

IN SEARCH OF MUSTANGS

by Jim Smart

Welcome to 1984! The year of the Pony and you all are a big part of it! Our very own Mustang is officially twenty years young April 17th. What will you do to celebrate? Those with early production Stangs will do it big (barring smashing the champagne bottle on the front fender). We will all feel a special pride this spring that goes with Mustang buffs everywhere. Remember what they said in '64? "America's new Fun Car!" All those cute little ads on TV and in the magazines. It was a magical period indeed. Mustang started it all and . . . the Pony Car era lives on today! A love affair, twenty years strong.

One thing about this Mustang research business, you never know what will turn up next. The past five years has blessed me with exciting Mustangs and most important, beautiful people (Oh yes, it hasn't all been beer and skid-dles!). Fred Glazier was sitting around the barn one day last June when he spotted a Mustang ad in Hemming's. "America's Number 1 Mustang," said the ad. As most of you well know, every Mustang ad has the ol' hard sell, with few exceptions. There are always the ones that are billed, "Oldest known" or "Owned by Ford family gardener," you name it. We get excited, only to discover the seller had "less than honest" intentions. Well, this ad was for real and turned out to be yet another "World's Fair Mustang!" Naturally, Fred made me aware of this unique sounding Mustang. I then contacted its owner, Bob Maxwell of Pennsylvania. Bob was very eager to tell me about his unusual Mustang. A get together was arranged and in two weeks, my wife, Diane, and I made our way north. In talking with Bob over the phone, I had the feeling I had heard his voice before.

We met Mr. Maxwell at a local restaurant near his home. Bob, slightly graying, was seated in the green metallic convertible. We followed Bob to his

home nearby. We introduced ourselves and began to chat about our mutual interest . . . automobiles! Bob has quite a collection of automobiles, ranging from a 1968 Pontiac Bonneville convertible (packed full of 428 4V and 4 speed) to a Bentley once owned by Richard Nixon!

With such an impressive collection, and such a unique voice, I had to ask Bob what he did to put food on the table. "Oh . . . Jim . . . I do TV commercials . . . you know . . . TAKE AIM AGAINST CAVITIES!" You can well imagine my reaction. I began to wonder if AIM would stop those cavities in the floor pan of my Mustang.

Bob so graciously allowed me to photograph and study his Mustang closely. I'll share my findings with you. 5F08A684768, a 1965 Mustang GT convertible, 289 4V, automatic, air conditioning, bench seat and standard interior. This Mustang bares no relationship to the 24 Mustang convertibles used at the "Magic Skyway." It is, however, historically more important and here's why. Bob's Mustang, as Ford Motor Company documentation shows, was a background unit on static display at the Ford exhibit. This means that his Mustang was on a pedestal or similar for display purposes. At some point during the fair, this Mustang was pulled and used in the World's Fair Parade where Henry Ford II, Donald Frey and Lee Iacocca were seated within. They could have easily named this Mustang, "The City of Dearborn," considering the raft of Ford brass within!

This Mustang was not as I had expected. Years of use, accident damage, and a recent restoration made this Mustang somewhat different than we had imagined. Gone were the original wire wheel covers and in their place . . . the ever popular Style Steel units. The restoration, performed by the previous owner, a real estate agent in New Jersey, was lacking in detail.

The GT badge on both front fenders was accompanied by the classic galloping pony insignia, obviously not authentic. In viewing the engine compartment, I quickly discovered accident damage. The previous owner had indeed been in an accident and lost interest in the Mustang thereafter. Bob picked up this Mustang at an auto auction in Fleming, New Jersey in 1979. The previous owner had been the only owner since Ford Motor Company.

The most notable item is the lack of the warranty data plate on the driver's door, which directed me immediately to the inner fender. The warranty serial number did indeed match the Ford documentation.

Bob's Mustang, though very historic, needs detailing to bring it to the condition that it once was. I would like to thank Bob for his gracious hospitality and for allowing me to view his very historic 1965 Mustang GT convertible.

Let's talk about my June 1983 trip to Dearborn, Michigan and the one-of-a-kind experiences that took place. Not only did this trip net a wealth of Mustang information (yet to be released), it enabled me to meet some very special people as well. Come along and let's share the memories!

Bill Bailey of Crofton, Maryland and I set out for Detroit the morning of May 29th, a rainy nasty day! Bill's 1983 Mustang GT was definitely the way to fly in style. Life in Detroit is much different from what most of us are used too. Car carriers are a common sight, as are assembly plants for all the auto makers. Ah yeah, Detroit, Michigan, home of 70 MPH driving and . . . no one cares!

