

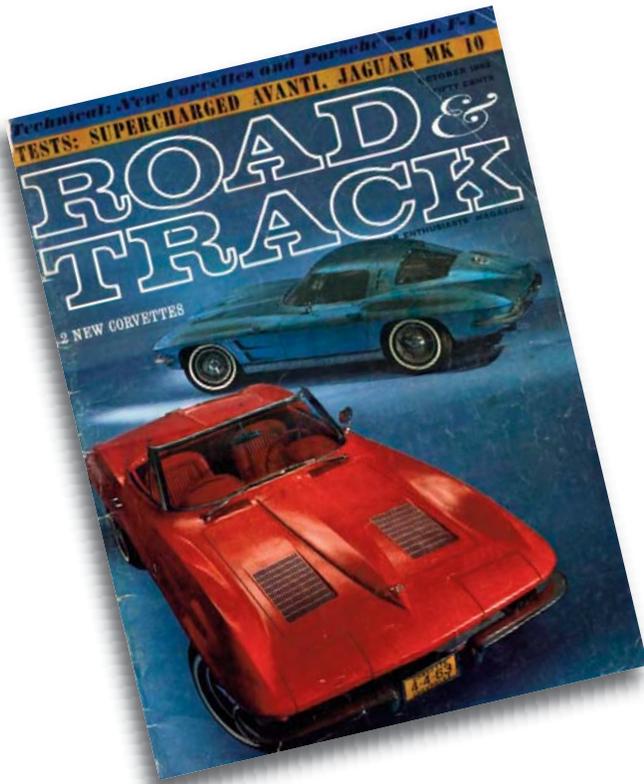
# One Guy's Road

*A "Life with Cars" Scrapbook*



**Paul Davis**

# Introduction



What follows is a compilation of what might be called “vehicular thinking” – the memories, thoughts, photos and documents which have made up my world of cars and motorcycles. Who would be interested in all of this (besides me) is another question. But being the documenter that I am, and having access to a bunch of wonderful publishing tools at hand as I do (as well as all this historical data), it seemed like a logical project.

As far back as I can remember, my thoughts and dreams were filled with cars. When I was just a little guy, I’d spend hours on the beach making roads and playing with toy cars and trucks. I went to sleep with driving fantasies.

But if there was one pivotal moment in bringing my car consciousness to the surface, it was in October 1962 (I was 11), when I saw an issue of *Road & Track* magazine in my cousin Stephen’s house.

The new for 1963 Corvette on the cover must have burned an image into my mind. I was hooked. I doodled sports cars incessantly through years of school classes, filling quite a few of those spiral-bound school notebooks. I built dozens of car models (mostly 1/25th scale AMT kits). Some of them actually turned out pretty good. To this day, I continue doodling through meetings and phone calls.

So here’s one car guy’s story.

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# The Early Years

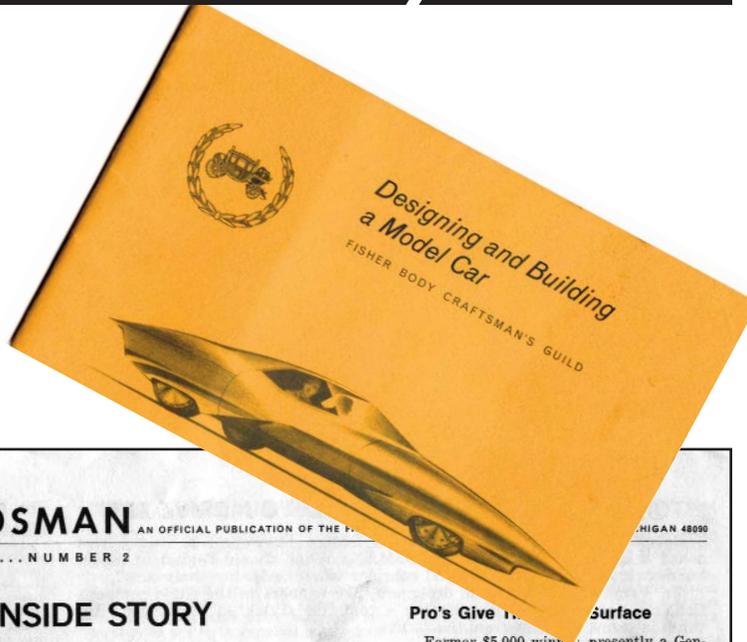
## The Fisher Body Craftsman's Guild

In the early- to mid-sixties, I belonged to the Fisher Body Craftsman's Guild. This was a program sponsored by General Motors – a competition to inspire young designers.

Of course I lacked the technical ability to actually build one of the models. In fact, some of them looked so incredible, I suspect many dads “helped” quite a bit.

I got a few of the newsletters offering hints on how to build the models as well as information about the competitions. I think I even got a set of wheels.

The experience sure added to my fantasy of becoming an automobile designer.



### GUILDSMAN

AN OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE FISHER BODY CRAFTSMAN'S GUILD  
VOLUME 14...NUMBER 2

## THE INSIDE STORY

by Roy C. Boyer, editor

Approximately 600,000 young men enroll in the Fisher Body Craftsman's Guild each year, and according to present figures this current competition could go even higher.

Most of you first became members through the Guild School Assembly Program which stresses the importance of creativity in each area of man's efforts, while others have joined through letter inquiries, advertisements, or school posters.

We like to emphasize the creative aspect of the Guild, simply because it takes the creative person to design and build a model car for our scholarships and cash awards which come to \$117,000 annually.

But you probably think, "How can I possibly win... there are too many guys that are members, so my chances to do anything really would be small."

Sorry 'bout that, but it's just not true. You don't have to build a model car to belong to the Craftsman's Guild, and most boys don't. In fact, *less than one percent* of you will complete a model car and send it to Detroit for judging when the competition closes come June 2, 1967.

That makes your opportunity for winning one of the 1,078 awards pretty good, and certainly worth the effort, even if the thought of making a model has only crossed your mind. Naturally to compete in this type of contest, you must have a keen interest in automobiles—those that you see today, and those that you would like to see tomorrow. And, you must be willing to squeeze in a few hours a week for the next several months in order to finish the project.

The Fisher Body Craftsman's Guild isn't concerned with how many hours you spend designing and building the car, because the number of hours doesn't count. What you do during the time you work with the model car does count, and can separate the best from the pretty good. If you would like a suggested time schedule to help you toward the completion date, drop me a card and I'll send one.

So, let's assume that now you've decided that making a scale model car of the future

### Pro's Give It a Surface

Former \$5,000 winner, presently a General Motors designer, Geza Loczi, told the GUILDSMAN that your model car can be given a more realistic road appearance by considering the "rolling radius" of the tires. This means that due to the weight of a vehicle, that portion of the tire on the road will be flat. This "rolling radius" can be achieved by filing the wheel bottom flat through the depth of the tread.



### "LET'S RIDE IN ALL THREE"

At the annual Guild convention, regional winners not only inspect, but ride in authentic experimental cars. These young men who have distinguished themselves as America's top model builders in the 1965-66 competition are looking over three of the most popular one-of-a-kind cars in the world: the Mako Shark I, Shark II and the Monza GT. The background building is General Motors Styling Division at the Technical Center in Warren, Michigan.

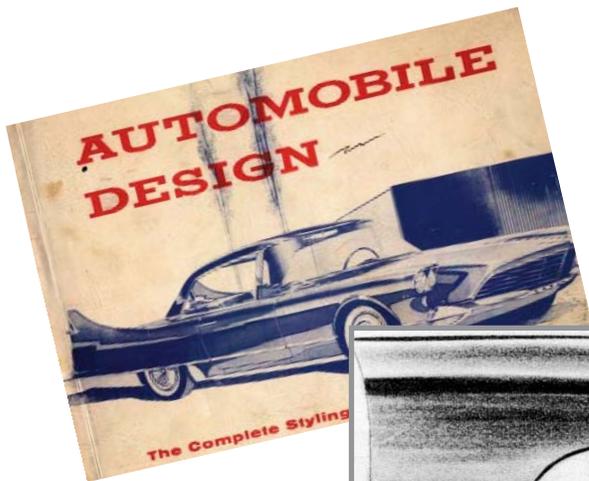


## Scale Models

Although I never built a model for the Fisher contest, I did build quite a number of model car kits. A very popular brand in those days were the 1/25th-scale plastic models from AMT. Here's a photo of a few of them I put together in the mid-1960s.



# Drawings

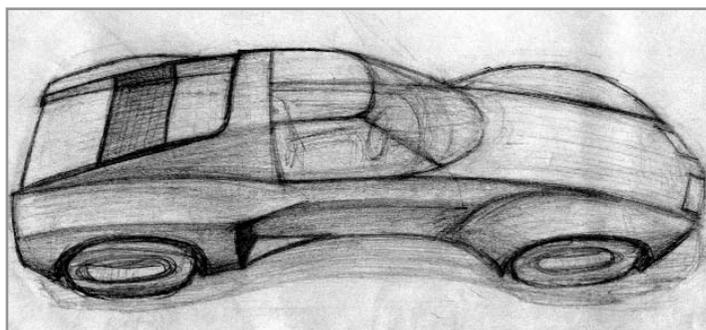
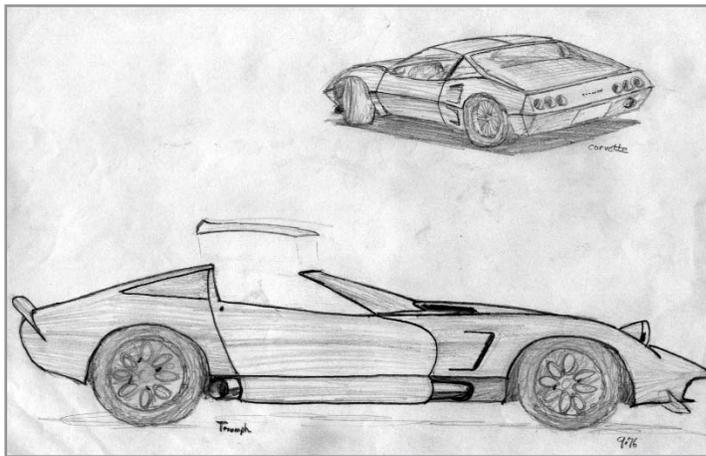


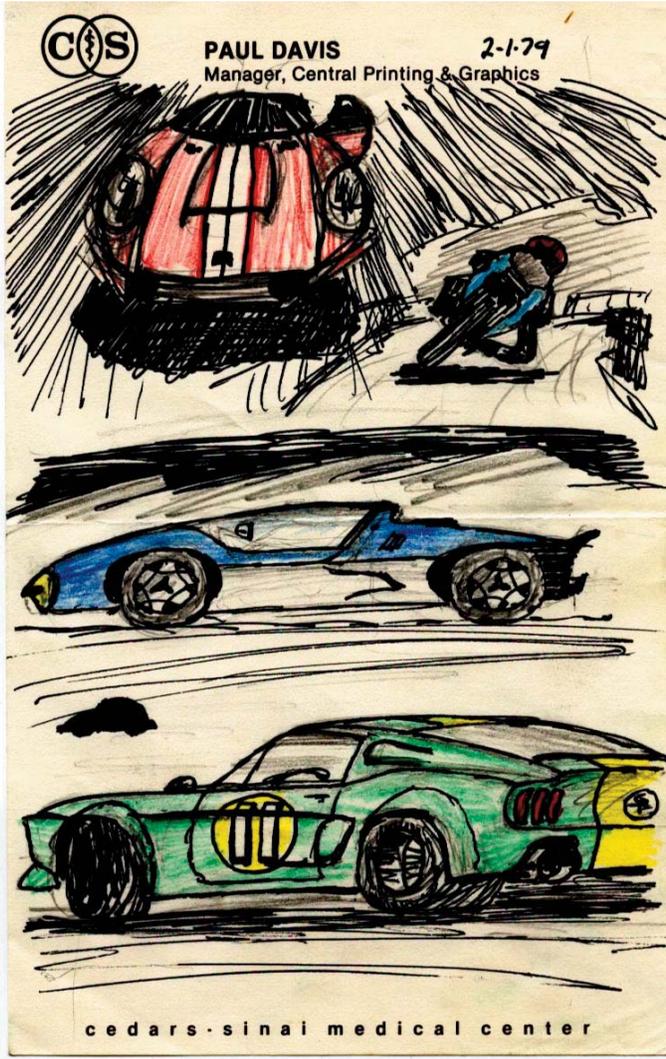
I've been drawing and doodling cars all my life. In school I filled notebooks during lectures. Today, I doodle while on the phone or in boring meetings. While I have saved some of my drawings starting from the mid-seventies, I sure wish I still had some of my old school notebooks which were always filled with cars and related scenes.

When I was very young, I actually sent some of my drawings to General Motors. Of course, they were probably pretty bad, but someone at GM responded with a suggestion of several books, which Mom acquired. The drawing of the fender to the left in "Automobile Design" (published in 1955) must have influenced me greatly, as I've continued to use a similar technique all my life. I probably could have become a better artist if I had been more patient.



The drawings reproduced here are from the mid- to late-70s.





I did these in late 1997  
while playing with  
Adobe Illustrator.

## 1966 Pontiac Tempest

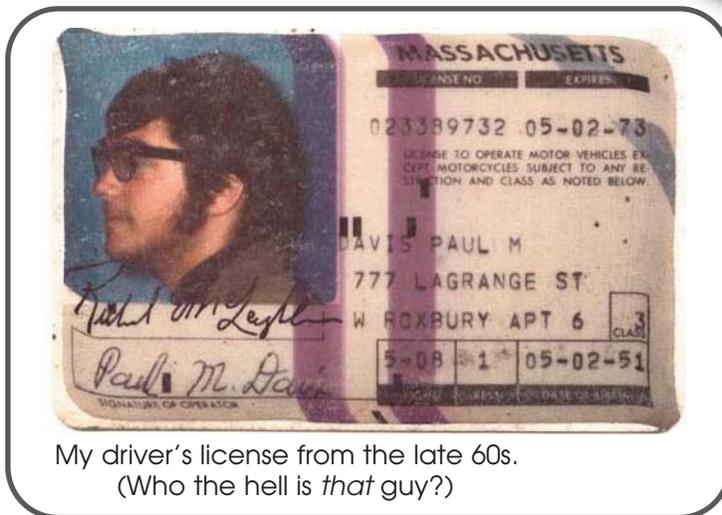
1966 - 1972

### Our First Family Car

Mom got her license very late in life, so the first “family” car we got was a new 1966 Pontiac Tempest. It was kind of a “stripper”, the bottom of the Pontiac line, but it was a decent size and a nice design, very clean for its time. The GTO of the same year (built on the same platform) was, and remains, one of my all-time favorite cars. (Of course, ours was a six-cylinder, automatic.)

Here’s a funny note – at first, I was very upset that we got a white car. I think I started crying while we were at the dealer. Of course white became my favorite color for cars, at one time owning three white vehicles.

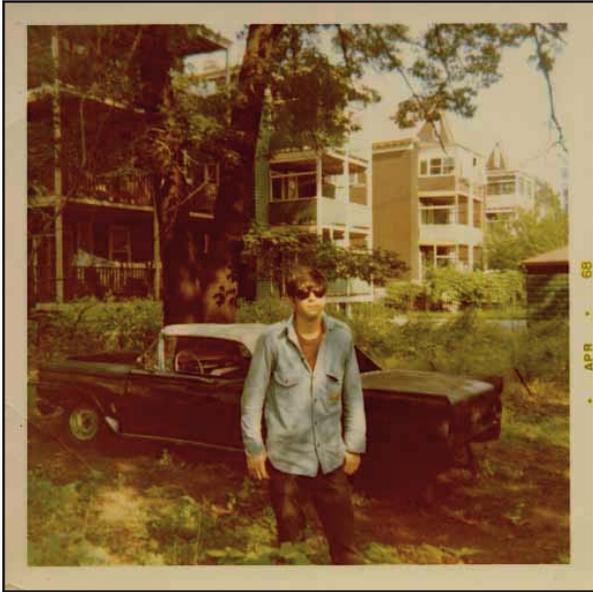
That poor Tempest... it lasted through three new drivers. My brother beat the crap out of it. And when I got my license, (December 1, 1967 - a *glorious* day) I continued the tradition.



My driver's license from the late 60s.  
(Who the hell is *that* guy?)

# 1959 Ford Galaxie

## 1967 - 1968



And who is that cool-looking guy?

Yes, that's me, at 15, in front of my first car, a 1959 Ford Galaxie convertible. It was given to me by a friend of Larry Haley (one of my neighbors back on Evelyn Street, in Mattapan, Massachusetts). The way I remember it, he was going in the Navy.

Although the car ran when I got it, there was something wrong with it (I'm not sure what) and it never ran again. The guy drove it into my back yard and their it sat until it was towed away. It's really too bad... that car restored today would be worth a small fortune.

I spent a summer mutilating it, learning a little about body work. In the photo, you can see that I removed the chrome and practiced filling the little holes. I removed the back bumper and taillights. Please don't ask me why.

---

# 1962 Fiat

## 1968

A 1962 Fiat replaced the Ford in my back yard. I don't know how I talked Mom into it, but she helped me purchase this little Italian beauty for \$25 or \$35. As I recall, most of the engine was in the trunk...in pieces.

My fantasy was to get it running and actually drive it after I got my license. Incredible as it seems, I *did* get it running. Although I know a little about cars, at that point in my life, I certainly had no serious mechanical ability or experience. It was only driven once or twice up and down Evelyn Street, enough to rile a few neighbors. (It was a one-way street!)

As was becoming a tradition, I mutilated this one too with the help of Larry Haley by pop-riveting a Studebaker grille onto the front end. (I sure wish I had a picture of that!)

At Christmas, 2001, my friend Gerard gave me a book entitled "The Convertible". It contained a picture of Eleanor Roosevelt in an identical Fiat, a model called the *Gran Luce*. (I'm guessing that Mrs. Roosevelt didn't keep *hers* in the back yard.)



