

THE CABRIOLETTER

THE CABRIOLET CLUB
P.O. BOX 1487 CONROE, TEXAS 77305
(936) 441-8209



Issue #163 March 2018

"Itching to Drive a Ford" By Tom Krueger

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At the end of December I had the opportunity to spend some time in Savannah, Georgia's oldest city. Savannah was founded in 1733 by General James Oglethorpe, a British social reformer that set out to resettle Britain's worthy poor in the New World. This city served as a strategic port city during the American Revolution and the American Civil war. With so much history there, it seemed only natural to attend a tour of the Savannah Historic District, and on this tour, among topics of architecture, cotton, and ghosts, I heard the quirky story of Spanish Moss.

Spanish Moss is the graceful plant that hangs from the branches of Live Oak trees that line the streets of many southern towns, and lend much charm and elegance to said cities. You learn something new every day, and I learned that these trees are called Live Oaks because they do not drop their leaves in the fall, and seemingly look "live" in all seasons.

As the story goes, somewhere in the era of the Model T, there was so much demand for the Ford cars that they came up with the slogan, "Itching to Drive a Ford". The very charismatic tour guide stated that Henry Ford, being the resourceful man that he was, saw the Spanish Moss hanging from the trees in abundance and thought that he could save some cost and use the plant for padding in the seats of his automobiles.

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Volunteers...

- **Co-Editor; Index; Roster; Printing and Mailing Newsletters**

Tom Krueger
303-378-9720
Cabrioleditor@gmail.com
tjkruegerjr@gmail.com

- **Co-Editor; Cabriolet Data List**

Alan Mende
717-469-1047
alanmende@yahoo.com

- **Technical Questions; Dues**

Larry & Gwyn Machacek
936-441-8209
larry-gwyn@consolidated.net

- **68-C Record Keeper**

Tom Moniz
916-682-9306
68c@frontiernet.net

In the photograph below, John F. Selle, a pioneer Spanish-moss ginner, is holding in his right hand some of the green moss, and in his left, the cured fiber



Hair from Trees

... SPANISH MOSS IS NEW UPHOLSTERING MATERIAL

Photo courtesy of POPULAR SCIENCE MAGAZINE, June 1937 edition, public domain

One Job Becomes Another and Another and Another

By Alan Mende



As you can see the repro is pretty square



This is an original non-riveted u-joint

I'm tempted to say "This is starting to get me down," but I've always been a problem solver. Our 1930 Cabriolet just seems to be presenting me with more problems to solve. Case in point: After the AACCA Fall National meet in Hershey, PA, I dropped the rear end one more time and removed the repro universal joint. I ground down the corners of it until its outside dimensions more closely matched the old, riveted u-joint that I took out of the car when I rebuilt the transmission.

With the help of my brother, Bob, we reassembled everything. I just *knew* the car would run right. Well, I was mistaken again! I backed the car out of the garage, and it made the same noise. It's about 100 feet from our detached garage to the one attached to the house, and as I backed it up that distance, Bob said he thought the noise was coming from the rear end. As far as I was concerned, that *couldn't* be. He suggested I let him drive it back to the detached garage while I walked next to the rear axle. Sure enough, that's where I, too, heard grinding. Back by the detached garage I got back behind the wheel to put the car away. Putting it in gear and letting out the clutch gave me not only grinding, but also no forward movement!?!? We pushed the car into its garage bay and said to Bob, "Let's wait until spring."

It is now the second week of March and the weather is still cold outside. The temperature in the un-insulated detached garage is about the same. Tomorrow's forecast is for more snow. As they say in the old country, "*C'est la vie.*" That's about all I remember from high school French classes. I'll keep you all posted.

.....
The Cabriolet Club is a Special Interest Group of the Model 'A' Ford Club of America (MAFCA) and a Special Body Style Interest Region of the Model 'A' Restorers Club (MARC). Its purpose is to provide a medium for collecting and exchanging information, ideas, parts, etc. on three body styles (68-A, 68-B, 68-C) of the Model 'A' Ford Cabriolets made from 1929 to 1931. The club newsletter, "The CABRIOLETTER" is written by Tom Krueger and Alan Mende, who do the final editing. It is published four times a year in March, June, September, and December. Any questions, articles, wanted ads, for sale ads, plus other information for publication in "The CABRIOLETTER" should be sent to: **Tom Krueger**, 12750 N 6TH Street, Parker, CO 80134, 303-378-9720, Cabrioleditor@gmail.com or **Alan Mende**, 306 Manada Gap Road, Grantville, PA 17028, 717-469-1047, alanmende@yahoo.com. Technical questions should be sent to **Larry Machacek**, PO Box 1487, Conroe, TX 77305, 936-441-8209, larry-gwyn@consolidated.net. Larry and Gwyn are the club coordinators. The club has no formal officers. Any matters pertaining to club membership (dues, change of address, etc.) should be referred to them at the above address in Conroe, TX. Dues for American and Canadian addresses are \$16 per year, \$18 for overseas addresses.

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Member Story: Ray Beardslee

By Tom Krueger



*La Mesa post card, circa 1930's.
Compliments of San Diego History Center*



When setting up interviews for our Member Story section of the *Cabrioletter*, I never know quite what to expect until I arrive. A man working on his Cabriolet out in the shop, wearing shorts and flip flops in the middle of February, is what I unexpectedly discovered this time around. I was welcomed to the home of Ray and JudyJo Beardslee, nestled in the year round Semi-arid Steppe climate (translate, nice!), in La Mesa California, also known as “the Jewel of the Hills”.

Here is their story. Ray served in the Army in the 60's, and specialized in aerial photography interpretation taken from Air Force reconnaissance flights. Because of his unique position, Ray ended up being the PR guy for the Army/Air Force rela-

tionship. He was stationed for most of his assignment in Germany, but when the Army asked if there were any takers for an assignment in England, Ray said, “I nearly broke my arm getting it into the air” to volunteer.

