

## *First Impressions Always Stick*

By Bob Schmeichel

My first fond memories of riding around in a car took place in early 50s Hudsons. My dad, Gary; my uncle, Henry; my uncle, Milton; my uncle, Roy; and my grandfather, August, all had Hudsons. Since we all lived on farms within a couple miles of each other, family get togethers happened quite often. And part of those times usually involved talking or bragging about Hudson cars or Allis Chalmers tractors when it came to conversation, which usually got loud with laughter. All of the adult men were gear heads in one way or another. One of my favorite things to do when riding in our Hudson was standing up on the back seat floor and hanging on to the rope that was behind each front seat back. This was way before seat belts were ever a thought and a young person then had to see where he was going. I remember my Uncle Henry taking six of us kids and my dad in his Hudson, in an attempt to go fishing one spring day. Little did we know it would rain all day as we ventured out with the excitement of fishing. Uncle Henry, eager to fish, stopped when we got there with it still raining and threw in a line as we all watched him through fogged-up windows. After a minute, he jumped back in the car soaking wet and said nothing was biting and it wasn't going to happen today. Kind of disappointed because of the rain, all six of us kids sat quietly scrunched together in the back seat to stay warm as the Hudson engine hummed its hypnotic tone back towards home. Being 67 today, I sometimes smile at the things I remember when I was 5 to 7 years old with times then seeming way more simple and innocent. Today within the Great Plains Street Rodders group, we grow with new friends and memories because of our vehicles again all while savoring the time in front of us. The talking, teasing, and bragging continues today within our car club family kind of as our parents did, but all in fun and with nothing taken very seriously when we get together.

About ten years ago Jason and Christina Jellis spotted an old car for sale while going through Madelia, Minnesota, on their way to the "Back to the 50's" event in St. Paul. After stopping, they found out the 1949 Hudson Club Coupe was already sold, but, because of its different body style that they both fell in love with, it was agreed they would have a Hudson some day. Years went by as a search now and then was done on eBay or any other car-for-sale ads that were posted. Then in the fall of 2013, a 1953 Hudson Hornet was found for sale in Missouri. After calling about the car, they found out it was owned and restored by the grandfather of the person they were talking to. His grandfather had passed away earlier from cancer, and neither his grandmother nor he had any interest in the car. As far as he knew, it was pretty much a restored and drivable car the last time he saw it in his grandfather's garage. After a few weeks of back and forth conversations with Jason's interest peaked, it was decided to make a trip to Missouri with his dad, Terry, to check the Hudson out. After getting there, they were both amazed at seeing the car in its restored state. Everything about the car looked like new along with many extra parts still in boxes yet to be installed. All the chrome was redone, which is a big expense, as well as nice new paint and interior. Most of the old receipts referring to the restoration were 14 years old showing when it was completed. Everything looked good, so everyone thought until the hood was opened. There was a towel over the engine and the head was off as well as the intake and exhaust manifolds leaving the top of the block and pistons exposed for who knows how long. Not letting this scare Jason or his dad, Terry, but liking everything else they saw that came with the car to complete it, a deal was made and the car loaded onto their car trailer.

Once the car was back in South Dakota, Jason and Terry jumped right into getting the car buttoned up with getting the engine back together. They both said there has been kind of a learning curve when it comes to Hudsons mechanically, but not too difficult as they found out when questioning other Hudson purists for help. People will help people that way when there is a common interest in a car. As it turned out, they put the head back on after checking it out and ordering gaskets. Jason mentioned that gaskets are not something you can go down to your local parts store and pull out of the warehouse. Most all engine parts are special ordered and finding out where to get them is half the fun of a challenge like this. They also installed a header along with a complete totally restored, looking-like-new-in-the-box Twin "H" set-up that came with the car. This was a Hudson option in those earlier years of an intake manifold with two carburetors on their bigger engines that allowed Hudson to win competitively in the early 1950s in NASCAR racing. They also changed everything over to 12 volts from the original 6 volt system, which makes everything about the car work easier and better. Once all the little things were completed that the previous owner had stopped at with during restoration, the real enjoyment began. Jason said he and Christina as well as their kids really love the ride of the Hudson as well as the great looks the car has, so much that Christina said she wouldn't mind having another Hudson someday. How about that!!

