

Goat of the Month – July 2010

By John Hunt

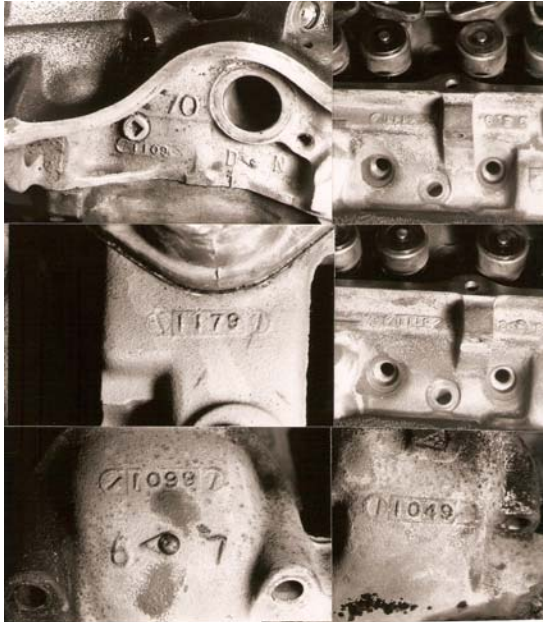


My GTO life started in 1973 when my friend Dan let me borrow his 70 Judge (black, black, black, Ram Air III Auto with Air. \$800 at a used car lot.) What a smooth car at the time. Fast forward to 1981, a friend at work ask me if I wanted a wrecked 1968 GTO for \$600. I went and looked at an HO 4 speed with 3.90 posi, bought a 1968 Lemans conv. and transferred all of the GTO stuff that was needed to make it look and run like the GTO. While driving this car one day a construction worker asked me to look at her convertible top on her car as it kept blowing the fuses.

When she brought this car for me to look at, one of the pistons for the top was bent. After talking to her for a couple of hours I purchase this car for \$1500. What I got was a real 1970 GTO convertible. This car was a standard 350 hp, auto on the column, power steering, power disk brakes and tinted windows. What a mess this car was, birds nest on the intake manifold, steel pop riveted to the rear fenders to cover the lack of steel underneath,



bent rear bumper, duck tape on the seats to hide the holes, if you did not hit the spare when putting things in the trunk it would end up on the ground. I had to replace the front springs, shocks, ball joints and bushings to drive the car.



In 1986 I joined the GTOAA and joined the Gateway GTO in 1990 after talking to member John Seabolt at a car show. In 1988 I rebuilt the motor for the first time. I took black and white photos of all of the date codes on this engine. At the time Paul Danni, tech adviser for GTOAA, stated that Pontiac did not use the "I" date code on any production cars when I was talking to him at one of the Nationals. This engine was built in Sept and has the date code of "I" on every part of the engine. A latter article in the Legend (June 1989) stated that maybe it was a preproduction part.

I purchased all of the parts that I thought would fix all of the metal problems (whole rear clip cut off behind the front seats from a hardtop, rear bumper, trunk lid and front fenders) and dropped off the car to Gary Clutter in Sesser, IL. 1991, 13 months latter I

drove the car to get a new top on it, new carpet and had new seat covers put on. I stayed with the original colors as this was a numbers matching car.

The first GTOAA Nationals that I took the car to after it was finished was in Indianapolis in 1993, what a surprise a third place in the Popular Vote. This was followed by a second place in St. Louis 1994 and second place in Niagara Falls in 1995. Car did not run too well coming back from Niagara Falls, so pulled the motor and sent for balance, cut down the compression to 9.5 to 1 and had hardened seats added to the heads this work was done by M.B.J. Machine shop in Granite City.

Got a Job offer in the Tampa area when the motor was in the shop, asked Chris Simmons to help to get the motor in while I was out of town. The transfer to Florida stopped my GTO driving and showing as the job took too much time. In 2001 I quit the job and moved back to Hillsboro Mo. I rejoined the Gateway GTO and have limited my hobby to occasional cruise nights. In June 2006 I purchased a Spice Red 2006 6 speed GTO from Belhmann. I liked this car a lot. Having a small child made taking this car difficult to family outings as a car seat must be turned upside down to get it in and putting on a seat belt for someone else in the back is very difficult. In Sept 2009 I traded the GTO for a G8 GT. This turned out to be a good move as the car is very easy to get in and out and drives great.

Along the way I have added a few items that did not come with the 1970, rear spoiler, rally gauge package with dash tachometer, console (car was a bucket seat column shift auto), 15" ralleys for the back, one from John Johnson. Over the winter of 2008 I replaced the dash. When the dash was out I replaced the wiring under the dash and the original speaker.

Still have two major projects to complete. The complete rear suspension is all original. Need new bushings and shocks. Original carb is in a box in the garage awaiting rebuild, I have a correct number carb on the car but it is built by Carter. Some of the original owners paperwork was left in the glove box, owners manual and new vehicle warranty paper without a Protect-O-Plate imprint. The build sheet was under the gas tank but was so rough it crumbled.

