

A note from "The Prez"

HAPPY NEW YEAR

2004 is a big year for GTOAA and the GTO hobby. We are celebrating our 25th Anniversary as a club this year and the party starts now. The GTO is 40 years old. It was 30 years ago in 1974 we said goodbye to the original GTO.

To celebrate all these events, the Nationals this summer are going home to Pontiac, Michigan and everyone is invited. Not just GTOAA members, but all GTO enthusiasts. Plan to be there this year. It will definitely be a Meet to remember.

I have been talking with Jon Schwenn, who heads up a new GTO enthusiast group with a web site called www.ls1gto.com. Jon is taking delivery of 2004 GTO and plans to attend our Meet in July with a few of his new GTO friends. Check out their web site. There is some great information on the new GTO along with some pictures. I like the shots of the new GTOs being loaded on the boat for the ride from Australia to the US.

FAREWELL FRIEND

Back on October 28th, The Goat Herd GTO Club of Oregon and the GTOAA lost one their own. Tom Foster, one of the finest gentlemen I know lost his life in an accident at his home in Oregon. Anyone that has been to Tiger Run in Bend, Oregon appreciated the hospitality shown by Tom and his fellow members.

Tom, you will be missed. Our sympathy goes out to his wife, Yvonne, and his family and friends.

Bill M.

GTO LETTERS

Bill Markowski, GTOAA President

WHAT HAPPENED IN THE 1970 'S?

I found your comment in the "Letters" section of the November Legend, "It is really interesting how many intermediate cars were sold in the 1960's, but dropped off as we entered the 1970's," to be interesting in itself. I mean it as no insult when I say it is, in fact, a very GTO-centric comment. This is as it should be in a GTO magazine!

I have been interested in the demise of the GTO for many years. In high school, in the early '80s, I wrote a research paper on the GTO. I hypothesized that the demise of the GTO was attributable Pontiac shooting itself in the foot with the introduction of the Firebird. This very simplistic theory is supported by one piece of data that GTO sales took their first dip in 1967, the year the Firebird was introduced.

Recently, however, a new thought has come to mind. As can be seen by the attached table, Firebird sales were never very brisk during the first years of the F-Body. Also, although GTO sales fell in 1967, they picked right back up in 1968. The real beginning of the fall in GTO numbers was in 1969. And another very important event occurred in 1969, the downsizing of the Grand Prix to the G-Body platform. It can be seen that, even though GTO sales dropped, Grand Prix sales generally made up for the loss. I believe that it was, in part, sales of the Grand Prix that siphoned sales from the GTO.

The table also shows total A-Body sales excluding station wagons, and it can be seen that intermediate sales were quite brisk through the seventies, at least until the A/G-body

was downsized in 1978. Also, it was in the late seventies that Firebird sales really picked up, supplanting loss in sales of an increasingly unpopular A-body.

Year	A-body*	GTO	F-body	G-body
1964	217596	32450		
1965	290669	75352		
1966	347389	96946		
1967	287739	81722	82560	
1968	333739	87684	107112	
1969	276837	72287	87708	112486
1970	227590	40149	48739	65750
1971	155324	10502	53124	58325
1972	156395	5807	29951	91961
1973	181213	4806	46313	153899
1974	139100	**	73729	99817
1975	94413		84063	86582
1976	82079		110775	228091
1977	65917		155736	288430

* A body excluding station wagons

** 1974 GTO not included as it was on the X-body platform

Tim Joseph
President
Performance Pontiacs of the
Carolinas

Tim,

Interesting look at the demise of the GTO. The Grand Prix was sure a hit when it was downsized in 1969. Looking at what happened in 1975-77, no wonder I don't see many LeMans from this period around anymore. The big favorites definitely were the Firebird and the Grand Prix.

I am surprised Pontiac kept the A-Body when models were downsized in 1978. Maybe it was because Chevy was doing so well with the Malibu that Pontiac stuck with the LeMans and came back for a couple years with the Grand Am.