

1960 Plymouth Savoy

It's been a long road for this one-family sedan



WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY
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My 1960 Plymouth Savoy was purchased new by my father on June 13, 1960, from Rossmeyer Chrysler/Plymouth in Metuchen, New Jersey. Since the purchase of the '60 came not long after we moved into a new home, my father wasn't exactly flush with cash with which to buy or run a new car.

However, the 1949 Plymouth he was driving was on its last legs, and a replacement for it was imperative. Therefore, though a new car purchase had been decided upon as unavoidable, the car had to be reasonable in cost to purchase and operate; thus a six-cylinder Savoy model became the vehicle of choice for my father.

As time went on, and the miles rolled by, the choice made in 1960 proved to be a wise one, as the 1960 Plymouth provided many faithful, economical years of service as the family taxi, grocery getter, etc.

The slant-six that powered what is now my Plymouth definitely gave the economy of operation my father needed from the car, while giving ample power to haul a full complement of passengers comfortably (six at least), and their luggage.

My Plymouth was the household mainstay until June 1972, when it was displaced from its top dog position. By 1972, the Savoy was starting to show the effects of 12 years of heavy-duty service, and my parents decided it was time to purchase a new family car. Unlike its predecessor, though, my Plymouth was not traded in on its replacement, but, as can be surmised, just demoted to second banana.

A "friend" of mine, convinced this then-naïve teenager that the Plymouth's engine needed to be rebuilt, and, lucky me, he could help me in that endeavor. I believed my friend had to be right about the need to overhaul the engine. What a mistake that was, believing his astute observations, not to mention my unbridled faith in his mechanical abilities. After the "rebuild," the Plymouth's engine wouldn't even turn; it didn't smoke, but it also didn't do anything else.

I wish I'd asked my father if I should even think of getting involved in a big job such as an engine overhaul, without his supervision. After all, Dad was a mechanical engineer.

At one point during the year that the car sat idle, my father considered sim-

ply junking it, but the paltry \$25 he was offered for hauling it down to the junkyard dissuaded him from doing so. At the end of the year, I made yet another not-so-good decision. I decided I was going to purchase a "good used engine" from a well-known national automotive mail-order firm. The engine turned out to be a piece of junk, and since it took my high school auto-shop teacher three months to get around to installing it, the mail-order company refused to take back the engine. The end result of this fiasco was still more idle time for my Plymouth, until I could find an engine rebuilder who would be at least willing to look at the used engine to determine if it was at all salvageable. The engine rebuilder I ultimately found, through my Aunt Rose, determined it would cost more to salvage the engine than it was worth, and offered me core credit towards an already rebuilt engine.

My Plymouth served as the wedding limo for my wife and me. It also has survived long enough to serve as transport home from the hospital when my son, Martin, was born. So, all in all, it's been a long and winding road, filled with potholes, and detours; but, as I said, overall, it has been worth the effort. Much like the mythical phoenix, my Plymouth rose from the ashes to live again, to serve three generations of our family and to become a rolling piece of automotive history in the process. 🚗

For a more detailed look at Ben's car, go to www.benscarpage.com.

