

I was first introduced to the Pontiac GTO in my senior year(1973) of high school where, with the help of my Mom and Dad, I purchased a 1968 Verdoro Green Metallic GTO. I was eighteen at the time and had one of the hottest cars on school campus. My green machine had a big block 400 with a 3-speed tranny and an AM/FM eight-track reverb system in it with six speakers. I worked at a Shell gas station at the time. After work, I would hook up my GTO to the newly acquired "SUN" machine to keep it tuned.



My first Pontiac

Many years later, my wife had a person setting up our computer so that she could work from home. While this was going on, we were discussing GTOs. I soon discovered that her husband was having his 1965 GTO restored at the time. I told her that I would like to find a red '64 that did not need a lot of work, as I was planning to start a frame off restoration of my 1966 2-door coupe GTO. The discussion went on until she finished her work and left.

The next day, my wife called me and said that the person working on our computer had talked to a fellow employee who thought he knew where there might be a '64 GTO for sale. He was not sure if it was red, but he thought it was. I got a phone number from him and called the owner asking if he had a '64 GTO for sale. His reply was "he might". I made arrangements to go and look at it in Carlinville, IL., about an hour from my residence in Alton, IL.

As he was pulling off the car cover, he began telling me a little bit about how he had acquired the car. Working for a trucking company and on a return trip home, he saw the GTO sitting in a junk yard. He turned around and proceeded to make a deal for the car. He said that the owners of the junk yard had used the Lil' GTO for a drag car and the engine needed some work. He had asked who in town did the best restoration work, took it to them and had the car gone over from bumper to bumper. In the meantime, he found the proper engine block and between the two engines, made one complete version.

As he continued to pull off the cover, what I saw was a dream coming true. Here sat this beautiful red GTO that was completely restored and had been sitting on blocks for the last 5 years. When he opened the hood, there sat the most beautiful sight of all, the infamous Pontiac Tri-Power. The next thing out of my mouth was "How Much"?

After a little discussion on price, he said he wanted to have the carbs tuned, fresh oil and antifreeze put in it so that I could drive it. I agreed and a couple of weeks later went back to drive it. Once we agreed on the price, I got the money together and drove my dream car home in September of 1998. The following day, I took it to my first car show and took a 3rd place trophy. The only preparation was to give the chrome a quick polish and wipe off the road dust.



Since that time, I have done some detail work and added fresh paint on the engine and frame. I have also had an aluminum exhaust system installed with the FlowMaster mufflers. These compliment the fresh pair of "splitters" coming off the rear fenders, a gift from my wife who is also into muscle cars. During my years of owning the '64 GTO, I have participated primarily in the local car shows and cruises.

One day in July of 2003, my wife called me to tell me that I had received a call from a representative of Polar Lights who was interested in taking pictures of my car apparently to have a model made of my GTO.

John Mueller said that he had contacted John Johnson of the GTOAA to try and locate a 1964 GTO to take pictures for the development of a plastic model. He told me that I was the second person that he had contacted for this year and make of Pontiac. After making a phone call or two to make arrangements with Quality Pontiac in Alton, IL., to arrange using their garage, the date was set.

John and his wife arrived July 25, 2003 and the next day we were at Quality Pontiac at 8:30 am putting my '64 up on the hoist. Six and 1/2 hours later, after taking something like 16 rolls of film, he was finished. John told me he had also contacted Wil Bowers of Glen Carbon, who owns a beautiful 1964 GTO convertible and arranged for him to come out to my house so that he could get pictures of his car as well.

It was quite an experience working with John and his wife. I really enjoyed it. They are very, very good people. John told me at the time that it would be 6 to 9 months after he sent in the pictures before he would hear anything.

I made contact with John around the first of the year and he told me that he had not heard anything from Polar Lights yet. He needed to do some more research and get some shop

manuals for the model development. Apparently, there was much more to it than I thought. He said that he thought that he might see the first samples of actual parts around mid-June, 2004.

I learned that he had designed three different versions: a stock plus options hardtop, a stock plus options convertible and a "pro-street" hardtop with a contemporary "Big Chief" big-block engine set up. I also was told that Playing Mantis and Polar Lights had been bought by the RC2 Brands, Inc. John was not sure of what that might do to the release date of the model.