After serving his country, Ray worked as a mail clerk at San Diego State University, and after retiring did some courier work, and then gave public tours of Historical downtown San Diego in Model T Touring cars for three years. Ray met JudyJo in the local Model A Club, and he said that their first date was disassembling a rear axle in the driveway. They hit it off, but before they could get married, Judy had some stipulations that had to be met. The house had to be paid off, her kids had to be moved out, and Ray would have to build a shop for his cars because Judy has a 31 Model A Coupe (that she has owned since high school), and a 68 Roadrunner that laid claim to the existing garage. Ray said his response to these stipulations was, “I can live with that.”



*JudyJo with her Model A Coupe and Roadrunner.
I think she likes the color red!*

Ray bought his Cabriolet in 1968 from Truly Nolan Pest Control, where it was parked with a couple other retired company vehicles of the same vintage for sale at a gas station. It was metallic blue with a black vinyl top, and actually according to the title, started out life as a 31 Coupe in Arizona. Ray has been working pretty steadily at restoring the Cabriolet for the past 10 years, and his goal is to

“finish it so I can drive it”. Now, the intact body tag on the Cabriolet would place it as a May or June 1930 68B, but the title described above left a bit of a mystery about the car that went unsolved for many years. Then one day, by fate or pure dumb luck, Ray met a fellow on a Queen Mary Model A Club Resurrection Tour to Yuma that he told about his Cabriolet project, and after a short conversation the fellow asked, “is that the metallic blue and black vinyl top car with the '31 Coupe Arizona title?” He knew the car, and more importantly knew some history of the car, and that the Coupe body had been replaced with a Cabriolet body that had been found in a riverbed.

Ray is making good progress on the restoration. The lower 4 inches of the entire body was rusted out and had been



Custom lower landau bracket, with post that threads into bracket.

(Continued on page 4)

Member Story: Ray Beardslee, Cont.

replaced with fiberglass as purchased, so extensive metal work was accomplished to get the body back to original. He is fitting all of the top wood and hardware at this time, and customized the lower landau brackets with a removable post to make the fabric top installation go much easier. He has a newly rebuilt engine from Hansen's Garage all ready to go and a Mitchell overdrive. He plans to have the car painted in Lombard Blue, with Duchess Blue beltline and rumble lid, and Hessian Blue wheels.

Ray and JudyJo's passion for the Model A hobby is extremely evident, and creative too! If you ever have time to visit them, you must pay attention to the details around the house and shop. You will see towel racks and toilet paper brackets made from Model A bumpers, outdoor lighting fashioned from Model A headlights, and a front lawn decoration



Ray Beardslee with his 1930 68B, under construction.



Creative details throughout!

with me that I can only tell you was a bit daring, but it is one of those that only Ray can share. However I can tell you that he and Judy Jo have visited many windmill museums, and he shared that the American Windmill Museum in Texas has several operational windmills outside of the museum that, when the wind blows just right, "sounds like a symphony".

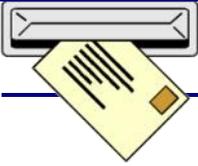
I really enjoyed my visit with the Beardslees, and I would encourage you, if you are ever in the San Diego area, to pay them a visit. Their creativity lets you glimpse ideas you may have never thought of, and their hospitality is genuine. I suggest you wear sandals and a Hawaiian shirt for the visit! Ray's workmanship on the Cabriolet is outstanding so far, and I look forward to seeing his finished project one day.

from Model A headlights, and a front lawn decoration using a rusty, yet with nice patina (and yes, running) 1928 "Farm Truck Coupe" Model A. You will see Model A parts "repurposed" for use on their VW van and their motor home. Ray also has a very distinctive 1928 Model A Pickup that he lengthened to fit a full size canopy; and sports details like glass knob door handles, an antique water spigot radiator cap, and dual 'B' carburetors, and parts from all 4 years of Model As, to just mention a few.

There is also one more giant clue to one of Rays other great passions (he has many!), and that is the large windmill mounted on top of the shop. Ray shared a story about "saving" a windmill



The windmill sits majestically on top of the shop.



Mail Room

* Greetings, We need some input on the rumble seat side panel design in a 1930 Cabriolet with a screw type adjustable seat. I've seen comments that lead me to think the Cabriolet and Coupe are very similar in this area. We purchased a template of the panel that is used by the upholstery shop and it was not good fit in our car. We have made a template that seems to fit and uses some of the comments and pictures posted in various threads on the Ford Barn. The first two photos show the panel from the front and rear. The area we are still not sure of is at the top – front corner. One thread we read said they thought the rumble seat side panel went behind the front side panel (the panel attached to the door post) about 1 inch. The third photo shows the panel standing vertical and clamped against the wood brace that goes from the door post back to the rear quarter panel brace (attached just below the rumble lid hinge). There is about a 3 to 4 inch gap between the rumble seat side panel and the tack rail surface that the front side panel would be attached to. The fourth photo shows how much bend has to be made to the rumble seat side panel to get to go behind the front panel. Is the way the rumble seat side panel would look after being installed? Another question we have about the rumble seat side panel is how and where is it attached to the car? Should there be a sheet metal groove along the bottom edge like the one for cowl side panel? What is supposed to hold the panel in place along the top edge? We would like hear your thoughts about how this panel fits. Thanks

John Crumb - Canton, IL

* It has been about twenty-eight years since I last installed upholstery in a Cabriolet, but I'll give your questions a shot anyway! The thin strip of wood you have coming all the way to the post, I would cut back, only to be mounted to the two upright braces. This will allow the front edge of the rumble side panel to easily bend toward the 1/4 panel and tuck in nicely behind the upholstery panel on the side of the seat carriage. Yes, I would extend your pattern all the way to just behind the door post, all the way up and down. There is a wood block inset that is screwed to the back of the 1/4 panel post. I would put a screw through the panel and screw it to the wood block to mount the front edge. This will then make the rumble side panel smooth and nicely fit behind the seat carriage side panel. There is no sheet metal groove at the bottom. The upright brace that has the rumble hinge, there are three screws that hold the rain gutter in place going toward the upper rumble lid corner. These three screws originally held a curved piece of sheet metal that hung about one inch or so below the rain gutter and curved to match this area and about 8 to 10 inches long. This sheet metal part acted as a brace to keep the rumble upholstery side panel from falling in toward to 1/4 panel. There was a drawing in a back issue on this, however no time to look right now. I believe there was a screw and cup washer that held the panel to the curved sheet metal at the rain gutter area. I'm thinking there may have been a screw and cup washer about mid way front to back on the wooden slat. I hope this may solve some problems. *Added later...* I have to back up just a hair if I may. Looking at the top front edge of your side panel, I would bring it maybe one inch short of the upper brace and follow the angle of the triangle brace forward and down. If you brought the whole panel all the way forward, it would cause it to have a bulge over the triangle bracket and look bad under the upholstery side panel next to the seat.