# 1967 Triumph TR4A

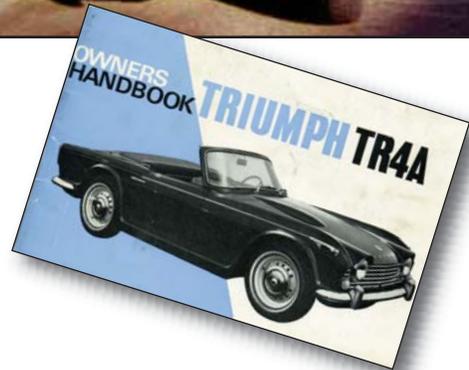
## 1969

### (My First Real Car)

While at Chauncy Hall High School, I met a guy named Carter Wright who was also into cars. His father owned a black, 1964 Triumph TR4. Carter taught me how to drive a stick shift in that car, and I fell in love with it – the shape, the sound, the handling. It was during those years that British sports cars really got under my skin.

Incredibly as it seems now, Mom bought me a 1967 Triumph in January 1969. As the bill of sale states, we paid \$1525 for it. At the time, I was working at a Checker car dealer in Brookline Village.

It was a beautiful little car – British racing green, black interior. (Look at those skinny tires!) Unfortunately I never got a chance to appreciate warm, top-down driving because I didn't own the car for very long. One day, while driving to work (going a bit too fast), I hit some ice and flipped the car over in someone's front yard. I wasn't hurt, but the car was totaled – what a bummer. I sure wish I had that little puppy today.



**LIBON MOTORS, Inc.**  
168 Western Ave. Dial 783-1300  
ALLSTON, MASS. 02134

SHIRLEY R. DAVIS  
777 LaGrange Street  
West Roxbury Mass. 02152

SALES TO ADDRESS: MAKE MODEL NEW OR USED SERIAL NO. ENGINE NO.  
1966 TR 4 A Roadster U CT69004L

SALESMAN: Flanagan KEY INDEX

INSURANCE COVERAGE INCLUDES  
FIRE & THEFT  PUBLIC LIABILITY - AMT.   
COLLISION - AMT. DEDUCTIBLE  PROPERTY DAMAGE - AMT.

GROUP	DESCRIPTION	PRICE
	Color: Green	

RECEIVED PAYMENT IN FULL  
LIBON MOTORS INC.  
BY *Clay Flanagan*

DATE	INVOICE NO.	STOCK NO.
Jan. 2, 1969	No 5942	6296

DESCRIPTION	SALE
NEW VEHICLE	
VW PASSENGER-TYPE 1	
VW PASSENGER-KARMANN	
VW FASTBACK-TYPE 3	
VW SQUAREBACK-TYPE 3	
VW STATION WAGON-TYPE 3	
VW TRUCK-TYPE 2	
VW FLEET & EMPLOYEE	
OTHER MARKS	
DEALER INSTALLED ACCESS.	
OVERALLOWANCE OR DISCOUNT	
SALES ANALYSIS CHARGES	
INVENTORY NEW VEHICLES	
USED VEHICLE	
VOLKSWAGEN	
OTHER MARKS	1525.00
WHOLESALE	
LICENSE FEES	
SALES TAX	
<b>TOTAL CASH PRICE</b>	<b>1525.00</b>
FINANCING	
INSURANCE	
<b>TOTAL TIME PRICE</b>	
DEPOSIT	50.00
CASH ON DELIVERY	1475.00
VEHICLE ACCT. REG.	
USED CAR ALLOWANCE	
PAYMENTS DOLLARS	
MONTHS PER MONTH	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1525.00</b>

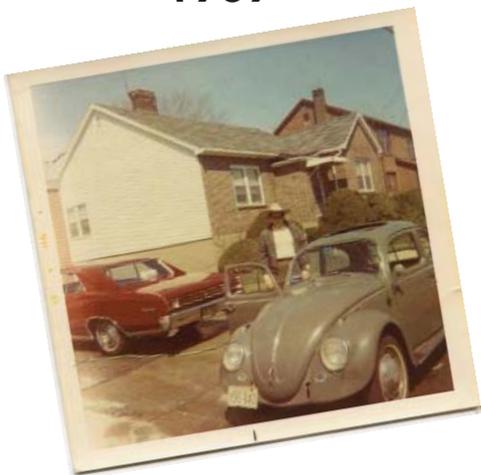
Always Bring Your Car Here For Factory Authorized Service

USED CAR TRADED				
YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	SERIAL NO.	ENGINE NO.

FORM 674 (1-61)

# 1964 Beetle

1969



After I wrecked my TR4, I bought my first Volkswagen, a 1964. I got it from the same car dealer who sold me the Triumph. As I recall, he tried unsuccessfully to talk me into the VW when I was looking at the Triumph.

1964 was the first year of sliding steel sunroof, although it still had a six-volt electrical system. And performance-wise, it was a real woof-woof. Like other cars, I spent some time mutilating it, removing the bumpers and replacing the glass over the headlights with chicken wire – like on the 1953 Corvette. (Don't ask me why.)

The VW turned out to be a fun car. One of the funniest times I had was having Ed Ryman, a friend of mine, wearing a genuine cowboy hat, do his Lyndon Johnson impression while standing up through the sunroof. One time, the hat blew off and landed in a giant puddle. I paid a kid a buck to get it! I still laugh thinking about that.

There was a television ad at the time showing a VW Beetle floating in water. So one rainy day, I decided to drive through a flooded section of American Legion Highway without slowing down. No, the car didn't leak or get stuck. But when the cold water hit the hot heating ducts, steam instantly filled the interior reducing visibility to zero. (This was not the first time I was lucky in my youth.)

Then there was the night it caught fire in the MacDonald's parking lot. I had removed the two resonator pipes because it sounded great and made the car backfire wickedly. Little did I know that when it did, giant flames would shoot out the back and in through the engine compartment. When a gas line leaked, one of those backfires started an engine fire. I desperately started throwing dirt on it (to the sound of someone yelling: "Turn it over. Turn it over." – I don't know why.) Unbelievably, with help from the car guys who hung around there at the time, we got the car running and I drove it home with very little actual damage.

In the summer of 1968 and for a short time in 1969 before I went back to college, I worked at a Checker car dealer in Brookline Village. Most of the people who bought Checkers were cab owners, although we would sometimes sell them to private parties.

The first time I ever flew on a plane was for a company trip to New York to pick up a new Checker at another dealer.

The photos at right are from the Checker brochure. (What do you think that lady *really* said when her husband brought home a Checker?)



The Checker Marathon  
a totally different kind of car,  
created and custom-built for those  
who demand maximum  
safety and long life.



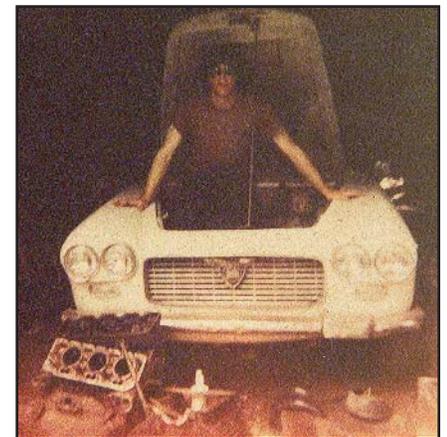
# 1962 Lancia Flaminia

Summer 1969

(How do you say "mistake" in Italian?)

A yellow invoice from ARCAL IMPORTED CARS, 192 BROADWAY, SOMERVILLE, MASS. 02145, TEL. 776-4070. The invoice is for a 1962 Lancia Flaminia, purchased by Shirley R. Davis on 7-30-1969. The car is described as a 2670 cc V6 engine with a 2100 cc displacement. The invoice includes a table of parts and their costs, and a total amount of \$5475. The invoice is signed by the dealer and dated 7/30/69. The number 208 is written in the bottom left corner.

What the hell was I thinking?



Having always dreamed about owning an Italian exotic, the Lancia caught my eye, sitting in a gas station in Roslindale. (I first thought it was a Maserati.) Although the body (which was made out of aluminum) and interior were in good shape, the engine was, quite literally, in pieces.

Larry Haley, a neighbor of mine who was into body work, told me he could put it together and get it running. I guess I wanted to believe him, so I did. (The owner of the gas station must have thought he won the lottery when I walked in.) Why Mom bought into this one, I'll never know. But she stood by while I sold my Volkswagen and got the Lancia towed to Larry's garage.

The first thing that the car needed was to have new iron sleeves pressed into the aluminum block. It took quite a while to get them from a Fiat/Ferrari dealer as parts had to be shipped from Italy. And it was going to cost even more to get them pressed into the block. Larry said he could do it...but couldn't.

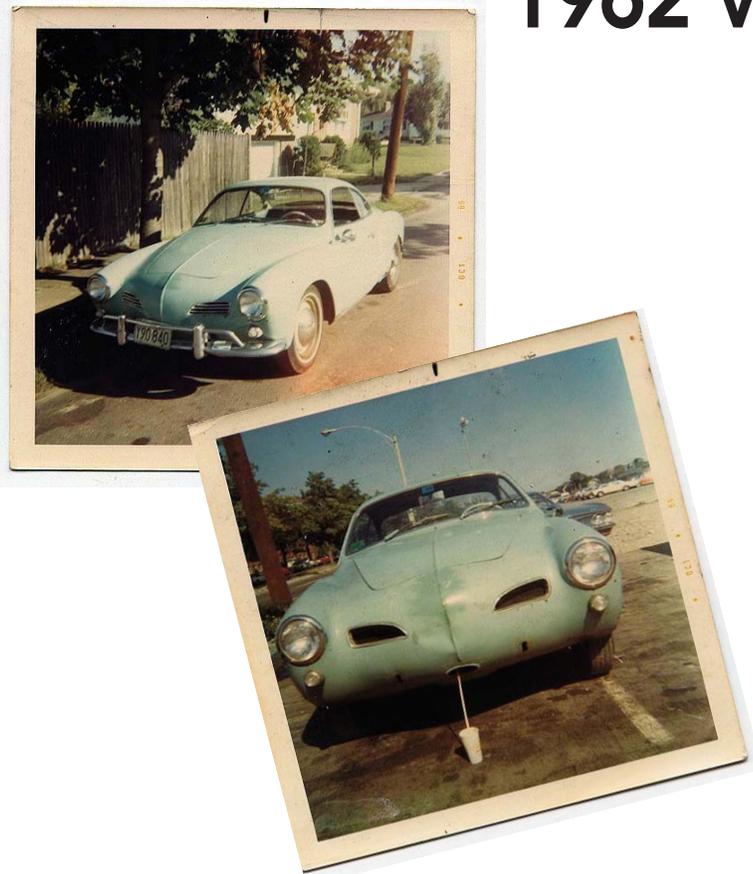
It wasn't long before I realized that I would never get the car in running condition and sold it and all the extra parts to a guy named J. DePagter for \$650 (about what we put into it).



In November, 2003, I saw another Flaminia at a car show. It was in very nice shape. (I presume that this one actually ran.)

# 1962 VW Karmann Ghia

## 1969



For a short time, I had a mid-60s Volkswagen Karmann Ghia. It was a fun little car, but it was heading down hill fast. (In those years, unlike today, having me for an owner was *not* a good fate for cars.) Of course I gave it the usual treatment of removing the bumpers and chrome strips. And the car had so much rust that when the door was slammed, pieces would fall off.

Back then, some motor oils did not have detergents. The detergents in new motor oils could cause problems in high mileage cars by loosening old sludge.

During a routine oil change, high-detergent motor oil was mistakenly used. The car started to leak oil pretty badly from all its gaskets. Not long after, I sold it for \$65.

---

# 1970 VW Beetle

## 1970 - 1971

The last car I was to own in Boston was a 1970 Beetle which was purchased new in May. What a neat little car – beige with a brown interior. I had a tachometer and custom exhaust installed by the dealer, and added a “short-throw” shifter.

Although VWs at the time were certainly not high performance cars, they had a real “stump-puller” of a first gear.

Unfortunately, in April 1971, while using all that acceleration at a launch from a green light, I totaled this one too (with my grandmother in the car). An old guy failed to stop at a red light on Route 9 in Brookline and broadsided me.

This was my lesson in looking both ways – which was probably very valuable in my later motorcycle days.



# 1970 Toyota Corona MkII

## 1970 - 1976

Mom finally sold the Tempest and, probably through some of my constant chatter about foreign cars, she got a new Toyota Corona Mark II (about \$2600 when new). It was a cute little thing, very well equipped, although the little four-banger was quite sluggish with its automatic transmission and air conditioning.

After Mom noticed that the silver paint didn't match on certain body panels, she confronted the dealer and

discovered that there had been some body damage before it was sold. Eventually, the dealer repainted the entire car.

On October 19, 1976, Mom traded the Toyota for new Camaro. You know, I *never* see any of those old Coronas around anymore.

**TOYOTA SERVICE BOOKLET**  
 NO. 288539

**TOYOTA**

BOSTON

SERIAL NO. 88543871 ENGINE NO. 2,320.00

1900cc, 4 CYLINDER-SIM  
 4-ON-THE-FLOOR ALL-FULLY RECLINING FRONT SEATS  
 NYLON CARPETING  
 2-SPEED ELECTRIC WINDOW  
 4-WAY FLASHER HORN  
 IMPACT ABSORBING FRONT END  
 3 POINT REAR SEATBELT  
 FRONT DISC BRAKES

STANDARD 35.00  
 25.00  
 4.00  
 175.00  
 2.00

TOTAL 2,611.00

STATE OR LOCAL TAXES OR LICENSE FEES

THIS LABEL AND THE INFORMATION THEREON HAS BEEN AFFIXED TO THIS MOTOR VEHICLE BY THE IMPORTER, TOYOTA MOTOR SALES, U.S.A., INC. PURSUANT TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF PUBLIC LAW 85-506 85TH CONGRESS, WHICH PROHIBITS THE REMOVAL OR ALTERATION OF THIS LABEL PRIOR TO THE TIME THAT SUCH AUTOMOBILE IS DELIVERED TO THE ACTUAL CUSTODY AND POSSESSION OF THE ULTIMATE PURCHASER.

CUSTOM FEATURES AT NO EXTRA COST

## Two Honda 350s 1974 - 1975

After I graduated college in February 1974, I couldn't find a job and wound up parking cars at an American Motors dealer. Without enough money to buy a car, I decided to try a motorcycle and got a used Honda 100. Except for the fact that it was a cold New England winter and I nearly froze my ding-dong off, I had a ball.



It looks kind of silly to me now, but I thought it was pretty cool at the time.

I only owned that bike for a few months before selling it. (No pictures seem to exist.) With the proceeds (about \$200, I think) I purchased a one-way ticket to San Francisco, and, after finding a job, I acquired my second motorcycle, a Honda 350 that had been

chopped and customized like a little Harley-Davidson. Looking at the pictures now, it sure was a little goofy, especially the picture on the gas tank.

With its straight pipes, it was loud. And because the rear shocks had been replaced with straight bars, it was a hard-riding little bike. It didn't bug me at first (I was a "tough" guy), but the discomfort finally got to me.

One day I remember driving over a pothole and thought I broke my back! I went to the Honda dealer in San Francisco where I purchased my first *new* motorcycle (with the help of Household Finance Corporation). It was another 350, but had a four-cylinder engine making for a very smooth ride.



At first, I was a little disappointed at what seemed like a lack of performance and the low end "grunt" that my other 350 had. But about a week after I bought it, I noticed that the red line on the tachometer was very high, like 8000 RPMs. So I started letting the engine rev higher before shifting – and discovered where all the power was hiding.

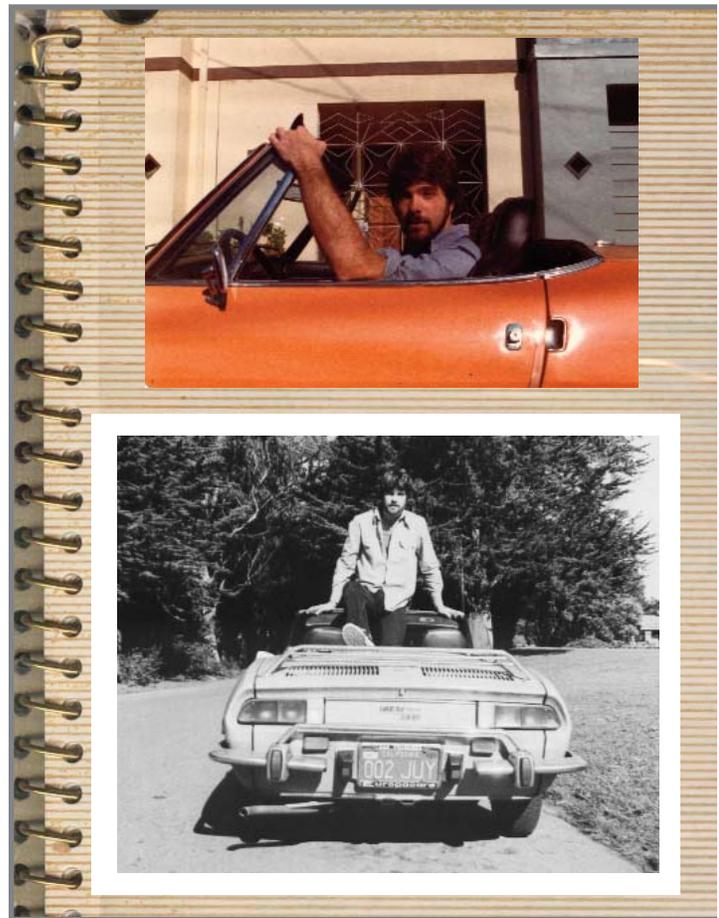
## Fiat 850 1974 - 1976

Shortly after I moved to San Francisco in 1974, I started working at a small printing company. Although I quickly purchased a motorcycle (see story to the left), I also got the use of several "company" vehicles.

The owners of the company had two Fiat 850s, one yellow and one orange. These cars were small! What's really funny is that the owners were big. In fact, if they were both riding in one of the cars, the manufacturer's recommended load limit was exceeded. True story.

These cars had a very small and underpowered motor in the back and couldn't get out of their own way. But the styling was beautiful and they were lots of fun.

Since I had a Massachusetts driver's license, I had to take a driving test after my move to California. It was fun taking the test in the little convertible. I think the DMV guy had a good time.



