

# Acquiring 6S074

*The story of Jeff Holliday's purchase of 6S074 was like a four-part mini series: the car was in Canada and he was in the U.S.; he could not travel to see the car due to the Covid shutdown; the bank was not happy about transferring funds out of the country; he had to get the car through customs and across the border; then he had to get it home to Colorado. It all came together and eventually there was a happy ending. Here are the details.*

– Jeff Holliday

SFM6S074 was advertised for sale on the SAAC website back in Mid-March, 2021. When I saw the ad, I

thought to myself, "Oh my goodness, someone is selling #74 – that's a carryover car!" You might see a carryover

for sale publicly every couple of years. I thought it would be sold in a matter of days.



6S074 in the Holiday Inn parking lot at 7:00 a.m. Friday morning awaiting pick up by Holliday. And so, the adventure begins.



The ad continued to appear on the website and after about a month I thought it might be at least worth looking into. Why hadn't it sold? I called and talked to the owner, Rob Burton, who lived in Abbotsford, British Columbia – about four miles north of the U.S. border. The car still had its original engine with the VIN number stamped on the block and still had the original aluminum transmission. Rob emailed me pictures and the paint and body looked very nice.

I was ready to hop on a plane and fly up to look at it. Then I had a conversation with Joe Bolis. Joe is a fellow SAAC member and has been the head of our Shelby club here in Denver for years. He has owned a 1966 GT350 as long as I have been in the Shelby club, which is a long time. Joe advised that before I booked a flight, I should check to see if I would even be allowed into Canada due to Covid. It turned out the border was closed so an in-person visit was out of the question. We've been living under the Corona virus shutdown for over a year and have gotten used to replacing in-person meetings with Zoom calls. So I arranged to have a Zoom call with Rob and Joe on a Saturday morning to get a better, more in-depth look at the car.

I spent all week researching the car. I had a three-page spread sheet of items to address, and see if they were correct or if they were even on the car. Many of the items were specific to the carryover cars. Once our Zoom call started, Joe began asking to see this

part, and to see that part, and to show us this area, and what about this stamping or that number? An hour later, when the Zoom call was over, I asked Joe if he had received my email with the spread sheet of items to check and he said he saw it in his in-box that morning but had not opened it. He was just going from memory; he has forgotten more about these cars than I will ever know. Joe's conclusion was that the car looked nice and he didn't see any major issues with where the body was repaired or any other spots (rusty areas were a big concern). So I had some serious thinking to do.

My brain was gyrating the next few days, deciding one day to pass on this car and the next day thinking it would be the chance to own a carryover that I shouldn't pass up; I should make the purchase. Finally, I made an offer and Rob accepted it. I went to my Wells Fargo branch and a young teller spent over an hour and a half trying to get a wire set up to Rob to pay for the car. In the end, Wells Fargo would not approve the wire because there was so much fraud occurring during the virus. The car was located outside of the U.S., which was a problem. Also, the fact that I had not seen the car in-person nor met the seller were also red flags. I had to admit that it all made perfect sense to me and so we moved to Plan B – to mail a cashier's check. I sent the check by FedEx and Rob received it the next day, but on taking it to his bank, they told him there could be up to a three-week hold on the

check. Again, due to all of the fraud.

At this point, I had hired the services of Bosch Customs Brokerage to handle all of the paperwork to get the car through customs and across the border. I would not be allowed to cross the border to bring the car back across. I contacted Dan Cook who has a business transporting items across the border. Because of the cashier's check, we all were forced to cool our heels for three weeks.

Finally, the bank informed Rob that he would have "good funds" in his bank account on Thursday, May 20th. I was confident we had taken the steps necessary to get the car across the border, but now I needed to get it from the border crossing in Sumas, Washington (north of Seattle) to Denver. I called at least eight different companies specializing in classic car transport and none were going to be in the Northwest in the foreseeable future. The soonest any of them could pick up the Shelby would be in late June.

Once again, Plan B: drive it home. Rob said he would have no hesitation driving it and I trusted his opinion that it would make the 1,450-mile trip without a problem. I booked a flight on Alaska Airlines to Bellingham, Washington and landed Thursday night around midnight. Dan Cook had picked the car up Thursday night and #074 crossed the border back into the U.S. Dan and I had made a plan to have him deliver the car to the Bellingham airport Friday morning, which is about 25 miles south of



First fill-up of the trip. 6S074 averaged about 14 mpg – about normal for a ‘66 GT350 when the driver is enthralled by the sound of the exhaust. Each tankful of gas would take the car about 225 miles, so the 1,450-mile trip required seven gas stops.