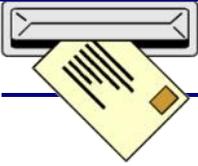
Larry Machacek - Conroe, TX

Editor Note: See Tech Talk section for back-issue rumble side panel details.

*Many thanks for the superb 'PDF' files. I can't seem to open the larger Google Drive version drawing, but I'm quite sure my son can get it working, let's see what he can do. As far as your visiting me, I would be honored if you could get here. I am a long drive from Savannah; I am about 25 miles straight south of Atlanta. I will try to get a photo of my car; it is in my garage, and not running at this time. I am very happy with the

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Mail Room

68C, it is my first Model A in 20 years. I am a New Jersey boy, and had my first Model A in 1948 when I was 12 years old. Take care, and please get here.

Ralph Eberspacher Sr. - Sharpsburg, GA

* Hi, Tom! In the Dec. 2017 issue of the Cabrioletter, Dan DiTullio asked about the proper screws to attach floor pans to the side and cross rails for 68B Cabriolets made after July 14, 1930 (adjustable seat). In my search through original parts that my father left me as part of my Cabriolet project, I came upon an envelope that was labeled in my father's handwriting "Screws and Clinch Nut Samples (also rivet) Lower Deck Panel to Rear Cross Structure". Exactly what his terminology concerning "Lower Deck Panel" means, I don't know, but I can assume that this may be the lower pan under the seat area. Anyway, in the envelope were several screws—some with heads and fairly intact although a little chewed up from being extracted—and some with the threaded shaft and head separated. These are a little different than any screw I've ever seen, so I took some photos and measurements. The screws are a fairly thin pan-head type with regular slot. The head is fairly large for this size of screw, about 7/16 wide. Each screw is 3/4 inch in total length, with a fine thread—it looks to be 28 teeth per inch. I'm not sure if this is the screw that you're seeking information on for Dan (and others, me included) but it is unique enough that I thought I would pass the information on to you. A photo of several of the screws is attached. By the way, keep up the great work, I spend a lot of time going over old and new issues of the Cabrioletter, it is a treasure chest of information! Regards, *Don Kinney - Lawrence, KS*



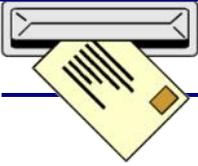
• Hi Don, Thanks so much for responding! The screws shown in your picture are of the ones that screw the sheet metal panel below the rumble "deck" lid to the aft steel body cross member. They screw into a clinch nut that attaches to the metal framework kind of like a rivet (basically the same as the clinch nuts that the wooden floorboards screw down to on a Tudor). With that said, I'm still looking for the size and type of screw that secured the Cabriolet metal floor pans to the wooden cross sills. About the website, I am planning to either update our site (very basic through Hemmings right now) or start a new one that is stand alone and more useful this year. I would love to have someone like you keep up a bulletin board, but would need to keep copies of past newsletters off the site as they are still a source of club revenue as backissues. However, we could advertise that backissues are available for purchase and possibly publish

the Index on the site as a solution. I'll keep you posted on progress on that.

Tom Krueger - Co-editor

* Hi, Tom! Thanks so much for responding and for the photos to clarify, I truly appreciate it...I could've made a mistake trying to use screws like those, probably because I'm a "noobie" I didn't know where they went...now my father's note makes sense. I have started the "fitting the wood process" following the write-up in the back issues of the *Cabrioletter*, but am changing the process slightly by loosely securing the cross rails to the frame and then moving the side rails back and forth and in and out on the tenons of the cross rails until I can get the cowl and rear cross member to fit—that way I can keep some adjustability for the cowl-to-hood-to-radiator and doors-to-rear quarters dimensions before solidifying everything by locking the tenons into the mortises with screws. I'll take some photos as I go along in case anyone wants to see them. I don't know how far along your car is now, but it so cool to see the wood frame on the chassis and confirm what I am doing currently, thank you! As far as a bulletin board is concerned, I absolutely agree that back issues should be kept off of there, but it would seem like a great place to advertise them, as well as get new members...I am surprised by the number of people working on Cabriolets that I run across online, but who are not members of the Cabriolet club. I guess not surprisingly, then, that I had a couple of people try to discourage me from joining the Cabriolet Club, but as far as I'm concerned, it's the most important resource that I can imagine. By the way, I tried to e-mail club member John Price to suggest that maybe we could e-mail photos and questions back and forth as it seems from his question in the latest Cabrioletter that we are at about the same place in wood frame fitting; unfortunately, the e-mail address that I got for him from the Club roster came back as undeliverable. My offer of some help with website or a bulletin board is always open—I have lots of enthusiasm for Cabriolets and a fair amount of computer and writing ability and some time since I'm recently retired... I just don't have enough information about what to do next! I've

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Mail Room

attached a couple of photos of my project as of today—it will be old hat to you, but it is exciting for me! Thanks again for all that you do for us Cabriolunatics! Regards,

Don Kinney - Lawrence, KS

Editor note: The email address that we have for John Price is:

j1price@comcast.net



* Tom, I'm working on a 68A and would like the blueprint of the floor side sill that was in the Tech Talk of the last Cabrioletter. You offered to email it please use: johnlavoy@msn.com If you have any sources for wood kits or pieces please include those. I made a lot of my bows etc. for my 29 town sedan but think finding a source would be nice. Thanks, *John LaVoy*

* Hi John, glad to help out. Attached are the 2 PDFs that cover the side sills. One has good detail of the front section and the other of the rear section. As far as a source for the Floor Sill Wood Kits, most Model A Parts suppliers (Bratton's, Snyder's, Mike's, Bert's, Mac's, etc.) carry them. For example Bert's here in Denver have the kit as part number A-81252 for a 68A/B with fixed front seat (non-adjustable). Bratton's calls them a Subrail and Cross member kit, part # 39820. Basically you will get the left and right side sill and two cross sills in these kits, and they run approx. \$1140 (2016 prices). If you are good at woodworking it probably is worthwhile to make your own side sills, but as you can see they will take more than average woodworking tools and ingenuity to duplicate. Let me know if I can help with anything else, and good luck on your project!

