

CORD MEMORIES, PAST & PRESENT



By **KEN TIBBOT**

It was nearly 40 years ago when I was finally able to acquire a Cord. Nineteen eighty-one, to be exact, when I discovered a 1937 Cord 812 S/C Phaeton listed for sale in Hemmings Motor News. It was nearby, too, in the San Fernando Valley. I had been a Cord fan for a long time but what I was about to learn was just how helpful other Cord owners are.

Early on, I took my Cord out for drive on the 405 freeway when I experienced something not too uncommon for Cord drivers—transmission issues. The car got stuck in one gear and I pulled off to the side of the freeway. A gentleman stopped to help and remarked he

had never seen a Cord out on the road—only at car shows. That man was Ron Irwin who serves as the Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg Club historian for Cord 810 and 812 models. Ron's knowledge of Cords goes well beyond the tracking of bodies and serial numbers. He has



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this page: *The 1937 Cord 812 S/C Phaeton after restoration.*

opposite page clockwise from top left: *Labor Day 2005, ACD Club Certification check; Winking headlight; Undergoing restoration.*

'37 CORD 812 S/C PHAETON

owned a supercharged 812 cabriolet for many, many years and he helped me get my car back home that day. By the way, I've not had a single transmission issue since!

The known history of my Cord goes back to 1960 in Long Beach, then owned by a Berman Gaber. Its next owner was a Walter Johnson (1965) followed by the gentleman from whom I purchased the car who owned it since 1973, a Mr. Hoffman. Even though this Cord's first 23 years are a bit sketchy, my ownership since 1981 makes me its longest owner. During my ownership, I had the car certified by the A-C-D Club. It is Certified Cord #C379, following its examination in Auburn, Indiana over Labor Day 2005. During that weekend, I participated in the A-C-D Club parade driving the short distance from Eckhart Park to downtown Auburn and experienced vapor lock during a very hot day. I eventually made it downtown to enjoy the rest of the festivities.

Back to the friendships I've gained through Cord ownership—each of these people (and probably a few I can't remember right now) were always willing to share their knowledge, experience and expertise which helped get this car in its condition today. Randy Ema, Ed McBride, Lee Foldenauer, Henry Portz, Mark Tomei and Stan & Carol Gilliland.

During restoration, I decided on a shade of blue for the exterior known as Geneva Blue. The top is that material by Haartz that is the exact copy of the original canvas. The car has a dark blue leather interior and is equipped with a radio. I selected blackwall tires to give a very serious look.

Since restoration, it has been recognized with an AACA first-place award at the Fallbrook, California show on November 9, 2019. And just this past March it scored a CCCA first-place primary win scoring 97.5 points at the Rancho Santa Fe Grand Classic. Thanks to all those folks who helped me! I do hope to show it a few more time and also plan to help other Cord owners, just like those who helped me.



clockwise from top left:
Ken and his Cord in Rancho Santa Fe Grand Classic; The Cord after restoration; Cord period ads; My Cord has the mesh screens on the side of the hood. Cord also offered a horizontal louvered design.

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