

My Car's Story

by Don Zimmer

I was a junior in high school in Evansville, Indiana when the next door neighbors (man & wife) brought home this Emberglo '66 Mustang. They had traded in her '53 Ford sedan on the '66. Back then, this was the car. The Mustang and the GTO. Camaro had not been born yet.

For some reason - without 5 cents in my pocket - I told them I wanted first shot whenever they decided to sell this Mustang. I finished high school, went on to college, got married and we were living in Northern

Kentucky outside of Cincinnati . I had all but forgotten about the car. Then, she passed away suddenly at age 43. It was a sad day. They had always been those "go-to" people between you and your parents. I could tell them stuff you could not tell your parents. Really cool people.

It was now 1975. Jane and I were home for Thanksgiving. The man who had been the next door neighbor saw my car in my folk's driveway and stopped to visit with us. He said that his wife had now been gone almost two years and he was going to sell her car. He remembered what I had said so long ago. Jane and I were already looking to buy a little larger car for her to drive for protection in traffic. While home, I went and looked at the car. Wow! It had been sitting under trees for all that time: flat tires, exhaust hanging off, paint had deteriorated. It was rough. He said he had been offered \$700 and offered it to me for that. Remember that it was just a used car at the time. It was not yet a classic. I almost passed on it, but I thought it had never been wrecked and it only had 38K original miles. We decided to buy the car.

I was already in the automotive parts business as a factory representative. I figured little by little I could get it looking and running good. I knew we would be back at Christmas to my folks. I had a month to gather advice, belts, hoses, anti-freeze and tune up parts (that last one was easy - that was my company business). I spent most of Christmas holiday doing the work - outside in December in Indiana!!!!

We got the car back to Northern Kentucky without a hitch. In fact, after doing all that work it ran pretty well. What I hadn't counted on was all the other reps I had worked with and helped over the years had very good memories. The Monroe rep dropped off new shocks. The Walker rep dropped off a new, complete exhaust system. The TRW rep even dropped off valve- job components. Then, to my amazement, one of the store managers, who also painted show cars on the side, told me to strip the chrome, logos and bumpers and he would repaint it for the store cost of the paint. He did with enamel paint what guys today are doing with two stage and clear-coat. By now I was in tall cotton!!!



After that it was looking really good. Jane drove the car and even car pooled 6 kids to pre school after we relocated down here in 1979. Everybody pulling up next to her in traffic trying to buy the car. Then about 1983 the value started climbing. It was time to get her out of that car!

From that point on it is pretty much history with the Mustang Club, Ken Blake and Todd Morris and guidance from a lot of old times originally in this club. Little did I know that my two sons would also want help with two Mustang restorations while they were in high school. That is why the club still means so much to me. The club has always been so helpful to me.

