

# SMOKE SIGNALS

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# Tempest

## 1966 TEMPEST CUSTOM



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There are two converging stories here. I bought my first car when I was 15 years old. It was my neighbor's 1955 Buick Special. I spend some time on it doing repairs and sold it before I had my drivers license. I had enough cash to buy a 1960 Pontiac Catalina from a dealer in Superior, Wisconsin, my hometown.

I bought and sold a few cars over the next 18 months and bought a 1965 Catalina convertible during the winter of 1969. I LOVED THIS CAR. Of all of the cars that I have owned, this is the one I remember the most. A couple of years after buying the '65 Catalina I discovered that there as a high performance version, the 2+2- and I wanted one. It became an on again off again obsession.

In 1975 I contacted a company called H-O Racing Specialists Inc., in southern California. From them I

purchased information on how to turn the motor in the 2+2 into one of the most potent street machines on the road at the time. I looked for my 2+2 with every intention of building a street machine out of it.

Life got busy and changed a few times as my career changed and grew. I did own several Firebirds over the years and owned a 1964 and a 1965 GTO as well. I never forgot my one true love though, and that was the 1965 Pontiac 2+2.

Four years ago I decided that it was time for me to own a classic car. There was only one car that I was truly interested in. I spent many hours looking for a Pontiac that would turn my head. I wanted the '65 2+2, but would settle for something else in the Pontiac family. I came within an inch of purchasing a 1966 Grand Prix weeks before I found my car. I visited many web sites with a '65 or '66 2+2 on them. I found only one other with any options on it, but it was priced way out of sight. On February 13, 2002 a friend of mine called me at the office and told me to get online and gave me a web site to look at.

The game was on. There was my car, a 1965 Pontiac 2+2, loaded with many factory options. I was so nervous and happy at the same time. I had never bid on anything on Ebay before. I signed up and placed four bids trying to hit the sellers reserve. I did not find the reserve, but e-mailed the owner that I was the one bidding and with the auction about to end, please contact me if he wanted to sell the car. Two hours after the end of the auction he e-mailed

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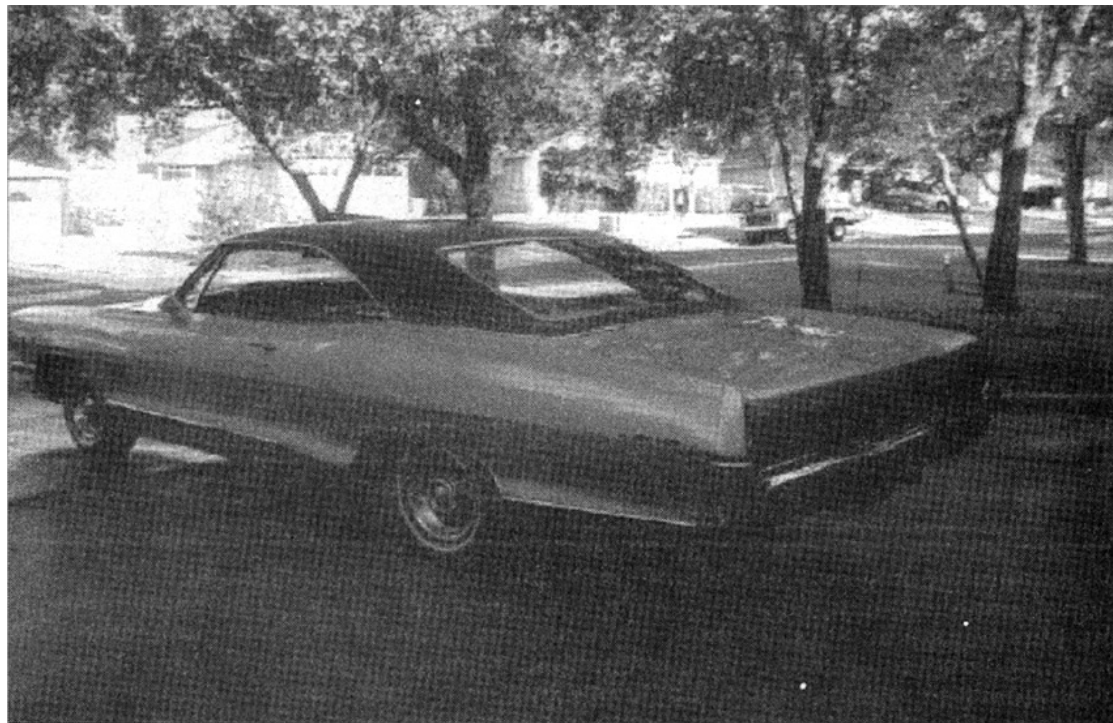


me with an offer. On February 14, 2002 I bought myself a Valentines gift. I finally owned my 1965 2+2.

