



Founded 1957

The Plymouth Bulletin

29-time Old Cars Weekly Golden Quill Award winner

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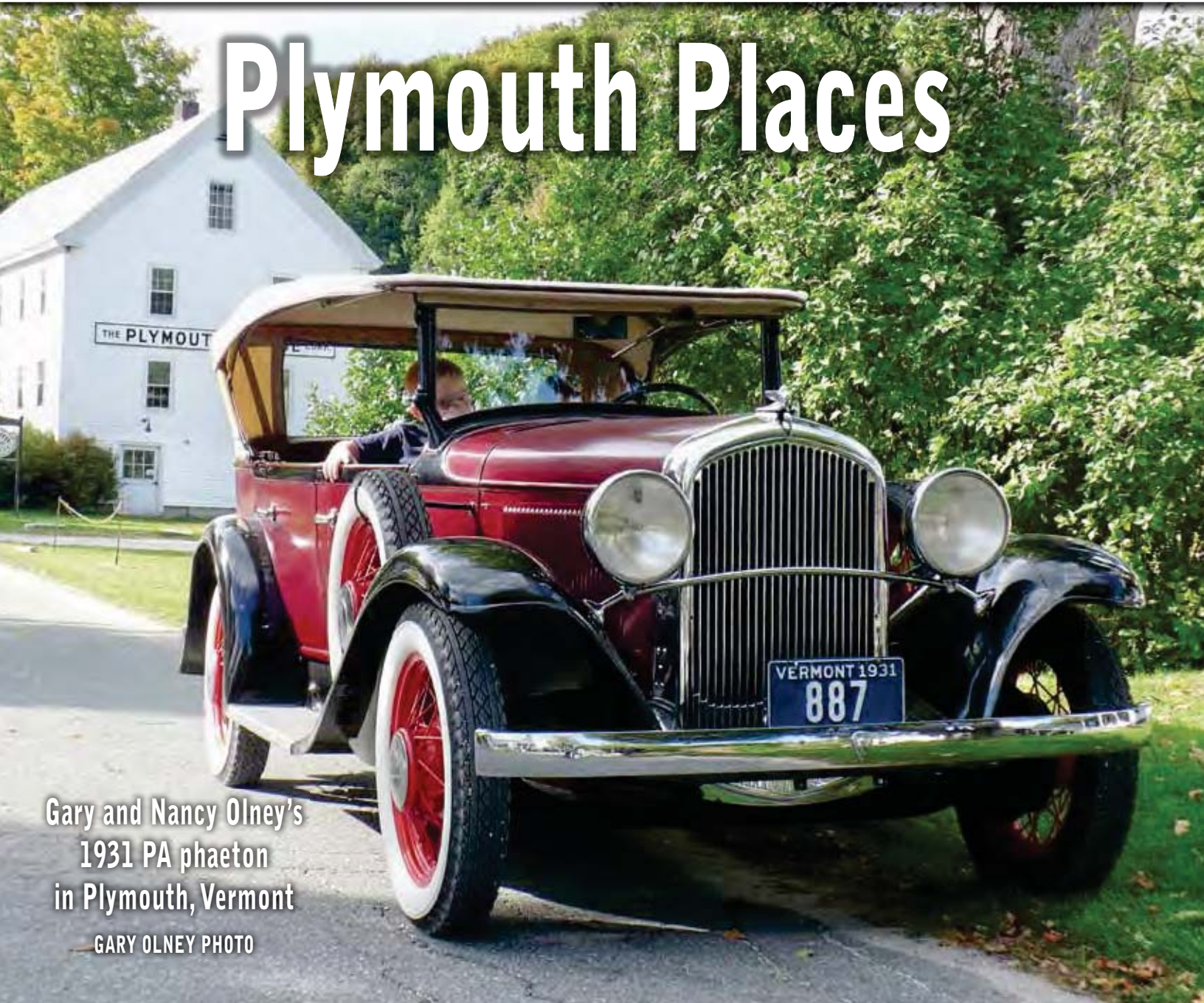
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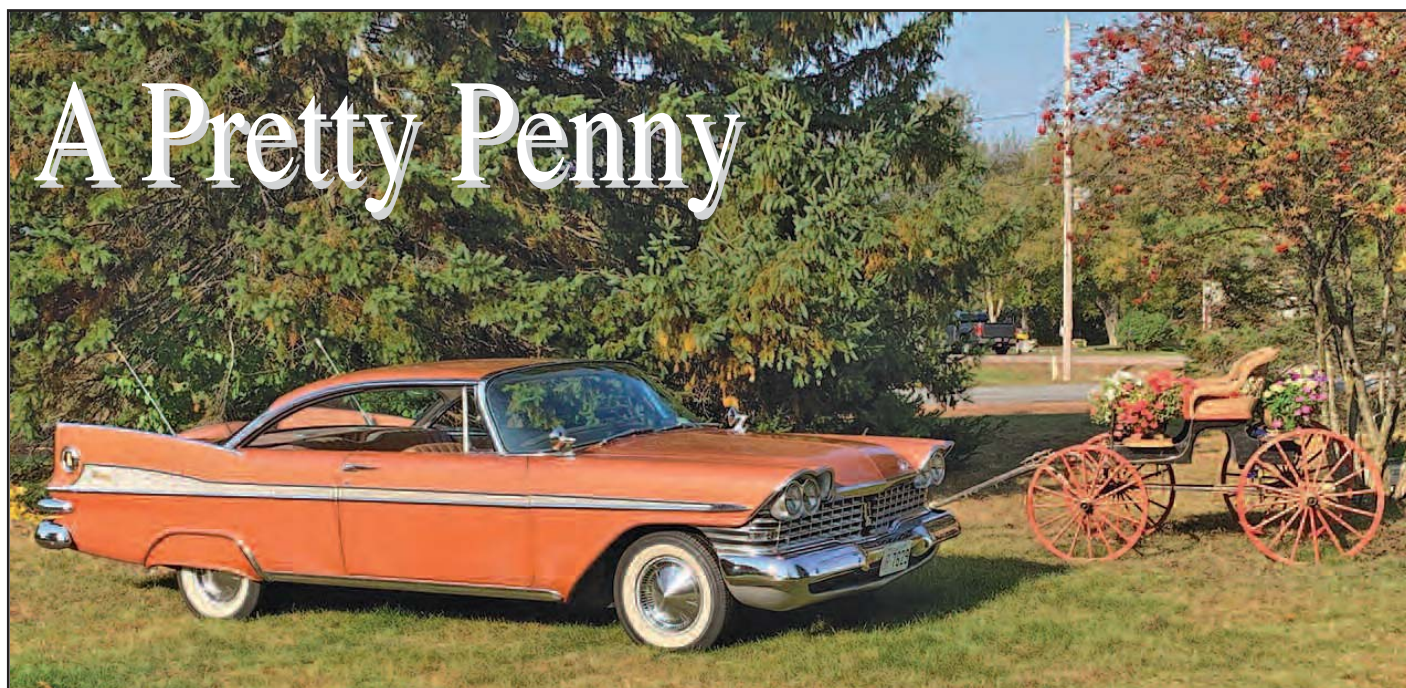
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Plymouth Places

