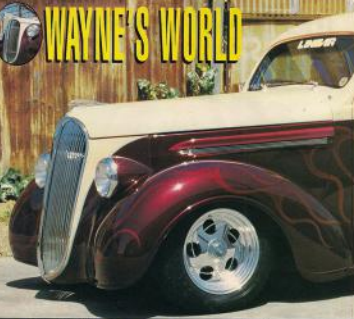




WAYNE'S WORLD



BY ERIC BRISSETT

Most of us have heard the story side of the Bug and the Princess. So when a lady bug came along a passion to give him a new, flowing form was a foregone conclusion. Wayne Lee, from Fresno, California, was her hand that may long ago.

Though he'd never built or owned a car, Wayne found in 1980 what he thought was a perfect candidate: a '32 Plymouth coupe. Not a hot rod, call it more a solid five-stroke, the coupe was the apple of Wayne's eye, and he offered the owner \$10,000 for it. The offer was turned down, and Wayne kept looking for a suitable ride. Three years later, a co-worker told him if he was still interested in the same car,

because it was up for sale for \$6,000 cash. Wayne couldn't argue against all the cash involved (it was a Sunday afternoon), and about the corner he had paid \$7,000, and he said yes.

When he drove the '32 home (it had a V16 and had converting professional) and sold his 17-year-old son, he was going to take it to the local shops over in Idaho state. So an old friend had got hooked on the car. Wayne decided to ditch the big black and go with a grey, red, and steel building's theme. While the coupe was going together, Wayne checked out the local junkyard for a Mustang II front suspension. With all the other trade shops that were doing such building a custom (Wayne was now in the hobby) the job

was extended on for some time.

Wayne wanted to replace the floor pan and get the steel painted, and after some years with the chrome and custom kit he needed some outside help. Wayne called in some Jeff Gump with a Lincoln. Then Franco, Gil, Wayne and Jeff both had good ideas for the roof, though Jeff took it as a personal challenge to do the interior transformation himself.

Being a coach, time to do the job right (no start), Jeff took some to work on the all-steel coupe. All four fenders were cut away, with the rear ones retained and the braces modified to accept the headlight buckets. The headlights and tie rods mounted to the grill, but were moved down into the fenders for a lower, better look.

In 1997, Plymouth dealers had an idea for



STREET RODDER

The '32 was lowered .500 inch to 320 inches and fitted with a Crown Cam and offset, forged V16 3.27 pistons, stainless Inconelone Mark Nutter headers, a Holley 650-cfm carb, and Edelbrock aluminum rock covers. Power goes to a Turbo 400 and a Detroit Locker Four disc clutch over 3.70 gears.

the coupe's head ends. They thought a wood look engine ran a lot better down the dash than the '60s-style, tipping into a spin. In Wayne's case, the headlights got moved, so the new piece didn't look right. With a little thought (and a lot of work), the head ends were moved to opposite sides and returned to fit. That solved the fit around rock was passing around the front of the end. This is one of the many body alterations and changes made to Wayne's end.

Mike Allen and Vic Sorey (both at Pacific Place), did the metal and bodywork on the Plymouth. The dash was Jeff's creation, which works a smooth Ninety pickup truck dash. It's filled with the V16 gauges, a Cruise master fuel unit, and controls for the Vantage. He brought and coming work. Bodywork out of the way, Jeff sprayed a two-tone topcoat and brought a lot of paint job, following with such glass finish and paint-together energy painting.



No longer an ugly duckling, Wayne's Plymouth used to get laughs when he had brought. The project was done from his own, but it's amazing what bits of time and money can mean! Bruce did the chassis and engine, while Pender's Place (Fresno, CA) did the bodywork and paint.



Gary Bruce covered the coupe's interior with light and dark grey velour. The dash was reupholstered and converted out, and it was done by 1981 owners, Wayne's 40-A5 and leading work, a Stone 40/19/02 head unit, and a polished stainless 10000 steering column. The bottom suspension shows the wheel ends, mounted upside down (no air-line) — Wayne spent the money, and he'll mount it any way he likes!

An Ugly Duckling Turned Beautiful