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CarStory

with *Bill Sherk*
The Old Car Detective



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1940 Oldsmobile in New Brunswick

Richard Dick of Toronto has a fine collection of vintage cars, including a restored 1949 Buick Super convertible he purchased from a used car lot in Philadelphia in 1955 – over half a century ago. He recently sent me the story of one of his other cars, a 1940 Oldsmobile Series 90 four-door sedan:

“Dear Bill: In August 1957 I was preparing to return to Toronto from my vacation in New Brunswick. Several friends asked if they could come back with me as they wished to move to Toronto. I was telling my grandmother this and how my ’49 Buick convertible had a small trunk, and with other people wanting to come back with me, I could not help them. She said: ‘My Oldsmobile has been sitting in the barn for four years. No one uses it so why don’t you take it and help them out?’

“I did a quick check and found I could get it started. But the right rear tire was a bald recapped snow tread. The tailpipe had broken off

and was blowing hot exhaust gases on the tire. Other than that, everything seemed OK. We drove it about 50 miles, then discovered it was down two quarts of oil. At an auto store I purchased six gallons of oil and we headed south to Boston, the Massachusetts Turnpike, and the New York Thruway.

“We soon found it had a top speed of 55-60 miles per hour. At that speed, a crack in the flex hose would open, allowing the fuel pump to pump air. However, 33 hours non-stop later, we arrived in Toronto, having covered over 1,000 miles and using up all six gallons of oil. But otherwise, no problems, a tribute I guess to something that had sat in a barn for four years. Even the bald rear tire held up OK.

“Over the years I have collected parts for it, and last spring had it repainted and some upholstery and chrome work done. A set of rings helped the oil consumption problem.

“I had the Olds shipped to New Brunswick last summer and the photo was taken at the Green Point Lighthouse near my summer home. The car will remain there.

“My car is a 1940 Oldsmobile Series 90 with a flathead straight eight engine of 110 hp, three-speed column-mounted standard shift, heater, defroster, and radio, and 98,000 miles on the odometer. My grandmother bought it used in 1947 from the U.S. Consulate, and I will soon have owned

it for 50 years.”

Richard Dick’s Series 90 four-door sedan sold new in the U.S. for \$1,075 and in Canada for \$1,665. For an extra \$57, you could order the optional Hydramatic fully automatic transmission, which first appeared on the 1940 Oldsmobile. It was a well-designed unit that steadily gained in popularity after World War Two.

Do you have any car stories to share with our readers?

Email: bill@carstory.com.



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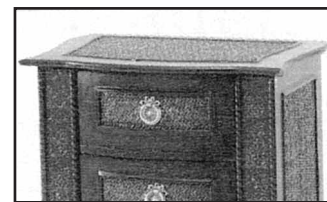


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