Gary and Nancy Olney's
1931 PA phaeton
in Plymouth, Vermont

GARY OLNEY PHOTO





A Pretty Penny

While stationed in the Coast Guard in Maine back in 1961, John Zastrow spotted a white 1959 Sport Fury with a Golden Commando V8 for sale and he had to have it. When John returned home to Wisconsin in 1965, he sold the Sport Fury (for a '66 Mustang!), but never forgot the Plymouth. He went on to marry in 1973 and have five kids. He worked as a mailman, then started his own business selling and renting RVs and campers and, finally, John retired in 2008 as a FedEx driver.

Still, the memory of the Sport Fury he had let go stuck with him, and a chance encounter at the 1997 Iola Car Show led him to an owner of a Sport Fury which was for sale some 350 miles away. With kids going off to college, John balked at the price and decided the time wasn't right. But almost two years later the car appeared for sale on the Internet, piquing John's interest again. With cash in hand and a buddy along as a driver should a sale occur, John made the trek to see the car.

Originally from road-salt-free Texas, the car was

pristine except for a rust spot on the driver's rocker panel. A power steering puddle underneath the car was also concerning, but the owner seemed anxious to sell the car with winter approaching and his annual flight to a warmer clime just weeks away. Besides, John seemed like a serious buyer with no intentions of flipping it. They struck a deal for almost half of the price offered two years earlier! Cautiously, John made the decision to drive the car back, first stopping to get some Lucas power steering sealer at the local auto store. The Fury performed admirably on the way home.

Surprisingly, the car has the rare factory air conditioning (although it's not working at present). John repaired the

rocker panel and added whitewalls and skirts, along with AAJ front disk brakes, using a Volare master cylinder which is bolted right up to the firewall. He also installed a Petronix ignition.

