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LIFESTYLE CARS MY RIDE

This Pink Mustang Has a Story as Distinctive as Its Paint Job

Sam McGee brought his grandmother's rare 1968 Ford Mustang back into his family after a two-decade quest

By A.J. Baime | Photographs by Christopher Lee for The Wall Street Journal

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Sam McGee, 48, an owner of a wealth-management firm who lives in Boerne, Texas, on his family's 1968 "Passionate Pink" Ford Mustang, as told to A.J. Baime.

When I was 14, my dad and I started restoring a 1966 Mustang in our garage in Houston and, once in a while, he would bring up his mother—my grandmother Eva Corcoran McGee—who had owned a pink Mustang where she lived in Kansas before her death in 1973. He said the car had a black-and-white houndstooth top. I asked him about the car's whereabouts, and he said that, after she died, the car was sold. He had no idea.



McGee located his grandmother's Mustang around 2001 and pursued it for about two decades before buying it in 2022. A therapy dog named Renee watches over the car.

I later found out that the reason the subject would come to an abrupt halt was because my grandmother had suffered from depression and had died by suicide. It was pretty traumatic for my dad. I never pressed him on it.

As I got older, I owned several Mustangs. Around 2001, I asked my grandfather about my grandmother's pink Mustang. He said he knew where the car was. A couple in Selden, Kan., had it. I looked them up in the White Pages and gave them a call. I had this overwhelming feeling that I had to get this car back into the family. They said they had no interest in selling it. But the next May, I called and asked again. I made it an annual tradition—every May, I called, for some 20 years. In 2007, I visited my grandfather in Kansas for his 80th birthday, and that is when I saw the car for the first time.



The 289-cubic-inch V-8 engine has powered the car some 53,000 miles. 'It drives like new and is all original,' says McGee.

In the meantime, I learned a lot about this pink Mustang. When the Mustang first came out at the 1964 New York World's Fair, Ford had

record sales. Ford came up with a Color of the Month promotion for the first four months of 1968 and, in February, the company made a small number of Passionate Pink Mustangs for Valentine's Day. The name is sometimes mistaken as Playboy or Playmate Pink [because Playboy magazine's Playmate of the Year was given a pink Mustang in 1964, the year the Mustang was unveiled].



Ford originally launched the Mustang at the 1964 New York World's Fair.

I did some research and, according to my knowledge, only one pink Color of the Month Mustang was made with a black and white houndstooth top. So according to what I have found, my grandmother's car is one of one.

Getting this car back became a cause for my wife and me. Back in the '60s and '70s, there wasn't a lot of mental-health treatment. We wanted to get the car back as a kind of living tribute.

During Covid, I made the call again. I said, "I have found another pink Mustang, but it's not my grandmother's. If you are never going to sell the

car, I may go a different route.” I kept pressing and, in 2022, the couple finally agreed to sell.



McGee uses the car to promote mental-health awareness and has launched an initiative with members of the Kendall County crisis response team.

My dad and I made an 800-mile road trip from Texas to Kansas to get this car, and during the trip, he went from rarely talking about his mom outside of all the things he loved about her to sharing about the events that surrounded her passing in 1973. When she died, all she owned was an organ and the Mustang, and the Mustang was sold to pay for her funeral expenses.

I rebuilt the brakes and did some engine work. The car has 53,000 miles and is rust free. It drives like new and is all original, like a time capsule. My sister, who was born before me and had gotten to meet my grandmother, got married last year, and we were able to use the car in her wedding. My dad's two sisters were there, and they got to ride in their mother's Mustang. I also use the car to promote mental-health awareness however I can. I am having the license plate changed from EVAS 68 to UR1 OF1 because everyone is one of one.



‘When my grandmother owned this car,’ he says, ‘she journaled that she would drive it and feel better.’

When my grandmother owned this car, she journaled that she would drive it and feel better. When I am stressed about work or other things, I get in the car, drive it in the countryside, and feel better myself. It’s almost like she’s with me, even though I never got the chance to meet her.

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