

CARS I'D LIKE TO FORGET



BY WARREN E. SHEPPICK

Let's start with the worst of the bunch. It was fall of 1955 when we first saw television ads for Chrysler's forward look. (The age of fins was about to begin). We especially liked the 1956 Plymouths. After all, our 1954 Nash Rambler (our first new car, as well as our honeymoon car, a story unto itself), while having been an excellent vehicle with no trouble whatsoever, had almost 18,000 miles on it, a high amount it seemed to us at the time.

Eventually a trip to the Desoto-Plymouth dealer in Charleroi was in order, where Jane & I fell in love with the 1956 Plymouth, 2 door hardtop pictures. Back then, you could order a car built the way and with the equipment you wanted. After negotiating a price for our Rambler, we ordered a red, with a black top, Savoy Plymouth 2 door hardtop, 180 HP V-8 engine, Power brakes, dual exhausts, and a push button automatic transmission (no PS, or AC). In fact, we left out a radio and undercoating as an attempt to be frugal. We had three years to pay for it.

The week before Christmas we received a call telling us our car was in, but it was all red, no black top. The dealer offered to have the top painted, but upon inspection we decided that we would take it as is. - THE ENIGMA HAD BEGUN, AND IT WOULD GO ON FOR MANY YEARS TO COME!

It started with little things, window crank broke, doors needed adjustment, a water pump, in fact, four water pumps in almost three years we had this car. I think something was misaligned. Two fuel pumps later we finally got one to stay! All four wheel cylinders went bad ruining all of the brake shoes, and then the master cylinder went bad. Front wheel bearings went bad and had to be replaced. The radiator sprung leaks and the exhaust system had to be replaced. Started to hear strange noises in the engine, but since they were intermittent I decided to ignore them.