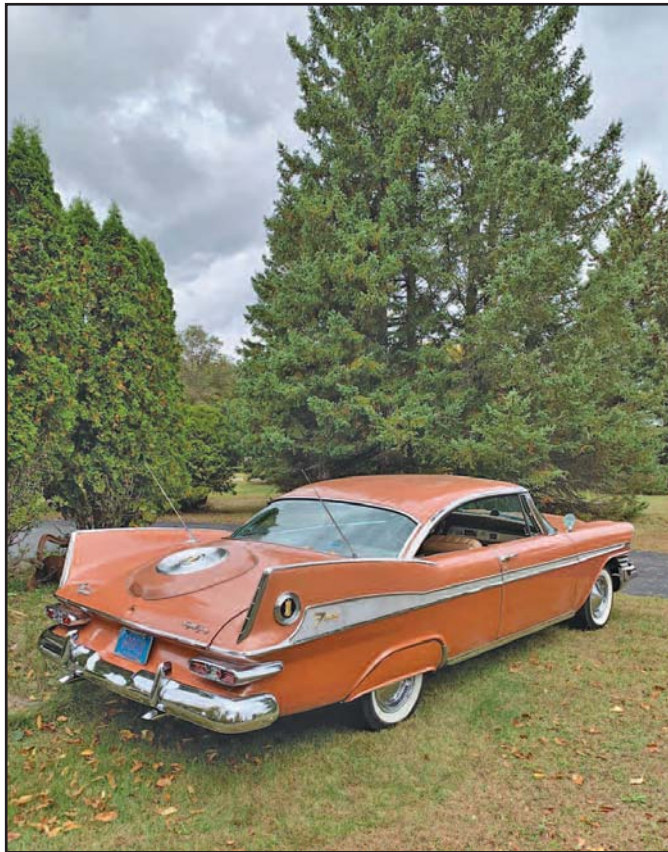
The interior is not original but does retain the buckles characteristic of Sport Furys.

Along the way, a '59 parts car John picked up for 200 dollars donated a Torqueflite transmission when the original failed. Rear springs and a radiator also came from the donor car.

But, as John learned, one needs to be careful with used parts. Making the trek from Wausau to Kansas City for his son's wedding not long after the transmission replacement—a trek of over 600 miles,

the furthest John has had the car from home—it developed an unusual vibration, both to and from his destination. Fortunately, he made it home, only to discover that one of the four transmission bolts was missing, with a second well on the way to backing itself out! "Never reuse lock washers," John cautions. With new lock washers in place all around, the vibration disappeared.





John, now into his third decade of ownership, considers himself fortunate to have encountered so little trouble with the car. The previous owner told John he had named the car *Penny* for its copper color, and he handed over a key chain with a lucky 1984 penny on it. Taking no chances, John replaced it with a 1959 penny and, in jest, attributes his good fortune to that exchange.

Soon after his retirement in 2008, John built a 30x48-foot garage on his three-acre property, helping to pour the concrete pad but otherwise building the structure himself. It sports a two-post lift, a Modine *Hot Dawg* gas heater in an upper corner and an insulated sliding partition down the middle which permits him to heat one side or both. The space



is accessible with three drive-in doors on three different walls.

Typically, John drives the Sport Fury only in the summer.

He made it to, perhaps, four car shows in 2020 because of the pandemic. Previously, it had not been unusual for him to make twenty shows a year. Along the way, he's collected a prodigious number of awards and attendance pins.

"Iola does not give out trophies," John says, "but each year they have a theme. In 2004, the theme was *Plymouth Built Great Cars*.

The organizers hosted a theme tent and picked twenty or so cars to put in the tent. They picked my '59, so this was an honor. In 2012 the theme was *21st Century Orphans*. Their orphans were Pontiac, Oldsmobile, Mercury, and Plymouth. Again, they invited *my* Plymouth to be under the tent, so *Penny* has made her presence known."

EVANSVILLE: John's Sport Fury also has the distinction of being built in Evansville, Indiana, in 1959, the last year Plymouths were built there before the opening of the new plant in St. Louis. His Fury was built early in the model year—the 1,838th car assembled there on November 16, 1958, according to the build card—but at that point, the writing was already on the wall.

IN ADDITION to his parts car, John also has a '59 four-door Fury he uses as his daily driver. And because he doesn't have enough toys, he also has a '70 AMC



Gremlin, a '71 Buick Skylark convertible and a '77 Cadillac Eldorado. He also has a very rare 1957 Herter Eldorado Rocket – a 14-foot boat with fins, and a trailer (with torsion bar suspension!) which uses the boat lights for trailering.



To round out his collection, John also has a horse-drawn buggy from the 1800s, with no discernible stampings to betray the vintage.

JOHN IS NOW A SPRIGHTLY 80, and is still getting up on the roof to mount Christmas decorations, to his wife's dismay. He says he feels like 50, is in excellent health, and that his goal is to live to be 100. And if I were to wager, my pennies are betting he does.

