

It's All About the NUMBERS.....

By Judy Badgley

Jon Wessel has dedicated this issue to the 40th anniversary of the 1968 Hurst/Olds. 40 years ago these “sleeper” cars were the talk of the dragstrip and the streets. I decided to use this NUMBERS column to share with you some details of our 1968 Hurst/Olds.

Doug and I bought our 68 H/O in 1981 when it was 13 years old. The car was in Santa Rosa, California. We flew out and drove the car home. The owner had altered the car with different wheels and a more driver-friendly rear end. The original wheels and rear end were loaded into the trunk for the drive back to Michigan.

During the winter we did a “restoration” on this special car. Basically that meant we repainted the car, bought new GM bumpers for it and freshened the rest by cleaning and detailing. In those days Fusick Automotive and all of the other suppliers of reproduction parts were not around. You had to make due with the best used available if you needed to replace something. In retrospect, that was probably the best thing that could have been.



Once the restoration was completed, we took it to several car shows. We were very pleased to be recognized with several 1st place awards. But even better than the awards was the looks we got when we drove by. We enjoyed the sound of the 455 and so did those we passed. Anybody that knows Doug knows we passed many!

We continued to buy Oldsmobile's and restore them and enjoy them. The 68 H/O went in to storage. We brought it out for special shows like Oldsmobile's 90th and 100 anniversary celebrations.

Last year we got the car out to participate in some of the 40th anniversary celebrations. It had been 10 years since we had the car out. In the 26 years since it had been restored, a lot of things had changed. Reproduction parts are everywhere. The value has climbed at a rate far superior to the stock market. Enthusiasts have become much more aware of the phrase “numbers matching”.

We needed to do some more “freshening” of the car before it was to appear at the shows. We

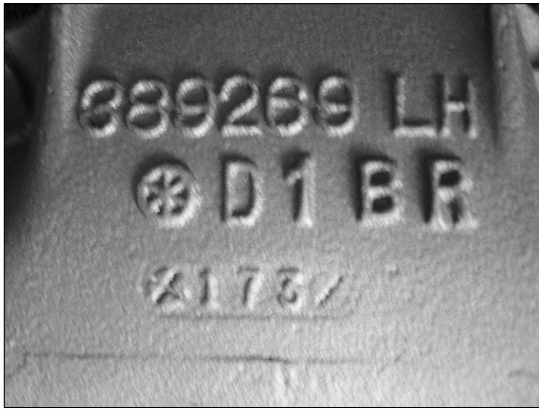
decided we should do some “NUMBERS” checking of our own car. We were amazed as we checked all of the parts. We decoded casting numbers and date codes wherever we found them. As a result we put together a calendar which reflects all of the build dates of the components on our car we could document.



Fisher Body Tag located on cowl

I have written previous “NUMBERS” articles on how to decode the castings and stampings on our cars. In this article I will detail the “NUMBERS” we found on our 1968 Hurst/Olds, in the order of their build date.

| PART | # | Date |
|--------------|----------|-------------|
| RH caliper | 122 | 5-1-68 |
| Diff. Cover | E3 | 5-3-68 |
| LH caliper | 134 | 5-13-68 |
| Carb | 157 | 6-5-68 |
| Body Tag | 06C | 6-10/14-68 |
| Alternator | 8F17 | 6-10-68 |
| Block | 170 | 6-18-68 |
| Frame | 6 18 | 6-18-68 |
| RH exh. Manf | 170 | 6-18-68 |
| Distributor | 8F18 | 6-18-68 |
| Cyl heads | 171 | 6-19-68 |
| Water pump | 172 | 6-20-68 |
| Intake Manf | 173 | 6-21-68 |
| LH exh Manf | 173 | 6-21-68 |



Left-hand exhaust manifold codes

All of the glass but 1 piece were coded with a JX, which is May, 1968. The 1 piece that was different was an IX, which is June, 1968.

Most of these codes are the number of days since the beginning of 1968. The body tag, differential, alternator and distributor use a letter that corresponds to the month. The

frame is just the date. The glass codes are completely different and have no reason for their codes other than the whim of the manufacturer. The starter is missing from this list because we had to replace it in 1982. However, we saved the original starter and will rebuild it and reinstall it at a later date.

Our car appears to have been completely built from parts that were built within a 9-week span. This is not always the case. Sometimes there can be several months between the date a part is built and it is used in production.



Alternator codes

The originality of a car is important in today's collector car market. In retrospect we are glad we didn't have reproduction or replacement parts available when we first went through the restoration process.