MODEL ‘A’ FORD HOUDAILLE HYDRAULIC SUSPENSION

1928 TO 1931



Model ‘A’ Ford
Houdaille Hydraulic Suspension 1928 to 1931.

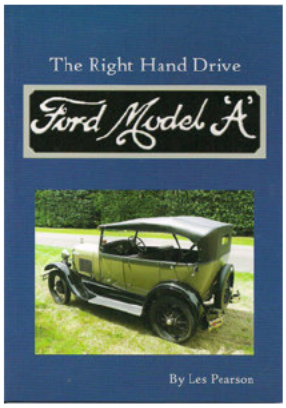
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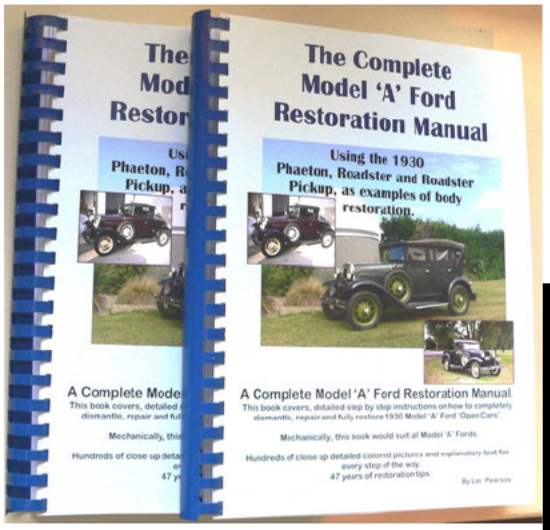
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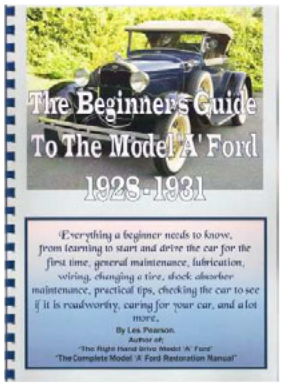
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Houdaille Hydraulic Suspension
1928 to 1931

By Les. Pearson.



This book is dedicated to my wife Kate.

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Introduction

When Model ‘A’s were first produced in very late in 1927, the economic depression was just beginning and times were getting harder. Henry Ford had just spent $100,000,000 USD on installing new plant to manufacture the ‘New Ford’ car.

By late 1928 times were getting even tougher and general maintenance on a lot of vehicles of the time was very limited, or simply none at all. Most Model ‘A’s had a rough beginning and with limited knowledge on oils and lubrication, the engines did very well to stand up to the abuse many received. The remainder we have on hand today would be some of the better maintained cars, and this includes shock absorbers.

The author has owned and operated a very successful Model ‘A’ Ford Restoration and Parts Shop for many years. During that time he has restored some 40 Model ‘A’s, ranging from rough wrecks to some cars due for their second restoration. He has had 49 years experience with Model ‘A’s and is passing his knowledge on, in this the fourth book in the series.

The Model ‘A’ Ford must easily be the most popular car with restorers and collectors. The cars are very stylish, new reproduction parts are plentiful and cheap with hundreds of Model ‘A’ Ford Parts Suppliers situated all over the world. Such a wide variety of parts are produced that it must be nearly possible to produce a ‘brand new ‘A’. There are also hundreds of clubs worldwide dedicated to the Model ‘A’, with thousands of restored Model ‘A’s operating daily.

The Model ‘A’s appealing design catches the attention of the public, restorers and collectors the world over. With it’s simplicity of design, reliability and sheer good looks, makes it a favourite in any antique car show and rally. The legend of the Model ‘A’ will remain in the hearts of car enthusiasts young and old, and will go down in history along with the memories of Henry and Edsel Ford.

The author can be contacted at modelabooks@xtra.co.nz if any owner wishes to discuss his or her shock absorber or restoration problems.

