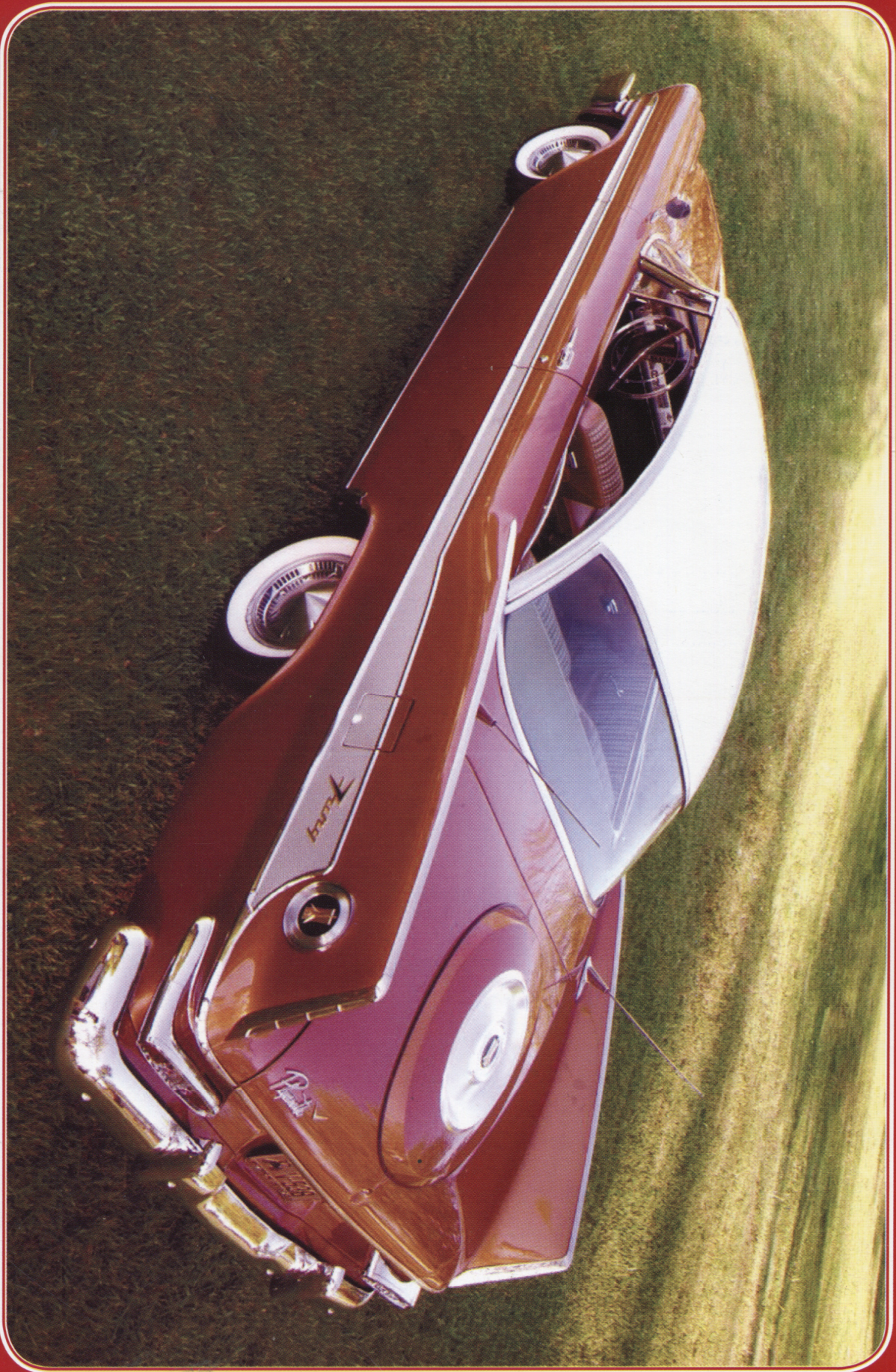


# Plymouth Showcase



PHOTO BY ART SCHLACTER



Art Schlacter's 1959 Sport Fury sport coupe



# Parting thoughts

by Art Schlachter  
Danville, Kentucky

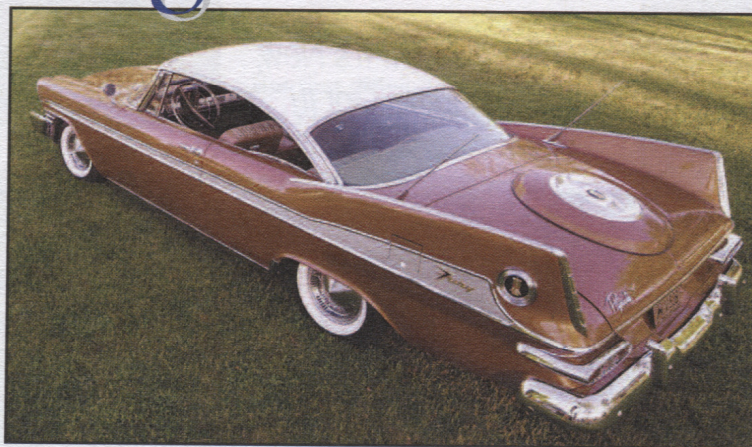
Getting old and parting with your loved one happens to everyone sooner or later. In my case, however, the "loved one" is not my wife but my vintage Plymouth. Don't get me wrong, my wife edges out my Plymouths—but not by much. Just ask her.

Throughout my sixties, I worked on my cars with exuberance and pride. I am now 74 and the exuberance has left, leaving only my pride. Crawling under cars, doing brake jobs, converting over from manual steering to power steering, working under the dashboards, etc., all require more effort and energy on my part than ever before.

With modern cars and younger mechanics, I find, in many cases, I now know as much or more about fixing things on my cars than they do. A perfect example is the carburetor. What young mechanic can tell me the seven parts of a carburetor? Would a young mechanic know what a trunnion joint is? You can't take a computer analyzer and plug it into a vintage car. Thus is the dilemma today for the person owning a vintage car.

The less I work on my cars, the less I drive them at any great distance. It is an inevitable trend as years of life start catching up with you.

Eventually you will have to part with your "loved one." Either you sell your car while you're still in this world or you just leave it in the garage and after you pass on, your heirs, who may not be familiar with vintage car values, could end up selling your car for a fraction of what it is worth, giving some unknown buyer a hell of a bargain.



I just heard on the automotive news, at the time of this writing, that Fiat Chrysler was to be making an official announcement regarding the elimination of the Chrysler name from all its buildings and replacing the iconic Chrysler Pentastar emblem with the initials "FCA." I, as many of our POC members, have always been a Chrysler car fan. To us, this recent announcement is just another blow slowly wiping away the Chrysler name associated with their great cars. After all, I grew up in the late forties and fifties when Ford, General Motors and Chrysler were the big car makers in America. With the Chrysler identity fading into oblivion, will