—Dan Morton
1959 Tech Advisor
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*"For '59... If It's New,
Plymouth's Got It!"*

Atlanta Savoy Cab

Not often in my regular column on Plymouth Miniatures do I have the opportunity to write about a new model, one that few toy car collectors or Plymouth fans have yet to hear about or see. This “new” Plymouth is not just a warmed-over model with a fresh paint job and catchy graphics or a new casting, and it’s not one collectors might expect—a Road Runner, ‘Cuda or a

marketed to the general car-buying public everywhere

This particular 1959 Savoy model was made not because its maker was enamored of Plymouths, but because it was identified as a popular, commonplace taxi model which for years had been in service in the City of Atlanta, Georgia.

Our Savoy is just one of many—I’m estimating into the hundreds—different taxi models made over the past few years



me know. Also, I am curious to learn of readers and Plymouth Owners Club members who recall seeing or hailing these Savoy taxis on the streets of Atlanta back in the late fifties and early sixties.

THIS FRESH PLYMOUTH TOY CASTING got me to thinking about our favorite brand of cars, the big ones I mean, as often happens in these articles of mine. Plymouths, from the inception of the line to its unfor-



model which has left its unforgettable mark on vintage car fans everywhere, hardcore MOPAR fanatics or not.

Taking a glance at the pictures, it becomes clear that this is “only” a Savoy, Plymouth’s lower-cost, bread-and-butter sedan—a workhorse, an affordable car

representing a wide variety of vehicles and cities throughout the world. If you are a collector of taxi miniatures this has been a period of mana from heaven for you. The Savoy is the first Plymouth, as far I know, to be selected for this taxi series. If you have seen others, please let

tunate demise, were designed as basic transportation vehicles aimed at buyers looking to haul their family around, drive back and forth to work, take on a vacation trip and perform any number of other mundane chores. I’m talking about two-door and four-door sedans and station

wagons, for the most part, with a few hardtops or sporty cars added to the mix just to make the whole line more attractive. With the Fury models of the late fifties and later—the ‘Cudas, Road Runners and GTXs—Plymouth took aim with a more specialized market segment. Yet Plymouth never lost focus (well, maybe a bit) of the premise that its car lineup should consist mainly of family sedans. In later years came the introduction of the popular van, a vehicle which only adds fodder to that latter claim.

Lastly, an often overlooked area in which Plymouth was highly successful was in providing service vehicles with proven reliability and performance features, meaning police cruisers and taxis. That said, I am not the least bit disappointed that this “new” Plymouth is a mere Savoy model or that it is a taxi, a common vehicle sighting for anyone who resides in most urban areas. Ply-

enough, only in foreign markets—Europe, Asia and Latin America. I fortunately found mine at a flea market in Brazil where I spend the winter months, but you will probably have to get yours on eBay and likely will have to pay extra for overseas shipping, which can run you from fifteen to twenty dollars. Add that cost to the asking price of the model (compare prices on eBay before you commit to buy) and you will have around thirty-five dollars invested in your taxi fare before the meter stops running. They were made (along with the other taxis I referred to above) by a company called Altaya-IXO, which is headquartered in Spain. Still, that is not explanation enough as to why their models are so difficult to find for sale in the USA. I wish I knew.

These Savoyos were produced in 1/43rd scale, die-cast with no opening doors, hoods, or trunks. But the exterior

trimmed in silver, headlights realistically done in transparent plastic and correct Georgia license plates have been tacked onto the front and rear of the vehicle.

This is one impressive Plymouth miniature. I can almost imagine Hank Arron, Warren Spahn and Eddie Mathews jumping into one back in '59 for the ride to Fulton Co. Stadium to suit up for an afternoon game against the Pirates, or I can see Dr. Martin Luther King catching one on his way to a speaking engagement at a local church.

-- Bill Brisbane
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mouth, as I've argued, depended on the Savoy to up its sales totals every year and Plymouth taxis, for me at least, were always a welcoming ride when I needed a paid lift, much more so than in a Ford, Chevy or Checker.

The more I examine my new '59 Savoy Atlanta Taxi the more I am pleased with it, and I think you will be as well if you can find one. These Plymouths were not sold in the USA, oddly

detailing is fantastic, and I cannot point out an error or flaw nor a modification I would recommend with the exception of adding red plastic inserts to the chromed tail lamps. Bumpers are chrome plated as are the door handles, left side rearview mirror, windshield wiper arms and exact replica, full wheel discs. The egg-crate grille with black trim is simply perfect as is the Plymouth emblem in the center. Window moldings have all been