Tom Krueger - Co-editor

* Tom, thanks, I got them. I made the wood for my 29 Briggs Town Sedan and these look very similar. I might try and make my own that is why I wanted the blueprints. *John LaVoy*

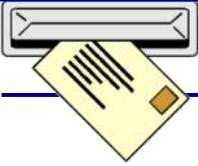
* Hi, Tom! As you may remember, I'm busily trial-fitting the body panels of my 1930 Cabriolet (68B) to the wood rails, but I've run into a problem and hope maybe you can give me a suggestion. In fitting the passenger door to

the cowl, I discovered some old damage that is keeping the door post and cowl from lining up correctly. In one area, the edges overlap (at the bead) and further up, they are as much as a half inch apart. It looks as if the windshield



frame area on the passenger side took a hit from the front years ago; that was repaired with lead and painted over. In looking closely at the damage, it looks like the cowl itself was tweaked, the door jamb dented in, and the top of the door post bent back. It's kind of hard to tell what's actually wrong when looking at the door and cowl together, but I know that I need to get this repaired, correctly, before going any further. I feel comfortable with most body panel repairs involving cutting out sections, welding in new sections, taking out dents or rust, etc., but it looks to me like these parts will need to be straightened, correctly, in order to line up. I'm very hesitant to turn over my cowl and door to a standard body repair place not knowing if they have the experience or understand the value of the pieces—this would be very hard to fix if someone botches it. I'm a little limited geographically as I'm sure that there's an expert in such repairs in California or Connecticut, but it would be almost impossible to get the body there from where I live in Kansas without some further damage or issues. So, is this something I should attempt myself, with c-clamps, square tubing to act as straight edges and an oxyacetylene torch,

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Mail Room

or should I be looking for a local body person? I've attached a couple of photos so you can see what I'm talking about, thanks for any direction you can provide! Regards,

Don Kinney - Lawrence, KS

* Hi Don, I've been thinking about your issue and this is how I think I would tackle it. Since the drivers side of your cabriolet is good, I would make a template out of some 1/4" Masonite board or similar that matches the profile of the cowl up to the top of the windshield post (lay the mason board flat against the inside of the driver side door jamb and mark it accurately with a marker, then cut out the shape with a fine jigsaw blade). It looks like you have the body mounted to the wooden sills and frame, so make the template wide enough to square up to either of these "reference" surfaces. Then you can flip the template around to the passenger side and see what exactly is out of position and then begin to figure out the best way to get the metal back to where it belongs, whether this is heating and bending, or possibly anchoring the cowl really well and pulling with a come along or something along those lines. With a good template, you might even be able to trust a body shop to local body shop to rework this area for you. Let me know what you think....

Tom Krueger - Co-editor

* Hi, Tom, Thank you so much for being creative with my problem and coming up with a common-sense way to approach it. I'm afraid that I'm so focused on the door/cowl gap that I wouldn't have come up with a method like you've suggested to account for where it "should" be. I did a lot of searching with local friends and others in the Kansas City Model A Club (Plain Ol' A's), and came up with the name of a body guy who lives in my community; he owned a body shop for many years before retiring and now works by himself and does work for just a few friends. He's been over to look at my car, and thinks he can do some good by cutting out a piece of the skin in the cowl post before pulling the structure back to where it needs to be, then welding back in a new patch piece on the skin. As for the door, he thinks that's going to need some massaging where the door skin is pulled around the frame, and it may be a question of adding some extra in places while taking some away on the edge in order to get a straight line. I have been able to get very good recommendations on the body and paint work this gentleman has done from friends, and he's actually going to come work in my basement garage, so I'll be able to control the process rather than just "turning over" the body pieces to someone and hoping for the best. I think what you've suggested is absolutely the missing piece—it will be a visual reference for what's needed for the structure to get back to original, and then the door should be fairly easy to sculpt to that shape. I'll take some photos as I go and send them along so you can see how it's going...maybe even a good article for the "Cabrioletter" at some point? Many thanks, again, Tom, for your time and thoughtful consideration. Regards,

Don Kinney - Lawrence, KS

* Bruce Adams shares his picture of himself, his 68C, and the Easter Bunny! "I Take the Chamber of Commerce's Easter Bunny to visit with children and take their photos."

Bruce Adams - Newport, NY

* Keep up the great work! We appreciate all that goes into this publication. Thanks!

Kevin Baily - Alta Loma, CA

* A BIG THANK YOU to you and Gwyn for all your hard work and keeping the Cabriolet Club strong. Helping many Cabriolet owners with info, and your many parts over the years.

Walter Sapp - Mount Vernon, OH



Please keep **Larry and Gwyn Machacek** in your thoughts and prayers as Gwyn is suffering with vertigo, and Larry is recovering from gall bladder surgery. No kolaches for Czech Boy for a while!

Trader's Alley

1931 Cabriolet 68C Wanted

Wanted to purchase - a 1931 Cabriolet Model 68C. Unrestored or an early restoration, must be a never-rusted example. Would accept a "body only" car. Am willing to pay the right price for the right car.

Contact: Ralph Eberspacher Sr.

Phone: 770-463-0734 Email: victorman@bellsouth.net

1931 Cabriolet 68C Wanted

I'm really looking for a 1931 Cabriolet 68C, and hopefully in quite good condition.

