

From Rust to Radiance: How a forgotten Model A became a show-stopping caravan

Written by Betty Sawatzky Sunday, Aug 03 2025



Dave Proven poses with his 1930 Model A camper at the WCN Car Show August 3, 2025 at the Keystone Centre, Brandon

It's not often that I would call a vehicle '*magical*' but at the WCN car show in Brandon yesterday, this one caught my attention!

Dave Proven lives just north of Minnedosa in the community of Basswood, and when he was looking for a project to do, specifically build a camper out of a vintage vehicle, a neighbor just down the road had just what Dave was looking for.

"I had actually wanted a vintage truck to build, and I wanted to make some kind of a camper. But this turned up just three miles from my place on a farmyard that was a homestead farmyard," shares Proven. "Our own homestead was from 1878, and this was probably the same vintage. And everything that was ever brought onto that property was still there."

Proven saw a truck that caught his eye. When he approached the neighbor, he found out that the truck was already sold, but the man had a couple of Model A's that were on available.

Proven brought the 1930 Model A home, and that was the start of designing a camper that has gotten a lot of attention.

What was astounding was how the front of the vehicle was in great shape.

"You can see here it's all pretty straight and this is the way it was in the field," he explains as he's pointing out the front fenders and hood. "So, it sat in the bush for 75 years or more. The lenses are still in the headlights. The hood, everything is just straight, the fenders. I didn't do any body work to any of this. I mean the rest of the car was completely collapsed," he adds. "This was a 4-door car."

"And so, I took it home and then started to try and decide exactly what I wanted to do with it."

A type of camper was still the goal, and he was thinking about a vintage panel truck to model the camper after.

"But I saw a music video with a gypsy caravan in it, and I just knew that's what I got to build. That's the look I want. And so, I could just see it with the Model A."

A series of sketches, lots of measuring and Dave's woodworking skills brought the gypsy camper to life. Take note of the door and the inside of the camper, showing the attention to detail and the many hours in designing and building the gypsy caravan portion of the camper.



"I dragged this Model A home in 2017 and slowly worked away at it," says Proven. "So, it's been 8 years since I brought it home and I got it on the road April of this year. Everybody loves it! Nobody just walks by and that's something I never even thought of how much pleasure I get out of seeing how much pleasure other people get out of this vehicle. So yes, it is pretty, pretty sweet!"



Proven had his 1930 Ford Model A at this year's Rodarama Car Show that takes place in early spring at the Red River Exhibition Park. The annual event is hosted by the Manitoba Street Rod Association. The camper won the People's Choice Award - and rightly so! Inside and out ... it's magical!



Dave's son Tim and Jesse Sawicz share the story of how this camper came to be!