

Extreme badge engineering: 1 body, 3 Utes

Vintage Truck[®]



**How to Drive
an Old Truck**

Fast Lane '65 Dodge

Fair to Fantastic: '47 Chevy Panel

Mercury's Jubilee



SETTING

1937 HUDSON

by Michael Kisber

HUDSON
TERRAPLANE



A FINE EXAMPLE

TERRAPLANE SERIES 70 COMMERCIAL CAR

For me, the whole reason for restoring any truck is to honor the historical significance of the vehicle by preserving the technology and styling of the era.

As a truck collector, I have always sought rare and interesting trucks. I have never owned a Ford, and I owned only one Chevy, a Cameo. I did not shun these makes of trucks because they were not beautiful or important

but because the production numbers were too high and they were too common.

With the help of many people, I was able to restore, as close to original standards as possible, an example of a fine and stylish vehicle—a 1937 Hudson Terraplane Commercial Car.

When I bought the Terraplane, I was told it was original. However, I was a novice when it came to Hudsons and, in fact, had never seen one except in a book. Unfortunately, I did not do my research, and as I became more educated, I became discouraged about my purchase. The truck was in very good condition but, I came to find out, while the truck was mostly original, a few important things were not.

The first things I noticed were a passenger-car hood ornament and a passenger-car banjo steering wheel. They were both off a 1937 Hudson car and did not belong on the truck. I figured this was not so terrible and, with the help of the Hudson-Essex-Terraplane Club (HET) and some very knowledgeable people, I could find the correct parts.

The greater challenge turned out to be finding the missing tool lockers that had been lost over the years. In 1937, The Hudson Terraplane Commercial Car was fitted with removable tool lockers, which covered the wheel wells in the bed. They served two functions. Tools could be placed in them to keep them from sliding all over the bed of



the truck, and they provided seating for a crew of workmen.

The most devastating discovery was finding the truck did not have a side-mount spare. Terraplane Commercial Cars came with the spare tire mounted on the right front fender, while the sedans had the spare in the trunk. The spare on my truck was mounted under the bed.

I can't think of a reason why the side-mount fender would have been replaced with a passenger-car fender, unless the truck was in an accident and was repaired using passenger-car parts. If that was the case, the accident must have been a simple fender bender as the frame, front end, engine, and drivetrain were all straight and correct.

I was encouraged by Glen Johnson, a nice gentleman who acted as my advisor



1937 Hudson Terraplane Series 70 Commercial Car

Engine	212ci, 6-cylinder
Exterior	Ocean Blue with Black Fenders
Wheels	Mandalay Ivory
Tires	Goodyear Diamond Tread

and parts locator. He helped me find a parts truck, which I was able to purchase. Though it was in pieces and had been in a fire, it had everything I needed, except the spare-tire cover. The side-mount mast was in great condition. The right front

fender was beyond repair, but we removed the wheel well and properly cut and welded it into my truck's passenger-car fender.

The tool lockers on the parts truck were rusted, but they provided a perfect pattern to fabricate new ones. The hood ornament was in great condition and just needed to be chromed.



