

Automobile

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With my wife, daughter, nieces, the auto is transportation, hopefully in comfort. There is no other consideration. The auto takes them to where they need to go and back, and it better work, cause if it doesn't, some male is going to hear from them.

With the male, the automobile can be exceptionally complex. With one brother-in-law, his car all romance. Each was given a feminine name treated with the respect due any virgin. He treated the vehicles he bought with the love, protection, care given by the most devoted mother to her newborn. As vehicles aged, he never changed his mind as owner; that's his baby. No, you were not allowed to drive his vehicle, even to a car wash.

My approach to transportation was conditioned by birth. Dad was an employee of the Pennsylvania Railroad and with his PRR Gold Pass, we rode the rails when not walking. That ended forever in 1929 when Dad changed employment, He bought his first auto, to help in his work as a salesman. It was a good show-car, a 1924 Buick 4-door Sedan with luxuries galore. That car would remain our family transport for more than ten years, longer than Barbara and I would ever own one auto.

Just a few words about the Buick. It was large, weighed 4400 #. My mother was 4' 10" tall. Seated in the front seat to drive, she could not reach the pedals, nor see much of the road. She sat on a large cushion; had another at her back, Even then, struggled to navigate. She did learn to drive; never drove unless mandatory. Without power steering, turning the car left or right was muscle exercise galore.

Dad rebuilt the Buick's engine several times. Loved working on any mechanical device.

Unfortunately his taste in autos remained odd, for in 1939 he upgraded the Buick to a 1934 Huppmobile, an attractive, low to the ground, sedan, modeled after Europe's fastest. I was 17, finishing High School, had no desire to drive the Hupp. And in fact never drove until forced in the military to drive a Bomb Disposal truck in Hawaii, 1945. I was taught behind the wheel of a Jeep in Honolulu. Favorite test, the infamous Pali Pass, north of the city, the only direct road to the north Coast of Oahu. Then the south side was a series of switchbacks, its hairpin curves exceeding any I would later find in Colorado's mountains.

Everyone should have a philosophy on the ownership of an auto. Mine is simple. Buy new vehicles; no reckless driving, limit miles driven. With these, the cost per mile is reasonable, the transport always reliable. Have the Oil changed every 4,000 miles with a friendly dealer, ask him to tell you when the vehicle might require serious maintenance.

Now I am the sole driver of a Honda. I avoid driving nights, and regardless of where going, stay to the major streets, divided if possible. We've kept the same Insurance. Recently someone backed into our car. With AARP driving certification, no previous claims, I was over-compensated in the repair. Three quotes were requested. Then the agent told me to chose the repair. I chose the highest, was congratulated, on the choice, and driving record. To conclude, Barbara likes the car clean on the outside; we both see transportation.