

Proper Timing of the Model A Headlight

Bob McMahon

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I was changing the batteries in my garage wall clock. Being as sure handed as I am, I boggled the clock, which broke when it hit the workbench. It had broken at the bezel and the clock face fell out – totaled! However, Model A resourcefulness gave it a second life.



Russ Harley, a Model A friend who has gone on ahead already, once showed me a picture of a clock in a Model A headlight shell. My broken clock reminded me of Russ and that picture. A quick inventory of my surplus “A” parts uncovered just what I needed to assemble my own headlight clock. Each essential part recalled the transaction through which I acquired it, as well as the old friends, some driving on streets of gold, I got them from.

The headlight shell was a “gift” from Jack Anderson. It had been dented on one side and Jack had toiled to smooth over the damage – with a hammer and a file. Jack

was a shrewd horse trader and he could make a Model A run, but he was less skilled at the fine points of refurbishment. I don't remember the value Jack placed on the compromised light shell. It was likely a dear one but now, in memory, it was well worth whatever he negotiated.

The headlight rim is from Duane Stevenson's 1931 Bud Cab Pickup truck. Fondly known as "The Fire Truck" because of its demise in a leaf fire that engulfed Duane's whole garage, the formerly prize winning truck has had its parts spread throughout many Fox Valley club members' cars and parts bins. That truck and the fire are burned in our collective memories! Surprisingly, the well baked headlight rim cleaned up nicely with just a few weeks of elbow grease.

Ralph Besic, another model A friend who is smiling down from his place of honor in a heavenly parade, contributed the running board step plate. It was hidden in the bottom of a box of parts I purchased at his estate sale. Now mounted on a 2" thick scrap of oak obtained from John Cali before his unexpected heavenly road trip, the step plate, headlight shell, and headlight rim –along with the broken clock – provided everything required to assemble an accurate garage clock. Mine serves a second function ... reminding me of good times and good friends, both current and departed.