

THE WOMEN OF AMC

Julia Chester

by: Casey McGowan

Julia Chester is the proud owner of the sharp '69 Rebel pictured here. It has a vinyl top, and is equipped with a 290 225 hp 3 spd auto with 87,000 original miles. She acquired the car in 1987 when it had 48,000 miles on it from her grandmother.

Julia remembers driving around Sunnyvale, California with her grandmother as a child, riding in the back seat. She remembers the new car smell then Rebel had back then. She remembers all the amenities that came with the car like the small waste basket with sand filled weights to hold it in place to the carpeted floor hump. Everything on the car had remained stock to this day except for the addition of gray spoked mag wheels (which really look sharp) and an open element air cleaner.



Julia never stopped thinking about her grandma's beautiful Bittersweet Rebel. One day, early in 2002, while attending a car show in Lebanon, Indiana, she met Pete Vaughn, who was there with his '70 Rebel Machine. Julia was impressed not only by the pristine beauty of Pete's Rebel, but she had never personally seen one all the years she lived in California. She was so inspired by this event that she decided to ship the car from Sunnyvale to her home in Indiana. She then joined several AMC clubs (at Pete's suggestion), met many of our enthusiastic club members, and has benefited from parts information provided by our newsletters.

I met Julia at the Hoosier Auto Show in Indianapolis last September. I just about flipped when I saw her gorgeous Rebel on the show field. After shooting a couple of pictures of her car, I began asking nearby club members who the owner was and where could I find her. I had a conversation with Julia and her husband about the car's history. Her husband, not having been a car guy in the past, is about to become one. He is now talking about finding a '69 Rebel wagon to go along with the hard top. Oh, boy, that's how it all starts!. May I suggest using it as a tow car for the trailer you will want next. I noticed when we were talking, the Rebel had a broken tail light lens. I later found a NOS lens in my box of AMC tail lenses, and now I believe I have helped in a small way to return the Rebel to its "new" appearance.

Julia is happy to be part of a group of people who have a common interest. Being around owners of other AMC cars is fun and has made her feel more "at home" in the Midwest. She just didn't see that many AMCs in California; it was Ford and Chevy everywhere.

Julia did not at first take to the idea of driving her grandma's car while in high school. It took some urging from her dad and a drive around town where Julia began hearing comments about the "cool car" to convince her the car was something special and appreciated by people who maybe had never seen AMCs before.

Julia has had a lot of fun driving the Rebel. The Hoosier Show was the first old car show she attended with her new pride and joy, but I know it won't be the last.

When you see Julia at one of our shows this summer, tell her thanks for relating her story to us and for being the first of many spot lighted in the "Women of AMC" column.