

Keeping It Old School and Original

By Bob Schmeichel

When I think back over the last 50 years, I can't believe the reality of how many cars from the '30s to the '80s have been wasted by choice for one motor sport or another. In the earlier years, a majority of cars were cut up and turned into dirt track circle racers. Many of those desirable cars today, the 30s through the 70s, were lost to that ongoing picture. Another event that continues with the demise of a large group of cars is the destruction derby and usually happens at local county fairs yearly. Although I understand it is a source of entertainment for the moment and a way of recycling steel back into the system to build new cars, but come on. Not everyone wants a new car payment and we are losing history as we watch. I suppose I am a bunch on the extreme side getting excited about a pile of tin that was formed into a specific old shape years ago and rolling down the street on four tires, but that is just me.

I can't tell you how many times I have seen an original car from the '40s or '50s driven into an event like a destruction derby with a very cherry body before hand, only to be destroyed in a very short period of time. It really kind of sickens me even though I know we can't have or save everything. I do know for a fact that an old car, even when it is original, will gather up more attention than a new car. Whether being driven on the street or parked, I don't think I have ever seen a negative reaction from anyone. People will always walk up to an old car asking questions directed towards the owners or commenting, "That's the way it really was," while smiling and pointing to other things in the car to educate younger people with them. It is fun to see the interaction between young and old this way still. Yet that seems to be disappearing today because of technology. Everyone is so busy looking at and wanting to be bothered by their iPhone continually that face-to-face socializing is being lost between all. Cars have always been part of a person's identity or personality that garnered up friends to do things with. Today most young people, in general, would rather just turn the key and go, while caring less what their ride looks like. In fact, there is more emphases placed on the constant receiving and sending of texts with no mind messages to the 9,000 friends they think they truly have who will surely be there in a time of need face to face.

Gale Horan is a guy driven by hanging on to the past and the way it was. He told me he has always loved '57 Chevys as his favorite car as far back as he can remember. Although we have all seen a majority of '57 Chevys lost, as told in the first part my story, Gale never gave up, searching until October 2012 to find what he was looking for. Because of his persistence, he found himself lucky enough, at this point in his life, to come across a '57 Chevy four-door hardtop advertised on Craigslist – better late than never. Even though it wasn't a two-door car, which was his first desire, he felt that he should seriously consider it since he had been looking so long. So, two days later after finding it on the computer and seeing the car in person, he actually brought it home from Corning, Iowa.

Now that he has had the car for awhile, he is glad he grabbed it up as he is finding out that four-door hardtops are actually kind of rare. Since the car is a totally rust-free, nice, complete original car with many options, Gale decided to keep it in its original form. With its 283 4-barrel Powerglide transmission combination, the car is loaded with extra outside trim pieces front to back. Besides the factory air conditioning and the dual, rear-mounted antennas, the car is loaded with extra outside trim pieces front to back. Any free time Gale has he continues to improve the original car by installing new tires and new aluminum sail trim panels. Apparently some of the gauges and radio didn't function when he bought the 56-year-old car home car too, so he had those rebuilt to factory specs. There is one fact that remains constant and that is keeping an old car original can cost more money than updating it with modern replacement items. Gale told me that his wife, Judy, is his biggest supporter with keeping their 1957 original, while they both enjoy taking the grand kids for rides in the '57 whenever they can, creating new memories for everyone where ever they go.



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