

# Byron's Burnt Roadster

Byline– Martin Harding

**This is** a story about a 1929 Roadster and how it went from a beauty to a beast. So let's start at the beginning.

When a new member of the Enduring A's Chapter in Albany, Oregon attended a meeting and said he was looking for a roadster, everyone in the room thought "well, aren't we all?" Right after the meeting one of our members casually told him of a car for sale close by. Of course, it was a Roadster and it was very nice and fairly priced so it was soon purchased. As word spread of this great find, all those in the room wondered why nothing was said about this car previously. The lesson learned is to speak up if you want something!



**The new** owner enjoyed the car for a few years but then there was this day..... A new big noise in the attached garage turned out to be a fire from his gas furnace spreading to the entire garage as he quickly closed the door. The short version is the garage was saved but the Model A looked a bit different after the flames and smoke had cleared. The car was soon sold to another club member.

**Byron and Ann Cook** were the new owners and the car could not have found a better home. When they brought it home, it was the Model A version of the man that just tried to smoke an exploding cigar. Most of us have seen those faces years ago in the movies.



**The paint** on the car was gone except for the sides of the gas tank where gasoline in the tank absorbed enough heat to save some of the paint. The roadster's top and all the interior was gone. The whitewall tires were permanently smoke stained and felt soft, like fresh marshmallows. The lack of paint exposed the once perfect sheet metal so at first glance it was sad to look at the car.

The poor car could have ended up a planter in the back yard but Byron had other ideas. Those that know him are aware of this trait in all he does. He is a farmer so he was used to getting stubborn machines running and keeping them running. This Model A was a simple machine and he knows them well. There was still gas in the tank so after cutting off all wiring from the battery and splicing on his own direct and simple power to the coil and distributor, it was "show time". The little engine came back to life after only a few rotations! It might not be beauty it was, but it ran.



**The car** received a thorough inspection before some test drives with whatever padding he could find for a seat. The running gear was essentially unharmed so headlights and other details were repaired for legal road worthiness. Then the fun began. So many places to go and so little free time away from farming.

So why not use the car for chasing parts for the farm machinery?



**Byron did** quite a bit of parts chasing so the car got a lot of miles of use that first summer. This is in Oregon so rain is never far away (except as this is being written) and the car was driven in the rain, as you see it. But that is another whole story in itself.

Rain and bare sheet metal just don't mix but a solution was soon found. Ford used a process call Bonderizing using phosphoric acid on the Model A's sheet metal before painting. The process etched the metal but also created a protective coating on the surface against rust. Metal Prep to the rescue! Byron found he could wash the car once a year with Metal Prep and it would kill any rust and prevent any recurrence for quite a while. Any Model A owner would agree appearances have to be kept up.



**Of course,** there were many other fun times with the car. On one club tour, Byron was very low on gas and we were so far away from any station it was getting critical. Then there was a card lock station ahead. Saved!





**Nope.** Nobody had a card that would work at this location. A local man stopped for fuel and the negotiations began. Byron convinced the guy to fill the Model A using his card and Byron would pay the guy cash. It worked out but Byron had to get the cash from Ann.



**Another time,** Byron and Ann had bought a beautiful blue 2015 Mustang and drove over to the local Ford dealer to receive their new car. It was a special day so Byron took the Model A. But he also wore his best hat for the occasion, a Davey Crockett style skunk skin hat to be exact. There is even more to the story, but just know, everything at the dealership stopped when he drove in. The new Mustang took a backseat to the star of the show, **“a burned out 1929 Model A Ford.”**

*MH*

