

Jim & Roberta's 1966 Chevelle SS Convertible

It all started with a search for a dream 70 SS 396 or 454 Chevelle back in 1997. You know how that goes; you look for one car, but find another. I was dreaming because Roberta wanted a Camaro and said that the 70 models reminded her of a Plymouth Duster she drove back in high school. In order to satisfy her and make sure I did not bring home a Duster, I actually made Roberta come along as we looked at different cars. Together, we were able to eliminate certain years (of Chevelles) and I was able to convince her that a Camaro would be fine, but the back seat is too small. A Chevelle was the better solution to answer my dream.

(continued on next page)



(continued from previous page)

The dream Chevelle would be a BIG BLOCK, however, should it be a 4 speed on the floor or an automatic? What if it was a column shift? These questions drove me nuts. Until one day on the internet of course, I found a 66 Chevelle SS Convertible. My dream did not include a model that could be driven topless. I called Roberta into the computer room to see what I had found. Based on the telephone number I knew it was close to us. I called and set up a visit to see the car.



After some negotiations the Chevelle found its new home in our garage in October 1997. It turns out that Roberta had always wanted a convertible. I met my BIG BLOCK Chevelle dream even though the original one I was searching for was four years newer than this Chevelle. *(1970 pictured above)*

We quickly found out that 4-wheel drum brakes did a lousy job of stopping a 3800-pound car. So first, we redid the brakes. During the process we discovered that the brake shoes were glazed and cracked. In order to make the car safer in today's traffic mess we opted to install front disc brakes. This allowed us to change to a dual reservoir master cylinder and increase the car's braking abilities substantially. Along with all new brakes and stainless steel lines, we rebuilt the front suspension, changed the shock and springs in the both the front and back. *(picture below)*

We have purchased little parts for the car over the next several years.



In early 2002, it was time to have the engine rebuilt. We had scheduled an appointment with Dave Folsom to remove and rebuild the tired 396 engine. Dave did many things to the car beside the engine. He fixed the power top, added back up lights as well as many other bonus items. We still have lots more to do, but

that is what makes it fun and rewarding.

Jim & Roberta M.

