

CAR OF THE QUARTER . . .

1971 Plymouth Barracuda by Larry Suddendorf

Classic Cars the Easy Way - Buy One New and Keep It for 41 Years!



Honeymoon
Florida Keys
January 1972



Festival parade - 1982



July 4 parade - 1998



At home - 2011

Fredericksburg show - 2012

It's always nice to hear from folks admiring my 1971 Plymouth Barracuda Convertible that they're amazed to learn I'm the original owner. Yes, it's true; I ordered the car from a Cincinnati dealership, the only car I've ever ordered from the factory, in March, 1971. It was delivered one month later, just in time for the warm days of spring. I can also identify with everyone who has replied, "I wish I still had the ... I once owned, but I had to ..." I traded in my 1965 Barracuda Formula S (4-speed) when I bought the '71. A power top, black side moldings, bumper guards, and Sure-Grip differential were among the few options I ordered; I wanted to keep things simple. So, 1971 was a busy year for me: bought the Barracuda, graduated with my bachelor's degree, got engaged to Joan, and received my draft notice (then enlisted) in the Army.

The car was my daily driver for over 9 years, through some hot Texas summer sun that baked the door panels, cold Ohio slush mixed with road salt, and storage in my grandparents' garage while stationed overseas. The top was once torn by hail and once slashed by thieves trying to steal the stereo and CB radio, but the drive train headed by the dependable 318 never

failed. As a matter of fact, regular maintenance, the addition of a Pertronix electronic ignition system in 1998, and replacing the timing chain at 85,000 miles sums up its reliability.

"Barry," as my children named "him" decades ago, became a figurative member of the family as I was able to replace the Barracuda with another car for commuting and such. I started restoring what I could, and a friend of a friend did some much-needed rear quarter sheet metal work, but I knew I needed to have a professional take care of such a project for a car with such sentimental value to us. But, time and money, those two enemies of our hobby just couldn't cooperate.

In 2004, when my wife and I moved our empty nest to the Texas Hill Country and built what was always thought to be a permanent retirement home. A few short months after moving in, I was mobilized to active duty for what would become a total of more than 4 years more service. Fortunately, I had already joined the club, met a lot of great members with properly restored cars, and started asking around about who was most capable. As you

can imagine, Steve Enochs' name came up many times. While he couldn't start on the car right away, he was gracious enough to store it for me. Good timing, as it turns out. Vintage Air was looking for a non-factory-air E-body as a prototype model for their development efforts. Steve towed the car to them for about a year's work on their project. When it was returned, we started a long-distance restoration and communication network. No problem; I trusted him completely. In December, 2008 he delivered the car to my home, completely restored "stripped down to the VIN" as I like to say. With the addition of suspension upgrades, power steering and brakes, and power brakes with front discs to add safety and handling improvements, one major upgrade between the rebuilt 318 and Sure-Grip is a Tremec 5-speed transmission with overdrive for easy cruising.

So, now the Barracuda is ready for another 40 years of enjoyment, thanks to my sentimentality and Steve's great restoration work. Even though I get lots of offers to buy it, all I can think of is the MasterCard commercial: Original MSRP: \$3,347.60, restoration: \$\$\$\$\$, value today: PRICELESS!