

# MY GTO

## BY LEROY BRUNE



Like most teenage boys in the 60's and 70's having a neat car was important. In my hometown of Washington Mo. It wasn't how fast your car went but it had to look cool. My first car was a 58 Chevy. It was transportation and that's about all I can say about it. Next was a 66 Mustang 6 cyl. (Not fast but it looked good). After that for a while I just had drivers.

When Deb and I met I was driving a Buick Regal and she had a Chevy Nova, both 6 cyl. Some years later we started talking about getting a cool car that we could cruise in. Since Deb and I both had Mustangs when we were younger we thought we would keep our eyes out for an old Mustang but then the story changes.

Terry and Gail Schott were friends of Deb's before Deb and I met and we had been seeing them once in a while and Terry would always want to show me his GTO and what he was doing to it. He kept telling us we needed a GTO not an old Mustang.

One Saturday when I was at work, Deb called me and said Terry called her (by mistake



I might add, he had wanted to call me) and asked her if we wanted to buy his old 65 GTO. Well one thing led to another and I now have his old 65 389 4bbl in our garage. That car has led us to THE REST OF THE STORY.

The car we drive the most and have the most fun in is our 1967 Lemans / GTO Clone ragtop. I

had seen the car around town for a number of years and always thought it would be a neat one to have. I knew the owner as he would come into the NAPA AUTO PARTS STORE where I work and I kept telling him if he ever wanted to sell it to be sure and let me know. Sometime later he came to me and said he was ready to sell the ragtop. Needless to say I was excited until he told me it had an under hood and under dash fire. I told him that I was not interested as I thought he was asking too much for the amount of work I needed to put into it. He kept bugging me to buy the car and coming up with a different price so I went and looked at it once more, agreed on a price and he delivered it to our house.

After we got the car home our plans were to fix the fire damage under the hood and dash, put a GTO hood on it, new windshield, new top and a quick paint job. All we were looking for was something that looked ok as we were driving down the street .Our son and son-in-law being body techs would hear nothing of the kind, so after spending several evenings messing around with it they had it down to a body on one side of the shop and the frame on the other side. That's when they told me we were going to turn it into a GTO, so the process begins. By this time my son in-laws brother (also a body



tech) was coming over also. The boys spent many evenings in the shop when they should have been home with their families. (Thank you Erin and Jen, you gave up a lot so the guys could work on our car.) We decided to start on the frame and work our way up. In the process the frame fell on me and broke my leg just before the St. Louis Nationals. I was in a wheelchair during that time.

The work continued for the next few years. The body got new quarters, a GTO tail panel and GTO grills. I found a GTO hood but after we got the paint and bondo off of it, it was not useable. Terry had an old Lemans hood that was in fair shape so the boys cut the scoop out of the old hood and fabricated it into the Lemans hood. Now it looks just like it came out of the factory.

As most of you know some of the parts we need are just not reproduced so many hours were spent in junk yards and at swap meets but we still could not find all of our parts. Once in a while things just seem to fall into place as one evening I received a phone call from a guy that asked if I was building a 67 Lemans ragtop. I told him I was and he told me he had a car he wanted to get rid of and that it had some good parts on it. I told him I was interested and then found out it was a complete car. After talking to him for some time I tried to get a price from him but all he wanted was a ride in ours when it was finished.

We finally got the car on the road in the spring of 2010. Since then we have had a few problems but all very fixable.

Deb and I enjoy our driver as often as we are able, sometimes 2 or 3 times a week just to go for an evening cruise. Twenty years ago if someone would have told me I would be the proud owner of a GTO as a toy I would have told them they were crazy. Now we can only thank Terry Schott for making the phone call to the wrong person.





