

Our 60 Lark Convertible by Bob Easton

The idea for this car started back in 1999 when I saw a 59 or 60 wagon in the desert sand colour. I thought the car looked great in this colour. When we were at our first International meet at Madison WI in 2000 we spent a lot of time looking at convertibles and decided that the 60 or 61 was the year for us. From the start we wanted to do it up in desert sand, tan top and a brown interior. After I took early retirement in 2002 the search for a suitable project car intensified. Could have bought several decent cars but I wanted a project and couldn't see paying for a decent car and then throw a bunch of it away. In Aug of 2005 our car was listed for sale on EBay and was just what we were looking for. It was in Hagerstown Maryland - not too far to go. A well worn, V8 automatic car, running and 90% complete. It was a white car with a blue interior. Well I was the successful bidder for about 1500 less than I expected to pay for a project car. I rented a towing dolly and with the assistance of my son Mark went to pick it up. Drove down loaded up the first day and home the next. Imported it myself and then registered it in my name as passenger unfit. You save a bunch of tax doing it this way rather than when it is restored. I always wanted to do a complete restoration myself and this was to be the car. Motor and trans needed very little work. Body was rough and challenging, especially the torque boxes but we pieced it with a lot of welding. I used 10 lbs of mig wire over 2 winters to make it solid again. Another enjoyable part of the restoration process was attending the swap meets in South Bend, Reedsville and York. Had many "boys" weekends and came home with the parts to restore it. Is there a better way for a car guy to spend time? Replaced all brake and fuel lines and installed the Turner master cylinder kit. By the winter of 08/09 Joanne and I did the interior after we (she) chose the vinyl and cloth colours. We used what we had as patterns, I carefully took things apart and she ran the sewing machine. We did it all including the padded dash. Bought extra material in case of mistakes and it's a good thing we did. The summer of 09 I put the desert sand base / clear paint on in my garage at home. I used lots of paint so I could wet sand with 1500 grit and then buff. Then off to have the top installed. This is the only labour that I paid. We started driving the car in the fall of 09 and have driven it about 10,000 miles, mostly with the top down. The miles got more pleasurable after we got the gas mileage up and stopped vapour locking by installing an electric fuel pump with return line. This past summer we received the ultimate compliment at the International Meet when Hemmings noticed the car and wanted to write it up. Little did I know it was to wind up on the cover! I am still very honoured to have been chosen by Hemmings out of the gorgeous cars that were there. It was built to drive and that's what we intend to do. Keep on cruising!!!