# 1975 Honda 750F

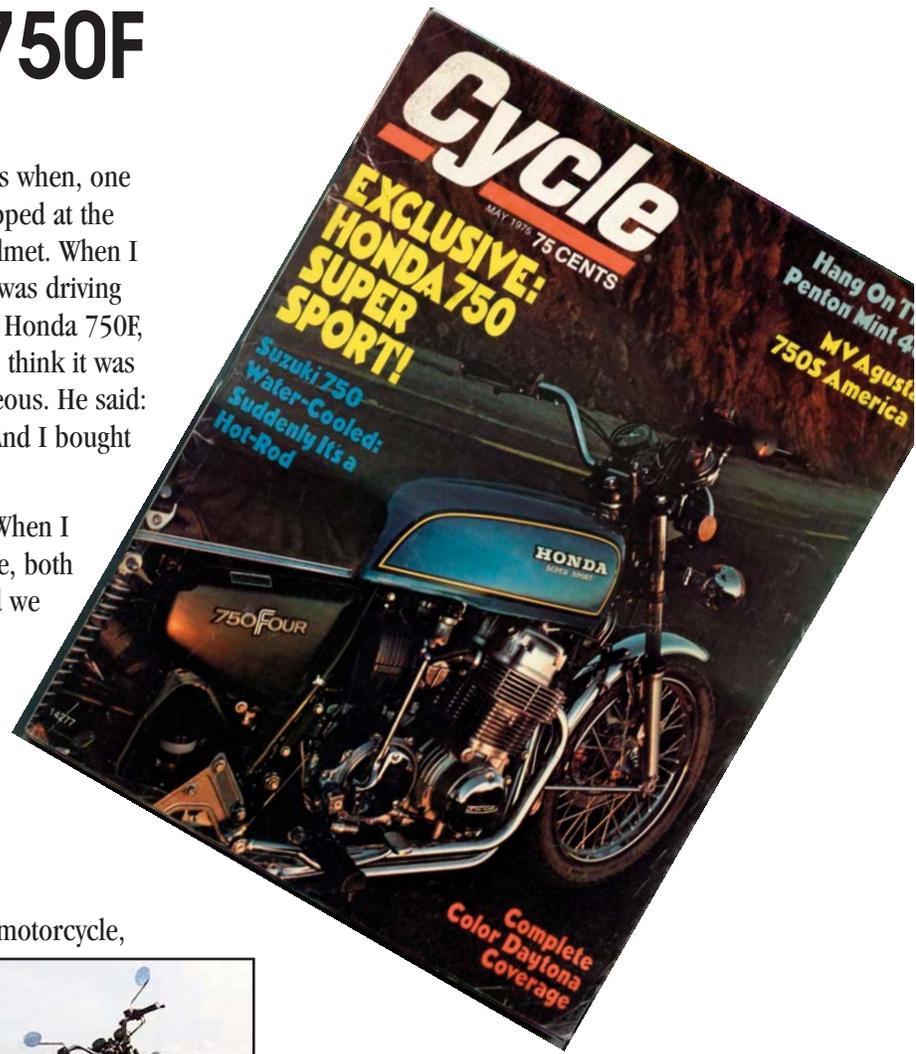
## 1975 - 1986

I only owned the 350-4 for about six months when, one beautiful Saturday morning in April, 1975, I stopped at the Honda dealer to get a new face shield for my helmet. When I got there, Dick Card, the salesman who I knew, was driving up from the service department on a brand new Honda 750E, a sportier version of the venerable Honda 750. I think it was actually released the day before and it was gorgeous. He said: "Paul, you've got to take this for a ride." I did. And I bought it. (What a salesman he was!)

I moved to Los Angeles in July of that year. When I did, my boss, Dave Dotson, and his brother Mike, both with Honda 750s, came up to San Francisco and we all drove down together, taking a brief, but nice trip through Yosemite (see next page).

I owned the 750 until October 1986. Towards the end, I didn't drive the bike too much. Tendonitis in my hand made shifting painful, and after several close calls, I became concerned about safety.

It's unlikely I would ever purchase another motorcycle, but on warm, spring afternoons, I sure get that desire to carve up some canyon road.



# 1975 Datsun Pickup

## 1975

For a brief period in San Francisco, I had the use of the company's brand new Datsun (as Nissans were called back then) pickup truck. Here's a picture of me putting the license plate on my then new Honda 750 in front of the little truck.

When I transferred to the Los Angeles branch of the company, I once again had the use of one of my boss's Fiats.



# Los Angeles

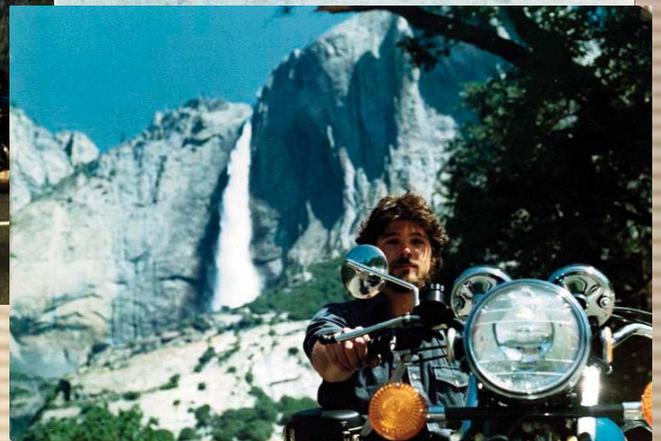
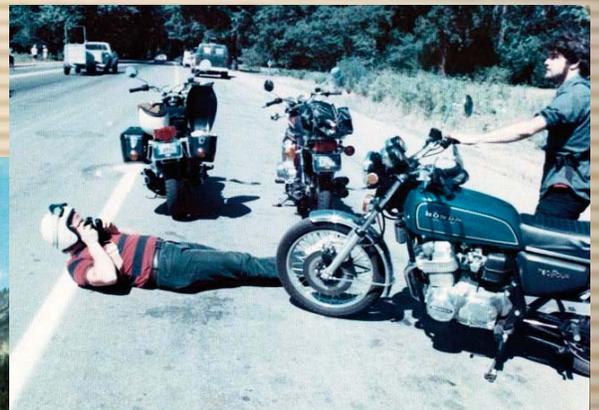


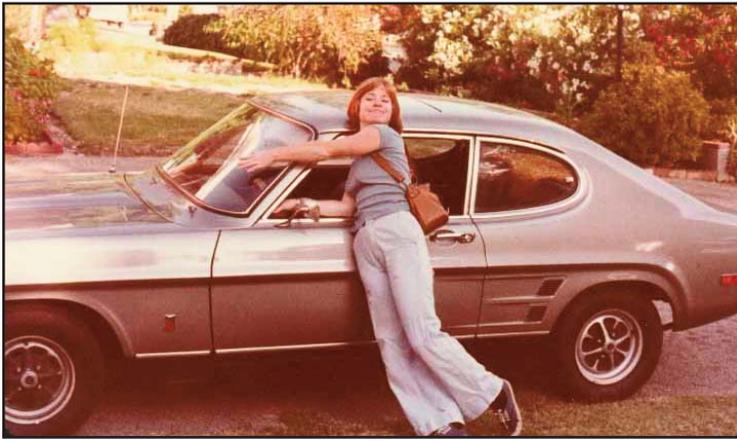
Dave



Mike

When I moved from San Francisco to LA in 1975, my boss Dave Dotson and his brother Mike came up on their Honda 750s and we rode down together. We spent a few days and rode through Yosemite. It was fun.



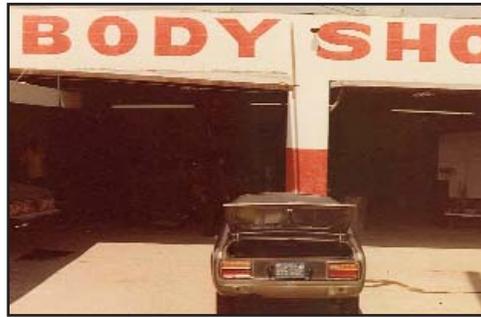


# 1973 Capri

## 1975 - 1980

When I met Rhonda in 1976 (we've been together ever since) she owned a 1973 Capri. It was a nice little car with a powerful little V-6 and sunroof. Unfortunately, it was an automatic. I had previously driven a Capri V-6 with a stick shift and it was a quick car, but the automatic seemed to suck a lot of the power. The other problem was quality – or lack thereof. Things just fell off. The rear side windows fell out! And the interior disintegrated.

We had it painted and it looked great. The photo at the top was taken right after I put the trim and bumpers back on after the paint job.



Rhonda always liked going places on the motorcycle.  
(Small people make excellent motorcycle passengers.)



# Honda Something

## 1977

In April, 1977, a guy I knew was moving out of state and he had a little motorcycle that he didn't want. I think it was a Honda 125 dirt bike. The only problem was that it didn't run. I bought it for \$43 (negotiated down from \$50) because I thought it would be a good project.

Of course, I didn't know much about motorcycle mechanics, but when I got it home, I was pretty successful at the disassembly process. There it sat, hundreds of pieces in boxes. Since I didn't have the knowledge, experience or tools to put it back together, I ran an ad in the *Recycler* and some guy came over and gave me \$50 for it. Then he said: "Could I use your garage for a little while?"

About half an hour later I heard the "brap brap brap" of a small motorcycle engine. The bike came down the driveway (on its own power) and off he went, followed by the person that drove him over. I guess he *did* have the experience.



# 1957 Pontiac

## 1976 - 1977



A year after I moved to Los Angeles, I changed jobs and lost the use of the company Fiat. Since I only owned a motorcycle, I needed something to get me around in the rainy or cold weather. In 1976, I purchased my first car in California. It was a 1957 Pontiac and I think it cost me \$150 (which I had to borrow from Rhonda's grandmother). It was certainly a vehicle of another era. Big, lots of chrome, a thirsty V-8 and a rare (for the time) four-speed automatic transmission.

I used it mainly to drive to work during rainy weather.

One of the most fun rides was its last. On May 21, 1977, some friends were visiting us. We all piled in the Pontiac and went out for Mexican food – and many margaritas. I still remember the ride home, tires screeching on the wide sweeping curves of Verdugo Boulevard in Glendale. I felt like I was in an episode of the 50's TV show, Highway Patrol.



The next time I went to drive the car a few days later, it wouldn't start. I pulled one of the spark plugs (like I knew what I was doing) and found it soaked with water. (I *did* know enough to realize that wasn't good.) That, together with the fact that it needed quite a bit of other work, made me decide its time had come.

Rhonda and I spent a day cleaning him up. Here he is with half of his hood polished.

The photo at the bottom shows old "Ashley" being towed away in June of 1977 – I got \$40 for it because it had a good battery.

It would sure be a great car to restore now.



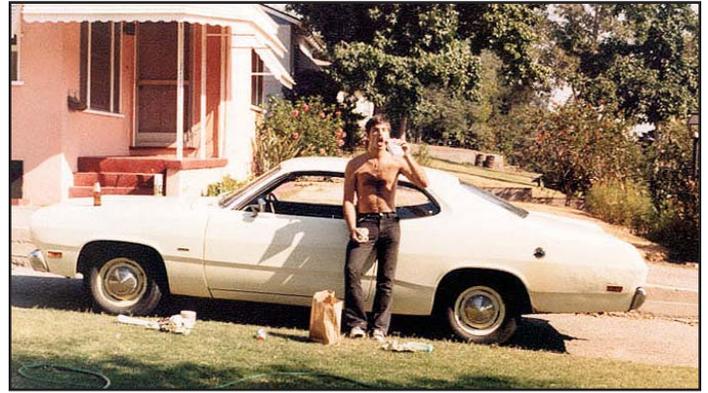
# 1967 Plymouth Duster

## 1977 -1979



After my old Pontiac died, I needed to get some reliable transportation and wound up with a 1967 Plymouth Duster with about 150,000 miles on the odometer. When new, it was probably the cheapest Plymouth one could get, with its six-cylinder engine and three-speed column shifter (referred in the old days as “three on the tree”). The interior was green vinyl. It didn’t even have armrests in the back. It had an AM radio and heater – that’s it.

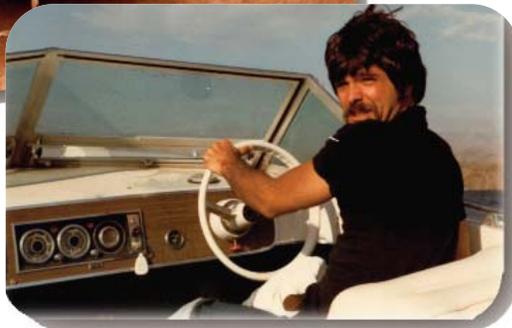
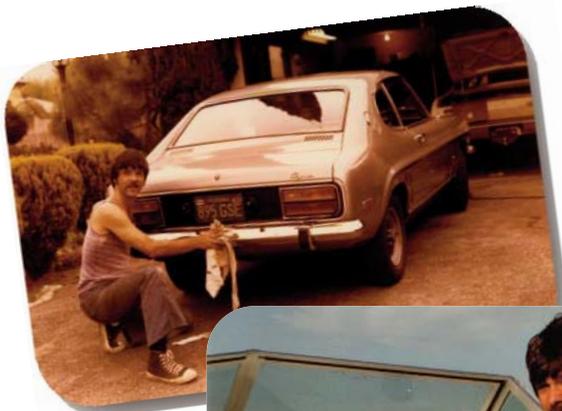
But there was something very attractive about its



simplicity, especially looking at the engine compartment of modern cars. When the hood was open, there was lots of space – the engine, wires, hoses, etc., were all within easy access. I was even able to replace the distributor myself with one I found at a junkyard. And with all that easy-clean vinyl, the back seat was perfect for transporting the dog.

I sold the Duster in January 1980 for \$200. It was leaking oil pretty badly from somewhere. It probably could have been easily fixed, but it was time to buy myself a new car.

### *Snapshots from 1979*



Although I look like a great boat enthusiast in this photo, I’m really not. (The black t-shirt and jeans give it away.)

# 1976 Dodge Van

## 1979 - 1988

In 1979 we purchased Rhonda's father's Dodge van, a relatively short Tradesman 200, which had been fitted with carpeting and paneling – I think we paid \$3000. It was originally silver, but, by the time we got it, was faded pretty badly. Eventually I had it painted white at One-Day Paint and Body (it took more than one day). The new paint job made a big difference – it actually looked pretty sharp.

It was nice having a vehicle that had so much space, but it sure sucked the gas. And it didn't run all that great sometimes, especially when cold or after it had been sitting for a few days. At times I'd have to prop the choke open with a stick (not an easy task that required removing the "captain's chair" driver's seat to open the engine compartment inside).

We used the van for some camping and, of course, transporting the dog. At times I even used it on my commute to work.

But we needed the van less and less and sold it in 1988 to one of the guys that built our deck.



February 1987 (after it had been painted white) in a freak Los Angeles snowfall.

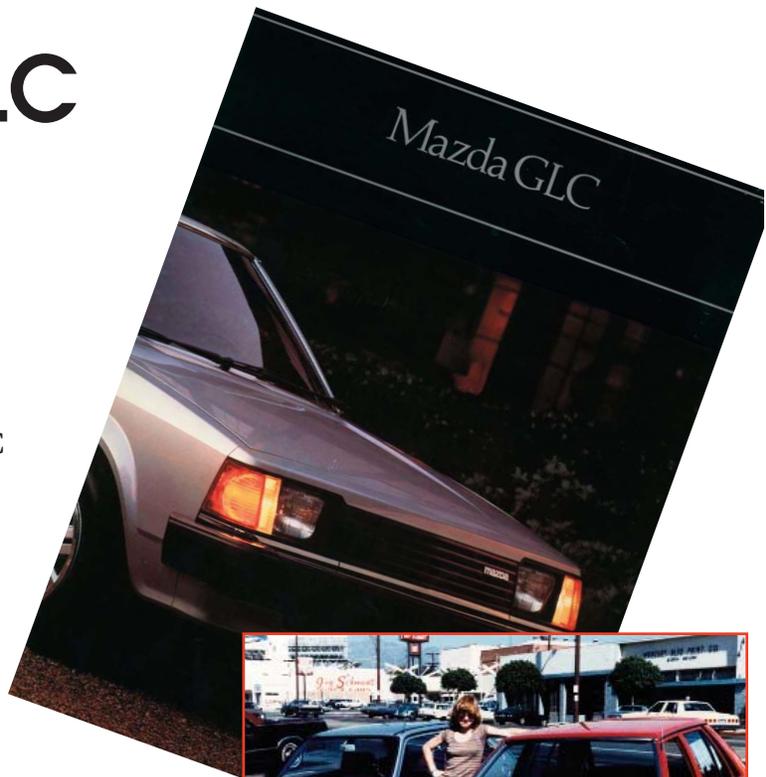


# 1981 Mazda GLC

## 1980 - 1992

In late 1980, we sold Rhonda's Capri for about \$900, and she bought a newly introduced Mazda GLC. It was a cute, bright red five-door hatchback. We needed something in which we could transport our dog, but Rhonda didn't want to get a station wagon. Since the rear seats folded down, the GLC worked out fine.

I took very good care of that car (as I do with all our cars) and when we sold it in 1992 to a young, Hispanic lady not far from our house, the car looked new (although it had over 100,000 miles on it). She was very excited at getting such a nice car. But not long after, we saw the car in front of her house and the back was all smashed in. It brought tears to our eyes – seriously. And sometime later, we saw the car again at another location near our house. It was even more messed up, with some unfinished body work and more dents.



Day of purchase in November 1980...