Sumas. This was a huge help. Friday morning Dan and his son arrived at the airport Holiday Inn at 7:00 a.m. just as we agreed. Dan’s son drove #074 to Bellingham while Dan followed to pick him up. I loaded my suitcase that contained my basic tool kit into the back of the Shelby and at 7:30 a.m. I was filling it up with gas and was ready to begin the trip.

I was concerned about the condition of the car. Would it make the drive? The image came to mind that I was jumping into God’s hands the way someone leaps into a Mosh Pit at a concert. It was a leap of faith.

The route I chose headed straight south from Bellingham toward Seattle “on the 5 dude,” and then veered off onto I-84, heading southeast through Yakima, past Pasco and the turn-off for Walla Walla and down to the Oregon border. Two fun sights on the Washington part of the drive were a junk yard for boats – hundreds of boats – all resting on dry land. It seemed like every one looked like the “Minnow” from Gilligan’s Island. The

second sight was when I stopped for gas and went into a fruit stand. Well, a fruit mall, actually. They had table after table filled with Washington apples. One of the tables featured “Cosmic Crisp” apples which were the largest, most gorgeous apples I’ve ever seen. I bought a half dozen regular apples for road snacks and two Cosmic Crisps to bring home.

I-84 runs through the northeast corner of Oregon. It seemed like every third vehicle on the road was a truck towing something – boats, ATVs, horse trailers, motorcycles; you name it and someone was towing one. Once I left the greater Seattle area the population became very sparse and the towns were spread far apart. Routinely, there were signs pointing out that gas and food were available at the next exit. And beneath those signs were warnings, “No Services for next XX miles.” The longest stretch of no-services I saw was 62 miles. By now, I had filled up two or three times and knew that I could use 14 mpg to calculate when I would need gas again. I made sure I

never let the tank get below a quarter.

Having the towns so spread out was a little concerning in the event of car trouble but on the positive side, traffic was almost non-existent. Cool weather and overcast skies made it easy on the eyes; no traffic and no bugs made it a dream drive.

After passing through Oregon, I-84 turned east and crossed into Idaho and immediately entered into the Boise metro area. I had no idea Boise was as large as it is. Planning the trip, I could not predict how the car would run or how far I would make it the



Fruit stop in Washington – famous for their apples.

first day, so I had not made any hotel reservations. I assumed there would be all kinds of hotel vacancies along this route. Any hotel would be happy to see me pull in and give them business. But not so fast, carburetor breath. It turned out that every hotel room for about 400 miles between Boise, Idaho and Ogden, Utah was booked. Ouch.

At a rainy gas stop at 9:00 p.m. I called my wife, Nancy, for help as my phone was down to 20% battery. I hoped she could find something on the internet. It was 10:00 p.m. in Colorado and she was already in bed. She was up in Frost Creek with her sister and they both got up and started making calls. They found a room on-line in Burley, Idaho. Perfect: the Burley exit was just a few miles ahead. I pulled into the Super 8 Motel while Nancy was talking to the front desk clerk to confirm the reservation. I could hear them talking and so I let them know I was there and asked about a room. Did they have one?

As it turned out, they didn't. Their on-line reservation system kept taking reservations, but they had no rooms. I said, "No problem," and asked if I could sit in the lobby and charge my

phone as I formulated a plan. Nancy and her sister continued to call hotels as I searched the internet and also made some calls. The closest room I found was 200 miles up the road in Ogden, Utah.

While I was sitting in the lobby, another traveler in need of a room got into an animated discussion with the man working the front desk. He had also had a reservation confirmation but no room. This discussion went on for about fifteen minutes and then I'm not sure what happened but the man seemed satisfied and left. I was telling Nancy on the phone that I just couldn't drive another 200 miles tonight and so I would just curl up on the fold-down seat in the back of the Shelby and get a few hour's sleep.

Well, no sooner had the door closed behind the guy who left without a room when the desk clerk enthusiastically waved me over. I shot him a puzzled look and he waved again and saying, "I have a room for you." I approached the desk and he repeated, "I have a room for you." And I said, "I would love it, but shouldn't that guy get the room?" He said, "No he's taken care of. I have a room for you." I am still not certain what happened, but I

was so happy to have a bed to drop into I didn't push it. I slept like a log and enjoyed every drop of that shower and brushing my teeth in the morning. Thank you, Nancy!

