

New Member - Questions about my '64

Posted by Chili Pepper - 2015/09/15 22:54

Picked up '64, 389, 4 speed with 72K miles. Got original window sticker, owner's manual, warranty book with plate.

Car runs and drives very nicely, interior is in excellent condition, power brake will put you through the windshield! It has the 8 lug wheels and came with a couple extra drums as well as some other parts.

There are some rust holes in the front fenders and around the rear fender wells. The paint is worn off in some spots on the roof and trunk/rear fenders. The seller told me it was one of 3200 made.

So, I have a couple questions. What trans would be in it, Muncie? M20 or M21 maybe?

The car has manual steering but actually steers quite easy. I would like to install A/C (Vintage Air?) as it gets pretty hot around here (been 100+ many times this summer) and I want to drive this car a lot. Also thinking about converting to a 5 speed for better gas mileage on the freeway.

I don't think either of those mods will affect the value of the car as they could easily be switched back to stock. Even though I'm from New England originally, I've lived in California for over 30 years now and we don't have a lot of rusty cars out here (this car came from Illinois) so I'd really like to fix all the rust spots. The car would then no longer be "all original" so would it hurt the value? I've had a few people tell me to leave it as is.

I have a '63&1/2 Galaxie with a 450HP 390/4 speed that is my "hot rod" car so I'd like this car to be more of a cruiser that I can take on road trips but not too nice that I'd be worried about it all the time. I'll try to post more photos.

Thanks.

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Re:New Member - Questions about my '64

Posted by Chili Pepper - 2015/09/15 22:56

How do I post a photo?

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Re:New Member - Questions about my '64

Posted by OldInjun - 2015/10/17 14:01

Chili -

Sorry for the delay in responding, but I just returned from a lengthy vacation in Greece, visiting family.

Congrats on your "new" 2+2!

The issue of maintaining originality vs. restoring can be controversial and any answers to your question

will vary based on differing opinions - what follows only mine.

I believe in keeping collectible cars correct and in possession of as many original parts as possible.

There is, however, a point where the appearance and value of the car suffers if left that way. As an example, my '65 coupe has a completely original interior, EXCEPT for the carpet. I have the car points judged regularly, and the original carpeting - though acceptable on a "driver" - was just not up to judging standards. On cars like yours where there is visible rust (especially if the panels are rusted through), I vote for restoration of the parts in question. The only time I would make an exception is if the car is a TRUE survivor, and the rust does not significantly detract from its appearance.

Regarding the addition of A/C, it will definitely add to the comfort factor, but take care to avoid chopping holes or permanent modifications which can't be reversed. Same advice regarding the 5-speed conversion. I'm doubtful that you can accomplish that without modifying the flooring to fit the larger trans.

The trans is either a Borg-Warner T10 or Muncie M20 or M21), depending on production date. I refer you to this link for more details.

Please do post photo's! You can post up to 20, but take note of the space limitations: 20 items totaling 20000 Kbytes - single upload size 1500 Kbytes. Check the "Resizing Digital Photo's" post under the Article / Miscellaneous tab - or click this link.

Welcome to the Registry!

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Re:New Member - Questions about my '64

Posted by Chili Pepper - 2015/10/22 20:19

Thanks for the info.

There are rust through holes so I will get them fixed eventually. I will check with Vintage Air as I think they make an under dash unit so wouldn't have to cut anything.

The 389 is all stock and original so I dumped a can of lead additive when I filled up. Should I run that on every fill up? I know you can burn up the valves with unleaded gas if they don't have the hardened seats.

I also have to dump a little gas into the carb to get it fired up after it sits overnight which is kind of a pain. I'm thinking gas is bleeding out the bowls? Would a carb rebuild solve that? I was thinking I may have to go to an electric fuel pump.

I drove it to San Diego last weekend (about 100 miles, one way) and won "Best Survivor" award. B) Car ran great but needs shocks and tires. The tires are old Sears bias plies and are probably pretty old. I didn't go over 65 with them because of the age.

The tach shows 3K RPM at 65 MPH. Seems to cruise fine but would like to lower it. I am going to check with Tremec as they make exact fit 5/6 speeds supposedly for any car.

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Re:New Member - Questions about my '64

Posted by OldInjun - 2015/10/22 22:50

The amount these cars get driven does not usually cause a problem with valve recession due to unleaded gas. I think that is a highly overrated issue. I've driven my '65 over 25,000 miles in the last 6 years with no ill effects - including drag racing.

Carb rebuild should solve that. I recommend this company .

I wouldn't take a chance on those tires if they're 10 years old or more.

Have fun with the car!