Contact: Norm Goodfellow, Box 5520 Huntsville, Ontario Canada P1H 2K8

Phone: 705-787-6930 Email: gfc@mukoka.com

Parts For Sale

Original (1928/29, Early 1930?)
Scroll Rumble Seat Handle (no
key). Great original condition.
\$190.00

2 Original & 1 Repro Door Handles
and a Standard Original Rumble
Seat Handle \$70.00

Also have a lot of back-up parts:
Rebuilt Steering, Reconditioned
Transmission, Starters, Generators,
etc. Reasonable offers considered.

Contact: Ron Locandro Phone: 860-658-2118 Cell: 860-989-5589 Email: ronlocandro@gmail.com



Cabriolet Parts Wanted

I am building a 30 Cabriolet and I am in need of the **guides for the front windows**. These are the pieces that guide the window up and down.

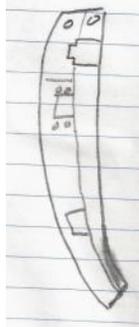
Contact: Tom Prothro, 290-357-2314, Satch538@aol.com

Cabriolet Part Wanted

I need the **metal door post** for my 1930 Cabriolet. Left side.

Please contact me with any help on locating one of these.

Contact: Jim Walden, 11207 E 37th Place,
Yuma, AZ 85367, 253-691-0922



Cabriolet Part Wanted

I'm in need of a **top window channel** for my 68B. Any idea where I might search? I paid for a reproduction several years ago, but it doesn't have the same profile as the original, so I won't be using it.

Contact: Don Kinney, 1104 Oak Tree Drive,
Lawrence, KS 66049, 913-636-4920
donwkinney@earthlink.net

Cabriolet Help Wanted

I am looking for info on installing seat belts in a Cabriolet (late 68A), or any Model A. If you have installed seat belts in your Cabriolet, I would appreciate any help or tips. Thanks!

Contact: William Kerr, 517-592-3889, wfkerr231@gmail.com

Editor Note: There is a good article on installing seat belts in a 1931 Model A Victoria in Cabrioletter issue #104, written by Roger Gill. The Cabriolet, however, with the wooden subrails, makes finding good anchor points more challenging. Has anyone in the club installed seatbelts in your Cabriolet? Would you be interested in writing an article to share the installation steps and pictures?

Trader's Alley

1931 Cabriolet 68B For Sale

Body #16134337, Elkpoint green upper body, Kewanee green lower body, Apple green stripe and wheels. LeBaron Bonney top and interior. Top color T14-GT green on tan. Side mount fenders. New radiator, rebuilt motor, new chrome windshield frame and bumpers. Price \$30,000. Call with questions.

Contact: Dewayne Jacobsen Phone: 651-462-5736 Forest Lake, MN

1930 Standard Roadster For Sale

Older restoration. Copra drab lower body color, Chicle drab belt moulding color, straw stripe. Price \$20,000. Call with questions.

Contact: Dewayne Jacobsen Phone: 651-462-5736 Forest Lake, MN

Items For Sale

Back Issues of "The Cabrioletter" and index are available. They contain a lot of useful information. Issues in [] were combined in one letter.

\$1 each: #1, 5, 6, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, [22, 23], 37, 44, 45, 46, 51, 52, 55, 60, 71

\$2 each: #2, 3, 4, 9, 12, 15, 24, 25, 26, [27, 28], 29, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 47, 48, 49, 50, 53, 54, 56, 57, 58, 59, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 72, 74, 76, 78, 79, 80, 81, 83, 84, 87, 89, 90, 91, 93, 94, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 103, 104, 107, 108, 109, 112, 113, 116, 118, 119, 126, 128, 131, 133, 134, 135

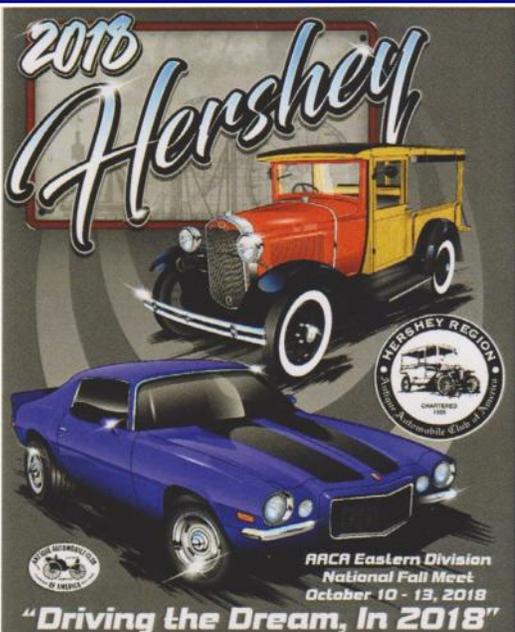
\$3 each: #7, 8, [20, 21], 61, 73, 75, 77, 82, 85, 86, 88, 92, 95, 102, [105, 106], 110, 111, 114, 115, 117, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 129, 130, 132, 139, 140, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162

\$4 each: #[136, 137, 138], [141, 142], [143, 144], [151, 152] **\$5 :** #[30, 31, 32, 33] one combined issue

Package deal on complete set of back issues (#1-158), \$265 postpaid. New members are automatically sent an index and current roster; non-members wanting an index and roster must add \$6.00 to the price.

Contact The Cabriolet Club, PO Box 1487, Conroe, TX 77305, 936-441-8209 for orders. **NOTE:** Foreign address please add \$15 to help defray postage costs on back issues.

Advertising Note: Advertisements are printed free for members of the Cabriolet Club. Unless otherwise requested, ads will be printed in one issue only. Ads can be sent to Tom Krueger, Alan Mende, or Larry Machacek by e-mail or regular mail. Pictures are welcome and will be added on a space available basis.



Save the Dates! Hershey 2018

The Cabriolet Club has an annual gathering each year at the AACRA Eastern Regional Fall Meet. Mark your calendars for the event, October 10-13 this year in Hershey Pennsylvania. Usually our gathering is on Thursday around 4 PM. Its informal, but a good time to rest your feet, eat a cookie or two, and share Cabriolet stories!

