

A Sentimental Connection

By Bob Schmeichel

Anyone who grew up as a teenager in the 1960s knows it was a much simpler and more innocent time. Kids created their own fun with friends who have lasted a lifetime. There were no cell phones or video games to occupy our time. In fact most of our time, when we were awake, was spent outside running around playing ball, fishing, swimming, or riding our bikes, and playing hard till it got dark. There was seldom a concern where we were or what we were doing as everyone knew their acceptable limits. Stepping over the boundaries would get you an introduction to dad's belt. No respect or love was ever lost for a parent who instructed this way. When a teenager became a driver at age 14 with a learner's permit, cars became a major factor that gave teen drivers an independence that lasts the rest of their lives. The movie *American Graffiti* truly epitomizes that time anywhere in this country. People then did come to recognize that a car was a reflection of the owner's personality, thus leading to the owner's customizing or hot rodding whatever they drove to make it their own. This still happens today, which keeps the car hobby fun no matter what you do with your ride. I believe there is an unspoken respect or bond by all who play with cars into their adulthood that keeps the hobby alive, along with some going in new directions pushing the so-called envelope to individual extremes, starting new trends.

Scott Brady grew up in the small town of Wakonda, South Dakota, hanging out and working at his dad's garage repair business in the 60s and 70s. Learning the basic fundamentals from his dad was a big factor that has led him to being a certified technician today. Scott mentioned that even though it is hard to keep up with learning the ever-changing differences between models each year, the challenge keeps it fun. He said once you understand the basics, as his dad taught him, it's easy. He did express that it is getting harder every year to beat the allotted flat-rate time given on warranty work to make extra money. While I visited with him about the story of his car, he had just finished up dropping the engine, transmission and front suspension as a unit out of a van in order for the in-house body shop to replace a damaged frame rail on one side that was caused by an accident. Scott said he really enjoys this type of work and can make a little more money if he pushes himself because it is not warranty work. With the cost of vehicles today being high, quite often they will be repaired before they are totaled out any more when they are in accidents.

When I finally got around to questioning Scott about the 1964 Dodge that he and his wife, Bunny, have, he started by telling me about when they were first married in 1975. They had a 1966 Mustang (that they still have today) and a 1964 Plymouth. When they started to have a family, the '64 Plymouth was traded for something newer to get them where they needed to go. Although the years had gone by rather quickly, the '64 Plymouth was not forgotten and had a sentimental soft spot for both of them in their hearts for that time in their lives. Then two years ago while attending the Vintiques Rod Run in Watertown, a 1964 Dodge showed up with a for sale sign on it. Although it wasn't a '64 Plymouth, the car brought back enough memories that they decided to buy it. So, with the car being totally as it came out of the factory and only 45,000 original miles, Scott and Bunny felt as though they have recaptured part of their past. The only addition Scott has added to the car is a set of mag wheels that you would have seen on a car back then. Scott says besides the car being in great shape for its age, they love hauling the grand kids around giving them the old-time experience of riding around in a car that is almost 50 years old. Can you imagine what cars will look like 50 years from today or if we'll even have cars? Makes you wonder, doesn't it since technology is advancing almost faster than we can comprehend while we watch.



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