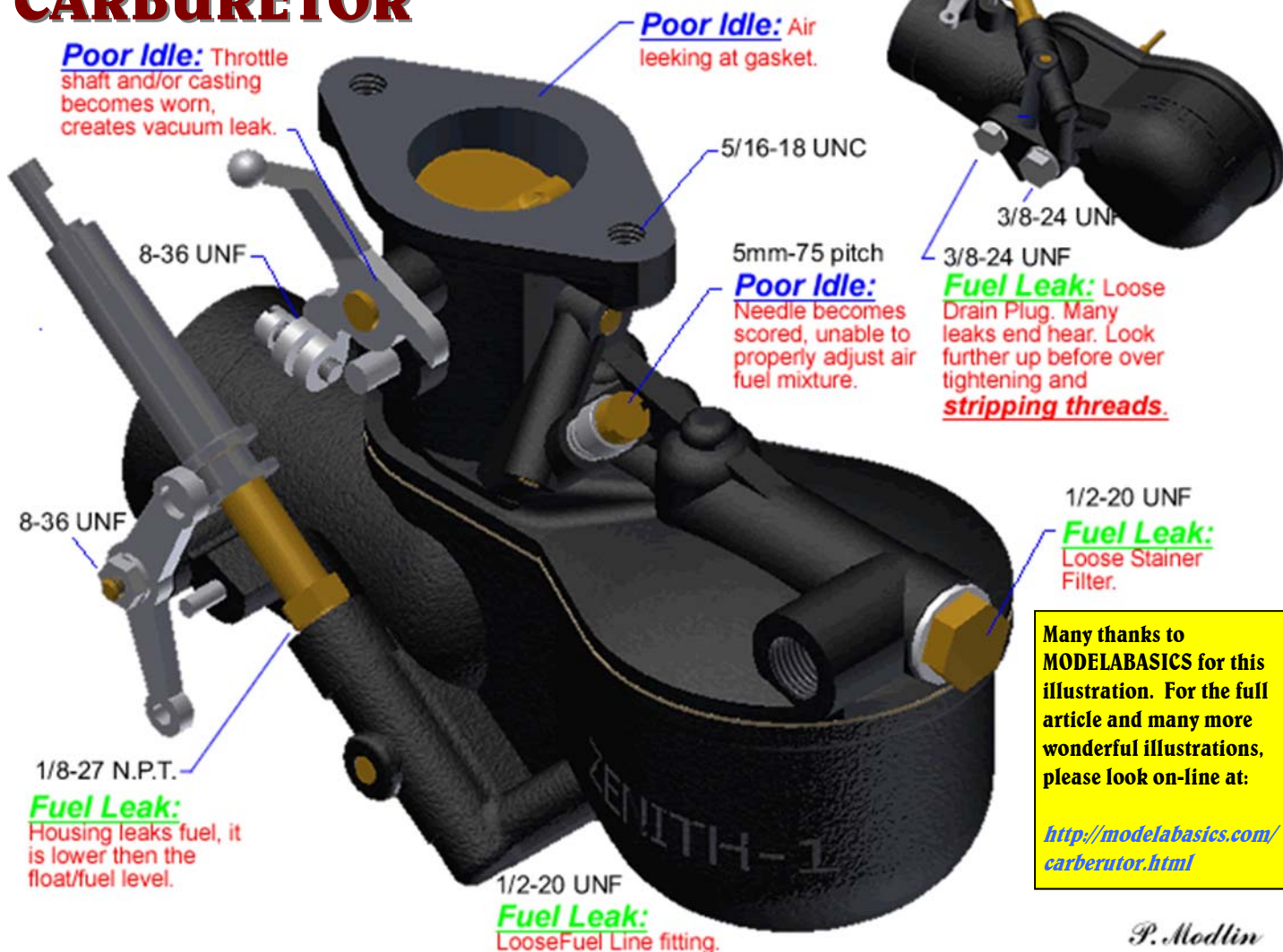
OK, that was enough...could US 30 really be that bad with a modern chase car with four-way flashers? This was getting to be too much like some Twilight Zone debacle or a bad dream where you arrive somewhere from which there are no roads back. US 30 it was. North now, at speed. Past the first road junction. Past the farmhouse with the folks waving, though more feebly now. Past the second junction. And there we were at US 30. Did we dare? Nothing coming . . . so off we went at 40 mph, 45 mph, now 50 mph!

We made it through Hinkley (getting a few more friendly waves), then Big Rock, and finally to North Aurora! We split up there and each headed safely home, satisfied with enjoying a really-gorgeous afternoon, the camaraderie and (as always) the gratifying sound of 40 galloping horses in 4 hard-working cylinders scooting us along in style.

Will there be another Naper A's Social Distance Tour? Without doubt, absolutely! But if you should volunteer to lead it, always recall this sage military advice: time that you spend on reconnaissance is never really wasted!



TROUBLE-SHOOTING TIPS FOR THE MODEL A FORD ZENITH CARBURETOR



Many thanks to MODELBASICS for this illustration. For the full article and many more wonderful illustrations, please look on-line at:
<http://modelbasics.com/carberutor.html>

P. Modlin

USED CAR LOT

FOUND ON HEMMINGS WEBSITE:

1929 Ford Model A Roadster Pickup

Location: Concord, North Carolina, 28027

Phone: 704-598-2130

Stock #: 5275-CHA

VIN # AC-41375MD

Mileage: 150

Transmission: Manual

Exterior: Green Interior: Black

Price: \$26,995