I received an e-mail from John again December 13, 2004 informing me that the hardtop kit version was the first being released later this month and could be located on the "Hobby Heaven" web site at www.modelcars.com. A couple of days later, I received a package containing 6 samples of the model-2 each of red green and gold. That same day on eBay, I found a white one and of course, bid high enough to win it. Ironically, the seller had gotten it from the "Hobby Heaven" web site.

Tom Carter, of "Hobby Heaven" has since requested pictures of my car and John Mueller taking pictures of it. He has posted them on his website message board. I had purchased additional red models for my friends and members of my family.



Measuring rear window on '64 for model



Model on roof of '64

Earlier while waiting to hear from John, I was asked if I would like to participate in the delivery of the first 2004 GTO by the local Pontiac dealer here in Alton. This took place at Quality Pontiac on January 18, 2004. The local paper ran an article on the delivery and some history of the GTO. The paper took some pictures of the new GTO with mine. The reporter asked me for a brief history of my car and the GTO in general.

In addition, David Stevenson, Sales Manager asked if they could use my GTO in their new local TV commercial. On May 12, 2004, I took my car back to Quality Pontiac and watched as my '64 GTO became a star on local TV. It appears at the very beginning of the commercial. David loaned me the original copy of the ad and allowed me to make a copy.



Filming commercial for new Pontiac GTO

Prior to purchasing my '64, I had been looking for a GTO to restore for quite a while. I was informed by a fellow worker that he saw a '68 or '69 GTO sitting outside a repair shop in Hamel IL. I scoped it out and ended up bringing it home and taking over our garage, much to my wife's displeasure. This was in September of 1992. I had been months into dismantling this, Verdoro Green and other colors '68 GTO, when I learned of a '66 GTO owned by a young man near

Brighton who specialized in restoring GTOs with his father. It was Montero Red and gray primer GTO with red interior 389, 4-bbl. After some discussion I found out the previous owner was Will Bowers. So I contacted him and had some discussion about the car and went back with the partially disassembled '68 and drove home the '66 (October 1994).



'68 GTO Brought home September 1992



'66 GTO Brought home October 1994

I worked on the '66 for quite a while until I found my '64. After that the '66 got an occasional wrench put on it. I finally sold the '66 GTO after a lot of thought, plus the money was right.

In fall of 2004 we had to run to the grocery store and I was telling my wife that Quality Pontiac, name at the time prior to the demise of Pontiac, had a new 2005 GTO sitting out front. I suggested we go and look. To our surprise, it was a 2004, with a dealer installed hood with scoops and grill inserts. We test drove it, took groceries home, then went back to pick up our new 2004 GTO.

So now we have "two"





2004 GTO at Route 66 Museum 2008

In 2005 I started an all Pontiac car club, Bluff City Pontiac, along with a couple of gentlemen I met at a show. It lasted for about four years then broke up due to numerous reasons. Bluff City Pontiac and GatewayGTO had a couple of cruises together.

Also in 2005, GTOAA had made contact with me wanting to do an article on my '64 GTO and on the model that was developed from my car. So I got some pictures from the photo shoot with John Mueller and sent it in to be published in The Legend. I did not know that it was going to be the cover story of the December 2005 issue. Of course I was very excited.



Up until 2009, I have shown my '64 GTO in most of the local car shows usually placing a 1st or 2nd. I have done very little as far as modifications trying to keep it as much as I can stock. I did however purchase a set of Cragar SS and BF Goodrich T/A Radials and install a set of "splitters," thanks dear, to help dress it up. I always did like the looks of those Cragar SS.

At present the tri-power carb set up is being rebuilt, working to install the timing chain cover from replacing re-circulation port washer and I am cleaning gas tank. All this was from time I was working out of the state and having detail work done for one and a half years and not being driven. My plan is to finish all this up during the winter and have back on the road by spring of 2015.

At my wife's suggestion, I am have been in process of building a scrapbook of all that has transpired with our relationship with the *GTO*.



Remember: NOTHING OUT RUNS A MEAN OLD GOAT !!