

## *It's a Coupe for Cruising*

When Gary Ebright built his 1937 Plymouth coupe, he was thinking about cruising around in style. And 15 years later, Gary and his wife Judy are still cruising around in it, and quite stylishly, too.

The Ebrights bought their Plymouth, one of four old cars they own, in 1989. Gary saw it parked on 12th Street in Sioux Falls with a for sale sign, and when he called the number, it turned out to belong to a neighbor just down the street from him. The deal was struck, but Gary didn't drive it home. It needed a lot of work.

Gary totally rebuilt the car. He bought a 1969 Nova as a donor car for a drive-chain. Now, for those Chevy fans, the 1969 Nova that he parted out was not a good candidate for restoration. "That Nova, there was nothing left of it," Gary said. "It was a rust bucket."

But what it did provide was an updated front suspension and steering, a 307 c.i. power-plant, automatic transmission and a rear end. He rebuilt the engine, leaving it basically stock except for adding an Eddlebrock intake and carburetor. He welded the Nova front subframe onto the Plymouth chassis for the improved steering and handling, besides giving a place to rest the V-8 motor.

"It runs pretty much like a '69 Chevy," Gary said.

The body was mostly complete and straight, except one rear fender was crunched and the rear corner rusted out where the body had been damaged. He replaced the fender, and didn't have too much difficulty finding the replacement from a local garage that has since closed.

"That's where the farmers were always backing into the granary with them," Gary chuckled in explaining the damage.

He completed the car in about a year, but that doesn't reflect the amount of work that went into it. During that year, he spent every spare minute in the garage working on it, estimating that it amounted to about working a second job of 40 hours each week.

"It's the only way they get done, is just stay at them," he explained.

Although all stock on the outside, with the updated drive-train, it might be called a resto-rod. But with a stock small-block, would it be called a hot rod? Gary doesn't care. He likes the way it looks and he likes driving it.

"It's been a good runner," he said. "I didn't build it to race. I just built it to drive and have fun."

In addition to the Plymouth, Gary and Judy also have a 1956 Dodge, a 1946 Nash and a 1954 Chevy Belair that he just completed restoring. He also helped his son build a 1946 Plymouth coupe that is often seen at the cruises. It's too soon after finishing the Belair to know what the next project will be.

In the meantime, if you pull up to the traffic light next to Gary and Judy in their '37 Plymouth, don't rev your engine in a challenging manner. They'll just smile and go on their merry way, very content with being in front or behind you.