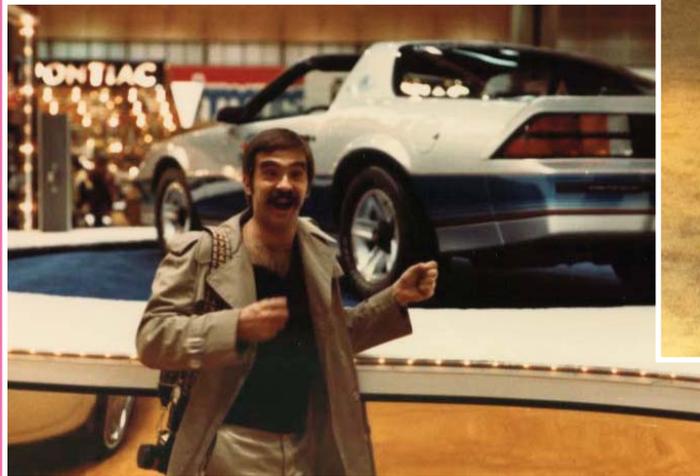
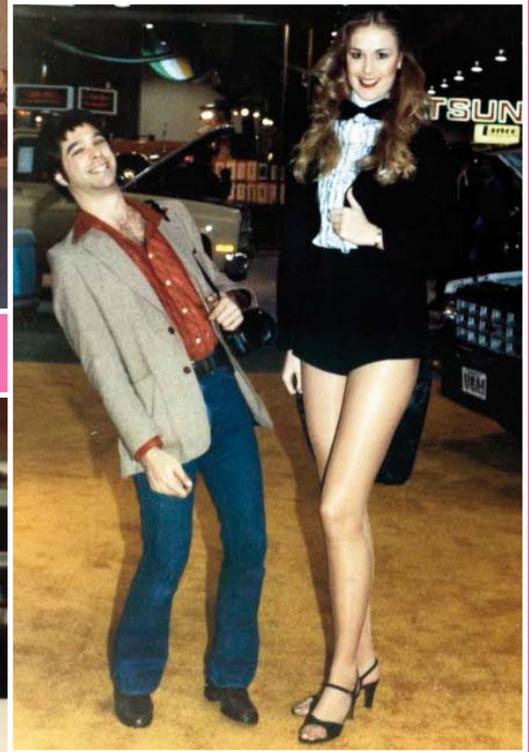


My friend, Bill McMurrey, once referred to our cars as "two little jewels." He was right. We were very lucky to have two such neat little cars through the '80s.

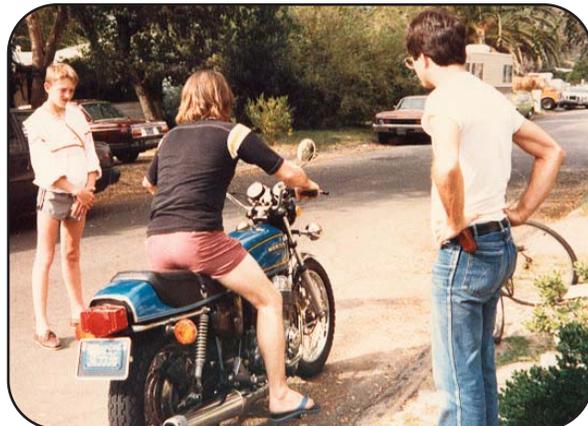


...and over 10 years later, still looking great.

# My brother Ken and me at the 1982 Los Angeles Auto Show



Kind of a sad day in  
November 1986 –  
Paul sells his  
motorcycle



# 1985 Toyota 4-Runner

## 1988 - 1993

After we sold the van, I started looking for a little pickup truck. Since we did a little cross-country skiing at the time, the idea of having a four-wheel drive was appealing.

While looking for a good used pickup (and before the SUV craze), Toyota's 4-Runner caught my eye – four-wheel-drive, room for five, lots of space, etc. After a short search, we found a very clean '85.



Purchasing it was a little weird. When Rhonda and I went to look at it in Burbank, the owner wasn't there so his wife showed us the truck and let us drive it. After we discussed price, Rhonda and I went to the bank to get a cashier's check. I had to call the owner because I didn't know how he spelled his last name. He told me that his wife hadn't really told us that she would sell us the truck at that price and accused me of lying. I suggested that he talk to his wife and call me back if he still wanted to sell the truck. By the time we got home, the phone was ringing. The guy apologized and we made the deal.



Paint on the fender and door was a little dull, so I eventually had them repainted. The metallic gray looked great.

Once, while parked in the middle of nowhere Arizona, someone dropped their door into my driver's door creating a huge dent. Man, did that bug me. I had that fixed as well.

Except for the fact that it was a very bouncy ride, it was lots of fun to drive. The outward visibility was outstanding (especially compared to the van) and I really enjoyed sitting higher. The few times we had it in the snow, it performed very well.

In 1993, when we were given Rhonda's dad's Pathfinder, we sent the Toyota to Rhonda's sister in upstate New York.

I spent the weekend cleaning it up before it was shipped. Man, did it look great. It was the best it would ever look again. Last I heard it was a rusted out little truck.



Day One: After I drove it home (left) Rhonda checked it out (right).



# 1992 Honda Accord

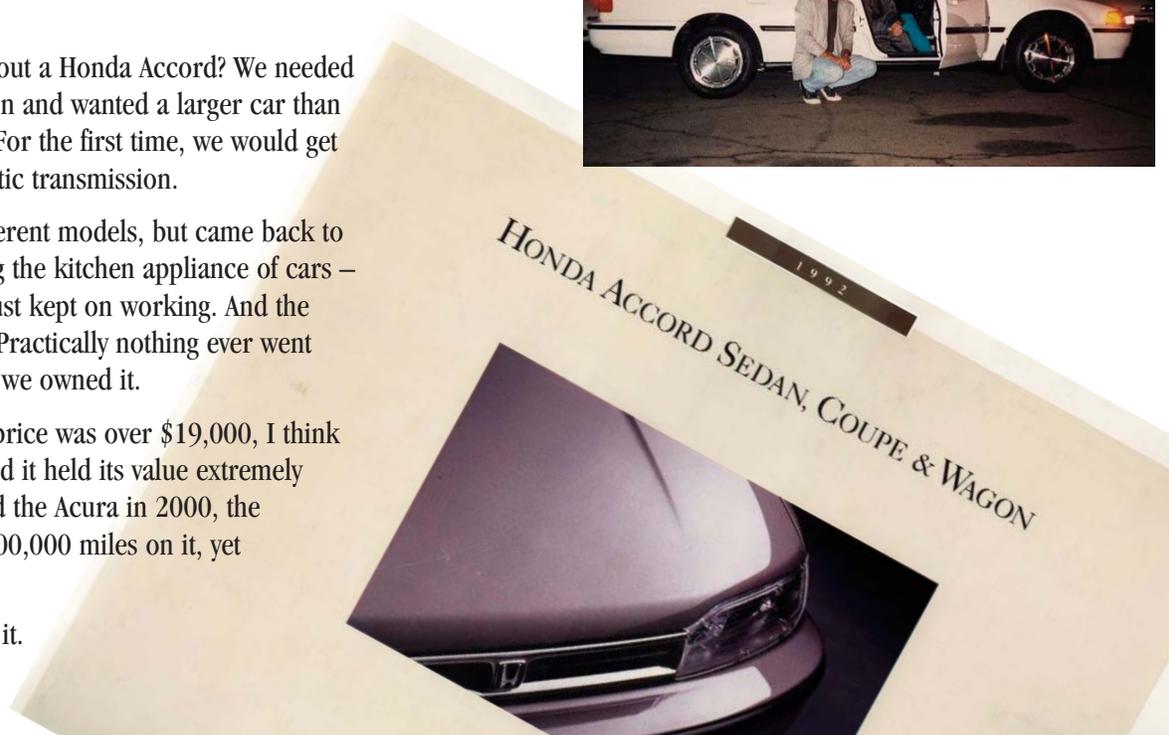
## 1992 - 2000

What can you say about a Honda Accord? We needed dependable transportation and wanted a larger car than what we'd been driving. For the first time, we would get a 4-door with an automatic transmission.

We drove lots of different models, but came back to Honda. It was like buying the kitchen appliance of cars – not real exciting, but it just kept on working. And the quality was outstanding. Practically nothing ever went wrong in the many years we owned it.

Although its sticker price was over \$19,000, I think we got it for \$14,500. And it held its value extremely well. When we purchased the Acura in 2000, the Accord had more than 100,000 miles on it, yet we still got over \$7000.

But I wish I still had it.



AMERICAN HONDA MOTOR CO., INC. 1919 TORRANCE BOULEVARD, TORRANCE, CA 90801-2748

DEALER TO WHOM DELIVERED <b>HONDA OF PASADENA</b> 1965 E. FOOTHILL BLVD. PASADENA, CA 91107 CALIFORNIA		PORT OF ENTRY <b>LOS ANGELES</b> 02201
DELIVERY POINT <b>LOS ANGELES</b> 265006		METHOD OF TRANSPORTATION <b>TRUCK / COMMERCE</b> 206510
MODEL <b>1992 ACCORD 4DR EX</b>	ENGINE NO. <b>A11-565248</b>	COLOR <b>WHITE</b>
VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION NO. <b>JHMCB7675NC040440</b>	MANUFACTURER'S SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE <b>18,995.00</b>	INTERIOR <b>BLUE</b>

**1992 ACCORD 4DR EX**

2156CC SOHC 4 CYLINDER 16-VALVE ENGINE W/PROGRAMMED FUEL INJECTION	STD
4-SPEED ELECTRONIC AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION/TACHOMETER	STD
4-WHEEL INDEPENDENT DOUBLE WISHBONE SUSPENSION	STD
FRONT & REAR STABILIZER BARS/GAS PRESSURE SHOCK ABSORBERS	STD
4-WHEEL POWER DISC BRAKES W/HONDA 3-CHANNEL ANTI-LOCK (ABS)	STD
VARIABLE-ASSIST RACK & PENTON POWER STEERING	STD
DRIVER SIDE SRS (AIRBAG)/ADJUSTABLE 3-POINT FRONT SEAT BELTS	STD
P195/60 R15 MICHELIN MXV-4 ALL-SEASON RADIAL TIRES/ALLOY WHEELS	STD
POWER WINDOWS/POWER DOOR LOCKS/BODY-COLOR POWER DOOR MIRRORS	STD
POWER TINTED GLASS MOONROOF W/SUNSHADE/DUAL TAILPIPE	STD
AM/FM ELECTRONIC FULL LOGIC 20W X 4 STEREO RADIO W/CASSETTE, FOUR SPEAKERS, & AUTOMATIC POWER ANTENNA	STD
SOFT TOUCH HEAT & VENT CONTROLS W/5-SPEED FAN	STD
AIR CONDITIONING/CRUISE CONTROL/ILLUMINATED PASSENGER VANITY MIRROR	STD
DIGITAL CLOCK/LOW FUEL WARNING LIGHT/FRONT MUD GUARDS	STD
ELECTRIC REAR WINDOW DEFROSTER/SIDE WINDOW DEFROSTERS	STD
FRONT RECLINING BUCKET SEATS/MOQUETTE CLOTH UPHOLSTERY	STD
FOLD-DOWN REAR SEATBACK WITH LOCK/REAR SEAT HEAT-VENT DUCTS	STD
REAR 3-POINT SEATBELTS & CENTER LAP BELT/CHILD SAFETY SEAT ANCHOR	STD
REMOTE TRUNK RELEASE WITH LOCK/REMOTE FUEL DOOR RELEASE	STD
PASSENGER ASSIST HANDLES/COIN BOX/TRUNK LIGHT	STD
REAR MAGAZINE POCKETS/DOOR COURTESY LIGHTS/IGNITION SWITCH LIGHT	STD
DRIVER'S SEAT ADJUSTABLE LUMBAR SUPPORT & FOLD DOWN ARMREST	STD
REAR SEAT CENTER ARMREST/CHILD-PROOF REAR DOOR LOCKS	STD
TINTED GLASS/INTERMITTENT WINDSHIELD WIPERS	STD
MULTI-REFLECTOR HALOGEN HEADLIGHTS/HEADLIGHT FLASHER	STD
BODY COLOR BUMPERS/MAINTENANCE INDICATOR	STD
CALIFORNIA EMISSION CONTROL SYSTEM	70.00
DESTINATION AND HANDLING CHARGE	290.00

This label has been affixed to this motor vehicle by American Honda Motor Co., Inc. in U.S.A. pursuant to F.R.C. 49.103-103, which prohibits the removal or alteration of this label prior to delivery to the ultimate purchaser. Dealer's license and title fees, state and local taxes, dealer's optional equipment and accessories are not included. (Includes Pre-Delivery Service)

**Total 19,355.00**

Compare this vehicle to others in the **FREE GAS MILEAGE GUIDE** available at the dealer

CITY MPG ●●●● ●●●● ●●●● ●●●● ●●●● ●●●● ●●●● ●●●●		HIGHWAY MPG ●●●● ●●●● ●●●● ●●●● ●●●● ●●●● ●●●● ●●●●
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Actual Mileage will vary with options, driving conditions, driver habits, and vehicles.

**1992 ACCORD**  
**132 CID 4-CYL ENGINE**  
**ELECTRONIC FUEL INJECTION**

For Comparison Shopping, all vehicles classified as **COMPACT**

# 1988 Nissan Pathfinder

## 1993 - 2002



When Rhonda's dad passed away in March 1993, her mom graciously gave me his Pathfinder. With only 26,000 miles on the odometer, it was like getting a new little truck.



The Pathfinder rode quite a bit better than the 4-Runner (which we sent to Rhonda's sister for use in upstate New York).

In the nine and a half years I owned it, I put about 105,000 miles on the Nissan. One of the reasons I'd been able to keep this vehicle so long (in such great shape) is that

I found a wonderful independent Nissan mechanic named Beck in Pasadena. The service department at the Nissan dealer near our house was horrible.

During the final few years I owned it, I test drove many other small SUVs (I'd considered the Ford Escape, Mazda Tribute, Toyota RAV4, Honda CRV and Pilot). I hesitated selling it. But after I got a new job with a round trip commute of 100 miles, I wound up replacing it with a Toyota Highlander. (Ironically, I sold the Pathfinder with the help of the *Auto Trader*, my new employer.)

I really *loved* that little truck.



Violet gives me the keys, May 1993



The first cleaning... very thorough.

The last wash, September 2002.



My friend, Allen, bought a new truck about the same time I got the Pathfinder. His was bigger.

Charlie Wimmer and his nephew pick up the Pathfinder.

I ran into Charlie a few years later, and he told me that his kid had put a supercharger on it and blew up the engine.





May 1993 – For about a week after we got the Pathfinder we owned five vehicles. I think it's a nice round number – Rhonda didn't agree.



The 4-Runner gets sent to upstate New York. It looked so good that I put a fake new car sticker on the window.



Mom got a Lincoln in 1993. She's been very happy with it. As she often said: "It still rides beautifully."

She gave up driving in 2006 and gave the car to my nephew.

FileMaker Pro - [AutoExp.FP5]

File Edit View Insert Format Records Scripts Window Help

Form View

Close View As Form View As List Summary New Record Delete Record Find Record Find All You Bud

Records: 237  
Semi-sorted

### EXPENSE LOG

Date: 1/6/2002 Mileage: 45,400

Vehicle: Toyota MR2

Item: Battery

Vendor: Sears

Notes: A Die Hard... what else. Replaced the exact same battery. Got over 6 years from a 6-year.

Amount: \$90.55  
Tax: \$6.60  
Total: \$97.15

Category

- Accessories
- DMV Renewal
- Oil Change
- Oil Change w/Service\*
- Parts
- Smog Check
- Service\*
- Tires/Alignment
- Other...

\*Service may include other category items.

Sometime in the mid-90s I created a database to keep track of all our vehicle expenses.

FileMaker Pro - [AutoExp.FP5]

File Edit View Insert Format Records Scripts Window Help

List View

### Capt. Pauley's Auto Expenses

Date	Item	Mileage	Vehicle	Vendor	Category	Amount
4/12/2002	Oil Change		Toyota MR2	California Car Care	Accessories	\$20.99
4/12/2002	Fluiter Clips		Toyota MR2	Bob Smith Toyota	Parts	\$4.40
4/12/2002	Steam Clean and Wax		Toyota MR2	Steve's Auto Detail	Cleaning	\$110.00
5/21/2002	DMV Renewal	125,000	Nissan	DMV	DMV Renewal	\$60.00
5/23/2002	Smog Check	125,000	Nissan	Northall Test City Center	Smog Check	\$60.00
5/23/2002	Coolant Change	47,522	Toyota MR2	Bob Smith Toyota	Service*	\$22.95
5/23/2002	Auto Top Cover Pin		Ford Mustang	Henry's Auto	Parts	\$19.97
2/11/2002	DMV Renewal		Ford Mustang	DMV	DMV Renewal	\$60.00
3/6/2002	Oil Change	124,859	Nissan	Hbf Lube	Oil Change	\$28.15
3/5/2002	Oil Change	25,596	Acura TL	Hbf Lube	Oil Change	\$43.20
1/11/2002	DMV Renewal		Acura TL	DMV	DMV Renewal	\$124.00
1/6/2002	Battery	41,400	Toyota MR2	Sears	Parts	\$90.55
12/24/2001	Wash Service		Nissan	IC Washery	Parts	\$55.13
11/14/2001	Oil Change	70,480	Ford Mustang	Hbf Lube	Oil Change	\$20.24
11/15/2001	Steering Body		Ford Mustang	BBB	Service*	\$201.90
10/14/2001	Oil Change	21,102	Acura TL	Hbf Lube	Oil Change	\$31.24
9/23/2001	DMV Renewal	44,980	Toyota MR2	DMV	DMV Renewal	\$124.00
9/28/2001	Insurance	120,428	Nissan	Auto-Block	DMV Renewal	\$20.00

# 1987 Mustang

## 1989 - Present

In early 1989, Mazda announced it would be introducing a real sports car. To me (and many others) this sounded like a dream-come-true: essentially a Japanese-built version of a British sports car. I knew that at long last I would be able to purchase a new, reasonably-priced sports car and not have to deal with unending mechanical problems.

The Miata made its debut in July of 1989. But the dealers were gouging customers with up to \$4000 "dealer markups." Take a look at the ads for Miatas from the *LA Times* classifieds one month after it was introduced. Many new

owners immediately put their cars up for sale for up to \$40,000! I became very discouraged – and angry.

Right around that time, Rhonda and I took a vacation to New Mexico and rented a Mustang convertible, fortunately, with a V-8. I liked it a lot! (I had test driven a 5.0 GT back in 1986, but wasn't really serious at the time.) When we got home, I started a search for a used 5-speed 5.0 V-8. (I preferred the cleaner looks of the LX over the GT's add-on plastic body panels. Mechanically they were the same.)

