

MODEL A's In WA
1929 Briggs Bodied FORDOR
Engine Number CA65298
Registration Number 1929A
Beige with Black guards and wheels
Restored by Alan and Edith Jeffree

1994 -

My association with A Models goes back to when I was a youngster growing up in Manjimup. As a child I looked through Mum and Dad's photo album and there were several black and white shots of Grandad's A Model taken of Mum and Dad during their courting days. Grandad Bert, as we called Dad's Dad, purchased a new 1928 Phaeton with the winnings from a card game. He never learnt to drive and my dad from 17 years of age was his chauffeur.

An little story worth passing on: My father worked for Thompson's Garage in Manjimup for the whole of his working life. He started there at 17 years of age in 1928. They were Ford dealers at the time and Dad was often taken to the Ford Factory on the Rope Works corner (Stirling Hwy) in Fremantle to drive a new A Model to Manjimup. He told me that on one occasion they picked up two new A Models and parked them in the street near a café in Fremantle. When they went to leave someone had slashed the seats in them! They went back to the factory and they fitted seats out of other new cars waiting for delivery. Vandalism isn't new!!

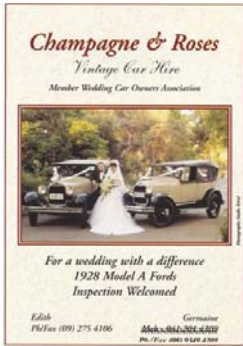
As a newly graduated Teacher in 1960 I was posted to Pingelly Junior High. I met up with Edith through the badminton club evenings and soon we were an item. It just happened that on their farm was an A Model ute. Edith's Dad purchased this in around 1957. It was bought for Edith and her brother to learn to drive. They were allocated 4 gallons a week and where the petrol ran out was where the ute stayed until the next week's petrol allocation!

The ute is now restored and has been on the road since 1972. It was Torana racing green at first and when I re-restored it in 1991/2 I changed it to a more conventional vintage colour: beige and black. The story of this car is already in our *Model A's in WA* file.

Some members will be aware that when I re-restored the Phaeton, son Darren also finished his 1928 Phaeton. Both Phaetons were just completed ready for the WA National Meet held at Noalimba (Perth) in 1992.



Both Jeffree Phaetons completed 1992.



Wedding flier with Darren and Germaine's picture

This now leads to the story on our Fordor. After the National Meet Edith and Germaine, our daughter-in-law decided that the two matched Phaetons would make great wedding cars. So it came that both Phaetons were doing weddings regularly with Edith and Germaine doing the driving. This continued for nine years and quite often we were asked if we could supply three cars. For a few years Steve Read loaned us his Tudor which actually lived with us.

I had known about the Fordor for a number of years. so I approached Rudd Barbarich who owned it at the time. To my surprise he was willing to sell. The deal was done and we were the proud owners of a potential Fordor!



Not a lot to start with!

I have traced its history back to a guy in the Midland area who had lots of A Model bits. The Fordor was dismantled by him and never put together. He sold it to Freddie Starkan in the late fifties. Freddie stored it for a number of years. His only son was tragically killed in a motor accident and it was then sold to Ian McCale. Ian had some repairs done but again it was shelved. Ian died and it was purchased in bits by Rudd Barbarich in Roleystone.

When the Fordor was sold in Midland there was a truck load of bits and pieces - several motors, two or three chassis etc. I got a trailer load of body panels and a little pile of rotting wood!

Having been in the A Model hobby since 1962 I had plenty of bits to use to make a complete car. The panels were in pretty good condition. The repairs that had been done on the panels had done more harm than good. I was fortunately able to buy a few panels from Alan Barton, a hot rodder. I bought a second rear tub and an American firewall. The firewall was much better than the Canadian original one as it had steel pillars instead of wood.

The first task was to rebuild the chassis and the mechanicals. This took me a year or so. The motor was expertly done by Ray Abbott who has helped numerous Model A members.

I have a good friend, Martin Heywood, who is a master panel beater and I had him come to our home every Saturday for a year or two. Martin would mark the bits that need cutting out and I would make and fit the metal ready for the following Saturday when he would weld them in and beat them into the correct shape. All welding was oxy with steel rod and there is minimal body filler used.



The whole body is wood framed!

Once the mechanical and panels were done I had the task of redoing all the wood work. Canadian bodied A Models are all wood. It took me a whole year to remake the wooden frame work. I used different types of wood, using appropriate types for different places -Oregon for the main bearers, Pine in the doors, jarrah for the cross pieces of the base and Tassie oak for the door pillars. I didn't have all of the original wood to copy. Luckily there was enough for me to mirror the original to make the other side. One of the problems I had was the missing bits. Each time the car changed hands, bits went missing. There were no window winders; these I was able to buy from NZ. The door locks were missing, etc.etc.

All preparation for paint and the painting was done by me working under the clothes line.

The upholstery was done by a personal friend – Tim Rayment. Tim and I became friends through Darren’s TV business where we both did his deliveries.

The Fordor was completed late in 2003.

Another little aside story. Germaine and Darren started a family before the Fordor was completed and our wedding car business had been closed because without Germaine driving Edith and I didn’t want the regular weekend disruptions!

The Fordor has won a couple of prizes: Top Ford 1920-1929 at the All Ford Day 2003 (WA) and Top Closed 1928/29 car at the 2004 WA National Model A Meet.



Two front guards ready to prepare for paint.



Four Model A’s in Tassie 2005

One of the main reasons for being a Model A Restorers Club member is the friendships and outings that you can be part of! Edith and I have spent many miles enjoying the cars and the friendships.

In 2005 four A Models visited Tasmania, driven by Merv and Kath Ward, Hans and Glenda Hurij, Edith and Myself, along with Bob and Val

Newton. We trained our cars to Adelaide, then drove the Great Ocean Road to Melbourne. From here we ferried across to Tassie before driving around the scenic spots, spending two weeks looking around.

It was Tassie again in 2010. This time it was the National Meet staged by the MAFC of Victoria but held in Launceston. This time both of my A Models went. Son-in-law, Chris with Leanne and their three children travelled in the Phaeton, and Edith and I were in the Fordor. This time we trained the cars to Melbourne but drove the Great Ocean Road back to Adelaide before flying home.



Tassie a second time

The Fordor has accompanied several Model A members on Bob Newton’s spring country runs. Each was great fun and we look forward to the next!



Payne’s Find Tourist mine



Bob’s Run 2011 Mt Clarence in Albany

Alan Jeffree
March 2012

Footnote – My dad and Edith’s father always referred to these vehicles as A Models, not Model A’s. Hence when I was growing up they were A Models. Model A is an American term and probably correct, but to Australians in their day they were A Models!