Art Grandle and Alan Mende are good contacts if you want some help with where to stay, the best way to get there, and how much time to plan for to peruse this giant swap meet..

Art Grandle - 740-927-1804

Alan Mende - 717-421-2930

We will have more detailed information on the meeting place and time in the September edition of the *Cabrioletter*. Stay tuned!!

Texas Rangers Ride Again!

By Tom Moniz

Here it is the beginning of March. Around Christmas I caught the flu; it's a nasty one this year but I've had post viral cough that's just disappearing now after two months of coughing. Some steroids and nose spray and I'm better.

First, did anyone buy the nice 68c for sale in Sacramento? I tried 3-4 times to go over and look at it, but he didn't respond. He pulled it just before the auction ended, and then it appeared on the local Craigslist only to disappear again. Then it was back on eBay, to disappear again. I had a friend here that really wanted it, but he could never contact the seller.

While I was laid up I watched some TV out of sheer boredom. I like to watch old movies in the hopes of seeing old cars. I tuned in to "Texas Rangers Ride Again" (1940). The only name I recognized was Anthony Quinn and he was just a character actor back then. And look what showed up? A nice 68C!

It was about 9 years old at the time and had some dents in the fender and a new paint job. It was only on for less than a minute, but I was thrilled! In the first showing, the car didn't appear to have any occupants but as it was passed, up pops a man and a woman! lol



JimZ Repair



On the back page of the newsletter there is a small ad for JimZ Repair, owned and operated by Jim Zimmerman, who is a fellow Cabriolet Club member. Jim describes his automotive repair business as, "very simple and 'low key'". I am the only employee, and my lounge for customers is a lawn chair!" Jim admittedly says that his business may just be "an expensive hobby".

He started the business in the early 80's, and specialized in maintenance and repairs on DeLoreans. His background is working on cars and teaching Auto Technician class at the high school level for 36 years, and Auto Technician class at a technical school for 25 years. His Model A experience goes back even farther, where he learned to work on these vintage vehicles with his father.

Jim's collection of cars is not limited to his 68B Cabriolet; he has a 1949 Hudson (with 19K original miles), a 1963 Studebaker R2 Avanti, a 1988 AMC Eagle, a 1971 Fiat Sport Spyder Convertible, a 1930 Model A Town Sedan (his first car - purchased in high school and now with over 400K miles on it), and another 1988 AMC Eagle which is currently for sale.

JimZ Repair is located in rural Wisconsin, and what Jim would mostly like to offer is roadside assistance and repair to any of you touring through the northern states with your vintage and antique automobiles. If you are ever near his neck of the woods, give him a call! **262-642-9683**



Jim's 36' x 64' Shop



Jim's 68B Under Construction



68C Windshield Frame Repair

By Don Kohl



This is not for everyone... When I go cruising the web, my wife gets real nervous - and rightfully so. How I got from North Carolina to Craigslist in Kent, Michigan, I have no idea, but..... There it was, a 1931 Slant Window 68C. I said, "Pack a bag we're taking a ride", and off we went within the hour. Two days later we opened the middle door of a three car garage which produced a scene right out of the Pickers TV program. Crammed and buried in there was a Cabriolet just begging for a new life. We winched it onto a car carrier and headed home. Then the project began!

This article will focus in on the nemesis for every 68C restorer - what to do with the blistered and pitted windshield frame (I attempted to have

my original frame chromed which, as always, proved to be an exercises in futility). All of our 'A's' are "drivers", and we tour as much as we can, therefore my approach was to make this car be presentable without having to break the bank. Gene Bunce's reproduction frames are the most recommended solution but due to the cost and the fact that they are no longer in production, this was not an option for me. That being said, my attention turned to my original frame and a reproduction aluminum frame from Bratton's (Part number # 30070 1931 Slant) for about \$260. Since the top of the original frame and the hinge were in excellent condition (including the special mirror bracket), I chose to make use of it and use the bottom of the new aluminum frame to improve my car's appearance. This picture shows the original frame as it arrived at my home. These chromed frames deteriorate from the inside out so if your thinking that it could be repaired with Bondo and chrome paint or chrome tape, I can save you much time and money - Don't !

It's first necessary to disassemble both the old and new frames. The top corners of the original top piece have sheet metal ears that need to be cut off carefully with an angle grinder using a cutting disk. The 1/4" corner bar stock that is crimped into this frame needs to be cut off carefully at the 45 degree angle and then, using a drift punch, drive the piece that remains in the frame further into the frame to where it will not interfere with the new corner pieces used to secure the top of the frame to the sides of the aluminum frame. Hold the corner mounting angle pieces next to the top frame and mark where new holes need to be drilled to match the threaded holes in the corner mounts and then screw the pieces into place. Set this top member aside while you now clamp the aluminum bottom with the welded on side arms onto your bench. Using a Dremel tool with a coarse drum mounted, carefully flatten the welds at each corner and stop just prior to touching the adjacent parts of the frame.

Attach 220 grit disk to a random orbit sander and lightly work the miter weld until it blends in as if there was never a weld there. Change the disk to about a 320 or higher grit and gently sand the visible parts of the frame until you just remove the 'Dull' appearance. It's time to work those arm muscles and grab the 500 grit wet/dry sandpaper on a stiff foam pad . Work the entire surface uniformly before changing to the 1000 grit. Continue the process by moving to 1500 grit and then finally use a 2000 grit paper. At this point, all sanding marks should be gone. The final step in the polishing process is to use

Mothers Mag and Aluminum Polish. It's available at Auto parts dealers and Walmart for about \$ 7 for 5 oz. Follow the label instructions until you are happy with the shine. The results will not perfectly match a well chromed frame





Tech Talk

68C Windshield Frame Repair

By Don Kohl



but will be a pleasing comparison as you step a few feet back. It's a *Huge* improvement over the blistered frame you started with and very satisfactory for a good looking touring 'A'. To the left is a piece of the aluminum frame, before the polishing began, setting next to the completed frame.