It wasn't long before I found a clean 1987 for sale by a woman who thought the clutch was too heavy. (It *is* very heavy.)

The car had about 30,000 miles. When I sold it in January 2007, it had about 75,000.



Our Mustang rental in New Mexico, September 1989

**Mazda**

'90 MIATA's Red Hardtop, B pkg, w/ht B pkg. 1st offer over \$50K for both. You pick up! (Ser. #'s 110592 & 109902) Tenn. (615) 967-4063 pp

'90 MIATA like nu, gar'd, less than 100mi. 99.9M on ext. warr red, avail. immed. loc. St.Louis Best offer srr111342.MO) pp. E 314-458-2994; dy 298-0071 Don

'90 MIATA-WE HAVE A MIATA FOR YOU!S in fact.Won't last long. 2 red. 2 white. 1 blue. Hardtp avail.Freeway.Dir.Ask Troy or Carl 801/621-1100

'90 MIATA marina blue Conv Und 300 mi. Air, cust. tires, cass. Ofrs.ov \$26K(q68370-Az) Pp 602/967-1097 Ed (Phoenix)

\*'90 MIATA MX5 ROADSTER\* (2). \$19,975; \$21,750. (NCT141-PA; YC02589-PA) IMMACULATE! 717/724-5968 717/724-3434 pp

'90 MIATA White w/Bik, ac, am/fm cass. Blaupunkt, custom wheels, Will del. \$25K (tkk782) 404/892-9151 Pp

'90 MIATA, White, A pkg. Less than 50 mi. \$25,000/best offer. (ser.060341) P/p. 205/721-2265 or after 2:15pm, 205/534-0954

'90 MIATA red pkg A,crz cntrl.ac, head rest spkrs.\$25K (CST8525) 919/299-1118 wrk, or 919/852-3091 pp

'90 Miata wht pkg B nevr drvn prv owner Best Offer (7897) 800-257-5141 ext.134 609-799-7106

'90 MIATA Red l'd U.S. Legal 5M Offers over \$23K (airdc) 403-483-8391pp af 5pm wkdy

'90 MIATA Make offer. (Ser107784) 318/322-2288 day; 396-9591 ev. Pp

\*'90 MIATA Red;rare "B" pkg +hrdtp, ac, alm Best ovr \$30K (HEYCHOP) 619/789-7838 pp

'90 MIATA MX5 3100mi Red Alpine stereo cass 4spkrs \$26.8K (FL BNT14Q)pp 407/798-0447

'90 Miata red \$25K Spencer, lowtax(ser070800)Pp Call Ron at 712/262-8955 or 712/262-3934

'90 MIATA red, \$24K, FOB Jackson Miss. 601/324-7901; 601/924-5030 (1AWM445-Miss.) Pp

'90 MIATA red with black int., loaded, best over \$25,000 P/p (236GJN)OH 419/536-5959

'90 MIATA Red, pkg. A, ac, alarm \$31K/obo (s#106288) Pp 619/274-9526

\* '90 MIATA Red undr 2M mi Never titled. \$24,995 (102405) Value Car Sales, 407/282-6779

'90 MIATA, blue, Pkg. A, bra & locking hubs, collectible \$28K/obo(SerI03805)303/771-8432pp

'90 MIATA WHITE, A-PKG, Make offer to: 214/827-8412 817/878-2362 (TX 100ygn)pp

'90 Miata white, alarm, paint protection, only 600mi, \$22.5K OBO (s174) 805-492-6406 pp

'90 MIATA red/bik, a/c, Alpine, Clifford alm,all stock \$25,500/obo (VIN8308) 619-483-7365pp

'90 MIATA B model. Air, alarm, 400 mi. \$23,500 Red Ext wrrnty

'90 MIATA B pkg, Wht, (78 n90) Michael (813)472-8624pp

'90 Miata conv. Az P/u \$40K obo (602)860-0787(FGW867) pp

'89 MPV, MIATA, RX7 CONV. EXCELLENT SELECTION

'90 Miata wht 3kmi alarm ac/ cass./st crvs/bra mi \$26K (2piv433) 818/957-0388 p/p



Mussy goes to a new home - January 2007

# Mustang Mods

March 2001



## The Mustang Project

As I approached my 50th birthday, I thought about doing that 50-year-old guy thing – getting a new Corvette. But something about \$700 car payments kept stopping me (then, as now). So I decided to “hot-rod” the old Mustang a bit. After all, it was in great shape with less than 70,000 miles – not bad for being 12 years old. The “Blue Book” on it was very low which meant I wouldn’t get a lot if I sold it. So I concluded it was a “keeper” and worth an upgrade.

It turned out that there was a very wide selection of after-market, bolt-on bits for the 5.0 Mustangs. And the Internet was an extremely valuable tool for helping me research just what it was I wanted and how much it was going to cost. Through one of the Mustang message boards, I found a guy named Brian at B&D Racing in Canoga Park.

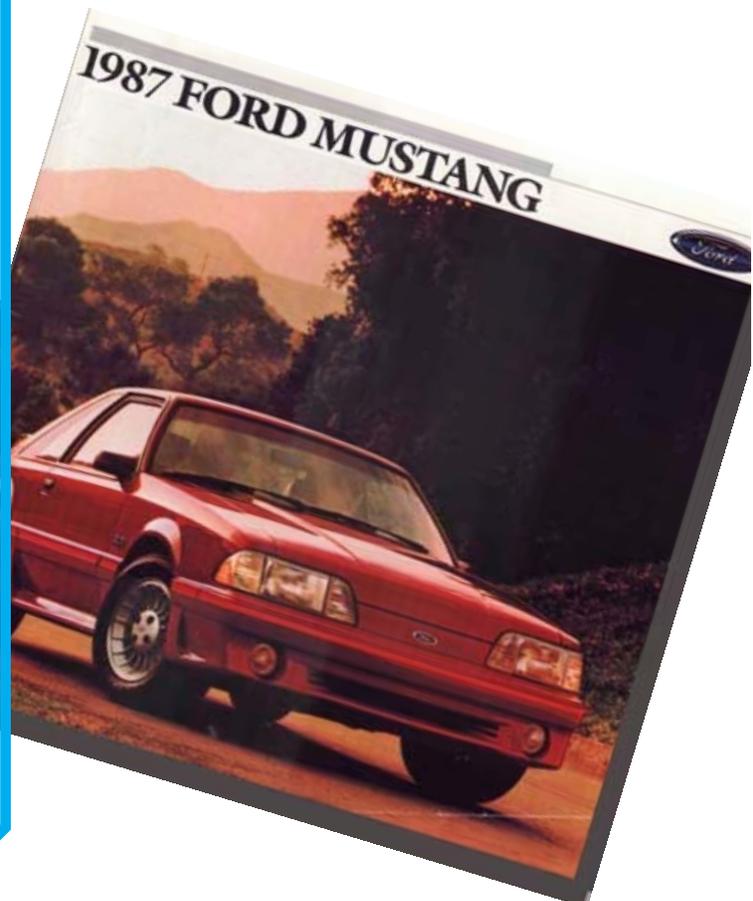
In March, 2001, I had a bunch of stuff done. Specifically: exhaust, intake, engine pulleys, suspension, shifter, ignition, and a few other tidbits. The result is much tighter handling, snappier performance, and she sounds real good! I wanted to kept the “stock” look so I didn’t make any modifications to the body.



Mussy June 04



Got some new wheels and tires in 2003



# The Current Fleet



# 1993 Toyota MR2

## 1996 - Present

When I was 14 or 15 years old, I fantasized that one day I would own two cars – a GTO, the definitive muscle car of the time, and a “true” sports car, something like a Jaguar XKE.

In October, 1996, my fantasy was fulfilled when I acquired my 1993 Toyota MR2. The Mustang turned out to be my “muscle” car, the MR2 became my “sports car.”

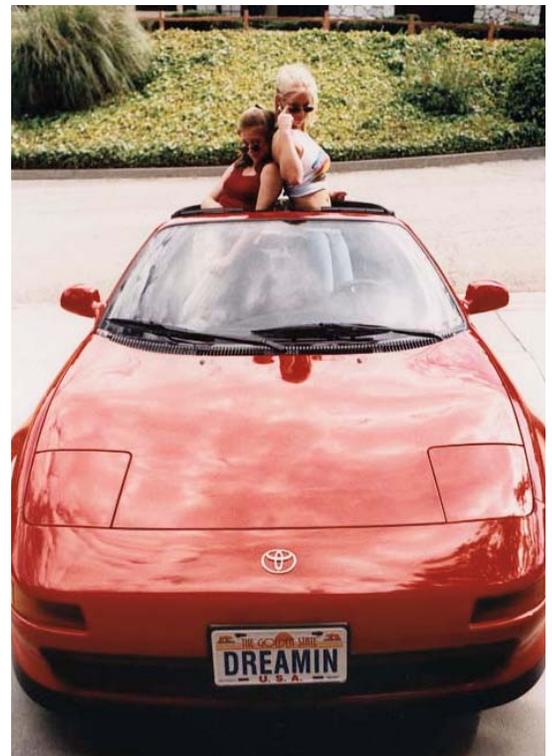
Once again, the Miata bug had bitten me and I had been sort of scouting around for the right one. But I spotted the little red MR2 one Sunday morning on Foothill Blvd. at Bob Smith Toyota in La Crescenta. It was a neat looking car, bright red with a T-top. And it only had 17,000 miles on the clock! It kind of reminded me of a baby Ferrari and I knew it was as close to an “exotic” car that I’d ever get.

Rhonda and I went back later in the day, talked to Ron Smith (no relation to the owner) drove it, and wound up buying it. I think it was about \$14,000.

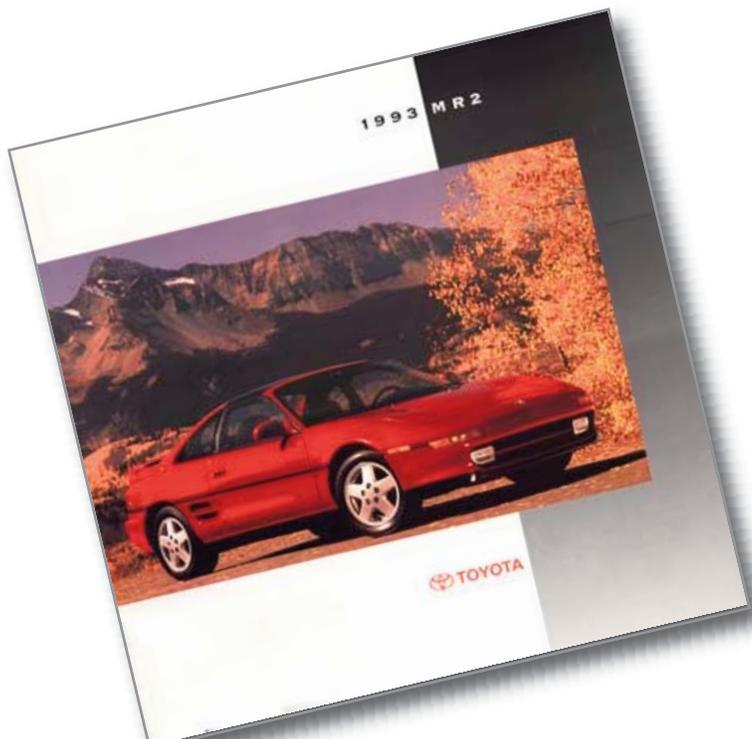
I had always liked the MR2s, but, like many sports cars of the day (like the 300ZX and the Mazda RX7) they got very expensive in their last years of US availability. I think I once drove one that was over \$25,000 – back in 1994!

In early 2002, I decided to minimize driving it. I had it detailed, got a car cover, and started driving it only on special occasions. I think this one’s going to be a classic. As of July 2007, it’s got less about 50,000 miles.

I think it’s a keeper.

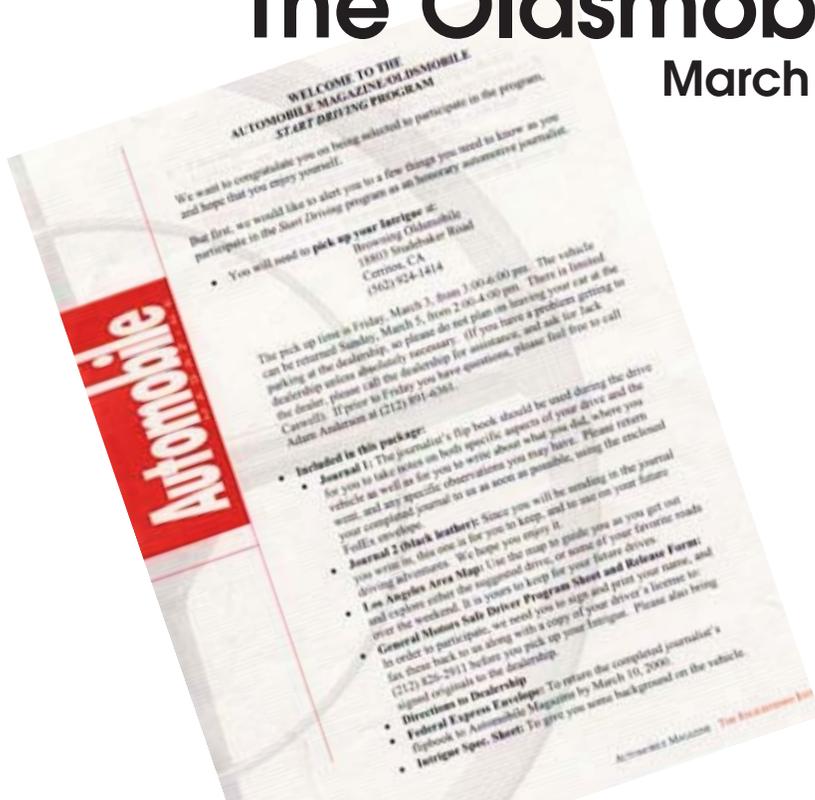


My two cute nieces posing.  
(The plate is a fake, of course.)



# The Oldsmobile Test Drive

March 2000



In March 2000, I was selected by *Automobile Magazine* to test drive and evaluate an Oldsmobile for three days.

I picked up a brand-new Intrigue on a Friday, March 3 and was encouraged to drive a lot. It was fun.

The car was very nice – a beautiful bright silver, spiffy chrome wheels and a gray leather interior. I would never have purchased one of these, but I sure enjoyed driving it, especially with its manufacturer's license plates.

As we were shortly planning on purchasing a new car, we used the weekend as an opportunity for research. There was a small auto show out in Pomona, and on the way back, we stopped to test drive a BMW 323 and Audi A4. Both of these cars drove beautifully, but after the Oldsmobile (and Acura TL – which we eventually purchased) they seemed a bit small and expensive.



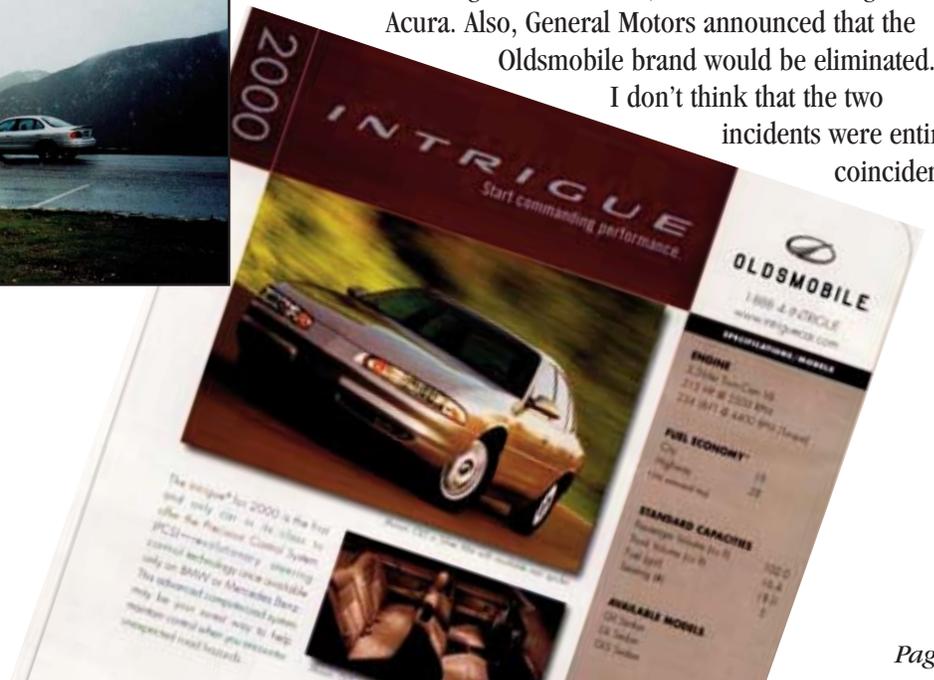
On this particular weekend, we also experienced hail and snow in Tujunga, and I was able to drive the car through some poor road conditions and was pretty impressed.

I wrote up my evaluation, trying to make it sound like an independent road test. It was months before I saw any reference to the test in the magazine, and I was kind of bummed when it turned out to be an elaborate plan to get advertising material. My input wasn't used.



Not long after this event, Rhonda and I bought the Acura. Also, General Motors announced that the Oldsmobile brand would be eliminated.

I don't think that the two incidents were entirely coincidental.



# 2000 Acura TL

## 2000 - Present



In early 2000, Rhonda's boss started giving her a generous car allowance which helped us decide to get a slightly larger, more comfortable car.

Trying to find a TL to drive turned out to be very difficult at the end of 1999. The salespeople at the Acura dealers were very annoying. When I called a dealer in Van Nuys, a sales lady told me that the TL was a "pre-purchased" vehicle, meaning that if we wanted to drive one, we'd have to buy it first. (That sounded a little nuts, eh?) When we finally located one in Pasadena, the sales lady there rushed us through the test drive telling us that someone was about to purchase the car.

**Paul Davis**  
6825 Wexford Place  
Tujunga, CA 91042  
(818) 352-7330

December 5, 1999

Richard Colliver  
Acura Division  
American Honda Motor Co., Inc.  
1919 Torrance Blvd.  
Torrance, CA 90501

Dear Mr. Colliver:

Yesterday I received the brochure that I had requested for the Acura TL along with your letter. Thanks.

