

20-year-old takes on restoration projects of 1930s era vehicles

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Julie Smith/News Tribune 2019 Hellas Catholic High School graduate Joshua Schubert spends his spare time working on and rebuilding Model A automobiles, one of which will be in the upcoming car show at Octoberfest in Jefferson City's Old Munichberg.

In the past few months, Joshua Schubert has driven about 1,500 miles or more, mostly cruising around Mid-Missouri.

And you would notice him if he passed, as he's cruising in very distinct vehicles — one of two 1931 Ford Model A's. Both are cars he purchased in the last year, one of them being a project car, where he started with nothing more than the chassis, or base frame.

Schubert is a member of the Mid-Mo Old Car Club, which is hosting its 51st annual Old Car Round Up and Show on Saturday, as part of Oktoberfest in Old Munichburg. Last year, Schubert was awarded a \$1,000 scholarship from the club, which was put toward his education at State Technical College of Missouri.

Schubert's love of old cars started early. He said he grew up looking at a 1930 Ford Model A two-door sedan that was owned by his great-grandfather and has been parked on his family's property since the late 1950s.

"I always loved that car," he said. "Someday, I'm going to restore it and take it to Michigan for the big national show."

As a self-described farm boy, Schubert said he grew up working on tractors and getting a basic knowledge of mechanics.

But it wasn't until last year that the now 20-year-old joined the Mid-Mo Old Car Club, after stopping by one of the club's cruise-in events. Not long after joining, longtime member Wes Scott reached out, Schubert said, and has become a mentor, helping him navigate restoration projects and teaching him the tricks learned over a lifetime.

"(Scott) was one of those guys that really reached out and took me under his wing," he said. "I just really got enthused."

Joining the club only fueled Schubert's desire to find an old car of his own to work on. Last summer, he found the rolling chassis for a 1931 Ford Model A, and by November, he had the chassis at Scott's garage, where they quickly got it running again.

"I was over here a lot in those early days," Schubert said, referring to Scott's garage. "(Scott) is the master mechanic, and I am but the humble apprentice."

Scott said he didn't have a project of his own at the time, and he was more than willing to help Schubert start his own.

Schubert said when taking on a project like that, where you start with only the very basic building blocks, the little things really add up to make a big difference. And everything seemed to line up perfectly for his first Model A project, in large part due to Scott's help.

"Every day we worked on it, you could tell that it was coming along more and more," Schubert said.

By December, the Model A had the pickup body that it does today. By April, the car was titled, licensed and insured. By August, Schubert estimated he had put about 900-1,000 miles on it.

This summer, Schubert decided to look for another Model A. He ultimately found a completely restored 1931 Ford Model A for sale in the St. Louis area. After purchasing that car for \$6,000, Schubert said the only things he had to do was put water in the radiator, flip the battery and put gas in the tank, and it was ready to go. Since then, Schubert said, he's put about 800 miles on that fully restored Model A.

"It's a heck of an experience," he said of driving a 1930s car.

"And it's work," Scott said.

"But it's relaxing work," Schubert quickly added. "I love these cars, and I love to drive them."



Schubert said driving the Model A he had worked to restore helped prepare him for driving the fully restored model he picked up later, which is essentially in like new condition, he noted.

Driving a Model A is very different from driving a modern car, Schubert said, as the driver has much more control over the engine.

"It's basically a glorified tractor engine," he said.

Schubert recently was recognized as one of 12 recipients of the 2020 Model A Youth Restoration Awards, which awarded him \$2,500 in gift certificates for Model A parts and supplies. The awards are a joint venture between the Model A Ford Club of America and the Model A Restorers Club.

The 51st annual Mid-Mo Old Car Club Round Up and Show will be held in conjunction with Oktoberfest from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday in Old Munichburg. The show will be set up at Dunklin and Broadway, with judging taking place at 10:30 a.m.

<https://www.newstribune.com/news/features/story/2020/sep/24/20-year-old-takes-on-restoration-projects-of-1930s-era-vehicles/842644/>