

A Story Of Persistence That Gave Her A Prize Winner

By Ted Schneider

In the early 1960s Doris Phelps often traveled for work from her home in Carroll County to Rockville. Her route went through Olney and one day Doris noticed a well-worn pre WWII vehicle parked in front of a home along the way.

Doris really liked the looks of that car and was curious about it. Finally Doris decided that she had to know more about the car, so she knocked on the front door and asked about it. She found out that it was a 1929 Ford Model A roadster that was being used for daily transportation and it wasn't for sale. That was in 1963. During the next year, she occasionally stopped at the house to inquire about the car and was repeatedly told that it wasn't for sale. The car's owner became somewhat resistant to the inquiries as time went on.

One day in 1964 Doris apparently hit the correct hot button, because the car's owner told her he was tired of being "pestered" about the car. He told her that if she really wanted the car he would sell it for \$400; hoping that the price would scare her off. Doris readily agreed to that price and promised to return with the money.

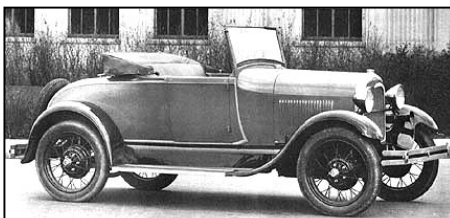
However, there was a small problem – even though she had a good government job and a part-time second job, \$400 was a lot more ready cash than she had. So Doris talked to her bank and convinced them to advance the money on a note that she could pay back at \$50 per month.

The sale was completed and Doris had the owner of the Manchester Esso station help her get the Model A close to home and store it. She began to look for a place to permanently store the car, finding a garage for \$10 per month.

Then life's changes caught up to Doris. She married and started a family and the Ford Model A that was in a rented garage became a project for some future time. But she didn't give up on her little Ford roadster.

Fast-forward thirty-eight years to 2002, when Doris' situation was completely different. She was a widow and had a career in real estate. Her children were now adults, and she enjoyed dabbling in antiques and collectibles. Doris was interested in fixing-up her Model A after all these years. She found a restoration shop in Pennsylvania that agreed to look at the car.

After a detailed evaluation of the car,



Shown from the top: Michael Phelps with his mom, Doris. Michael helps with maintenance and transport to shows for the Model A; a factory photo of the 1929 Model 40-A Standard Roadster; and details of Doris' Ford radiator stone guard and headlights topped by the Ford script motometer.

Mr. Reinhold, the restoration shop owner, told Doris that he could easily find a nicely restored 1929 Ford for her at a fraction of the price he would need to charge to restore her car. At issue was Doris' desire to restore the Model A to the highest standard possible.

Doris decided to go ahead with the restoration, which took about eighteen-months to complete. Besides the restoration work, Mr., Reinhold gave Doris advice on how to prepare the Model A for judging at car shows.

The 1929 Model A easily received its First Junior and Senior awards. Subsequently, the Model A received a First Grand National award at Buffalo, NY and then a Senior Grand National award at Dover, DE. With this Model A, Doris' persistence certainly paid off.

This 1929 Ford is a Standard Roadster – Model 40-A, with a rumble seat. It has a sophisticated paint scheme – the base body is in Bonnie Gray complimented by Chelsea Blue accents and Straw Yellow wheels and pin striping. Correct period accessories include a radiator stone guard, motometer, wind wings, outside rear view mirror, and step plates and grab handles for the rumble seat. The list price, FOB Detroit, was \$435, without the accessories.

1929 Ford Model A Specifications:

Wheelbase: 103 in.
 Engine: 4 cyl., L head, 40 HP
 3-speed manual transmission
 4-wheel mechanical brakes
 Top Speed: 65 MPH
 Gas Mileage: 25 to 30 MPG

The four-year domestic production run of the Ford Model A was 4.3 million vehicles, of which 1.43 million were made during the 1929 model year. There were 192,000 Standard Roadsters made in 1929. At that time, Ford assembled Model A vehicles in 32 plants throughout the United States.



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Crab Feast Registration Flyer On Page 2

Towson Independence Day Parade – July 4th
Fire Museum Car Show – July 9th
Annual Crab Feast – July 23rd
Fair Antique Car & Truck Show – August 7th
Ladew Topiary Gardens Car Show – August 21st

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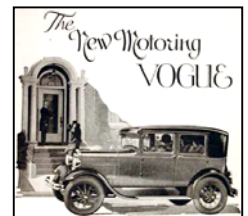
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THE CHESAPEAKE BULLETIN



VOLUME 51 – NUMBER 4

JULY & AUGUST 2011



Doris Phelps' 1929 Ford Model A Roadster at the Latimore Valley Fairgrounds. Read about this car on page 13.