

1964 Ford Falcon Sprint Convertible - A Fun Car To Drive

By Norman Williams
As told to Ted Schneider

Norman Williams says that he has been interested in older cars for a number of years. While working at an Esso gas station when he was young, more than thirty years ago, he had an opportunity to buy a 1938 Oldsmobile two-door sedan from a customer named Charles Streett. Norm liked the car so he bought it from Charles, who was a Chesapeake Region member. It was Norm's first antique car and it launched Norm into the hobby. He joined the Club in 1979.

Norm had the Oldsmobile for about twenty years, but the condition of the car got to the point that it needed some serious work done to keep it running. So twelve years ago on an October morning Norm got up and out the door at 4 AM to take the Olds to Hershey, where he intended to put it up for sale in the car corral. He didn't realize that car corral spaces were sold in advance only, so when he got to Hershey he wasn't able to put the Olds in the car corral. However, someone saw the for-sale sign and bought it on the spot.

Norm intended to find another car at Hershey that year. He wanted a convertible and looked through the car corral. A 1964 Ford Falcon Sprint from Ohio caught his eye because it looked to be in really nice condition. An agreeable price was negotiated, but Norm had to come back the next day with the rest of the money. That Hershey car corral was excellent for Norm – one sale and a good acquisition.

The Falcon Sprint was not a show car, but it was very solid and the paint and interior were excellent. Norm has done some up grades like brakes and front-

end bushings that are more maintenance than restoration.

Ford introduced the Falcon in 1960 as a compact car to compete with the rising sales of imports and competition from compacts introduced by GM and Chrysler – the Chevrolet Corvair and Plymouth Valiant. The Studebaker Lark and AMC Rambler were also in the compact market segment. In the first few years after introduction the Falcon was a huge success and outsold

Norm's '64 Sprint convertible has the 260 C.I. V-8 rated at 164 H.P. @4,400 R.P.M. mated to a three-speed automatic transmission. The convertible weighs 3,100 pounds. Other Sprint features include: improved handling with stiffer suspension, special wheel covers, a wood-grain steering wheel, front bucket seats and center console, a tachometer, and chrome covers in the engine compartment.

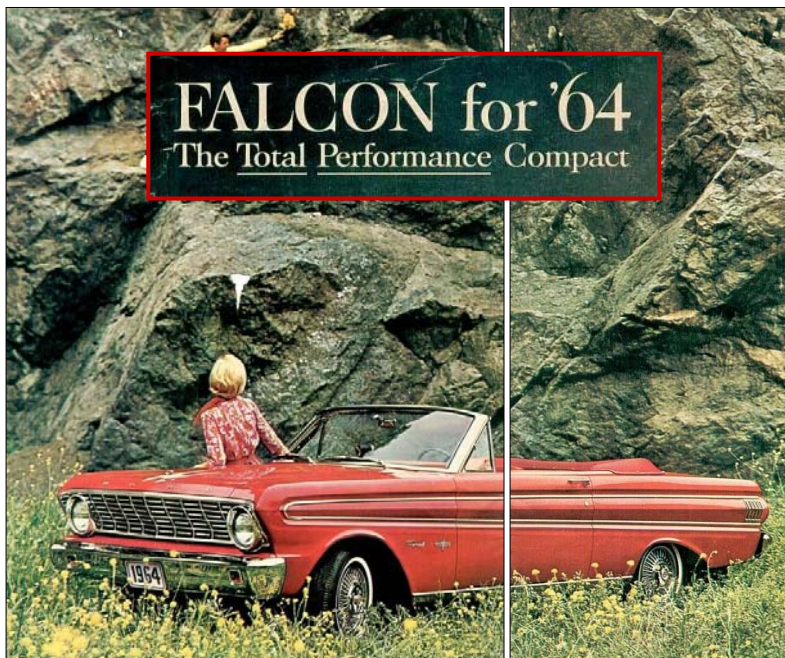
For the '64 model year, 317,000 Falcons were produced, of which only 3,652 were Sprint convertibles.

While the small number of sporty Sprint convertibles seems to indicate the original compact car market for Falcon was correct, at mid-year 1964 Ford introduced the first Mustang models, which were built on the Falcon chassis and used some of the same components. The Mustang was aimed at a younger buyer and soon became a huge sales success. By the 1970 model year the Falcon

was dropped for the Maverick.

Norm says that he likes to take the Falcon Sprint for weekend rides and even takes it to work occasionally. He thinks that it's just a fun car to drive.

Norm and his wife Lisa also enjoy taking their Falcon Sprint to various Chesapeake Region events like the B&O Railroad Museum car show. Lisa and Norm take advantage of the car's ability to handle today's traffic. At times the car has been out to the Streetcar Museum, Ladew Topiary Gardens, Fire Museum, and Howard County Fair car shows. Other local events include the TowsonTown Festival and the car show at the Maryland State Fair, plus several parades. The Williams seem to get the most out of the hobby experience.



Pictured above is a 1964 Falcon showroom sales literature cover that features the Sprint model in an outdoor adventure setting.

the Corvair and Valiant by a significant margin. 2010 is the 50th Anniversary of the introduction of the Ford Falcon.

The Falcon marque was sold as a full-line with a broad range of models – two sedans, two station wagons, a hardtop coupe, a convertible, the Ranchero, a sedan delivery, and an Econoline van. The marque's emphasis was on basic transportation, fuel economy, and reliability. Of course as the brand evolved, upscale trim lines like the Futura were added and the youth market was targeted with the addition of the Sprint models in 1964.

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Streetcar Museum Fall Car Show – Oct. 17th
Halloween Poker Run – Oct. 31st – see page 4

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Falcon

It's the 50th Anniversary
of the Ford Falcon's
Introduction in 1960



FALCON for '64
The Total Performance Compact

Lisa & Norman Williams' 1964 Ford Falcon Sprint at the B & O Museum – Read about this car on page 13.