# If it didn't fit...lead it!

*by John Spinks*

Condition of the Airflow body panels under the lead is an absolute maze of pimple dents and very crude welding by today's standards and it appears that Chrysler body builders made them to a rough shape and crafted everything in lead

Our Coupe, even though it is a 1936 model, appears to be a carry over of a CU, a C-1 or even an SE or SG coupe body particularly in the rear around the trunk opening, trunk lid seal flange areas and rear tail section.

Even the remnants of the fuel filler pipe opening in the left rear of the body is still evident under the lead and this has been welded up as the '36 filler is located into the left rear fender. The same can be said for them also welding up the body extensions that appeared on the '34 bodies to bolt the rear bumpers to. On the '36 and the '35's the rear bumpers bolted to a bracket that looped off the chassis and down under the rear of the body so these extensions were therefore redundant on these models.

It appears that the body builders also hammered two very large creases into the body of the coupes below the lower extremities of the trunk lid at a point vertically down from the corners where the trunk lid turns horizontal across to the lid lock. I think this was to strengthen the body panels across the rear so as to stop the panel from being sprung in to form a dent. They then filled these massive creases and welded sections with an enormous amount of lead and filed everything up to look right.

We also discovered that the body swages that run from the front quarters of the car along the doors and thru the rear quarters to the rear and then blends out below the trunk lid on either side varied in it's position from side to side on the body by something approaching 1-inch. This was apparently rectified at the assembly plant by loading in more lead and moving the swages around in lead until they looked balanced.

When we were "remanufacturing" the rear of our Coupe body we lined everything up on the original swages that we found when the lead was melted out and to our dismay we discovered this misalignment whilst welding everything together. Luckily we were able to hammer the swages

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## Letters to the EDITOR

Dear Jerry,
Just so you know, Fort Worth Magazine is doing a story they're doing a feature on *"Men and Their Cars,"* and they're featuring about 25 men and their cars including my Airflow and me. Included in the article also is Johnny Rutherford (Indy 500 winner), along with the owner of Texas Motor Speedway.

They shot photos of the C-10 and me on the TCU campus. The article should be in the March issue. When I get a copy, I'll forward it to you. I just wanted to give you a heads-up.
Chandler Smith, Ft. Worth, TX
*Editor's note: We relish articles and tidbits on Airflows and their owners - How's the article on your Airflow coming along?*

Hi Jerry & Phyllis,
I just wanted to say I really enjoyed your article on Houston Fee. It gives me such a warm feeling that someone so young finds the beauty in the Airflows.

Thanks for sharing that story.
Corrine Mansfield, Simi Valley. CA
*Editor's note: All thanks for the article goes to John Librenjak, the elated member who corresponded with Houston and signed him up. We welcome Houston and look forward to seeing what restoration SE to C-17 project is in his future.*

Dear Jerry,
There are a couple of troublesome typos on the application for the National Meet. Out winter address is **184 Egret** not *1184 Egret* and the zip code is incomplete, it should be 33844.

Also the May 13th deadline should read, Deadline for judged cars is May 13th. We can accept registrations for the Meet right up to the date of the Meet. Otherwise the form looks great.
Doug Conran, 44th ACA National Meet Chairman, Haines City, FL
*Editor's note: My face is red again! Everyone who hasn't sent in their Meet Registration, please note the changes on this month's Registration form.*

*"Lead," continued from page 6*

across the body so as to align everything where it should be and it now looks balanced in the rear from one side to the other when referencing the centre line of the body.

All '34 and '35 coupes had a cut-out in the trunk pan on the left side so that the petrol tank filler tube could pass from the tank up at an angle into the lower left of the body. This is plated over on the '36 as the petrol fill tube enters the petrol tank horizontally high up on the side of the tank whereas the '34 & '35s enter at the corner of the tank at an angle of probably 45 degrees?

The frame (chassis) on our Coupe is stamped C-9 in a few places but also has CU stamped on it as well!!!!

*Filing the body smooth*

What do you think of that one?

The '34 and '35 Coupes had a tire compartment complete with a spare tire well that was accessible from the rear of the body with the luggage compartment accessible from behind the rear seats.

The '36 does not have that separate tire compartment and our Coupe still carries the 22 bolt holes equally spaced behind the trunk lid seal flange on the body that were apparently used on the previous models to secure the spare tire well into the tire compartment.

A number of brackets that were used to prop the rear tire compartment lid etc on the earlier bodies were apparently no longer required and have been very crudely flame cut out of the C-9 Coupe body ex factory.

I am inclined to think that the rear floor pan in all of the coupes was the same pressing or near the same anyway and all that the factory did was to include on the later models after '35 a plywood timber infill panel at the very rear of the pan in the vicinity of the trunk lid lock striker where the pan sloped down at a very steep angle to meet the outer body sheetmetal. This timber panel was included on the later models so as to make the trunk pan more of a usable sort of flat surface to house the spare tire and some luggage.

I remade all of the pan for our C-9 Coupe along with everything else in my home workshop using a little of the grey matter that I was born with and a few basic tools.