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Re:New Member - Questions about my '64

Posted by Chili Pepper - 2015/10/23 20:05

Cool! I can run pump gas then. Makes things a lot easier.

I was thinking I might have to convert to a throttle body EFI set up but they are pretty pricey. Guess I'll do the carb rebuild first and see how that works.

Tire have to be replaced. They look cool but too risky to drive on. Have to check around for best replacements. I think Coker makes bias ply tires but may go ahead and just get decent radials. Probably will ride and drive a lot better.

I'm a '70s guy (graduated high school in '74) so I like to have some big tires and am tempted to also go with some Torque Thrusts or Cragers although I like the stock finned drums too. They are only 14" wheels though and would like to go to 15's and maybe disk brake conversion. Decisions, decisions!
:woohoo:

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Re:New Member - Questions about my '64

Posted by OldInjun - 2015/10/24 10:02

The first thing you need to do is decide how you intend to use the car. Cars guys often waste considerable time and dollars going down one path, only to reverse direction. Will it be a boulevard cruiser or on long highway drives to farther destinations? Show or go? Modified or restored? Local show trophy collector or points judged? Drive it for a season or two then flip it, or get buried in the car? You can buy as hell of a lot of gas for the price of converting to FI. When you go to sell the car, the non-correct FI unit may even detract from the car's value.

If your car has factory 8-lug wheels, I recommend you keep them on the car. IMO there is no better looking wheel out there, and they are highly prized by Big Pontiac buyers. Roush sold an 8-lug disc brake conversion for awhile, but I'm not certain that they are still available. They required the 15" rims. Check with Larry at 815.735.4002 or lgto67@yahoo.com (tell him the 2+2 Registry referred you). There is a company in Texas that makes 15-inch rims to fit the 8-lugs. Coker has the best selection of vintage-look tires, including a new line of radials that have that '50's or '60's appearance. Unfortunately the sizes available may not fit our cars - hopefully the options will improve. If you are not concerned about originality, go with radials. I'm forced to use reproduction bias-plies on my '65 because I frequently

drag race with a FAST-class (factory-appearing/stock tire) group, and have the car points-judged at POCl and AACA. My friend has a '65 2+2 coupe which runs on radials, and the smooth ride on his car is far superior to mine.

Best of luck with your choices! Making the car your own is 1/2 the fun - driving it when done (if they ever are done) is the other 1/2.

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Re:New Member - Questions about my '64

Posted by Chili Pepper - 2015/10/24 17:26

I think I am going to leave it as stock as possible. I have my Galaxie which is more of a hot rod. I'm not completely sure what I will use this car for but I am thinking it will be occasional car shows but more for just driving around locally and some trips.

After all, I drove these type of cars as every day cars when I first started driving back in the early 70's. They are perfectly capable of going cross country with no issues. Just need to fix the carb issue, new tires and shocks and maybe check the plugs, wires, etc.

I'm not crazy about the stock shifter though. The lever is kind of short and I have to bend forward slightly to reach it. It has a little slop in it too which I may be able to adjust out. I'll have to check it I guess I have to remove the center console.

Speaking of that, the console lid is stuck shut. I tried both ignition/door key and trunk key but neither will unlock it. Not sure if it is actually locked. I can push the button down but it won't release. The lock (slot where key goes in) is sideways.

I'd post a photo but when I try they don't show up and they are under the size limit.

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Re:New Member - Questions about my '64

Posted by OldInjun - 2015/10/25 14:29

Email me your photo's and I will post them.

'64 and earlier shifters are notoriously sloppy. Fortunately for us '65 & newer owners Pontiac switched to Hurst shifters.

you may have to drill out the console lock, or try picking it.

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Re:New Member - Questions about my '64

Posted by Chili Pepper - 2015/10/27 20:56

I will put in a Hurst shifter. Don't think anyone would be bothered by that and will keep the original shifter anyway. I hate a loose sloppy shifter!

Next question: How does a tire store mount and balance new tires on the 8 lug rims without a center in them? I'd like to go to 15" rims (then I can keep the original 14s with the tires on them in the garage) and a larger tire. What is the largest tire that will fit in the fender wells?

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Re:New Member - Questions about my '64

Posted by OldInjun - 2015/10/28 08:12

Can't help you on the tire size that will will. There's an excellent Pontiac discussion forum at this link. Try searching "tire sizes" there.

You will need to buy an 8-lug tire mounting adapter. There are several available from small Pontiac after market vendors. It is simply a flat steel plate with a hole in the center & studs for mounting the rim. Take on with you when you need tires mounted.

I bought one from Bill Coburn - he advertises it in "Smoke Signals" for \$79 + shipping - call him at 303 906-4663.

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