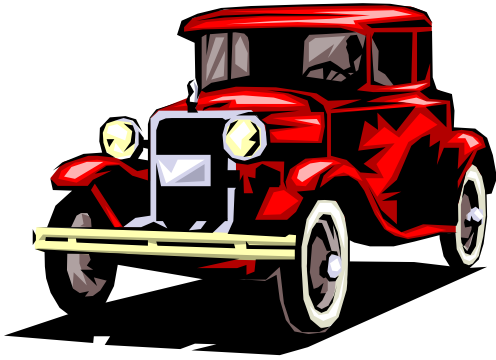


My 1936 Ford Coupe

One of the personal true stories from my book titled "But, That's Another Story"
by William P. Brown



In 1951 I was working for Western Electric Company, the equipment installation division of the old now non-existent Bell Telephone System. I had hired on with them in 1950 when I was only seventeen years old - but that's another story. I was working in Provo, Utah at the time and had become "friends" with two of the other young workers. We decided to purchase a car together as neither of us could afford one by ourselves. We looked through all the local used car lots and finally came across a black 1936 Ford Coupe on "Snow's Used Cars" lot. It ran good and had a rumble seat in the back so, even though it was a one-seat coupe, we were able to carry six when we went on dates. After all, at age 18 dating was a top priority. After taking the little coupe for a short test ride we bought it. The tires weren't very good but looked like they would carry us for a while.

Shortly after buying the little Ford Coupe we were all three transferred as a team to a little town in southern Utah named Loa. Now Loa was a real small town. It had one combination gas station, restaurant and grocery store, a little six-room motel, two churches and not much else. We rented one of the rooms at the motel for the three of us and began our work. We were installing a brand new telephone system in a new small building right next to the motel. The new telephone system would convert the little town from operator handled calls to a dial system. The operators for Loa were actually located in the main telephone office in Bicknell, Utah. Many small towns were still using live operators at that time and having a new dial telephone system was much desired.

I had been designated as the crew chief of my crew and we were to install a complete new telephone system in the new empty building. It was not an easy job. We had to start from scratch and install everything including the large metal framework and metal bays to hold the cabling and electronic equipment. The hardest part was to drill the holes in the cement floor and install the lead locks to bolt the metal framework to the floor. Of course, all we had was a regular ½ drill and manual cement chisels we had to hit with a big hammer to drill the holes. We then had to install the frame work, run the wire cabling, install the electronic equipment, wire it up, test it and get everything ready for the big day of converting the little town to the new dial system. The job would take us about six weeks.

The first week went pretty smooth except for sore hands from the missing hammer blows trying to drill the cement floor. Finally Friday night came that we had looked forward to, but what do we do? There was no movie theater, bowling alley or any gathering place where we could find any girls. We drove down the two-block town several times but, nothing. We finally just sat in front of the motel and watched the cars go by. Interesting, there were lots of young people, boys and girls riding by but we had no way to meet them. We went to bed early that Friday night. Not something three young boys in the late teens like to do.

As I lay in bed that night I tried to think of some way to meet some of the local girls except to stand out in the street and flag them down. Suddenly, I had an idea.

Early the next morning I got dressed and told my two roommates I was going to drive over to the hardware store in the little town of Bicknell. It was about 25 miles away. They decided not to go but to sleep in a little later and didn't ask why I was going. I supposed they thought I was going to get something for the telephone job as we had done several times during the week. When I arrived at the hardware store I bought a small can of every color paint in the store, red, yellow, green, blue, white, purple, orange, pink, and even black. I also bought a variety of paint brushes ranging from very small to large.

When I got back to Loa the other two guys had gotten up and ate breakfast at the restaurant across the street. I told them "we're going to get dates for tonight." They looked at me kinda puzzled and asked "how?" I said, "we're going to park our coupe out by the street and paint polka-dots on it." They thought I was crazy and weren't very anxious to help me.

Well, I parked the black Ford Coupe out by the street and started to paint all colors of polka dots on it, from small ones to large to huge ones. Since the little coupe was black the vivid colored polka dots really stood out. Soon the other two guys joined in and we were all painting polka dots.

Then, guess what? After a while we noticed the same cars were driving by. Some contained just young boys, some young girls and some had boys and girls in them. Pretty soon they were stopping. They'd ask, "what are you doing?" We'd reply, "we're painting polka dots on our car." "Why," they'd ask. That would open up the conversation and we gave all sorts of reasons. But, by early afternoon, we all had dates.

Those old tires held up all the time we were in Loa but when I left for the next assignment the tire problems started.

But, that's another story.

Bill Brown