

1959 Plymouth Fury

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During the past ten years Chrysler has taken some bold moves in design with a radical change in pickups, the clever, PT Cruiser, a couple of hot rods and the impressive Chrysler 300. But the company has a long history of bold moves and the 1957 launch of their tail fin wonders almost destroyed the company.

Though these designs were a real departure from cars of the era they were accompanied by two outstanding developments. The torsion bar suspension and a push button

transmission that was well ahead of both Ford and General Motors. However, the consumer discovered rather poor quality control on the late 50s cars and without money from Ford and GM Chrysler would have gone under.





The soft sloppy bodies of 57 and 58 were pretty well sorted out with the 1959 model with the **Savoy**, **Fury** and **Belvedere** models.

This was the era of the two door hardtop and though the Plymouth was pretty nice the Impala was a much better seller and substantially better made.

This rare example was spotted on the street in South Regina during the first week of the 2005 Canada Summer Games and has to be the property of a very proud owner. Paint, fit and finish on this vehicle are in many ways better than I remember these models right in the show room.





This look inside illustrates the innovation that Chrysler put into their late fifties models. The rear view mirror moved from above the windshield in the middle to left of centre on the dash.

This model has a padded steering wheel and dash. After market addition of gauges below the dash were not uncommon at the time as drivers felt that the idiot lights on the dash just didn't do the necessary job.

Below you can see the buttons for the transmission. Ford experimented with buttons on the centre of the steering column of the ill-fated Edsel but Chrysler put them in all of their automatic transmission vehicles. They worked flawlessly and the





transmission was absolutely the most durable part of the car. My 57 had a leaking pan on the transmission and I actually ran it out of oil. The think showed no ill effects from the trauma and kept on working until it got oil and worked just fine up until the time I traded it off for another car.

The wheels and wheel covers on this one look like after market modifications as most Furys had a large cone shaped wheel cover.

By 1959 the power problems with early year models had all but vanished and with a very light body and abundant power these cars were rockets. They were surprising safe compared to vehicles of the day largely due to the really great suspension.





Torsion bars on the front and leaf springs on the back. Chrysler cars throughout the entire decade of the fifties had really great steering with their cars able to whistle down the road with precision. 59 Fords were notoriously bad handling cars with weight distribution problems and the General Motors vehicles and their all coil spring suspension road nicely but behaved badly with to much body roll and the tendency to take flight off a snow drift or obstacle then returning to early and squirming hopelessly out of control.

I lost a front wheel on my 57 Plymouth due to my failure to tighten the wheel nuts and the car dropped onto the road at sixty miles an hour and rolled along nicely on the brake hub. I put seat belts in my old 57 Plymouth but compared to the competitors, the Chrysler cars were better handling and all around safer.



But just looking at this forty-eight year old wonder I really think the design that looks so odd at the time and were the source of a good deal of derision has stood the test of time and looks like it quite belongs on this Regina street looking a good bit better than cars forty-eight years newer.



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