



Keeping the dream alive

Gerald Burns loves the spirit of his car, bought over forty years ago by a young fellow Texan, Richard Hodges

HOWDY folks – I have a severe case of Mustang Fever. Since the age of four the only car I ever wanted was a Mustang. I used to drive my parents up the wall, begging my dad to drive past the local Ford dealership to see the “Mustangs and boats” on the lot. My first car was a six pot-equipped ‘70 Sportsroof and my first new car was an ‘85 GT. As a matter of fact, every car I’ve ever owned has been a Mustang. 40 years later, I still love these cars.

In the fall of 1964, an 18-year-old called Richard Hodges sat down with his father and specced out his dream car – but it was more than just a dream as Hodges Senior was a salesman at Weatherby Ford in Brownwood, Texas and was about to make his son’s dream come true. The poppy red high performance

Mustang 2+2 he chose rolled off the line on

about October 16 and was delivered to the small west Texas town. The hi-po was more than just a young kid’s hotrod, it also did double duty pulling the family ski boat back and forth to the lake for a while. It remained in Richard’s possession until about 1973 when it was traded in for the paltry sum of \$1250. It changed hands a couple of more times until I bought it in November 1998. The previous owner had repainted it in the mid-90s, but otherwise it was almost completely original. She wasn’t perfect ... the engine burned oil and the brakes were shot, but I finally also had the car of my dreams.

Over the next six years, I took on one project after another. In 2000 a rusty brake fitting broke. A month later, she was up on jackstands and the entire undercarriage was removed. I worked on the car for seven months, grinding rust, re-painting parts and rebuilding anything that

was worn out. I attempted to keep everything mostly stock, but couldn’t help but improve a few things – installing 1” drop 600 pound springs, a 1” anti-sway bar and a combination of poly and rubber bushings. The factory disc brake calipers were sleeved and rebuilt and new Ford springs were installed at the rear as well as new stainless steel brake lines.

Last year, my buddy Charlie (a fellow K-code owner) and I decided to make the journey to Nashville for the 40th Mustang Anniversary celebrations. I spent two months getting the car ready to make the trip. Charlie recovered the seats and I set about all sorts of other preparations. We had a blast! After 2000 miles, 13 quarts of oil, one blown-up battery, a new set of spark plugs and a few stops to adjust the points, we were back home.



What an adventure! Unfortunately, my poor little engine had had enough and it was smokin’ like a chimney when I arrived home. A week later, Charlie and I pulled the engine. Luckily, the trip had done no real damage to it, but I finally figured out why the no. six cylinder had always fouled the plugs so bad – a broken landing between the rings.

The engine was packed off to Performance Plus in Austin, where Larry and Casey worked their magic. It was rebuilt back to stock, balanced and blueprinted. While the engine was in the shop, I took care of getting the engine bay cleaned and repainted. Along the way I had the alternator rebuilt, valve covers and air cleaner rechromed, steering box rebuilt, installed new underhood wiring etc. In August after four months of hard work, the solid lifter 289 High Performance powerplant came roaring back to life. I have truly enjoyed this car. The only problem I have now is that I can’t think of anything else to fix, but then I guess that’s not such a bad thing!



... 40 years on and another proud owner – Gerald Burns