

## CHARLES BAETSEN'S '30 TUDOR

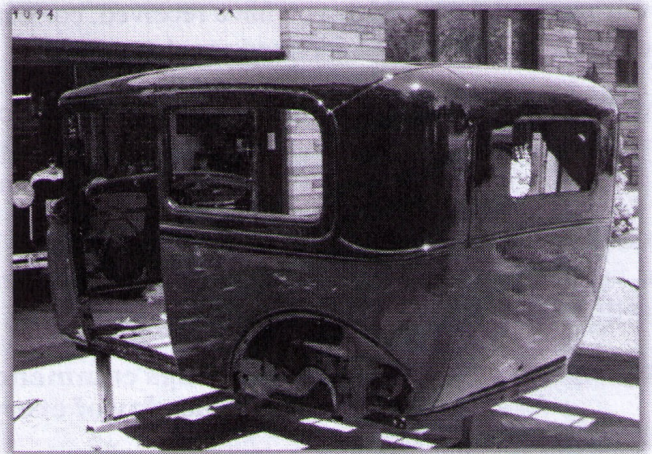
submitted by: the Author

I am not quite sure why, but I developed a love for antique cars at a very young age. It was not because I had seen a lot of them. As a kid growing up in rural Nova Scotia in the 1970's, it was a rare indeed to see a genuine "antique car". More probably, it was the result of spending many a rainy Saturday afternoon watching old silent movies on TV such as the "Keystone Cops", "Charlie Chaplin", or other TV shows like "The Waltons".

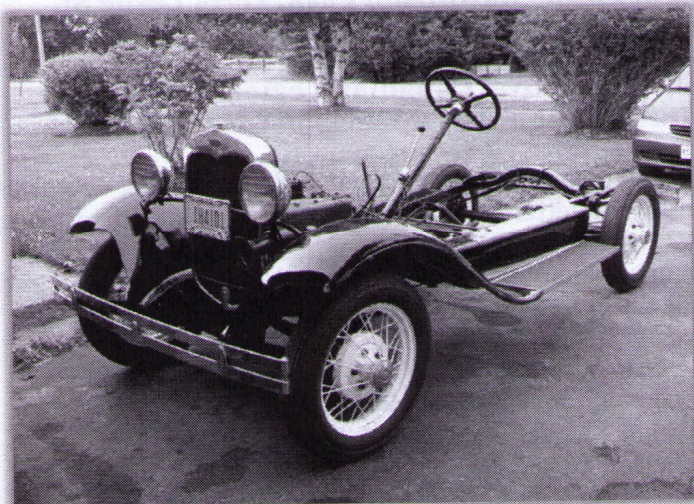


Even then, I dreamed of driving my very own antique car. By my teenage years, I had forgotten all about antique cars as I got interested in other things. It wasn't until the late 1980's, that an unexpected find on my parent's farm reawakened my interest in antique cars. One day, my dad discovered the

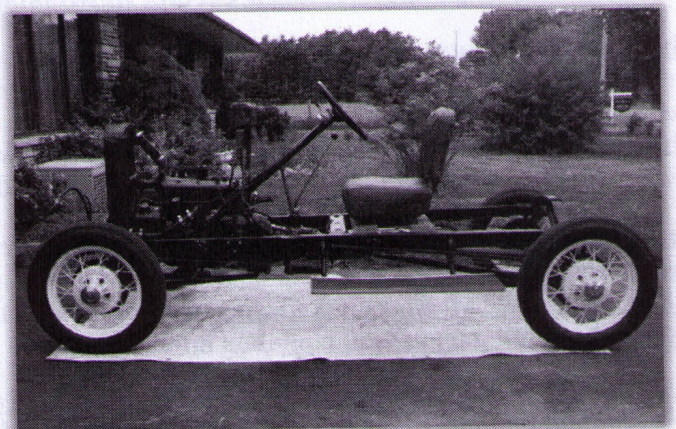
it was enough to identify it as a Model-A with a rumble seat. Unfortunately, the frame and engine were missing, so there was no hope of doing a restoration. However, it did spark my interest enough to head on down to the library and learn as much as I could about Model A's.



Occasionally, I would spot a Model A for sale alongside the highway or some back road, and dream (once again) of owning one. It wasn't until the fall of 2007 that I finally decided to make my dream a reality. After spending several months researching prices and learning all about Model A's from the internet, I got a call from Tom Luke who knew of a car for sale in Port Perry. It was a Canadian made 1930 Tudor. It was mechanically sound and it was drivable as is. The car was, for the most part, original. It ran great and the price was fair. It was perfect for me, so I bought it.



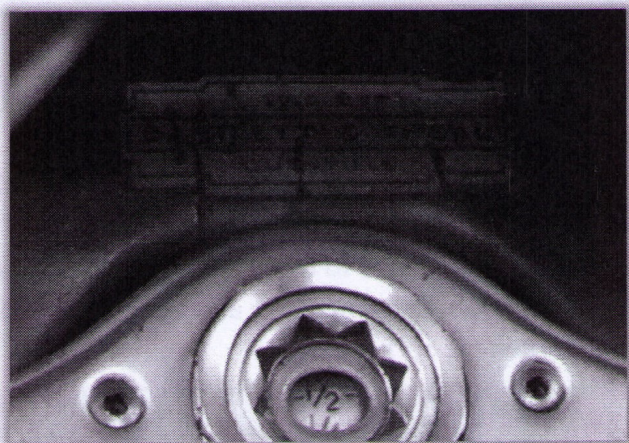
remains of an old car in the bush. There was not much left, just a few bits of rusted sheet metal, but



I do not know much about the car's history other



than it was at one time, sold in Dunnville as a used car. There was a label placed above the fuel gauge that read "Bartlett & Theal". They were a Chevrolet dealer that also sold used cars. In 1973 it was sold to a gentleman in Brantford who repainted the lower body green (it was originally Andalusite Blue) and he used it in the local Labour Day parades. It remained in that family until 2003, when it passed to two other owners before I bought it.