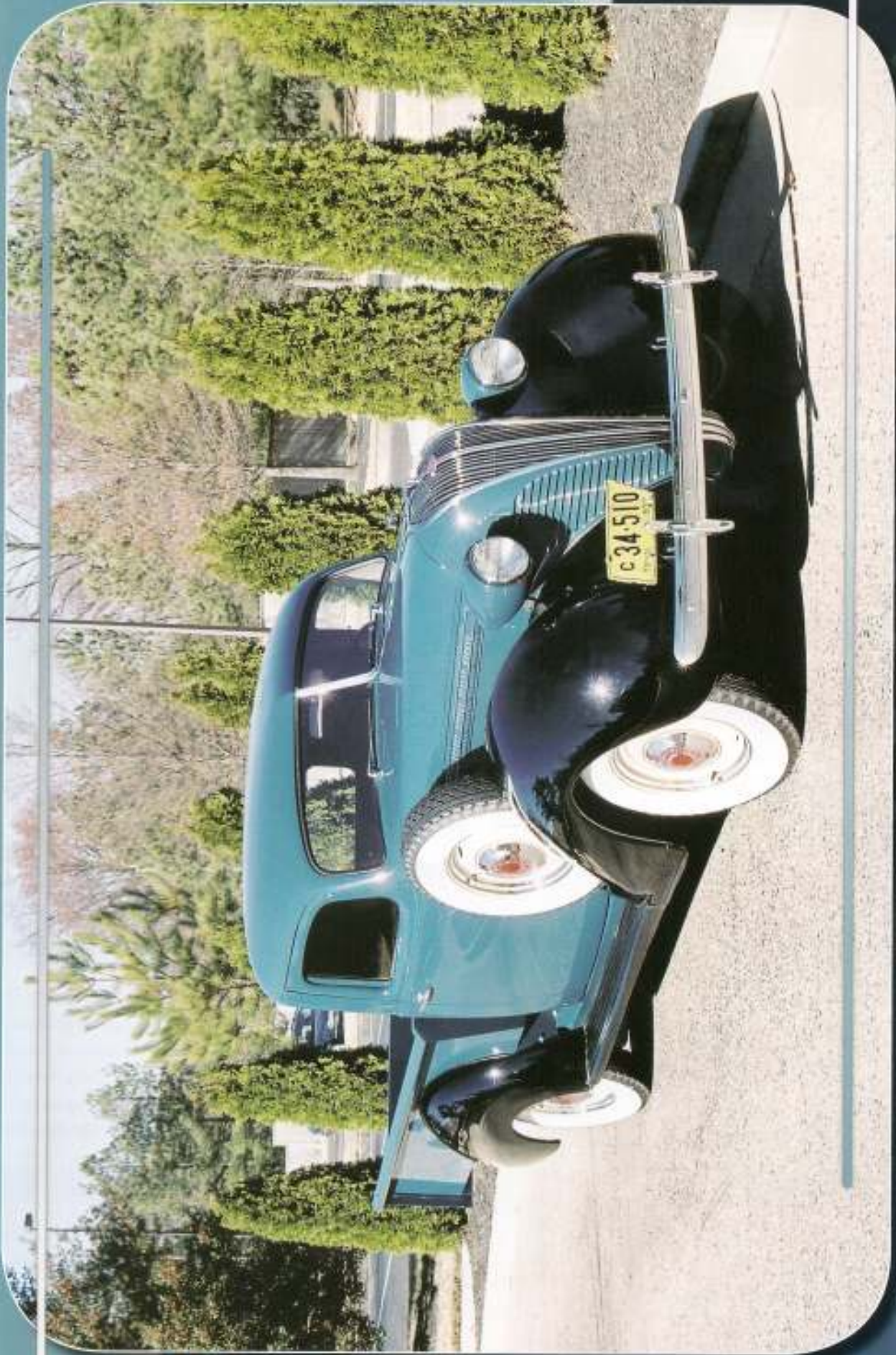
Johnson and Robbie Williams, the HET 1937 technical advisor, helped me select the colors for the interior, exterior, and wheels. The engine was correct and completely rebuilt and balanced. We tried to pay close attention to detail right down to the braided wiring harness.

The result is a beautiful truck that runs and drives great and, most importantly, serves as a slice of history by showing the elegance and technological achievements back in the day. 🚚

Special thanks go to Glen D. Johnson, Bill Albright, Robbie Williams, K-Gap of Santa Fe Springs, California, which manufactures many rubber and plastic trim parts, and the Hudson-Essex-Terraplane Club (www.hudsonclub.org), which is the best-organized club I have ever been associated with.

Hudson Motor Car Company had a very trying year in 1937. Plagued with a strike in the spring and the death in November of key engineer Howard E. Coffin, Hudson ended the year with sales down almost 10 percent from 1936. The only bright spot was the 1937 Commercial Car line, which was up 77 percent.





Michael Kisber's 1937 Hudson Terraplane Series 70 Commercial Car