

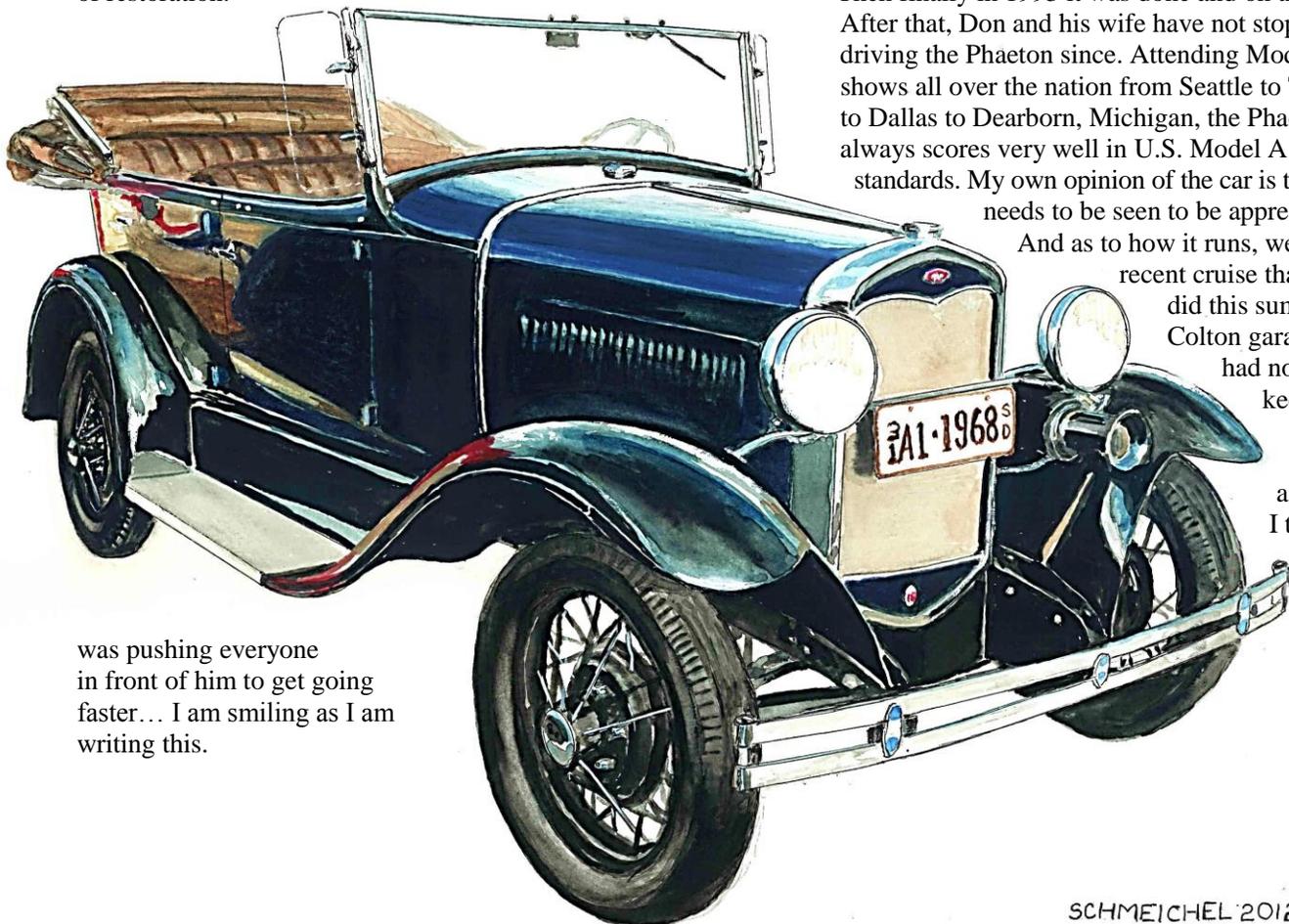
Dream Achieved

By Bob Schmeichel

Don Hood was one of those lucky guys in high school who played around with Model A Ford cars. As much as he liked all the different body styles that he had in those earlier years, he really yearned to have a Model A Phaeton. For those who don't know, a Phaeton is a 2- or 4-door car that holds four people with no roll up windows and a fold-down top. Don knew of one in the area owned by Donus Oakleaf, but also knew it was out of his price range for a kid in high school at the time. As time rolled on, Don continued into his adult life with his love of Model A's along the directions they took him and his family.

Then many years later in 1982, a Model A friend of Don's called him from Rhode Island. In talking about cars as guys do, a story evolved of three guys from Florida who went to South America to retrieve some old cars. One of the cars brought back from Uruguay just happen to be a 1931 Model A Phaeton. As the story went on, it turned out the Phaeton had just been recently sold and shipped to a guy in Minneapolis. Don's buddy knew of Don's longing desire to have a Phaeton, so he connected him with a name and phone number. It didn't take long and Don owned the Phaeton. After getting the car home, Don was amazed at the condition of the car that had 48,000 original miles on it. Besides having only one bullet hole in it, the body was quite perfect, yet. One of the different features of the car you don't see in this part of the world was that it had steering on the right side. In the 1930s, Model A frames in general were made to have steering on either side then. In fact most all new car brands built in the U.S. up into the 1960s, and going out of the U.S., had steering converted to the right side before they were shipped out - our history lesson for today.

Don started to restore the car in 1983, but later that year put it on hold for a while when he and his family moved to Colorado. It took three years to get situated before Don was comfortable to start working on the Phaeton again. During the restoration, Don converted the steering back to the left side to be correct for the U.S. Beside Don doing all the mechanical work, replacing the wood, as well as the rough body work, he had a buddy in Colorado paint the car for him. After that, Don installed a Barron LaBonney interior and top while continually pushing himself with all the little details of restoration.



was pushing everyone in front of him to get going faster... I am smiling as I am writing this.



Then finally in 1993 it was done and on the road. After that, Don and his wife have not stopped driving the Phaeton since. Attending Model A shows all over the nation from Seattle to Tacoma, to Dallas to Dearborn, Michigan, the Phaeton always scores very well in U.S. Model A judging standards. My own opinion of the car is that it truly needs to be seen to be appreciated.

And as to how it runs, well, on a recent cruise that the club did this summer to a Colton garage, Don had no trouble keeping up.

In fact, there were a few times I thought he