



In early 1987 my daughter, Maura Jean (MJ), was preparing to go to college and she thought she needed a car. She found a 1969 Mustang MACH 1 that had been restored; it was love at first sight. Unfortunately before I could see the car it had been sold. So one day when I was passing the local Ford dealership I spotted a one-year-old '86 Mustang GT 5.0. I drove it, negotiated the price, and purchased it.

My daughter was ecstatic and couldn't wait to drive it. One minor problem was that she never drove a standard and it took a bit of patience on my wife's part to teach MJ how to handle the shifting. That was the good news for my daughter and she drove it the summer before going off to college. The bad news was that the college did not allow freshmen or sophomores to have a car on campus. Therefore she had to leave it at home and I got to drive it for the next two years when MJ was not at home on break or summer vacation.

Shortly after we purchased the '86 we joined MCA and in one of the monthly publications there was a fully restored 1967 Fastback which was just beautiful. That picture stayed in my mind. Fast forward to 2002 when the company I had started, and had a small investment in, was sold freeing up some cash. My search for a '67 Fastback officially began and in early 2002 I found a listing for a '68 Shelby GT 500 that had been recently "restored." I made the trip to view it and my questioning about VINs etc. were answered too vaguely, and this was from a supposedly knowledgeable dealer of vintage

Mustangs. Fortunately I passed on that car and the dealer later had to put in the car listings the fact that he had been duped and the Shelby was not original.

I kept up my search and found an ad in a national magazine for a 1967 Shelby GT 350 Replica with what appeared to be set up with all the right Shelby equipment.

Several calls and a fair amount of emails later, I had all the specs which checked out with some of my mechanic friends. I decided to go to San Francisco during a trip we had already planned to Santa Monica. Arrangements were made to meet. When the car pulled up to our hotel a crowd immediately gathered around the 'Stang. Upon a lengthy viewing and a run through all sorts of streets and highways around SF, the car checked out as advertised and I was hooked. The car had been restored by a young successful business man whose hobby was to spend his time and money in this fashion. The car was not a trailer queen and it had some minor road warrior paint chips etc. That was OK with me since I wanted a car that I could drive. The deal was consummated and the car was shipped back to Massachusetts.

Back in New England I needed to find a reputable mechanic capable of performing tasks which were beyond my capabilities. Luckily my neighbor was friendly with a garage owner/mechanic who also owned a 1969 MACH 1. Jim Venutti of Coachworks in Belmont, Massachusetts, is and has been superb to work with and has done most of the work which I felt that needed to be accomplished to get the 'Stang to the level that I wanted.

Over the past few years we've added and or replaced a fair amount of parts. In 2005 I decided that the '67 would be treated to a correct-era Paxton Supercharger. After not finding one we decided to install a current Paxton. Since the original 289, which had been modified, had way to high compression, 11 plus, Paxton told us the compression had to be less than 10 and preferably 8 to 9. OK, we will change the pistons to accommodate that spec. Not so fast, upon pulling the heads, it was determined the internals were much too "tired" and thus onto a complete rebuild which ended up to be pretty much a brand new motor since we replaced everything but the modified 289 block. This project took the better part of the spring and summer of '06. During the engine break-in process it was determined that the original radiator could not handle the engine heat. So we have added a large capacity aluminum radiator which is working quite well.

This past spring I wanted to correct a constant drip from the power steering unit. After reading up on this situation, the wisdom from far more knowledgeable Mustang folks was that one should consider a rack and pinion steering system. I checked various ads and decided on one from Randall's. Jim installed it and we are both pleased with the results; a great improvement over the old power steering system. I also changed the tires to Cooper Cobra's and they look great.

That's where we are today and as I mentioned earlier, the next task might be new paint along with new glass and chrome molding.

UPDATE SEPTEMBER 12, 2008:

I dynoed the car a year ago, the results were not what I had expected. In June I had the car at a Mustang racing engine builder and put it on the dyno and once again the results were not satisfactory. So, after considerably more testing and diagnostic work it was finally pinned down to a problem with the #8 cylinder. The engine was disassembled and a problem was discovered with the cam shaft. So we installed a new hotter cam shaft, lifters, springs etc. We coupled that with a new distributor, racing plugs and wires. Right now the car is running great with a dyno output of 365 HP to the rear wheels.

The next project is to install new interior parts including seats. I still haven't decided on a new paint job but I am getting some leads for a good body/paint shop from other members of MCCNE.

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