Once your glass is installed and the upper corner screws tightened into place, you're ready to mount the whole unit onto your vehicle. The swing arm brackets align well and since the original top frame and hinge were reused, the 'Mirror Mount' that was unique to the 68C and A400 Slant Window Cars is still intact as seen on the right. Notice the 1/4" corner rod inserted in the end of the frame at

the right end. This whole effort allows Meriweather (as she's known by her closest friends) to be able to drive down the back roads and take in an occasional show with pride, and my wife is pleased with the cost.





How to Lower (and Raise) the Top

By Tom Krueger

In issue #162 club member Harold Fienberg asked for help finding an article on how to lower the top of a Cabriolet. For some of you old hats this article will be of minimal use, but I thought it would be a good idea to write a set of instructions for those that are new to the Cabriolet, or for those that have never operated their top. I turned to one of our very active MAFCC members, and all around “good guy”, Fred Binkley and his beautiful 1931 68B to help me put together these step-by-step instructions.

Before you begin, consider getting a helper as it is much easier to lower the top with a person on each side of the car. Also, if you have a boot, you must decide if you will be installing that before you begin, as it must be snapped into place before the top is lowered. Here we go...

1. **Roll down the side windows.**
2. **Unzip the back panel of the cloth top that contains the rear window. This is done from inside of the car.**
3. **Go to the back of the car and unsnap the 3 attach points for the back panel that you just unzipped. Push the panel inside of the car. Note: If you are planning to use the boot cover, now is the time to attach it to the three snaps that you just removed the back panel from. You attach it inside out so that it will fold up and around the lowered top and hided the attach points.**
4. **Go back inside the car, and attach the back panel to three snaps that are located in the cloth top between the #1 and #2 roof bows (This holds that back panel up and out of the way for folding the top down).**
5. **Unscrew the left and right wing nut screws that attach the header to the windshield frame. Make sure that the header is loose and can lift off of the windshield frame alignment posts.**
6. **Under-center your left and right folding irons that run along the top of the side window opening. This is done by operating the lever lock, or push lock, depending on the year of your Cabriolet (except the early 68A which has a solid bar here), and then bringing the folding iron out of its rigid position.**
7. **If your folding irons have the snaps installed, unsnap the cloth top attached to them. Many Cabriolet owners have removed these snaps because they are difficult to get re-snapped when you put the top back up.**
8. **Under-center your left and right folding landau irons by pushing them out of their rigid position. By now they may have done this by themselves. Note: the folding irons in step 6 and the folding landau irons have pinch points at their centers. Be very careful when operating these or you may draw blood!**
9. **Fold the top down, making sure that the cloth top material folds towards the inside of the car on the way down.**
10. **If you are using the boot cover, you now fold it up and over the lowered top and snap it into position.**

To raise the top back up, you simply reverse this order of instructions. However, one tip is to make sure that first get your folding irons relocked, second get your folding landau irons relocked (over-centered), before screwing in the wing nut screws on the header. Once again, be very careful of the pinch points on the folding irons and the folding landau irons!

See pictures on Page 15...



Tech Talk



Cloth back panel with rear window is unzipped, unsnapped, and pushed inside of car.



Snap attach points in cloth top located between #1 and #2 roof bows.



Back panel is snapped into position on the attach points between #1 and #2 roof bows.



The boot cover snaps on, inside out, before the top is lowered.



Wing nut screws are unscrewed to allow the beader to come up and off of the windshield frame posts.



Folding irons over the side windows are released out of rigid position by operating the lock mechanism.



Folding landau iron shown in over-center locked position.



Folding landau iron shown in under-center unlocked position.



Top is folded down, making sure the cloth top material folds inwards.



Boot cover wrapped up and over lowered top...



...and snapped into position.



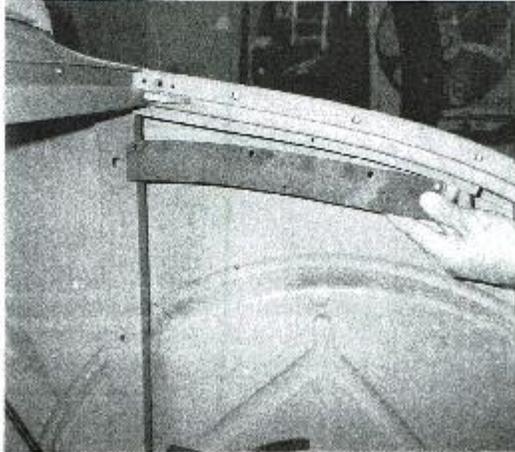


Tech Talk

Rumble Side Panels

DO YOU HAVE THIS PART FOR THE RUMBLE SEAT AREA?

This piece holds the top edge of the rumble seat side cardboard panels in place, not allowing them to be pushed into the metal quarter panels. After the rain gutter is in place, screw the two upright metal braces in place. Now is a good time to finish the back end of the car by fitting the curved inner panel in place.



Based on the discussion with John Crumb about the rumble side panels, I looked up our past *Cabrioletter* information in the Club Index and included here the picture of the side panel support bracket, and the dimensions for the side cardboard upholstery panel pattern.

If your side panel support is missing, you can get a pair of these new from Bratton's, part number #35401 for about \$20. Or, if you would like to make your own, there is an "actual size" pattern in *Cabrioletter* back issue #135 on page 6.

