

1966 Sprint 200 Registry Celebrates Third Anniversary!

by Rick Mitchell

Break open the champagne, sound the sirens, and toss the confetti. It's the third anniversary of the 1966 Sprint 200 Registry!

Two decades ago, the first Sprint 200s were assembled in anticipation of the *Millionth Mustang Success Sale*. Imagine that! One million produced in less than twenty-four months — a record that has never been broken! And to commemorate this, a brand new Mustang was created, the *Sprint 200*. It was the most luxurious and economical first generation (1964½ to 1966) Mustang ever built. Yet most were delivered to their first owners for under three thousand dollars. Quite a deal, even by 1966 standards.

But after a flurry of excitement during that memorable Sprint twenty years ago, the memories themselves soon faded, and buyers soon forgot what a special little Mustang the "Limited Edition" Sprint 200 Mustang really was. That is, until November, 1982.

After owning my own Sprint 200 Mustang for a year at that point, I was amazed at how little had been published on our beloved Sprint ponies. I rarely saw articles on them. And at 13 major car shows I participated in during 1982, I only saw one other Sprint 200 compete. It occurred to me that sometimes in order to find the buried treasure, you have to draw your own map. Thus the creation of our *1966 Sprint 200 Registry*.

After several months of preparation, the public debut of the Registry was made on March 1, 1983. And in the months that followed, we received our initial exposure. Within one month, we were up to a solid ten members! That same month saw the first issue of *Sprint Print*, which was printed on a purple ditto. It was one and a half sides long. Next, my Sprint and I were invited to be on the cover of the June, 1983 issue of *Mustang Times*. After this, we were on our way!

In the three years that have followed, the Registry has collected data on 141 coupes, 7 deluxe coupes (with factory pony interiors), 30 convertibles, 7 deluxe convertibles, and 4 fastback Sprint 200 Mustangs, making 189 in total. We have members in Canada, England, and Scotland, as well as here in the United States. Today, our numbers are still steadily growing.

1966 Sprint 200 Mustangs were assembled in all three plants, and many had factory pony interiors as noted earlier. The oldest Sprint on record was a fastback model, assembled on November 27, 1965 in Metuchen. It now belongs to member Holly Abbott, of Pomona Park, Florida. The newest recorded Sprint is a standard interior coupe, built on August 8, 1966, in Dearborn. It is now owned by member Donnie Harget, of Memphis, Tennessee. We do not yet have on record any deluxe fastbacks with pony interiors (model 63B), nor any coupes (model 65C) or convertibles (model 76C) with

factory bench seats. Surviving Sprints with automatics outnumber three-speed models by three to one, although we do have one coupe and one convertible equipped with Dagenham four-speed transmissions.

The Registry is fortunate to have twenty-two original owners in its ranks. And of the cars documented, at least 88 have confirmed chassis mileage in excess of 100,000 miles (and 16 of these are over 150,000 miles!). One wonders whether the name *Sprint 200*, given to us by Ford, was intended to mean, *still Sprinting at 200,000 miles!*

If anyone doubts the impact a well unified registry can have on an automotive hobby, or the benefits its members can derive from that registry, then let there be no doubters left after reviewing the results of this registry. More people know about the Sprint 200 Mustangs than ever before, and their values have increased like no other period in recent Mustang history. The Registry has done its best to bring back the memory of this almost forgotten, yet highly memorable, little 200 cubic inch Mustang.

Three years of Registry research, documenting twenty years of Sprint 200 Mustangs. We're not darkhorses anymore!

