



LADY OF THE NIGHT

by Donna & Noel (Biff) Hitzeman

This 1967 GTA coupe is a true Lady of the Night. Dressed in Candyapple Red, this beauty can increase your heartbeat with just a short ride. Sit down in the bucket seat, strap yourself in, turn the key, and the 390 "Thunderbird Special" explodes to life. As you shift the heavy-duty C-6 into "Drive", your pulse quickens. The power disc brakes strain to hold this Pony back. Cruising along Main Street, USA, you feel that old urge to "Chevy hunt" once more. Finally, unable to hold back any longer, you nail it! The Holley screams as the F60x14 Goodyear Eagle STs melt away. True awesome power takes over.

This '67 coupe was destroyed in a collision 6 years earlier. Found stored under a tree over three years, the rear-end sheetmetal ripped away, sitting on the ground with the rotors buried in mud, there were little animals making their homes in the stock red interior, entering through gaping holes in the floorpans. Hidden under a maze of weeds lies the massive 390 drive train. After endless hours of labor and not a

small amount of cash, this GTA is once again back.

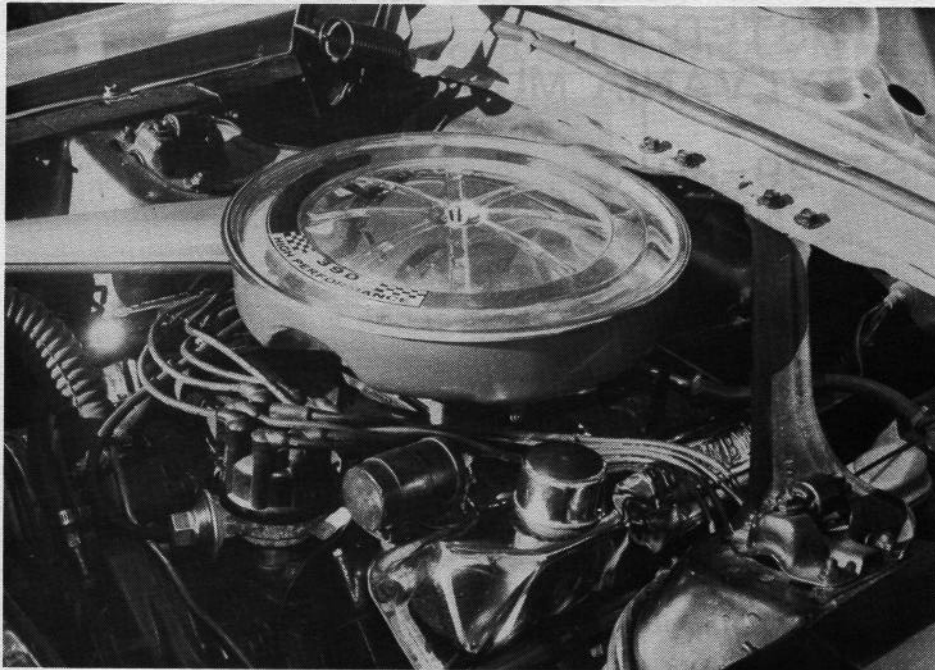
Missing the fog light bar and correct style steel wheels, we still enjoy showing this Mustang at local shows with members of the Old Fort Mustangers of Fort Wayne, Indiana. With over 100,000 miles showing on the odometer, this Lady still sees action every chance she gets, weather permitting.

This coupe has some very desirable options. The 390 "Thunderbird Special" develops a low rated 320 Horsepower, and the heavy-duty C-6 automatic locks up to the nodule 9-inch rearend. The GT option package with white side stripes sets the Candyapple Red paint off great. With heavy-duty disc brakes and handling package, this coupe is very nimble. The interior is standard red with the interior courtesy lights and full console.

About 6 years ago, this car was totalled in a rear-end collision while it was owned by our nephew. He held on to the car in the settlement with the insurance company with plans of one day restoring it. Time went by, and the

car still sat there. We tried many times to buy it, but he still had hopes of returning the car to its former beauty. Three years, a wife and new baby later, he finally decided to part with his totalled Mustang, and we became the proud owners of a '67 GTA in need of a little work.

Work began with a trip to the local body shop to have the frame straightened. Once that was out of the way and the car was back home, both rear quarters, light panel, rear valance, and a large portion of the floor panels were removed and replaced. Except for the floors, there was little rust on this car, but a great deal of time was spent preparing the body for a new coat of paint. Every speck of rust had to be found and eliminated, every ding straightened. After all, if you're going to do something, you might as well do it right. The interior was removed, with both front bucket seats being recovered. The headliner was replaced, but surprisingly, the carpet was in good shape, and only needed a good cleaning.



The massive 390 engine and C-6 transmission were pulled and the engine rebuilt. The "pop-can" exhaust system was replaced with a stock one. The transmission was also rebuilt, although at a later date. Unable to find a set of style steel wheels that would fit into our budget at the time, (a lot of the work was done during a time of unemployment due to the plant closing) we acquired a set of '68 GT wheels in exchange for rebuilding an engine for a fellow Mustang. They may be the wrong year, but they really don't look bad on the car.

We have restored a number of cars in the past, only to sell them as soon as they were finished, but we decided to keep this one for a short while in order to show it in a few local shows and just enjoy driving it around town on the weekends. We still hope to find a good set of style steel wheels and replace the light bar that was missing when we picked the car up, keeping this car completely stock. We have become very attached to this car, but there is still occasional talk of selling it. You see, the problem arises from the fact that there is a '65 Fastback, with restoration work almost completed, sitting in the garage now. Where do we store our two Mustangs this winter and still have room to put our everyday driver in our one car garage? **MT**



(Ed. Note - Biff and Donna are very active members of the Old Fort Mustangers in Fort Wayne, Indiana and are true Mustang enthusiasts. On a rainy day last November, the Hitzeman's could be seen enjoying putting their GTA through the paces of the Old Fort Mustangers first "Pony Cross" (autocross). Don't be fooled, though; this GTA has also brought home one 3rd place and three 1st place trophies.)