Additionally, if you have a 68A, there is a rumble side upholstery panel pattern in *Cabrioletter* back issue #56 on page 5 for these earlier models

THE CABRIOLETTTER

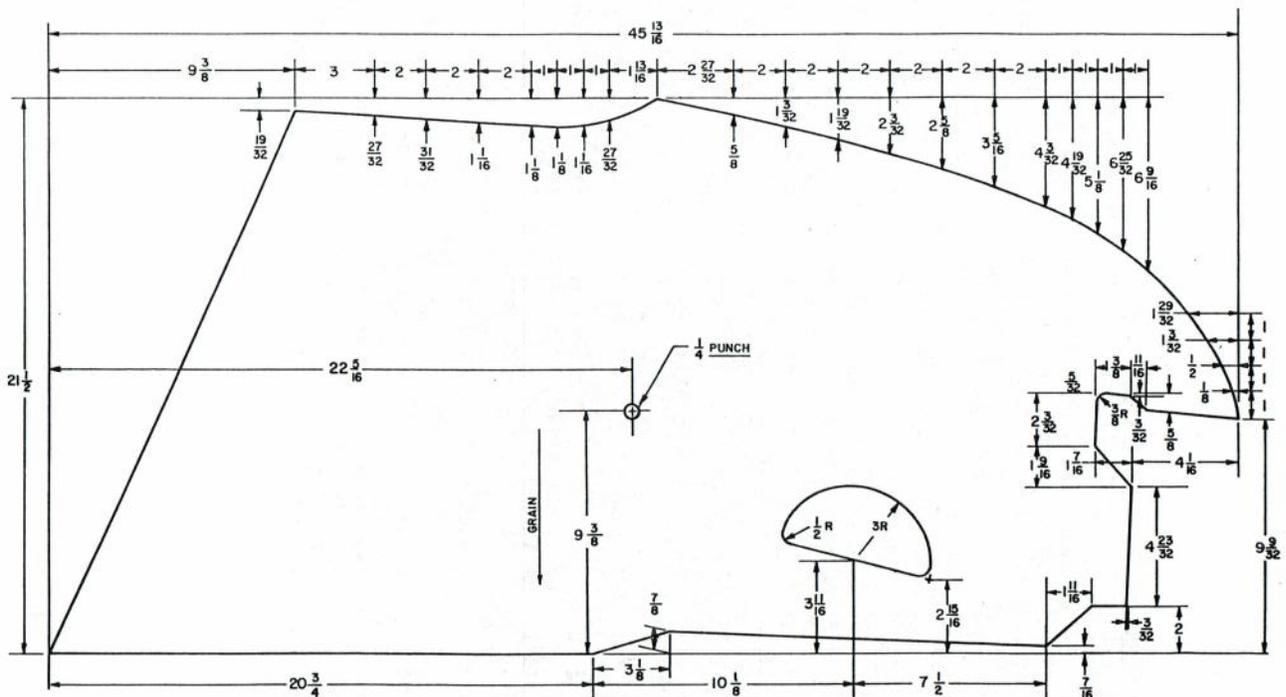
PAGE 5

Issue No. 135 March 2011

RUMBLE SEAT COMPARTMENT SIDE CARDBOARD PATTERN

DRAWN FOR MODEL "A" NEWS 3-25-68

CABRIOLETTTER #55
PAGE 5
MARCH 1991



FOR 1930-'31 CABRIOLET STR. W/SHIELD AND 1931 SLANT W/SHIELD
MATERIAL: STR. W/SHIELD - BLACK COBRA CROSS GRAIN COATED CARDBOARD
SLANT W/SHIELD - DEEP BROWN CRUSH GRAIN COATED CARDBOARD

“Itching to Drive a Ford”, cont.

As great of an idea as this seemed to be, the tables turned when many new Model T drivers were complaining of itches and rashes, and after some investigation it was discovered that red bugs, or “chiggers” loved to make their home in Spanish Moss, and were in fact the cause of the irritation. Now, according to the story, this led to the first major automobile recall in history, and the slogan, that now had a self fulfilled prophecy, had to go.

I thought this would be a great story to share in the *Cabrioletter* since it is early Ford related, so I set out to do a little fact checking to corroborate the details and very quickly discovered that this story, like the name Spanish Moss itself, is merely an entertaining tale. Spanish Moss is not Spanish, and it is not moss. It is actually in the taxonomic family known as a bromeliad (Air Plant), and is somehow related to the pineapple plant. This plant, not originating from Spain at all, was likely named as such because it resembled the beards of the early Spanish settlers.

I reached out to the Georgia Historical Society (GHS), the Benson Ford Research Center at The Henry Ford (BFRC), and the Model A Ford Foundation (MAFFI), to get help with my research, and was pleasantly surprised at the quick response from each organization.

Stan Deaton, Senior Historian at GHS said that he could not confirm that the story is true, and that, “If you heard it from a tour guide, I would be extremely dubious!”

Linda Skolarus on the Archive and Library staff at the BFRC states, “The question about the use of Spanish moss in the production of Ford automobile seats comes up quite regularly. We believe this to be an apocryphal story because we have been unable to find any documentation to support this notion.” She also passed on, “The only information I can find regarding the use of Spanish moss in the manufacture of automotive seat cushions comes from the *State of Florida Department of Agriculture Bulletin* No. 85, April 1958 issue. On page 11, it states, ‘... [Spanish moss] is not used as extensively in automobile cushions now as it formerly was for the reason that hair mats cut by machinery are found more expedient in the mass production methods employed in the manufacture of automobiles...’ This statement implies that there were car companies that used Spanish moss, but does not specifically call out Ford Motor Company or any other automobile manufacturer.” Linda also sent me a list of early Ford Motor Company advertising slogans, of which “Itching to drive a Ford” was not listed.

John Begg, president of MAFFI simply said, “I’ve never heard this story about the Spanish moss. I think it may just be a story someone imagined. I’ve taken tours of Charleston and Savannah and have heard stories about the Civil War I’m sure were exaggerated. I think this falls in the same category.”

So at least the part about Spanish Moss being used in upholstery is true, and I found a copy of June 1937 issue of *Popular Science Monthly* magazine that has a great article on Spanish Moss, “the hair from trees!” and its use in upholstery; and also how generations of people in the South used it to stuff their pillows and mattresses. Who knows, perhaps this is where the saying, “Good night, sleep tight, don’t let the bedbugs bite”, comes from?



Spanish Moss hanging from the Live Oaks in Savannah



Historic Downtown and Talmadge Bridge in Savannah



**PO BOX 1487
CONROE, TX 77305**

VENDOR PAGE - DO YOU WANT YOUR COMPANY HERE?? IT'S FREE!!

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