

**MY 1933 EAGLE COUPE**

By Roger O.

My story begins in 1962 while I was working at Boeing. My boss was an old car nut, and would search the classified ads for them. One day he invited me along on one of his lunch hour jaunts looking at old cars to buy. A couple rare but rusty Plymouth roadsters sparked my interest, and I too was hooked. At the time you could buy restored Model As for \$500. Early in the fall of 1963 while looking for my dream car, a 1929 Model A roadster, there was an ad in the Tacoma paper for a 1933 Chevrolet. My automobile mentor, who is also my father came along, and we drove home with my prize. The second owner was a senior in high school, who had just inherited the coupe from the original owner, who must have had a narrow garage, as every fender had a scrape, or two. It had a starter problem, which required a push, but overall a solid original with seventy thousand miles on the odometer. (cont. next page)



I was living with my parents then, and we had a small carport. I had to park on the street anyway due to the starting problem. To give you an idea of the traffic back then, I took a drive up to an old wrecking yard near Kirkland called East Side Battery in the old Chevy, and had a blow out northbound on the Alaska Way viaduct. Forgot to mention a mile into the trip the carburetor seat backed out requiring a fix. We changed the tire on the viaduct, then continued North. Try this in an unreliable car today. That wrecking yard had a few complete cars in the twenties, thirties and forties. The owner had new older parts as well. I found many parts here until it was consumed by progress. Just before that first winter the car was disassembled, and plans for the restoration were underway. As a young man my ideas on restoration were slightly misguided. These were the days of chrome wheels, rolls and pleats and white wheel wells. Chrome was cheap back then, so I chromed nearly everything not cast; oil pan, side cover, valve cover, cam gear cover, fan blade, nuts, bolts, generator brackets, radiator brace, window frames, gear shift arm, floor board brackets, emergency brake arm, and of course all the parts that were originally chromed. I had yet to hear of the V.C.C.A. so off I went on my dream car tangent. After stripping the frame with a quarter inch drill and quite a few wire brushes, I painted it white. Then I installed the running gear painted caterpillar yellow until I had a rolling chassis. Forgot to mention, I had the wheels sand blasted, and I painted them the same color yellow before I started the frame. This color scheme would have made any Barnum and Bailey aficionado proud.

Hearing the horror stories of dangerous mechanical brakes, I designed the hydraulic brake system using 1936 Master drums and backing plates. Almost a bolt in job, but routing the brake lines with the body detached proved later to be near disastrous. Instead of routing a line across the rear axle housing, I came down both frame rails, and rubber hoses went to each wheel cylinder. The first time I ran over a bump creating body lean one hose sheered off when the body came between the hose and the cylinder. My emergency brake was the savior, and back to the drawing board came up with using front cylinders on the rear. The brakes were now road tested and worked great, but forty plus years of my minimal driving has taken its toll. On a recent tour with the coupe being the only car with hydraulic brakes, guess who had a brake problem? You guessed right, and a system upgrade is in the works. My restoration took a rest in a storage warehouse, as I obligated the next two years to my Navy active duty, then resumed work after returning from Viet Nam in the Spring of 1967. The body required little work, but one rear fender and the rear splash apron required some patch work, where the exhaust pipe caused some rust out. I used the original rubber for the glass, but used tinted glass for all windows. The interior was redone with Naugahyde, but keeping the stock appearance using the original buttons and pleats. None of the wood was replaced except for the plywood floor boards. The top was replaced with nylon instead of the original material. Running boards are covered with vinyl, and the paint is two coats of enamel. Looking back, almost everything I restored was wrong, but I kept it mostly stock. The engine was rebuilt, and kept original, but I put in the diaphragm clutch out of a 1937. The car was finished in the summer of 1967, and I drove it to the first meeting of vintage Chevrolet enthusiasts held at Wapato Park in Tacoma to form the first Washington State region of the V.C.C.A. We named it the Puget Sound Region because there were members from both the Seattle and Tacoma areas. The club has since migrated North with stops in Renton and Seattle. I have redone the chassis color scheme, and replaced the extra chrome parts with correctly painted parts. My carport restoration is still presentable after 37 years.

This car is the Eagle model, which came out before the Master model. Everyone calls it a Master Eagle nowadays, but there is no such model as a Master Eagle. I believe it is a way of grouping the two for parts listing, as they used similar parts. Some of the ways you can tell which model you have are as follows. The Master has a post between the wing window and the roll up window, but the Eagle has this post roll down with the window. This makes you have to roll down the window some to be able to wind out the wing, which has a knob instead of the crank, like the Master has. Also the door window frames were not drilled for screws along the bottom like the Master was. It seems there were a few other differences, but my memory has them stored. The Mercury model was the predecessor to the Standard model, which was a slightly smaller, less expensive car with fewer body styles. I've heard the only 1933 part that is interchangeable between a Master and a Standard is the battery.