As a bonus, breakfast was included in the morning. While I was making a waffle, I opened one of the warming trays to see fresh buttermilk biscuits. I opened the second warming tray to find cracklin' gravy. So in Burley, Idaho at the Super 8 Motel, I had fresh biscuits and gravy with a bass fishing show on the television and a GT350 waiting for the open road. Life was very good, indeed!

Refreshed after a sound sleep and a good breakfast, the road took me south toward Ogden, Utah, where I stopped for a fill-up. As I was checking the oil, I noticed a nice pick-up pull into the convenience store parking area and two people got out. One went into the store but the other walked over to my car. It was a young guy about 14 or 15 years-old and he was so excited to see the GT350 that he was almost breathless. He asked if he could take a picture!? I said, "Not only can you take pictures, but you can hop into the driver's seat and I'll take your picture in the car." Once he was in the driver's seat I showed him how the Ray Brown seat belts worked and he checked out the dash gauges, the tach and steering wheel. When his father came out of the convenience store, we talked for a few minutes and I learned they were headed to the Good Guys car show in Salt Lake City that morning. He thanked me for showing the car to his son but honestly, seeing that young guy's excitement made my whole trip.

The only time the entire 1,450 miles that I felt a little tired was just past Ogden around 9:00 a.m. or so. Maybe the biscuits and gravy had something to do with that. Thankfully, I-84 veered off to the southeast and took me through some beautiful canyons. The road became one curve rolling into the next. That was all I needed to perk up as every sweeping curve put a smile on my face and the red canyon walls with the sun dancing over them made for a terrific backdrop.





Youngest son, Willy, readies himself for his drive in Dad's new car. It won't take much to make a lifelong Shelby fan out of him.

I-84 connected with I-80 which headed east into Wyoming. I noticed a sign in Green River, Wyoming for the Flaming Gorge Scenic Drive. It was a 150-mile drive around a lake and sounded like it was worth seeing, but I needed to press on toward home. That ended up being a wise decision, because between Rock Springs and Rawlins, the temperature gauge suddenly spiked and I could smell antifreeze. The radiator was boiling over.

Thankfully, there was an exit coming up immediately and I was able pull off. I say thankfully, because there were stretches on this road where there wasn't an exit for miles and miles. After a cool-off period I added some anti-freeze that I had in the trunk and nursed 074 into Rawlins, where I asked, "Hey Siri, where is the nearest O'Reilly Auto Parts store?"

When I think about it, we live in an amazing country where a person can pull into an auto parts store in a small town in Wyoming and in five minutes, have everything needed to change the thermostat on a car that was built 55 years ago. I was "that guy" working on my car in the parking lot of O'Reilly's, replacing the thermostat. After start-

ing the car it was a nervous ten minutes, but seeing no green puddles underneath – and noting that the temperature gauge was holding steady – it was back on the road again and heading for the home stretch.

Later I said to Nancy, "If you gave me a list of one hundred things that could go wrong with the car and I had to pick one, I would pick the thermo-

stat as it was easy to replace." Whew.

While I was changing the thermostat, my daughter Brooke called to let me know her weather radar app on her iPhone had received a tornado warning for most of the front range in Colorado. I checked my radar app and Rawlins seemed just overcast and rainy. But as I neared Laramie I checked in again with Brooke and my son Willy, and they both felt taking the cut-off from Laramie down to Ft. Collins was the way to go to avoid the storms. This was another great call. The road from Laramie down to the state line was a freshly paved, two-lane highway. The air was cool, the traffic was non-existent, the sky was unending, and the thrill of the Shelby accelerating through long sweeping turns had me chuckling to myself.

Late Saturday evening, I was excited to be home. Nancy's sister and her husband were at our house with a sip of tequila to celebrate and hear all about the trip. The next morning, Nancy had arranged for Willy, Brooke, Caroline and Palmer to come over for breakfast to see the car. Both Brooke and Willy took it for a spin and they got a big kick out of driving a car with a clutch, a manual transmission that was a little tricky to shift, no power steering, no power brakes and was VERY rumbly. It was SO enjoyable to have them drive it!



Middle daughter, Brooke, connected with the car immediately. She was laughing like she was on a roller coaster as she ripped through the gears. You don't get that kind of a feeling from a Prius!