The most memorable occasion in Detroit was an interview with Mr. Edsel Ford II for *Mustang Monthly*. Meeting Edsel Ford II was truly a pleasure. I found Mr. Ford to be one of the nicest people I've ever met and if there ever was an automotive buff . . .

There were others too, that made the visit quite memorable. Mr. Jim Hager

and his son, Dennis. Jim and Dennis are both Mustang buffs as they drive the popular Pony Car everyday. Jim, who is employed by Ford, drives a 1983 Mustang convertible, while Dennis drives his 1966 Mustang hardtop. Jim equipped his 1983 drop top with the 5.0 Liter V-8 and the new 5 speed. Dennis was a bit young to equip his 66 Mustang back then, so he is satisfied today with 200 CID power in the 66 hardtop. Jim and Dennis, I thank you both from the bottom of my heart for your gracious hospitality and friendship.

After visiting with Jim and Dennis, I contacted Ron Wahl there on Grosse Isle and we got together. Ron owns one of "fifty" 1972 Mustang "Sprint" convertibles and he allowed me to view it, along with his 1964 Ford Fairlane. Both cars are a sight to behold! Ron and I spent an afternoon chatting over our lives and the World of Ford.

The Mustang Owners Club of Southeastern Michigan and Dearborn Assembly are so involved, they are topics of yet other columns for you to see in the future.

5F08F100001 was the topic of another day. Production Mustang Number One was viewed in storage, courtesy Henry Ford Museum and my good friend Les Newcomer. Les, Bill and I spent a day talking Mustang and digging deep into Mustang #1. Our findings were many and not all of a positive nature. Mustang #1 is very original, yet lacks many of its original items. I'll share our findings with you.

Opening the door of 100001 is like witnessing a birth for the first time. I have never opened a Mustang door and been hit with "New Car Smell," have you? Close the door, once inside, "thump," WHAT WAS THAT?!!! That solid, new sound of a car door slam. Something else I've never heard in our ol' Mustangs. Ah yeah . . . isn't this neat!? Seated in Mustang #1. Was Jim Smart excited? You bet! Not even 11,000 miles on this nineteen-year-old Pony. Why is it, she is not as I expected? A virgin Mustang, yet she has seen harsh treatment.

Neither headlight is the original FOMOCO type. The 64½ hood has been replaced with a 65 type. The original 2100 Autolite carburetor replaced with a rebuilt unit. The blue color 260 V-8 with oil filler tube on the valve cover? Even the original spare tire



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has been used! All disturbing items and open to question. What happened to the original hood? Accident or collector's item? The spare tire had an obvious answer. In viewing the trunk area, we found a wheel and tire assembly with seriously damaged lug holes, obviously a case of loose lug nuts at 60 MPH!

Mustang Number One has been repainted and "poorly" I might add. After years in storage and abusive relocations, Father Time has not been kind to 5F08F100001. With under 11,000 miles on the clock, she has a Jekyll and Hyde personality. Some areas are flawless, while others show serious signs of abuse. A non-climate controlled environment has caused 100001 to rust on the exterior floor pan and frame rails. These items, given time, will be the ultimate death of "America's Original Pony Car."

Captain Stanley Tucker, original owner of 100001, has been contacted as you well know. Captain Tucker today is a corporate jet pilot who spends his time flying business executives around the country. Stan Tucker is quite a fellow with fond memories of 100001, plus his 66 Mustang known as "One Millionth." The 66 Mustang is gone, but the memories are many for Stan Tucker. We will share Stanley Tucker with you in a future issue. I did take the liberty to tell Captain Tucker about his first Mustang. He was surprised to learn of its condition today, so were a lot of Mustangers!

Stay tuned to IN SEARCH OF MUSTANGS as we keep the surprising information coming your way!

Jim Smart

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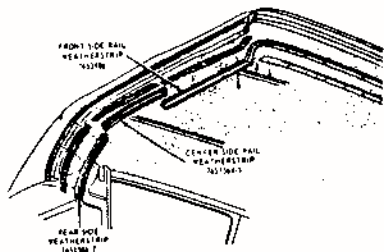
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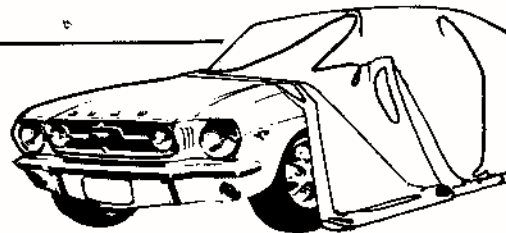
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