I should actually say I had hopes that I "owned" this car. It was in Lima, Peru (not Ohio-Peru!) and needed to be shipped to the states. I sent the man payment in full for the car and kept my fingers crossed that he would deliver. The car was shipped to the Port in Houston, Texas on a container ship. It took a couple of weeks on the water to reach Houston. I hired a Customs Broker to help me get the car through customs. I was told this is very rare to actually have a U.S. built car being shipped back to the U.S. I was told most cars that are imported are foreign cars. A private party does not usually deal with a port like this and I met with a few challenges to get the car out of the port. On April 2, 2002 I went to the port in Houston to pick up the car. My neighbor and I drove to Houston and I expected to drive the car home- that was really having some faith.

We were there when they cracked the seal on the container and opened the doors. I can only say there was lots of deep breathing when the doors opened. There it was. We rolled it out and fired it up with a jump-start and drove it out of the port and to it's new home in Austin. We did this without incident. I was on cloud nine to be sure.

I still had a couple of hurtles to get over. I was not 100% sure that what I purchased was indeed a 2+2 and not a clone of some sort. I contacted the Pontiac Historical Society and checked the car out. It is indeed a 2+2 with many options. When I received the



Copy of the original window sticker I smiled to see that the car came with the 2+2 package- 421 HO motor with three- duce carbs, turbo-hydramatic, electric antenna, AM/FM radio, power door locks, visor mirror, remote outside mirror, electric trunk

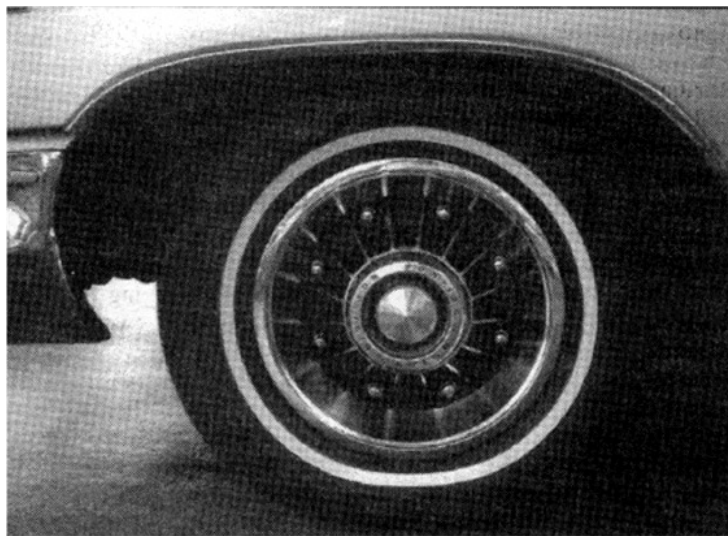
The color code says that the car is Blue Mist Slate.

The top and the interior of the car are in very good shape. The odometer reads less than 69,000 miles. The man tells me that it is original. The exterior is for the most part in good shape. The car

needs plenty of work to make it my car. I drove it for the first time after getting it home on Saturday. I took it to have the oil changed and fill it up with gas. Many heads were turning and at my stops everyone wanted to talk. I had a ball telling everyone the story of how it was found and brought back home. I am not ready to take it to any shows yet, but I can't wait to show it off someday.

One of the first things I did when I bought my car

was to join POCI. I really enjoy your magazine and expect that I will contact vendors and people I find in it to help me find the parts I need to compete my restoration.



release, tilt steering wheel, reverb, power steering, power brakes, power windows, power seat, tinted glass, air conditioning, eight bolt aluminum wheels, vinyl top, and all the light options you can get for the inside.

A total of 11,519 '65 Pontiac Catalinas were built with the 2+2 option, of which 5,316 had the manual shift and 6,025 selected the Turbo HydraMatic. There was no separate breakdown of the production figures showing the convertible versus the hardtop. The 2+2 optioned Catalina convertible sold for \$3,593.04 and the hardtop sold for \$3,286.54.