Since I know that automobile manufacturers spend quite a bit of time and money accumulating information about customers, and, more importantly, potential customers, I thought you might be interested in my Acura dealer experience.

Within a few months, we will be replacing my wife's Honda Accord. Last Saturday we decided to look at and drive the Acura TL. As an automobile enthusiast (I currently own four), I receive several automobile publications, all of which have given the TL excellent reviews during the past year. Also, we've been very pleased with the two Honda's we've owned.

Keys Acura of Van Nuys was the first dealer I called (and the one which you recommend in your letter). I was told by a rather rude woman that the TL was a "pre-sold car", and if I wanted to drive one, I would have to put a deposit down and wait until one arrived. (Note to self: never, ever call that dealer again.)

I then called Acura of Pasadena and was told that they did indeed have a car to drive. When we arrived about 45 minutes later, the saleswoman was very polite, but she told us we that the car we were about to drive (the only TL they had) was in the process of being sold - we had to hurry. (Since the car was indeed sold while we were there, if we had arrived an hour later, we would not have been able to look at, let alone drive one.)

During our conversation with the saleswoman, we were made aware

and

was

happy

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e,

sig



First day...



first gas...



first wash.

I was so pissed that I wrote a letter to Acura. Shortly thereafter, the manager of Acura Van Nuys called me, apologized, and sent us tickets for Preview Night at the auto show (a \$150 value).

In March of 2000, we purchased one at Acura of Valencia. (They were much easier to find by then.)

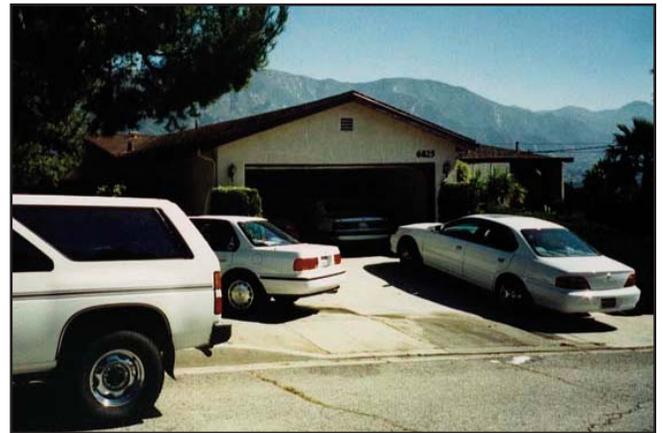
We had driven quite a number of cars by this time (including Infiniti, Audi and BMW) and finally decided on the Acura: First of all, it was a Honda and we had been very pleased with our previous Hondas. And it was very well-equipped for the price. Plus, it had to be one of the smoothest accelerating car I'd ever driven! Although the BMW was like a 4-door sports car, it was a little small (as was the Audi A4) and a few thousand dollars more.

A little side note - in a tradition started when I was 15, I'm *still* removing trim from my cars: I took the chrome "A-C-U-R-A" off the back. (Fortunately, most identification is put on these days with two-sided tape.)

It's been a wonderful car.



February 2000 – I'm sure lucky to have a couple of great "toys" like these, eh?



March 2000 – Once again, for a brief period after we purchased the Acura and before we sold the Honda, we owned five cars.

## My License Plates – 2000



**For Sale**  
**1988 Nissan Pathfinder SE**

- 4-Wheel Drive
- V-6, 5-speed
- Air Conditioning
- Chrome Wheels
- Trailer Hitch
- 130,000 miles

Snow chains (never used) and service manual included.



This vehicle is in excellent condition. It has been family-owned since new, and has been expertly maintained. Receipts for all maintenance are available.

**\$4800 o.b.o.**  
Call Paul  
**818-352-7330**  
Tujunga

The flyer I made to help sell the Pathfinder. (August 2002)



# 2003 Mazda Miata

## 2004 - Present



The test drive.

On January 10, 2004, 35 years after I got my TR4, I purchased a fifth car: a gorgeous 2003 Mazda Miata Shinsen. Yes, I finally got a little roadster.

Back on New Year's Day, Rhonda finally agreed to let me get one. "Do what you want," were her words. I like to think it was my great salesmanship that finally won her over, but I think I made some deal about new kitchen cabinets.

Anyway, I started a search for a used British Racing Green Miata, to kind of replace that old TR4 I had so many years ago. The on-line Miata community was incredible. I learned so much from Miata owners on the forums at *miata.net* and other places.



After the purchase.

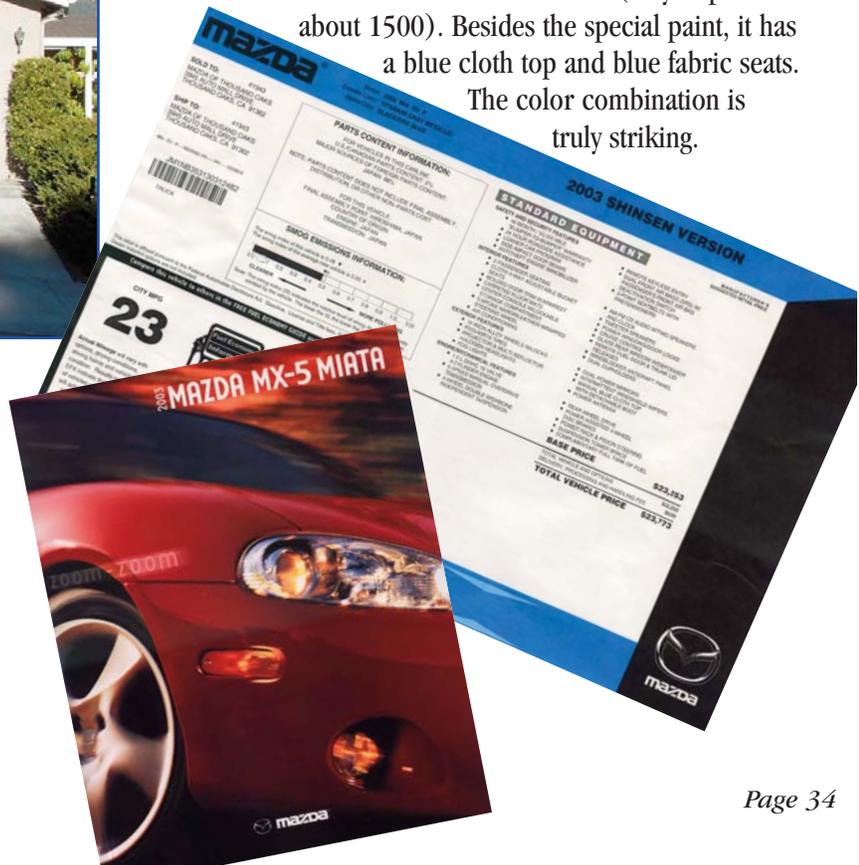
After driving a couple, I stumbled into Mazda of Thousand Oaks to drive a 2001. They were asking about \$14,000. After the test drive, I asked if they had any killer deals on a 2003. Tim, the salesman, pointed to the lovely Titanium Gray Metallic Shinsen and said: "I can give you that one for \$16,995." I couldn't believe it...that was \$7000 off the list!

I went home, got Rhonda, and within a few hours, it was sitting in the driveway. What a fun little car. After all these years, I've got another little roadster.



I'm a lucky guy to have such neat toys. Yes, I still love to play with cars.

The Shinsen is a limited edition (they imported about 1500). Besides the special paint, it has a blue cloth top and blue fabric seats. The color combination is truly striking.



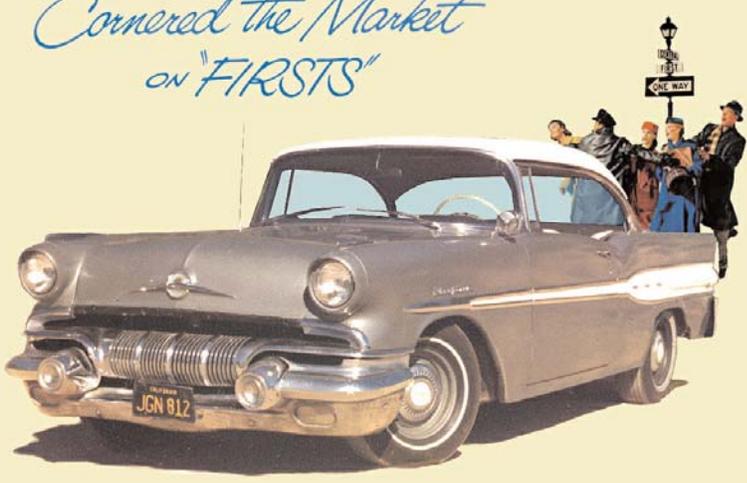
First wash.

As I'm sure you can tell, I like playing with computer/digital photography. Using Adobe Photoshop, I created a few "artistic" type of pieces of automotive art. (These were done in 2002.)



On some web site, I found a magazine ad for the new 1957 Pontiac, so I recreated the ad using a picture of the Pontiac I owned back in the '70s. (See page 16.)

*LOOKS LIKE Pontiac  
Cornered the Market  
ON "FIRSTS"*



It's new from power to personality, this '57 Pontiac, and packed with a carload of fresh ideas that caught the entire industry by surprise! There are over 6-dozen "firsts" in this spanking-new beauty, all proved and polished to perfection in the most grueling road test ever undertaken—the 100,000-mile Marathon Run! Sample the '57 Pontiac's cloud-soft ride, its cat-quick wheel response, the lusty brilliance of its all-new V-8 engine. One mile on the road in this solidly proved newcomer will spoil you for anything else!

**FIRST CAR AT ANY PRICE WITH . . .**  
**Star Flight Body Design**—A Pontiac Exclusive—larger and lower than ever before—'57's most distinctive automotive styling.  
**New Interior Styling** with the "Off-the-Shoulder" Look—a fashion "first" for '57—perfectly color-matched with the exterior of your choice.  
**New Strato-Streak V-8 Engine**—270 h.p. in the Star Chief and Super Chief, 252 h.p. in the Chieftain—with Strato-Flight Hydra-Matic, an extra-cost option.  
**Cloud-soft, Level-Line Ride**—the ride sensation of the year—a new suspension system based on a big, road-hugging 124 or 122 inch wheelbase.  
**Three Popular-Priced Series:** Star Chief • Super Chief • Chieftain

PONTIAC MOTOR DIVISION OF GENERAL MOTORS CORPORATION

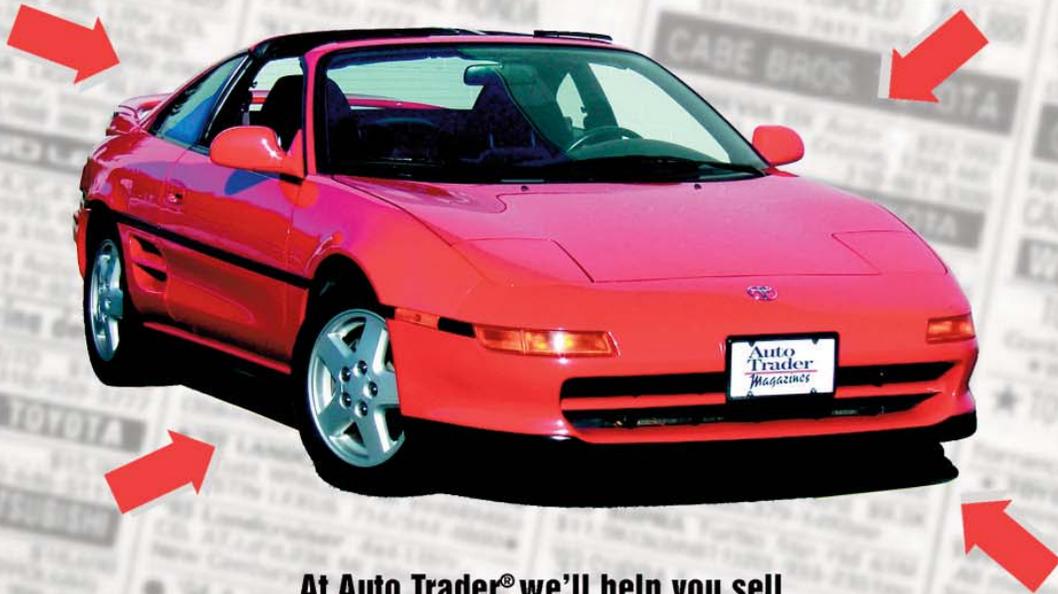


**IT'S AMERICA'S NUMBER 1 ROAD CAR!**



These are actually a couple of model cars on my patio table.

# Some Things Are Meant To Be Seen



**At Auto Trader® we'll help you sell  
your vehicle by getting it seen.  
As California's premiere photo ad publisher we have the means  
to get your vehicle the attention it deserves.  
Our ads run for two weeks, and cost only \$25,  
or Run Till It Sells for \$37 in Autos & Trucks & \$39 in Sportscar.**

**After all the service your vehicle has given you,  
don't you think it deserves a little attention?**

**Auto  
Trader®**  

---

**Magazines**

For Ad Placement Information Call  
**1-800-395-SELL™**  
[www.TraderOnline.com](http://www.TraderOnline.com)

This is a "filler" ad used in Auto Trader magazines.

In January, my cousin, Robert Horton (a pretty famous actor from the 50s and 60s) sold three of his cars at the Kruse Auction in Phoenix. I drove his Aston-Martin across the block.



In June, a co-worker bought a Highlander like mine.



What a sporty-looking couple!



One of my first rides with the local Miata club.



Me with another car enthusiast.



Yikes! On a trip to Bullhead City in June, we hit 115 degrees!



I try to go to every car show in the local area.



When a Baby Boomer gets a Miata, you get a Baby Zoomer!



I met Dennis Gage, host of the TV show "My Classic Car", at Hot August Nights in Reno.



I admit it - I've always been a paranoid parker. So during the second half of 2004, I put together a web site devoted to good parking. I am surprised by the positive feedback I receive from all over the world. Some folks actually send me 'thank you' notes! I've even been quoted in newspaper articles.



In September, I displayed the Mustang in a show at the Petersen Automotive Museum.



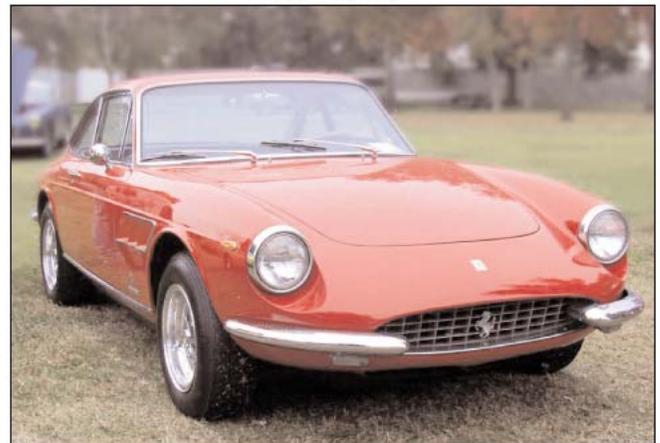
In August, the Miata club visited Meguiar's for a detailing seminar - it was great!



There's nothing like a weekend playing with toys. (The big ones are more fun!)



BEST of ITALY  
WOODLEY PARK - NOVEMBER 7, 2004  
PAUL DAVIS





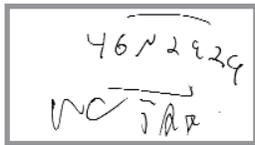
Some "artsy" stuff I created from photos taken at the LA Auto Show.

I'm lucky that I work at Auto Trader because it doesn't seem too geeky to fill my office with automobile art and models.



# A Close Call

January 19, 2006



This was one of those heart-pounders.

I've been very fortunate. For the past few years I've had a 100+ mile two-way daily commute, almost entirely on the 210 and 10 freeways. So far, except for some minor damage from flying debris, I've remained unscathed. In 30,000 miles per year of driving, I've seen many incidents and many more close calls. But this one was *too* close.

With a trailer truck to my right, I was in the left lane of a two-lane transition from the westbound 10 to the northbound 57 in Pomona. Suddenly I noticed that the cab portion of truck had crossed into my lane. It didn't take me too long to realize that the rest of the truck was shortly going to be following the cab. I looked over to see the trailer portion very close – I mean *real* close. I honked, moved a bit to the left and slowed to let him by. But before he completely passed me I heard a smash – he had hit my mirror.

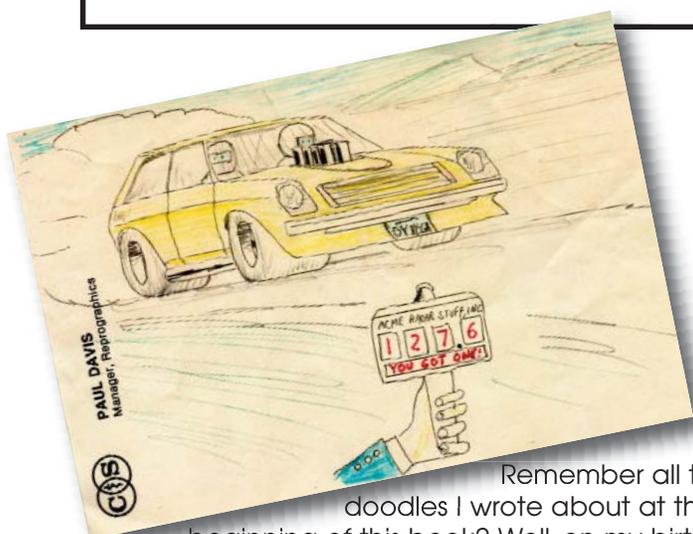


I scribbled down the license number and the name on the truck door, but the driver wouldn't make eye contact with me. I guess there's a possibility he didn't even know he had hit me.

When I got home, I saw that not only did he know my mirror out, but the tire of the truck lightly rubbed my front fender. Holy mackerel. (I could not locate a company by that name.)

I got a new mirror and, amazingly, with some elbow grease, was able to remove all of the tire residue from the paint.

Here's a hint: Don't mess with trailer trucks. The driver could be wrong, but *you* will still lose.



