

*Model A's in WA**1928 Roadster**Engine Number CA 73364**Owned by David and Pat Bussard 1993 - 1995**Registration Numbers KMC6601, 8NY764, and 28A 40A**Colour: yellow/orange with black top, mudguards and trim*

Baldivis 1995



Applecross 1993

Pat relates:

David's paternal grandfather, Arthur Bussard, was the 17th Ford Dealer in western Canada, and the first to operate in the province of Alberta. Central Garage in Olds, Alberta, Canada opened its doors in 1917, and was operated by Arthur and then by his sons Jack and Gordon until 1972. As a young boy, David spent time after school, on weekends and in school holidays working in the garage alongside his father, Jack, but chose to become a geologist. During those years he worked mainly on Ford vehicles with flathead engines, but there was obviously an interest in Model A Fords, as he secretly hoped to own one someday.

Geology in Canada was seasonal due to severe winters which prevented fieldwork for many months. David's first job after graduation was in Ontario, but ended in the autumn. He and a mate decided to go somewhere warm for the winter, and they ended up in Sydney in late 1966. They worked in central NSW for a time, and then David came to WA and worked near Norseman and Widgiemooltha for two years.

David and I married in 1969, and came to Western Australia. We lived in Coolgardie, Widgiemooltha, Coolgardie again, Cairns, Marble Bar, Roebourne and Kalgoorlie before settling in Perth in 1980. I do not remember going to car shows until about 1990 or 1991, when we checked out a display in Forrest Place. I was stunned when David announced that the Model A's we saw there were the kind of car he wished to have! We then went to the display of Model A's at Whiteman Park during the 1992 National Meet. Here I learned the difference between 1928 and 1930 radiator grills.

David started looking in magazines, and in 1993 in *Restored Cars* he found a yellow/orange 1928 Roadster being sold by Geoff Paynter in Kalgoorlie. He got a video of the vehicle, and decided that "it was a good unit". So in July 1993, the car was delivered to our home. David went for a drive by himself, and then offered me a drive. But something happened and the car failed to proceed. It was several days before I had my first drive.

We had a one-car garage and a single lane driveway with a bulge near the back gate. Our parking arrangement was that my car was in the garage and David parked outside behind me because he left for work first and got home later than me. Now the Model A took over the garage – of course! I quickly learned to park in the bulge of the driveway, and things hummed along.

With information from Geoff Paynter, David joined the Veteran Car Club of WA immediately. He attended a few meetings of the club and the Vintage Section by himself, and learned about the Model A Restorers Club of WA (Inc.). Someone suggested that he contact club member Bill Bennie, which he did on a Saturday, to learn that there was a run and meeting the following day. So off we went to the Coventry's car park in Walter Road, and joined in the run to Yanchep organised by John and Shirley Hall. I remember it being very noisy inside, and the traffic outside was the same, so navigating was very difficult for me. I loved the different Model A's lined up at the lunch stop. I also learned that our Model A was a hybrid – it had a 1932 back!



David now takes over:

It also had a few other oddities. The Roadster top was actually a cut-down Tourer top that had been adapted to fit. It would pivot on the rear mounts but would not actually fold.

The worst thing about the car was the brakes. I knew that it had mechanical brakes so wasn't expecting much but driving it in the city was certainly exciting. I joined MAFCA and bought copies of the repair manuals they had for sale, then pulled the brakes apart to see what could be improved. The first thing I discovered was that the rear brakes had been assembled incorrectly. There are two large roller pins that the rollers turn on, the heads of these pins slide on roller tracks; on this car both rear brake shoes had one of the two roller pins inserted from the wrong direction. This meant the rear brakes could never be pressed against the drums, the car was stopping on front brakes only. A few other dodgy items like welded brake rods convinced me to rebuild everything to do with the brakes; cast iron drums, new shoes, all new wearing surfaces, rods etc. This took lots of time but eventually I ended up with brakes that will lock up on a bitumen road if I hit them hard enough.

Once it would stop it was time to make it go. I had the engine rebuilt by Steve Read, changed the motor mounts to full floating, added turn signals, a new radiator core and a few other items. We attended the Adelaide National meet in this car in 1994, training it both ways due to work commitments. It now ran well, it just looked odd.

In late 1995, I found a notice in the Sunday Times Vintage advertisements for a left hand drive 1928 Model A Special Coupe body. The seller turned out to be Nick Ferreira, who had a body shop in Midland. I went to see him and in the course of the discussion mentioned I had a 1928 Roadster that had been used, then subsequently fitted with 1932 Roadster rear quarter panels. Nick was a 1932 collector and builder so was very interested. He came out and looked at the car, then we did the deal. In mid December, Nic got the Roadster body from the windscreen back (I needed the RHD cowl) and I got the complete coupe body. Some money changed hands but not a lot, maybe a few hundred dollars.

I left the Roadster body on the frame while I repaired the Coupe body.

I purchased the Registration Plate 28A 40 A while it was a Roadster: 28A for the car, and 40A designates the Roadster body style.

This is the story of our Model A before it became our Special Coupe. That story will be in a future newsletter.

David and Pat Bussard
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