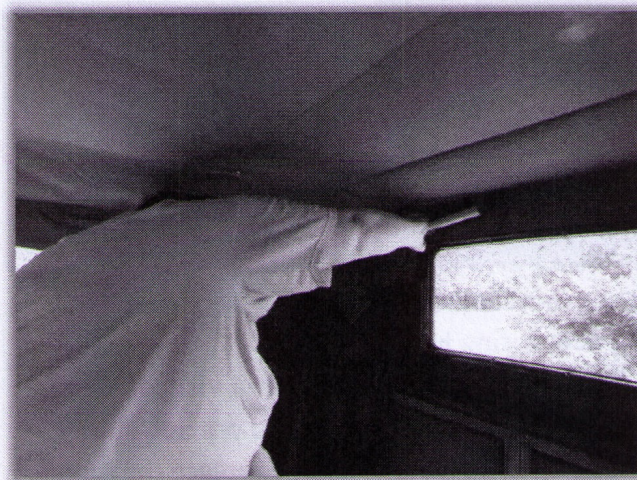


The car was delivered on May 11, 2008. As I had never driven one before, I got Tom to come over and give me a crash course in double clutching and how to use the spark retard lever. It wasn't long before I was off driving it all over the place. Each day or so I would take "Veronica" (as my son called her) a little farther afield until I was confident that she was not going to leave me stranded somewhere. That first summer I managed to put over 2000 miles on it. I was impressed with how reliable it was.



I didn't have too many incidents and she hasn't left me stranded yet, though I came very close once! The car

had the original wiring in it (including an aluminum tag with "Ford" written on it). Though it looked ratty and moth bitten in places, it seemed to work fine. Nevertheless, in the interest of safety, I installed a fuse block.



One late evening, I decided to go for a quick drive to get some gas. It was such a nice night out, that I decided to take her for a bit of a spin before heading back home. About a mile away from the gas station I flipped on the high-beams and saw a brilliant flash of white light before all went dark. At the same time, I heard an enormous backfire, and then the engine died. In an instant I was stranded in the middle of the country with no headlights, and a dead engine. A quick check under the hood revealed that the fuse blew. I popped in

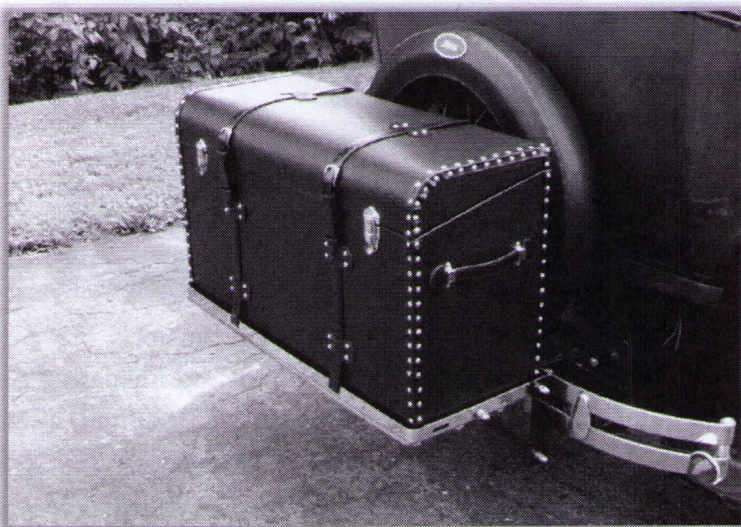


a new one and restarted the engine. Unfortunately every bulb had blown when the fuse went and I had no spare bulbs on me. All I had was my trusty flashlight, which wasn't much help. Thankfully, a Good Samaritan stopped by and guided me back with her headlights. The trouble turned out to be caused by an





intermittent short in the wiring, so the very next day I ordered a new wiring harness. Slowly, I would replace this and that. I visited automotive flea markets for parts, and ordered stuff online, until in 2010, it came time to replace the running boards. They were rotted out and needed to be replaced. This job required the body to be taken off the frame. With the help of family and friends, we got it off without too much trouble. This gave me access to lots of things I couldn't otherwise get to. One thing led to another and before I knew it, everything that was bolted to the chassis was taken off! Even the engine was taken out. Before installing the replacement running boards, I repaired, cleaned, painted and replaced dozens of parts. In the end the entire undercarriage was worked on that spring. It wasn't until July that the car was back together. I limited my work to the undercarriage, leaving the interior and bodywork for another time. That time came in the fall of 2014, when my top material started to come apart.



It was covered in many layers of old tar and was in pretty bad shape. I ordered new top material along with the interior from LeBaron Bonney. At the same time I decided it was a good time to take care of the body work and a new paint job. I arranged for a local restorer to do the bodywork in the spring of 2015.



The body came off the frame once again and we delivered it to person doing the restoration in mid-April. The bodywork took much of the summer to complete, but it was worth the wait. It arrived back home a week before the Just A's Ganonoque tour in August. With the help of Tom Luke and my wife Patricia, we managed to finish the reassembly a mere 10 hours before the tour began! I do not know how we managed to pull it off, but we did. Other than some minor generator troubles, she performed quite well on the tour. Needless to say, Patricia and I are quite happy on how things turned out. In the past seven years, I've put over 10,000 miles on Veronica and I hope to put many more on her in the future. - **Charles Baetsen**