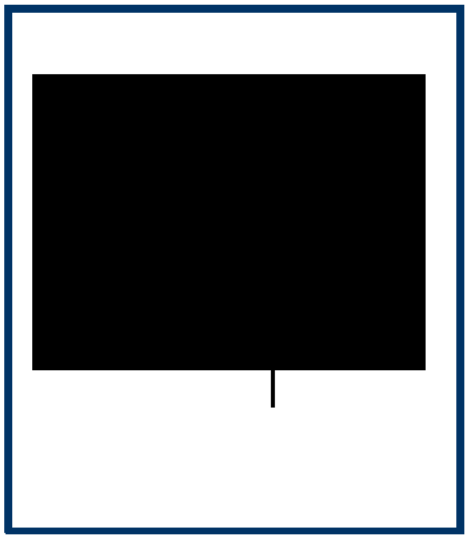
"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away." - 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 (NIV)

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Preface.
When driving my Ford Model ‘A’ time stands still in a sense, and I am magically transported back to a simpler time. There are no modern luxuries in the Model ‘A’, it’s a basic simple machine. There is no radio or CD player, so you’re forced to spend time by yourself thinking or conversing with whomever is with you. There is no digital cluster in front of you on the dashboard giving you more information than you’ll ever need, simply a gas gauge, and ammeter. Vehicles back then didn’t even have heat and obviously air conditioning was out of the question, but the front windshield folds out so you can get some air into the cab.

The mechanics of the car are beautiful in its simplicity also. This was long before fully automatic transmissions, so a standard three speed transmission without synchronized gears makes you double clutch when you drive. You have to manually adjust the spark, throttle, and gas mixture when starting the car. The brakes consist of mechanical brakes, not the hydraulic ones we’ve come to know and love in our current vehicles. No power steering either, just basic transportation that tops out at about 50 MPH.

When I drive the Model ‘A’ I’m in another place and another time. I realize all the finer points of what at the time was cutting edge technology in transportation. With nearly 5 million Model ‘A’ vehicles sold, not including the USSR, Henry Ford revolutionized the auto industry and all of our lives as we know it today. Up until Henry Ford, automobiles were only for the rich and well to do. Henry realized there was some decent profit to be had for making a car for the common man. Driving a Model ‘A’ forces you by its sheer design to slow down a bit from the rat race we all live in. The Model ‘A’ makes you take a moment and surprisingly you see a lot when you slow down. You appreciate the countryside around you, you suddenly notice that gorgeous horse in the field, and you see the beauty of God in everything you pass that you would have otherwise missed if you were flying by at 70 MPH.

Driving my Model ‘A’ gives me some quality alone time, or quality time with my wife Kate, when we’re together. It’s a beautiful ride and once you’re used to not going 50, 60, or 70 and you realize that you can take life slowly. The Ford Model ‘A’ makes you take a step back in time to a much simpler time and a much simpler pace. We have become a society of rushers, we rush to work, rush to get the kids off to school, rush to the grocery store, rush to the drive thru to get a coffee, we rush our lives away. It’s nice every now and then when something comes into our lives that make us slow down and take a look around and enjoy life rather than rushing through it.
The old adage “it’s the journey, not the destination” holds so true when driving my Model ‘A’. That car has allowed me to enjoy more journeys in the past year and given me some great views along the road.
It made me think of what a visionary Henry Ford was, he made these cars to handle over rough roads, out in the country where mechanics were few and far between, and an owner had only a basic set of tools to fix their Model ‘A’ and keep it running. From the Dust Bowl through the depression, the Model ‘A’ was designed to endure hard times, Henry built them pretty much indestructible to endure all that.



Lesson learned that life truly is about the journey and not the destination.
Enjoy your Model ‘A’ and drive it with pride!

USA Parts Suppliers Of Merit. (In no special order.)	Details Of Model 'A' Parts I Have Purchased.
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