

About three years later, I met a previous owner who told me he first saw it sitting in a backyard next to a freeway in Oakland, CA. He recognized the car as a rare model Cadillac and pulled off to have a closer look. Learning that the then-owner had begun dismantling the car in preparation to turning it into a street-rod he felt compelled to intervene and bought it on the spot. He had the car hauled to his shop where it had been reassembled back to the condition it was in when I bought it from Scotty.

The paint was checked and cracked, the leaded body seams were shrunk and the interior was tattered, but I drove it for a year in that condition, including trips to Kings Canyon National Park, Big Bear Lake and Pismo Beach. It was on the way back home from Pismo that the engine swallowed an exhaust valve seat and, although the engine still ran OK, I decided it was time to start the restoration process.

The car was completely disassembled by removing everything that could be unbolted. Parts that we could repair were done in-house and those that couldn't were sent out to be tanked, etched, straightened, re-chromed etc. However, the engine was simply given a valve job and then reassembled.

The body also was sent out to be stripped, re-leaded, and primed. The only area of major rust was found under the trunk/rumble seat which was replaced with new metal. The body frame work is all wood; this being the last year before Cadillac went to all-steel body construction.

There was a small amount of dry rot around a driver's door drain hole that was easily fixed, but beyond that all the wood framing is original.

When I bought a business in Santa Barbara, I had everything moved to my new home. Running the business became my first priority and so the Cadillac restoration project was dragged-out over the next seven years. During that period the body work was completed, sent out to be painted and brought back home for reassembly. The upholstery was redone using English broadcloth for the interior and leather for the rumble seat. All the rubber parts were replaced, the bright work was rechromed, and a new wiring harness was installed.

In 1999, I decided it was time to do a complete engine rebuild which I had done by a couple of retired diesel mechanics who had a small shop specializing in flat-head Cadillac V-8s. Most of the moving parts were replaced, the engine was "blue printed," balanced, and run on a test bed. During reinstallation all bolt-on parts were rebuilt as needed and the exhaust manifolds were re-porcelained.

This car has been driven frequently since being restored and has proven to be very reliable by showing up at most CCCA and Cadillac regional meets on time rain or shine. After more than 40 years of owning this car, it is still fun to drive although now showing its age and wear, albeit with dignity.

I am pleased to share the story about my 1937 Cadillac Sport Coupe in this Bumper Guardian.

Submitted by Jon Schoenfeld



1937 Cadillac Fleetwood Sport Coupe Series 70 Model 7057

Specifications:

Engine: Monoblock Flat Head V8, 348 C.I. 135 HP @3400 RPM. This engine was produced by GM from 1936 through 1948 and was used exclusively in all Cadillacs and LaSalles built during that period. Although CUI displacement stayed the same, rated horsepower was increased to 150 in 1941 and remained there until the end of production in 1948. During WWII GM produced this engine for extensive use in US military tanks, armored cars and amphibious vehicles.

Transmission: Floor shift three speed w/ synchromesh in second and third gears. Third gear is 1 to 1 direct drive. There was no overdrive option.

Frame: 131.0" wheelbase heavy duty X-Type channel steel box w/straight sides. Lighter duty I-beams were used on smaller series.

Body: Hand built composite (wood frame/ steel shell), turret top (w/o fabric insert), welded body seams (110 lbs. of lead were used in body restoration). Interior is same as the original, English broadcloth with burl walnut trim. This was the last year with large bullet headlights and wide running boards.

Production: There were 1001 units of the 1937 Series 70 Fleetwood Cadillacs built in four body styles - 5p touring sedan, 5p convertible sedan, 2p sports coupe & 2p convertible coupe. This followed 2,000 nearly identical Series 70 Fleetwood Cadillacs built in the previous year. An article in the June 2008 National Cadillac/ LaSalle Club magazine sited production of the 1937 Series 70 2p Sports Coupe at just 168 units of which only six were known to still exist at that time.

Price: The published base price for a 1937 Series 70 Sports Coupe was \$2,905. When optional equipment normally ordered with these cars (radio w/under running board antenna, heater, trip lite & side mounted spare tires) was added in the average selling price rose to about \$3,000. This was near double the cost of the lowest priced 60 Series Cadillac offered that year of which about 7,000 were built.