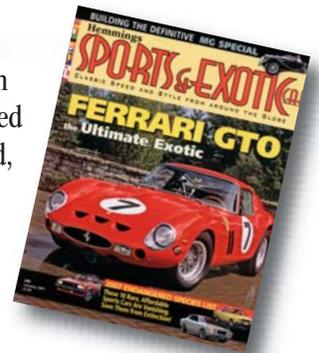
Remember all those doodles I wrote about at the beginning of this book? Well, on my birthday in May, 2006 (celebrated in Hawaii) my old friend Will gave me a framed drawing that I did of his Vega wagon back in 1978. It was great seeing it again. I'm glad he saved it.



I rented a Shelby Mustang from Hertz on a visit to Boston in October, 2006. Needless to say, it was fun. And it started me thinking about getting a new Mustang GT. (In January 2007, I did!)

One of the neatest things to happen in my world of cars was to have photos of my MR2 used in a car magazine.

In December, 2005, I started a thread on the miata.net forum about an article which I had seen in *Hemmings Sports and Exotic Car* magazine. In that thread, one miata.net forum member seemed to react very negatively to the mention of the magazine. After several references to a previous thread, I found that this member had been kind of a jerk to Craig Fitzgerald, one of the magazine's editors. Craig was trying to locate a stock Miata to photograph for an article, and the poster got very nasty because his Miata had been modified – and rejected by the editor. I was embarrassed for the more “rational” members of the forum, so I e-mailed Craig, sort of apologizing.



In a subsequent e-mail exchange, I mentioned that I had a very original 1993 MR2. I was shortly contacted by Jeff Koch, their associate editor on the west coast, and, to make a long story short, earlier this year, he photographed my MR2. It was featured in the January 2007 issue in an MR2 Buyers Guide.



# 2007 Mustang GT

## 2007 - Present

History indeed repeats itself – at least in my garage.

In 1989, after renting a Mustang convertible in New Mexico, I bought one (see page 26).

I kept that car for 18 years, eventually modifying it for a bit more "punch".

But I drove it less and less (in the last year I owned it, I think it only went about 500 miles) and I started thinking about a replacement. The thought of a new Mustang crossed my mind.

Well, in October, 2006, on a trip to Boston, I rented a Shelby GT-H (page 41). I really liked it. Yet as fancy as it looked, it was essentially a slightly modified Mustang GT. I thought "hmmmmm."

In January 2007, Matt Stone, Editor of *Motor Trend*, showed up to our weekly car meet in a new Shelby GT. That did it – I took it as a sign. The next week, I did something I've dreamed about since I was a teenager...I ordered a muscle car with the exact options I wanted. Five weeks later, my Mustang was delivered. It's a beauty and so much fun.

Needless to say, the on-line community was, and continues to be, a robust source of information about the car.



I'll probably wind up modifying it a bit (so far, I've only added custom mufflers), but what's incredible is that right out of the box it is a very quick car – and yet gets over 25 mpg on the freeway using regular gas! (Mileage is substantially less when *not* cruising the freeway...if you know what I mean.)

By the way, I picked the car up in the exact same spot where Clark Griswold was standing when he first gazed upon the Wagon Queen Family Truckster in the movie "Vacation" (starring Chevy Chase). The scene was filmed at what is now Star Ford. (I hope I have better luck with mine.)



Greg and Richie...a couple of nice sales guys.

As I was thinking about getting a new Mustang, Matt Stone, editor of *Motor Trend*, showed up to a car meet in a new Shelby Mustang. I ordered mine the next week!



The same spot – about 25 years apart.





His first wash.

Of course i didn't pay list. Besides a \$1000 rebate, I think I got a \$1200 discount.

VEHICLE DESCRIPTION  
**MUSTANG**

2007 GT COUPE PREMIUM  
4-PASSENGER SPORTS CAR  
4.6L 3V OHC V8 ENGINE  
5-SPEED MANUAL TRANSMISSION

VIN 1ZVHT2H57306908  
306908  
EXTERIOR  
TUNGSTEN GREY  
INTERIOR  
DARK CHARCOAL LEATHER

STANDARD EQUIPMENT INCLUDED AT NO EXTRA CHARGE

**EXTERIOR**

- PREMIUM PAINTED CAST ALUMINUM WHEELS
- P235/SZR 17 2-TIRES
- REAR DECK LID SPOILER
- FRONT FOG LAMPS
- STAINLESS STEEL DUAL EXH DUAL POWER MIRRORS
- VARIABLE INTERVAL WIPERS
- REAR WINDOW DEFROSTER

**INTERIOR**

- SHAKER 500 AUDIO SYSTEM
- AIR/FW W/ CD/6 & WPS
- AUXILIARY AUDIO INPUT JACK
- AIR CONDITIONING
- LEATHER TRIM SPORT SEATS
- POWER 8-WAY DRIVERS SEAT
- SPLIT FOLD REAR SEAT
- CENTER CONSOLE W/ARREST
- 16-SPEAKER PREMIUM 7YR/100K WHEELS

**FUNCTIONAL**

- POWER DOOR LOCKS & WINDOWS
- DUAL VANITY MIRRORS
- BRAKES, POWER 4-WHEEL DTSC
- POWER RACK PIVOT STEERING
- POWER POINTS (2)

**SAFETY/SECURITY**

- ABS/TRACTION CONTROL
- ATE BAGS - DRIV/FRONT PASS
- FRONT/REAR OUTBOARD THREE POINT SHOULDER/LAP BELTS
- 24 HR ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE
- SECURELOCK
- REMOTE KEYLESS ENTRY

**WARRANTY**

- 5YR/36000 BUMPER TO BUMPER
- 5YR/60,000 POWERTRAIN

**PRICE INFORMATION**

STANDARD VEHICLE PRICE **\$26,875.00**

**INCLUDED ON THIS VEHICLE**

- ORDER CODE 100A-PREM GT COUPE
- DRIVER & PASSENGER AIR BAGS
- ANTI-LOCK BRAKES
- TRACTION CONTROL
- POWER 6-WAY DRIVER'S SEAT

**OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT**

- 215/40 CRIS TIRE NO CHARGE
- INTERIOR UPGRADE PACKAGE 460.00
- CHARCOAL ALUMINUM PANEL
- REAR SPOILER DELETE NO CHARGE
- ACTIVE ANTI-THEFT SYSTEM 325.00
- WHEEL LOCKING KIT 50.00
- CALIFORNIA EMISSIONS SYSTEM NO CHARGE
- FRONT SEAT SIDE AIRBAGS 380.00
- 3.55 RATIO LIMITED SLIP AXLE 100.00
- COMFORT GROUP 575.00
- HEATED SEATS
- 18" POLISHED ALUMINUM WHEEL 925.00
- PREMIER TRIM PACKAGE 355.00
- BLACK FLOOR MATS
- PONY CENTER CAP

TOTAL VEHICLE & OPTIONS 30,085.00  
DESTINATION & DELIVERY 745.00

**TOTAL MSRP \$30,830.00**

1ZVHT2H57306908

Compare this vehicle to others in the FREE FUEL ECONOMY GUIDE available at the dealer.

CITY MPG **17** HIGHWAY MPG **25**

Fuel Economy Information

For more information see [WWW.FUELECONOMY.GOV](http://WWW.FUELECONOMY.GOV)

Actual Mileage will vary with options, driving conditions, driving habits and vehicle's condition. Results reported by EPA indicate that the majority of vehicles with these ratings will achieve between 14 and 20 mpg in the city and between 21 and 29 mpg on the highway.

2007 MUSTANG GT, 4.6 LITER ENGINE, 3 VALVE FUEL INJECTION CATALYST, 5-SPEED MANUAL TRANSMISSION

For Comparison Shopping all vehicles classified as SUBCOMPACT have been tested mileage ratings ranging from 11 to 34 mpg city and 16 to 40 mpg highway.

Estimated Annual Fuel Cost: \$1988

Ford Extended Service Plan is the ONLY service contract backed by Ford and honored by over 5,100 Ford and Lincoln Mercury Dealers. Ask your dealer for prices and additional details or see our website at [www.Ford-ESP.com](http://www.Ford-ESP.com).

SOLD TO Star Ford 500 S Street Blvd Ontario CA 91704

SHIP TO or other new loca to

SHIP THROUGH ITEM#: 71-3908 OVT 1

1ZVHT2H57306908 711 031 FLAT ROCK RAIL RD27 7A261 N RA 2X 730 001587 01 26 07



I liked the sound of the Shelby Mustangs, so I had the same mufflers installed.

# I've Been Published!

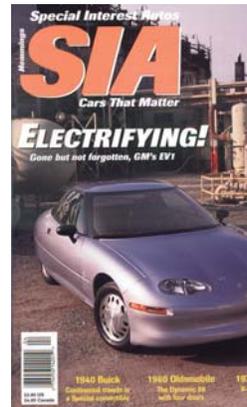
Over the years, I've had a number of letters (and even pictures) published in miscellaneous car magazines. It's kind of neat – in a very *fleeting* sort of way.



**LETTERS**

**A supercar or a super waste?**  
The ME Four-Twelve (Cover Story, Sept. 6) is an incredible bit of engineering. But does anyone else think DaimlerChrysler could find a better way to invest its money and time? It could try to figure out why its vehicles fall short on quality, reliability and dealer experience. A 240-mph "good for the brand" toy won't do much to help current Chrysler owners, or make me an owner.  
Paul Davis, Tujunga, Calif.

**A misbehaved cat**  
Your Dec. 27 long-term wrap-up on the Jaguar XJ8 was generous. My 25 years' worth of Hondas, Toyotas and an Acura haven't, in total, returned to the dealer as much as your Jag. It may have purred for you, but being able to steer clear of the dealer's service department is a luxury.  
Paul Davis, Tujunga, Calif.



**Recaps**  
Readers' Letters

I recently subscribed because I greatly value cars from the '60s and '70s. They should be preserved, displayed and driven. But I'm also immensely pleased that even the mass base of our daily drivers possess a lot of safety, fuel economy and environmental standards that couldn't have been imagined back in the '60s. I'm also glad that the quality of a vehicle is no longer measured by the volume of chrome, fin size or overall length.

Jim Richardson's article "Zoom Zoom Zoom" should have appeared in April, because it must have been meant to be a joke. Otherwise, his closed-minded cynicism and complaints about new cars don't warrant a page of editorial space. It seemed more like the nostalgic ramblings of someone trapped in the past, remembering the "good old days." I'm curious: Did he pound out his article on a manual typewriter? Does he now a rotary phone because it takes a little more skill than pushing buttons? Would he prefer to take his next transcontinental flight on a T-37?

While any reader of SIA obviously appreciates older vehicles, how can anyone honestly agree with statements like: "Nobody goes for drives anymore," "buying a new car seems like a meaningless activity" and that today's cars have no "feel for the road"? Mr. Richardson posits the handling characteristics of a 1997 Chevy station wagon over that of modern SUVs? He even complains about today's automotive advertising! I don't anyone to sit through a few TV spots out of the Fiftes without breaking into laughter.

There is simply no justification in criticizing today's vehicles. We have many more (and much better) choices than ever. If Mr. Richardson can't find something he'd rather drive than his '50 Chevy, that's his problem, not a problem with the current state of automotive development. While we can all appreciate the classics, for many drivers, the "good old days" are now!

Paul Davis  
Tujunga, California



I seem to photograph some unusual "No Parking" signs. Fortunately, *Autoweek* likes to print them.

## READER SIGHTINGS



**Perfect for the Hollywood crowd.**  
Photographed somewhere in L.A. by Paul Davis of Tujunga.



## BACKFIRES



As a Mustang enthusiast and owner, I agree with your conclusions about the Shelby GT. What bugs me is that it was included in the first place. As noted, performance of the Shelby is very close to that of a standard Mustang G1, available at \$10,000 less. If you just had to include a \$40,000 Mustang, I think there were more appropriate "tuner" Mustangs from which to select.

Paul Davis  
Tujunga, CA 91104

I had the above photo published in the February 2006 issue of *Car and Driver*. I even got paid \$50! After taking thousands of pictures over the years, I think this was the first time I ever got paid for one...although I never cashed the check!

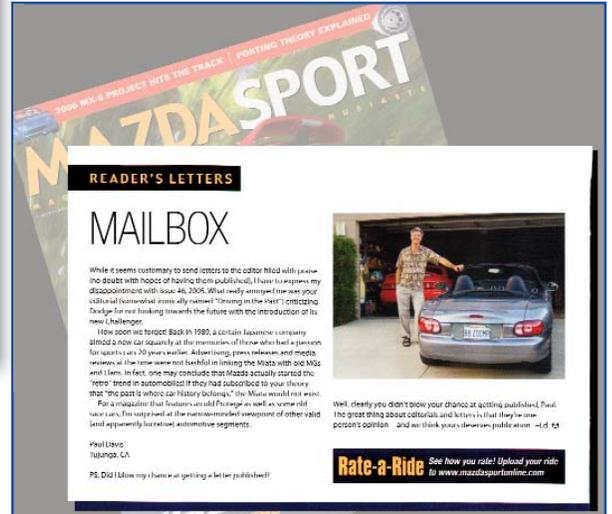




*With just a little more planning... You still not clear as to why you decided that your L.A. trip to the beach and the ski slopes needed to start in one of the busiest parts of the city, on a weekday, at rush hour ["City of Snow Angels"]. If you couldn't get it together to leave earlier, why didn't you head to the beach first (closer to where you were staying) and opposite the flow of traffic and then, after rush hour, drive up to the mountains? You would have had a much more relaxed drive back, just in time for the Hollywood night life. Driving in Los Angeles is like driving in the snow. If you don't learn how to do it right, you can still get around. But you're going to complain a lot more. Paul Davis Los Angeles, California*

**ROAD & TRACK**

**PROFILING IN A MINIVAN**  
Shaun Bailey's statement, "Compact SUV buyers should really be buying minivans" (Saturn Vue First Drive, August 2007), was not only inappropriate, but, in my opinion, borders on insulting. I'll bet that 90 percent of all vehicles wouldn't exist (as well as enthusiast magazines like *Road & Track*) if pure practicality were the only factor in a purchasing decision. There's nothing wrong with seeing oneself as "stylish" whether it's in an SUV or a sports car. People should buy what they want to drive.  
Paul Davis Tujunga, California



Not only did *MazdaSport* magazine publish my letter to the editor (January 2007), but he sent me an e-mail asking if I had a photo – and they printed that too!

# Car Meets

As I'm sure you can tell, there isn't much I like better than being surrounded by cars. Well, it's no coincidence that I live in southern California, where there are car meets of one sort or another close by on every weekend.

I'm very fortunate to start each Saturday with an early morning get-together in Montrose, about ten minutes from my house. Another great meet takes place on the last Sunday of every month in Calabasas.

And of course there are many other meets and shows held nearby that I attend regularly.



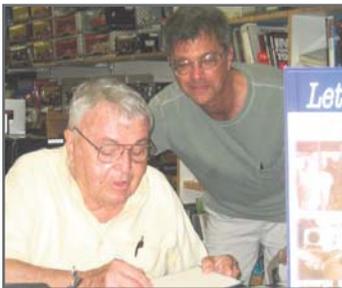


Autobooks has been in Burbank for over 50 years. I had visited it on a few occasions since I've lived in LA, but in 2006, I read that they had a get-together every Saturday morning. I started stopping in on a regular basis, sometimes just to hang around with other car nuts.

What a place! Besides thousands of car books, everyone who is anyone in the world of cars stops by. Check it out..



I've run into Jay Leno several times there. He is a genuine "car-guy" and is incredibly friendly to everyone.



Here's Chris Economaki, legendary sports broadcaster, at a book signing (July 2006).



At the same book signing, I met Jeff Baugh, traffic reporter for KFVB radio here in Los Angeles.



Ed Iskenderian (right), a hot rod legend known mainly for his racing camshafts, and Glenn Necessary, who owns that old race car).



Here's a great story.

Coming home from a cross-country business trip on a Friday, I had watched a DVD of "Victory by Design," a TV series about old racing cars. It is hosted by race car driver Alain de Cadenet, who drives all the cars.

So on Saturday morning, I really felt like driving my MR2. I wound up at Autobooks. Suddenly I heard this familiar British accent behind me! It was Mr. de Cadenet himself.

Here's another good story. While buying a copy of Motor Trend Classics at Autobooks, Doug, one of the guys who runs the place, told me to look out the front window.

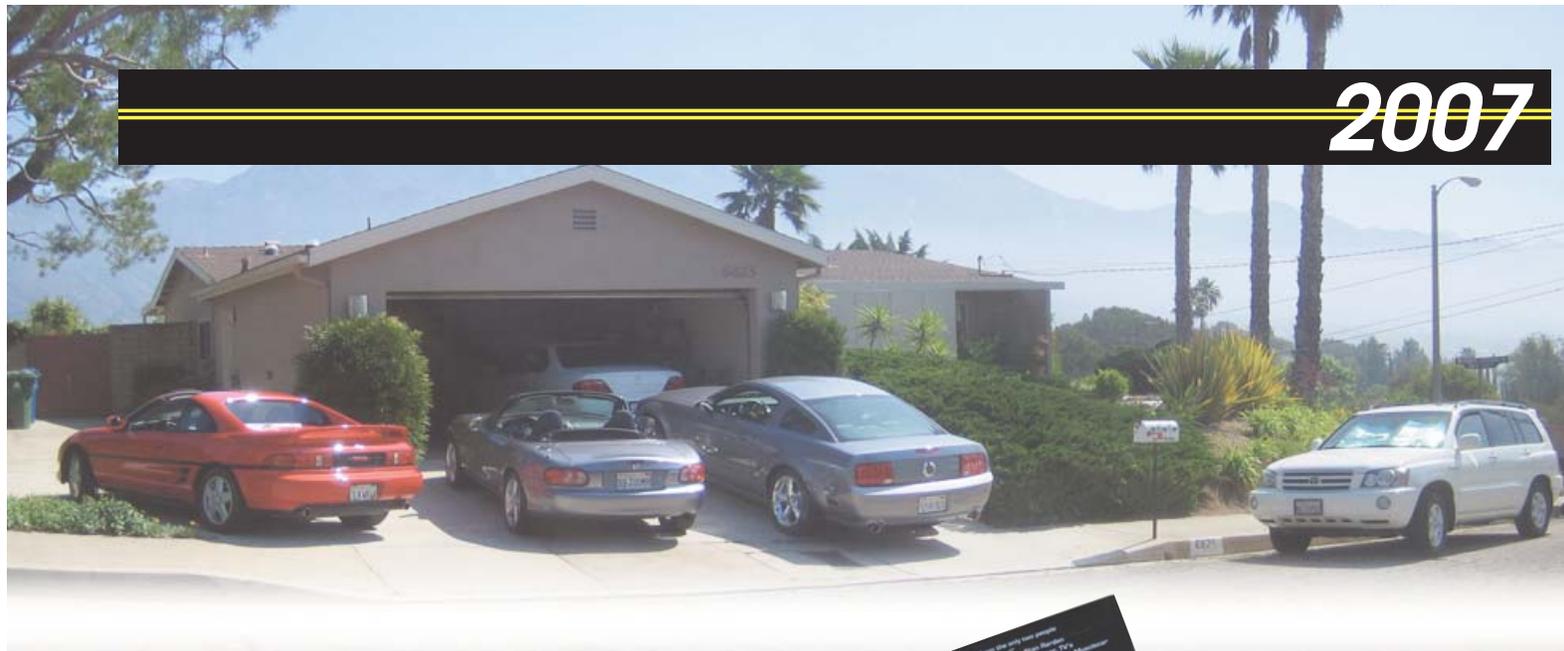


There was the car that was on the cover! Then he said, "Now look behind you."

