

# Friends FORD



by Louie Mayall

One of the benefits of this job is you start to see cars as stories. Stories of most cars are lost over the years and replaced by new ones, but we magazine Joes get to save a few of the stories from the monster of time. Like all rods, Larry and Barb Hibbler's '34 Ford Tudor sedan has lots of stories, but we see a story about friends. It's our friends which get us through the low points during the construction of a rod (it took Larry 20-plus years) and like 9 out of 10 of our feature car owners, Larry wanted to thank his friends Ernie Vishon and Brian Campbell. He says they are the most helpful and talented rodders on the planet

and never get any credit. So let's see what Ernie, Brian and the rest of the crew did to help out on the Hibbler's sweet ride.

Larry found the rod when he was delivering parts to a customer from his salvage yard and after a couple years of dickering they made a deal. The rod came home to Larry and his wife Barbara. Larry started getting things ready for the project, then came kid one, then number two and so on until they had five. The rod spent a few years getting pushed back by more kids, more braces and finally massive college bills. Fast forward nearly 20

years and Larry was ready to get building. He had his friend Ira Holensbe (the car's original owner) box-up the stock frame and then Larry slipped in a Vega-steered Super Bell tube axle bouncing on a transverse leaf spring with a stainless four-bar system. The rear suspension is a four-bar located Ford 9-inch riding on coilovers. Larry self sourced his junkyard powertrain that includes a fuel-injected 1994 Chevrolet LT1 powerplant backed up by a 4L60E transmission.

Brian Campbell did some of the welding on the chassis, but his talents started to shine when he made (remade?) the cowl, the floor pans and started filling holes. Ernie Vishon started helping out by hanging the doors, making the rear hinged three-piece hood (sides and top) with all of the assorted hardware and helping get everything to fit. The old Model 40 was then delivered to H & H Autobody who hammered the top 2 1/2 inches in the back, 3 1/2 inches in the front and filled the roof with one from a '62 Chevrolet station wagon. The car and frame were then dropped off with Bob Mitchfield who laid the Freightliner Fleet



Green paint. The car is rounded out with 15- and 16-inch American Salt Flats in as-cast and wrapped in Michelin rubber.

The interior follows the simple, but stunning, flavor of the exterior. Ernie was called on to perfect and make the dash that Larry wanted. It's filled with Stewart Warner gauges, Sony tunes and the Ernie-built inserts and covered in wood grain by Roger Bell. Larry then slipped in the Escort front seats and Neon rear seats before shipping the car off to Jerry Sexavers for upholstery. Jerry made new door panels, slipped in some dark sand-colored wool carpeting and covered everything else in tan leather. The interior is rounded out with air conditioning, a '40 Ford steering wheel connected to a tilt column, Lokar pedals

and shifter. The last step was to have Rob Hightful put together the wiring before Larry, Barb and the kids (he still has at least one young enough to drag around) hit the road.

Larry was lucky enough to have friends who physically helped him with his car, but the most valuable support he received was in the form of encouragement. It doesn't matter whether it was the rodders looking through his salvage yard for parts silently egging him on, his friends giving him a hard time for letting the project sit, or his friends coming through when he no idea what to do next. We've said it before and we'll say it again, it may be the cars that got us coming here, but it's the people we meet that keep us coming back year after year. Rod on my friends!