our vintage Plymouths fade away over the coming years as have Packard, Studebaker, Hudson and Nash automobiles? It certainly seems as if they will, if history is any gauge. You can still see those cars of a bygone era, around, and it is a delight to see them. However owners are no longer sticking money into their upkeep and many of the cars have been modified with modern drivetrains, as parts have become obsolete and can't be found.

Last week I drove my 1959 Sport Fury to a cruise-in hosted by a local distillery company. Arriving early, I was one of the first ones there. Across the large parking lot, a group from Indiana

was disembarking their bus to tour the distillery. As they walked across the parking lot, several noticed my '59 Plymouth and came over to admire my Sport Fury. I must admit, I was flattered by the attention. Afterward, I realized that members of the tour group were retirees who had grown up, as I had, when these cars were new.

They had a real appreciation of my Plymouth.

Robert Hinds, the car's previous owner, sold his '59 Sport Fury to me four years ago, a year before he died of cancer. Robert had been the POC 1959 tech advisor for several years. Although I didn't feel right about buying his car under such circumstances, he knew I would take good care of

the car just as he had done. I remained in contact with Robert until his passing and now occasionally talk to his wife.

Although at age 74 and in good health, I can picture myself someday being in the same position as Robert had been and having to decide whether I want to sell my Plymouth or just keep it. For now my answer is to just keep it and enjoy it while I can. As the saying goes, "We never really own anything in life; we just have our things for a while."

With the Chrysler name fading into oblivion, it is important to keep things in perspective as we realize that although we hate to see it happening, such "fading into oblivion" has happened many times since the advent of the automobile.

In a small building housing a vast collection of hood ornaments at the Gilmore Museum, in Hickory Corner's, Michigan, hangs a poster listing the names of every car manufactured. Over 2,800 car manufacturers have come and gone. In the end, all one can say is "It's been a great ride!"

PB

*I believe it is better to be looked over  
than over-looked.*

MAY WEST