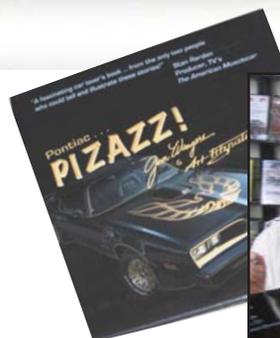
It was Dave Kunz, a reporter for ABC in Los Angeles. Turns out it's his car. And he drove it in the article!



Autobooks hosts quite a few events. A number of car clubs meet there.



Another book signing at Autobooks. That's Wallace Wyss on the right, one of the authors of a book about the Ford GT.



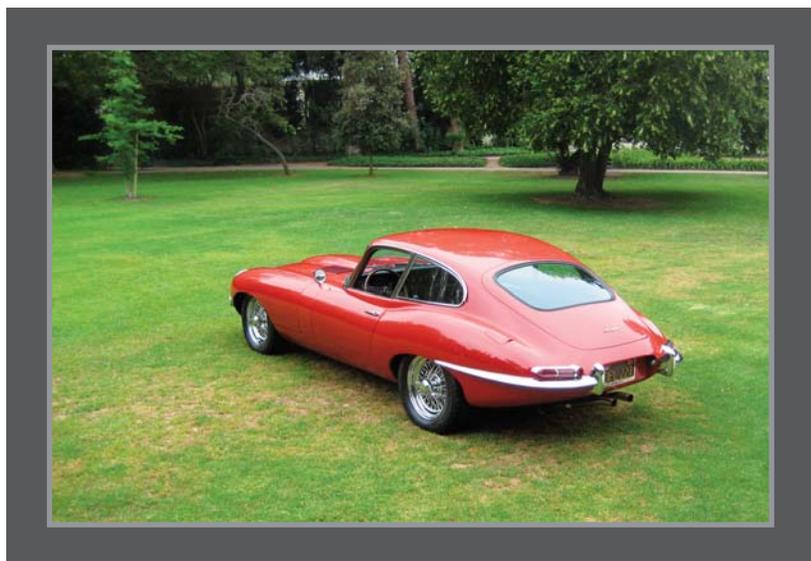
Art Fitzpatrick, left, well known automotive artist, and Jim Wangers, a famous marketing guy, at book signing in October, 2007. These guys did much to create Pontiac's image throughout the 60s.



Barry Meguiar, president of Meguiar's ...a genuinely nice guy.



Dan Gurney, race legend, at Autobooks.



A picture I snapped of a friend's Jaguar.

## Some not even real!



Here are a couple of photo-manipulations I did using Photoshop.

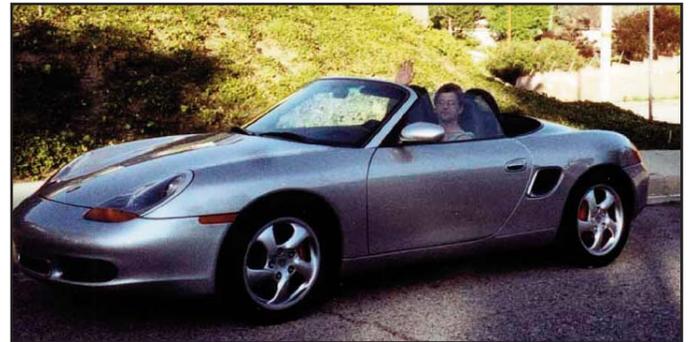
This gorgeous black Cobra (a *real* one, not a kit) belonged to my dentist, Dr. Geoffrey Shanklin, who had restored it from the ground up. He took this photograph of me at a little car show at La Canada High School. I cut out the car and overlaid it on a picture I took while Rhonda and I were heading to Death Valley.



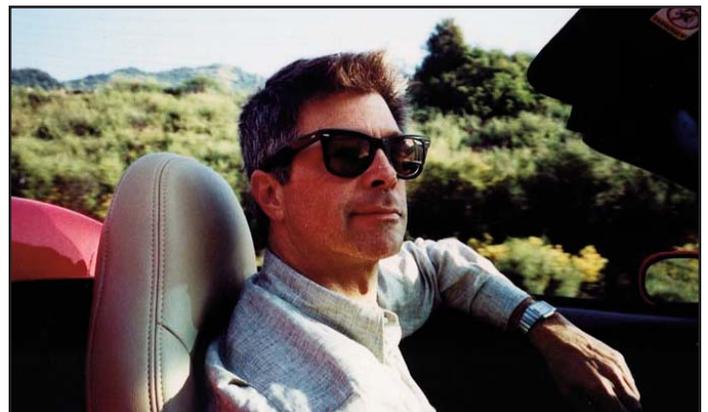
This is a Caterham 7, which is a Lotus 7 replica. The car was actually in a car show at Beverly Hill High School. I flopped the image (so it would look like it was a right-hand-drive car) and merged it with a photo I had taken of the parking lot where I then worked.



An Austin-Healey Sprite which I sort of borrowed while living on Commonwealth Ave. (across from Foreign Motors, a large foreign car dealer) in the early 70s. (I went to school with Jay Leno and we test drove cars together over there.)



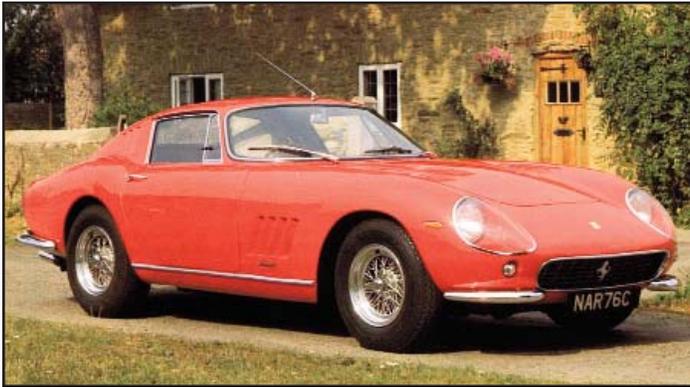
My friend Dave Arenz bought a new Porsche Boxter in 2000. It's a beauty.



For my 50th birthday, my wonderful boss at the time, Judy Jablonski, got me a one-day Corvette rental. I used it to go to her wedding in June, 2001. This was one fast car and a lot of fun. I think it looked good on me.

# My All-Time Favorites

There are many cars I like and would own. Here, in no specific order, represent the top of the list. Not coincidentally, most of my favorites are big-engined, high-performance machines of the early- to mid-sixties.



Ferrari 275GTB4 – in my opinion one of the most beautiful cars of all time.



1968 Dodge Charger (I'll take one without the hood scoop, please)



This might be my number one favorite: a 1967 Corvette (A 65 or 66 would also suffice)



1968 Plymouth Roadrunner



1959 Corvette Sting Ray concept/racer



1966 Pontiac GTO



Jaguar XK-E (one of the early ones)



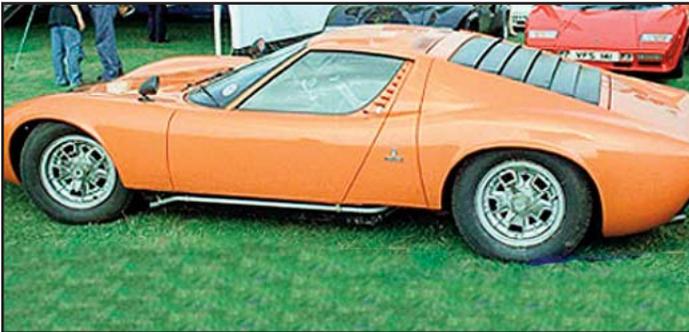
Mid 60s Ford GT40 - The street version



Lotus Super 7



Shelby GT350



Lamborghini Miura



Ford's new GT (2004)



Triumph TR6

Old guys like to tell stories. I sometimes call these “war” stories – stuff that happened during “the old days” when they were young. So, although I don’t consider myself “old”, I think that someone who has reached his 50s is entitled to a few stories. Here are some of my car-related memories and a few other tidbits.

## Skipping School

While skipping school one day back in 1967 (I did it pretty often), a few friends came back to my house. While sitting there kind of stoned, one of the guys picked up the then current issue of *Car and Driver* which featured a Ferrari 275 GTB (one of my favorite cars).

“You know what this car looks like?” he asked.

Since I had become a sports car snob, I quickly replied: “You’re going to try and tell us it looks like a Corvette. But this car is so different...” I went on and on about it’s hand-built, aluminum body, 12-cylinder engine, incredible handling, racing heritage, blah, blah, blah. There was a little pause. Then my friend asked: “How did you know I was going to say a Corvette?”

Totally seriously and without thinking, I replied: “That’s the only other car that it looks like.”

Man, we laughed.

## Mom’s First Drive

My mother didn’t acquire a driver’s license until late in life. I think I was fifteen.

She was not exactly a “relaxed” driver at first. (Sorry, Mom, it’s true!) On what must have been the first day she drove, she asked me how you know when to get gas. I pointed out the gas gauge. She told me it was halfway. I joked: “is it half empty or half full?” She got mad at me and yelled: “How should I know. This is all new to me.”

## Signals

One day, during driver’s education (1967), while we were driving around practicing hand signals, an old lady pulled up next to our car in a big, new Thunderbird – one with the gigantic sequential turn signals. She yelled: “What’s with all that arm waving?” Then she drove off.

## Drawing in Class

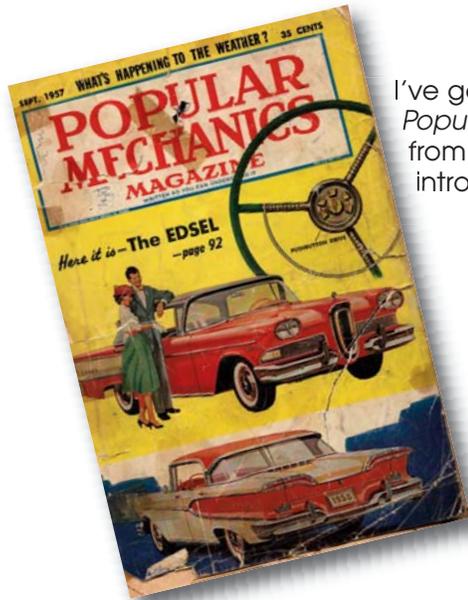
As I mentioned at the beginning of this document, I used to doodle cars and scenery during school.

At Emerson College in Boston, I was taking Mass Communications classes. During one particularly boring course in radio station operations (or something like that), I used to draw pretty elaborate race car scenes.

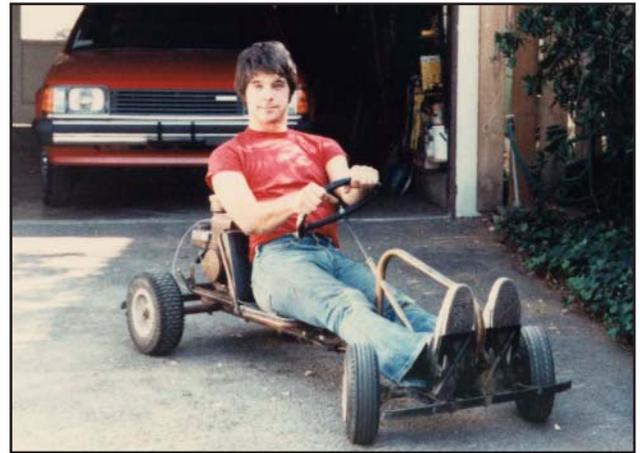
One day, I must have forgotten a pencil. I turned around the guy behind me and asked him if he had an extra one. He replied: “No, I never take notes in class. I just sit here and watch you draw.”

## Get a DieHard

In the mid-70s, while leaving work one day, a co-worker, Bill Fields, said something like: “Uh oh...I left my headlights on all day.” He got into his car and it started right up! That’s the day I learned about Sears DieHard batteries and have been purchasing them ever since. The one in my Pathfinder lasted seven years!

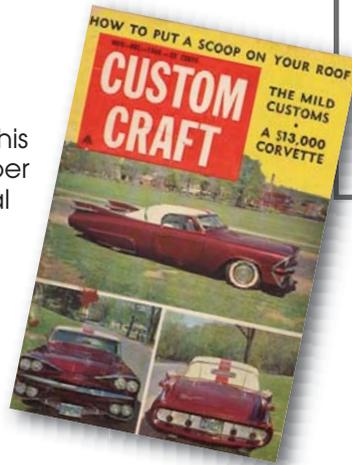


I've got an issue of *Popular Mechanics* from September 1957 introducing the Edsel.



In the early 80s, my buddy Bill McMurrey gave me this go-cart. It was a little small so I had a co-worker, Joe Huld, cut and weld another section in it. It was a quick little thing. (I sure wish I had a picture of the night Rhonda drove it up to the grocery store on Foothill Blvd.)

I don't remember where I got this copy of *Custom Craft* (November 1960), but the cover car is a real beauty, eh? Looks like a Studebaker with fins from a Cadillac and a Dodge front (or, rather, two of them).



## Don't Trade In!

Here is my lesson as to why you should never trade in a car when buying a new one. Always sell it privately.

When we bought our new 1992 Accord, I was told they could only give me \$200 for my 1980 Civic. It was a great-running car, looked fine and made a wonderful transportation vehicle, but with over 100,000 miles, the paint was getting a little dull and the interior wasn't the best. The dealer told me that it was so old, they would "wholesale" it.

Well, I thought it should be worth at least \$500, which is what I would have sold it for. But it was Sunday night and we had already been at the dealer for what felt like hours. I thought that for \$300, I wasn't going to argue so I traded it..

Not long after we got the Accord, we stopped at a restaurant in Glendale and there was my little silver Civic. I talked to the owner who told me he bought the car from the



dealer for – get this –\$2000! I couldn't believe it. I mean the car was less than \$5000 when it was new twelve years earlier! Although the dealer kind of screwed me, I think the new owner got the worst of it. At least we got a great deal on the Accord.

# Pauley's Vehicle Timeline

1966 . . . . .	.Mom gets her license – and a Tempest	August 5, 1979 . . . . .	.Got our Dodge van
June 26, 1967 . . . . .	.I started driver's education	December 23, 1979 . . . . .	.Ordered a Honda Civic
June 27, 1967 . . . . .	.Got my 1959 Ford	January 10, 1980 . . . . .	.Sold the Duster
September 5, 1967 . . . . .	.Got my learner's permit	March 31, 1980 . . . . .	.Picked up the Honda!
December 1, 1967 . . . . .	.Finally...my drivers' license	November 4, 1980 . . . . .	.Rhonda got her Mazda GLC
January 2, 1969 . . . . .	.Bought my Triumph TR4A	November 23, 1980 . . . . .	.Sold Rhonda's Capri for \$938
Winter 1969 . . . . .	.Totaled the Triumph Got my 1964 VW Beetle	October 26, 1986 . . . . .	.Sold my Honda 750
July 1969 . . . . .	.Sold the Beetle, got my Lancia	October 30, 1988 . . . . .	.Sold the van
August 27, 1969 . . . . .	.Sold my Lancia	November 3, 1988 . . . . .	.Got the Toyota 4-Runner
Fall 1969 . . . . .	.Got the Karmann Ghia	October 2, 1989 . . . . .	.Got the Mustang
May 28, 1970 . . . . .	.Bought my new VW Beetle	February 16, 1992 . . . . .	.Traded the Civic for a new Accord
April 17, 1971 . . . . .	.Totaled the Beetle	April 30, 1993 . . . . .	.Picked up the Pathfinder
May 10, 1974 . . . . .	.Moved to San Francisco	May 9, 1993 . . . . .	.Sent the 4-Runner to Rhonda's sister
June 28, 1974 . . . . .	.Bought my Honda 350 (chopper)	October 8, 1996 . . . . .	.Got my MR2
August 19, 1974 . . . . .	.Sold the old 350, bought the 350-4	March 18, 2000 . . . . .	.Bought the Acura TL
April 26, 1975 . . . . .	.Traded the 350-4 for a 750F	April 5, 2000 . . . . .	.Sold the Accord
June 13, 1975 . . . . .	.Left SF, heading to LA	March 2001 . . . . .	.Had the Mustang modified
November 16, 1976 . . . . .	.Got my 1957 Pontiac	November 2001 . . . . .	.Started this document
April 26, 1977 . . . . .	.Got a non-running Honda 125	August 15, 2002 . . . . .	.Bought the Toyota Highlander
May 21, 1977 . . . . .	.The Pontiac's last ride	September 28, 2002 . . . . .	.Sold the Pathfinder
June 25, 1977 . . . . .	.The Pontiac gets towed away	January 10, 2004 . . . . .	.Got my Miata
September 24, 1977 . . . . .	.Got the Duster	February 3, 2007 . . . . .	.Sold my trusty Mustang
March 19, 1978 . . . . .	.Sold the Honda 125	February 20, 2007 . . . . .	.Got the Mustang GT

First printing, April 2002  
Last printing, December 2008