

MY FIRST CAR.....by John Allison

My first car was a Seafoam Green 1950 Ford Custom Deluxe club coupe.

Sometime in late 1949, my parents packed me into the back seat of our 46 Ford Tudor and we left the mountains of North Carolina for the flatlands of NW Ohio, where my dad had taken a job with the C&O railroad. On the trip north, in eastern Kentucky, the old Ford gave up the ghost as evidenced by the vast amounts of steam coming out of the engine compartment. The car was towed to the nearest dealer where my dad decided to buy another car.

I remember the showroom with the shiny new cars, especially the flashy Crestliners with the vinyl roofs and two tone paint. I was hoping for the yellow and black one or the sportman green and black, but it was not to be as my mother had her eye on the green coupe in which we proceeded on our way north. I rode in that car as a passenger for the next 13 years until I got my driver's license in Port Clinton, Ohio, on a snowy November day.

From then on, the green coupe carried me on dates, road trips, to work, and back and forth to college on a daily basis. It also took me from Ohio to North Carolina every year at Christmas and other holidays. It served me faithfully for many years, with the only problems being a failed generator, which was easily replaced with a used one, and a leaky water pump, which was replaced by one from the auto parts store.

Those were the days before "recycling centers", when you could go to the junkyard and remove the parts yourself and pay a reasonable price. I don't recall the price for the water pump, but the used generator was only \$5. This represented 4 hours of labor at \$1.25 per hour, which was my hourly rate working at the dairy bar at that time. A few months later I became a roofer at \$1.75 per hour, which allowed for more improvements to my car.

Over the next several years, I updated the coupe with a radio, dual exhaust with glass packs, 57 Dodge Lancer wheel covers, whitewalls, a custom grille, and various other items purchased at K-Mart, junk yards, and "Flash" Bauman's 24 hr auto parts store in Toledo. I also painted it a Lincoln med. metallic blue, with my brother's Sear's Roebuck paint sprayer, in his back yard, while visiting on Christmas break. It wasn't the greatest paint job but it looked good from 50 feet.

We had some great times in that car. My friends would each chip in 25 cents and we would buy enough gas (at 26 cents a gallon) to cruise all evening, checking out the girls or to head for Sandusky to play miniature golf. Occasionally, we would grab a case of PBR or Black Label (drinking age was 18 back then) and put it in the back seat, and head out on a deserted country road to enjoy the scenery.

The miles and the dreaded "tin worms" finally took their toll on the little coupe, and we reluctantly parted company in favor of a 4 year old Galaxy 500 with a high performance 390 and overdrive. It would be several years before my first Cadillac.....