

Mercury What?

I didn't know Mercury built a pickup truck!



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Above: Restored pickup trucks — 1952 Mercury M1 (left) and 1954 Mercury M100 (right).

Left: Harry Hartman's 1949 Mercury M47 panel truck (half ton frame like the '49 pickups).

“I didn't know that Mercury built a pickup truck or a panel truck for that matter.”

Harry Hartman, Mineral County, WV resident, often hears that statement when showing his 1952 Mercury M1 pickup truck and 1949 Mercury M47 panel truck at public events. Even among antique vehicle enthusiasts the trucks sometimes come as a pleasant surprise.

So where has this elusive Mercury been hiding? Answer: in Canada. Mercury produced the M series truck at its Windsor Ontario plant from 1946-1968. If the pickup looks familiar to American motorists it's because the M1 is

stylistically the same vehicle produced in the United States as the Ford F series truck. Except for badges, trim, and paint options the models are identical. The difference between Mercury and Ford was the Mercury motor had a longer stroke so it was more powerful. Instead of 239 cubic inch displacement, it had a 255 cid and the heads were embossed “Made in Canada” – American flatheads had Ford markings. The 1954 Mercury Truck still had a flathead V8 while the '54 Fords came with the overhead valve system.

Harry Hartman's interest in acquiring an antique truck peaked after his retirement from the West Virginia Mineral



County public school system. “I remembered my father’s 1952 F1 pickup. He called the truck a “Hoopie” because it would shimmy at cruising speed. So, I decided to find a 1952 Hoopie.”

Harry’s quest led him to Canada where the truck of choice was purchased. In the process of finalizing the deal, the Ford owner casually asked Harry if he was familiar with Mercury pickup trucks. The inquiry sparked Harry’s interest and he began researching the vehicle’s history and availability. In a short period of time Harry fell in love with the flat head, V-8 model.



Purchasing an M1 required a second trip to Canada in 2010 where a deal was concluded with the owner. Upon returning home, Harry dubbed his Ford and Mercury pickups the “1952 Cousins.” Harry describes the M1 as 95% original. “I added some things and fixed others, but it will remain as original as possible.”

Harry’s second Mercury truck purchase, a 1954 M100 model, filled his stable with three vintage vehicles. While the pickups filled his garage, they did not end his pursuit of Canadian models. He has recently purchased his third Mercury truck, a 1949 M47 panel truck.

Harry once again ventured north to purchase a 1957 Mercury Meteor Rideau, a companion to the Ford Fairlane 500 model produced in the United States.” My wife, Kathy, drives the Meteor to shows. We really enjoy driving to shows and sharing our stories.” The Meteor featured chrome trim and a three color paint scheme not available on the Fairlane 500. And like the M1, M100 and M47, the Meteor is mostly original and pristinely preserved.



The Hartman vehicles were never intended to be static museum pieces but rather a means of enjoyable transportation to special events and shows. Being members of the Antique Automobile Club of America, Queen City Region, and the Veteran Motor Car Club of America provides Harry and Kathy opportunities to show the vehicles and share camaraderie with fellow enthusiasts.

Top: 1952 Mercury M1 pickup truck before restoration.

Middle: 1954 Mercury M100 pickup during the restoration process.

Bottom: Harry Hartman and wife Kathy with their restored 1954 Mercury M100, at a car show in downtown Cumberland, Maryland. According to its VIN number, this truck was indeed red originally.