

Sedan DELIVERY

By Bob Schmeichel

Sedan delivery model cars came about in the late 1920's because of a need to haul items that had to be protected from outside elements. They might be considered the early beginnings of station wagons with the exception that they were only two door models. There was metal that replaced the side windows on a normal station wagon behind the front door and around the back end was a third single door with a window instead of a fold down tailgate. If you think you've seen one of these with two doors in the back, they are called panel trucks and are usually larger in size not to be confused with a sedan delivery. These vehicles usually had only a bench front seat unless a person wanted to add a rear seat to haul passengers. Otherwise the floor behind the front seat was flat or level clear to the rear door allowing whatever to be put in thru the back door and taken with ease. In the beginning these vehicles were used by couriers and local merchants to haul bakery goods, fruits and vegetables, flowers, car parts, news papers, and the list goes on even with the beginnings of being used as an ambulance and or even a police paddy wagon. Many plumbers and electricians started their own businesses using one of these sedan deliveries which enabled them to haul everything they needed with one trip to a customer, then being able to lock it up to protect what was not easily visible inside when parked. Ford started introducing sedan deliveries with their 1927-1931 models. General Motors, which included Chevrolet, Buick, Cadillac, Oldsmobile, and Pontiac as well as Chrysler saw the need for these every day utility vehicles and started producing their own sedan delivery models in the early thirties. Even some cars in Europe were starting to be built this way. Because these sedan deliveries were built along the lines of a car basis rather than a truck, they tended to wear out faster, which kind of kept the market going pretty steady until 1960 when vans and cargo vans were introduced. Even though production of any kind of sedan delivery kind of came to a halt, Chevrolet and Ford occasionally have brought back a smaller concept of a sedan delivery with hopes of renewing interest for a short trip need. This was done with a Vega Panel Express and a Pinto Cruising Wagon. These smaller handy wagon type cars that sipped gas really didn't catch on, and were eventually dropped. The last retro look attempt of a sedan delivery was done by Chevrolet in 2007 with their HHR Delivery. Even though the market of vehicles today pretty much depicts an older or retro look, the sedan delivery just hasn't come back because of pickups and vans capturing $\frac{3}{4}$'s of all car market. Over the years I have seen many sedan deliveries, both original and ones turned into street rods that I think will gain in value as time goes on because of what is becoming their rarity. As far as a historical value, they were just as much of a work horse in their day as trucks were with bringing the growing America into the 20th century.



When I first approached Scott Brady about doing an article about one of his cars, he told me he didn't build the 1953 Chevy sedan delivery I was looking to get information on. I said it doesn't matter; it's just the fact that you are getting it out there, driving it for others to see the way cars used to be and enjoying it at the same time. I have said it many times before and continue to say driving an old car is truly a social connection to our past and present that can continue well into our what we might call our golden years as long as we are upright and able to drive. That kind of makes me sound old, but I am not going to stop having fun with old cars as long as there is gas in the tank and a road in front of me.

Scott and his wife Bunny Brady went to an auction in Wakonda about six years ago looking to bid on a 1953 Chevrolet 2 dr. sedan that was listed as one of the cars for sale. When it finally came up to bid, their hopes buying the car were diminished when the bidding went way north of what they agreed to spend. Discouraged about not being able to buy the car, Bunny pointed out another 53 Chevrolet on the list but in a sedan delivery form. Upon going to check it out they were pleasantly

surprised how nice the delivery really was over all. It had fairly new metallic grey paint over all with light blue flames painted over the whole front end and onto the sides. Under the car was a Heidt's front suspension, power disc brakes, a 350 Chevy engine with a 350 trans along with a Nova rear end. The chrome wire wheels along with a nice interior got them in a renewed mood to bid for it. As it turned out they drove it home

later that day and have been enjoying it ever since. Scott being a career mechanic told me it has been a really good car taking them 12,000 miles since they bought it. The only problem they ever had with the car was that the wire wheels leaked air. They remedied that issue by replacing the wire wheels with chrome S/S Cragar 5-spoke mag wheels. Scott and Bunny have quite a few old cars that they try to give equal driving time to, but I think this sedan delivery just might be their favorite to roll down the road in.



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