



Glen Morrow (Glen Morrow collection)

# GLEN MORROW

## Pioneer - Hot Rod, Custom Car, Drag Racing and Land Speed

Information supplied by Glen Morrow and Frank Kirby, edited by Brian Pratt and Tom Johnston.

Born in November 1942, grew up in Northern Burnaby with five younger sisters, Glen started working at the age of 14, moving paint products for CIL. He was also working in an old gas station on Capital Hill in North Burnaby.

By the age of 16, he had his first car, a 1952 Austin Somerset which he transformed using the front half of a 1950 Chev sedan delivery frame, running gear, straight six engine, steering and brakes. A small machine shop cut the torque tube and shaft for a mere \$7.50 - those were the days.

In those days vehicles had names, Glen's choice was *the Iron Termite*. As the name applies, the Austin was quick and ate the local competition. Later, he found a pair of convertible doors for his Austin, welded the rear doors shut, cut and made a two door hard top from a four door sedan. Later, he added V8 engine and an open drive line.

1963 saw the Iron Termite being raced in the area. At this time Glen was part of the BCHRA (still is member #28), also a member of *Dragon's Racing Team* from North Burnaby which, at the time, held their meetings in a green Sun newspaper shack, right beside the Burger Baron (the local hangout).

In 1964, Glen's second car was a 1938 Chev Master Special Deluxe, which became the "*the Iron Termite II*". 46 years later, he still has this same car. It was driven on the street, used for work and then drag raced throughout the Pacific Northwest, raced at the old Mission, Arlington, Kent, Puyallup, Bremerton Washington and Vancouver Island (San Cobble) until 1969 when the rule book for racing changed faster than the pay cheques. Best time for a 3300 lb car with a 327 ci engine, four speed Hydramatic was 11.90 et. in 1969 at 120 mph in B/MP. The record et for North America was 10.80 seconds at that time. If there was no



Morrow with Toyota (Glen Morrow collection)

competition in B/MP, he would run in C gas. This was all done with 50 cent per hour wages and no sponsors!

During the early years, Glen built 80 ft steel drum-seine fish boats, worked on deep sea tugs, BC Ferries (air controls), ran two gas stations at the same time, (what a nightmare), then got into building logging trucks and low bed trailers for Cats.

A couple of years building BC Hydro and BC Tel trucks (utilities), then into specialized welding for pulp mills and breweries.

Toward the end of the 60s, Glen owned his own business, building 33 to 40 foot aluminum commercial fish boats and log salvage boats including *RELIC'S* aluminum jet boat on the Beach Combers TV show.

Also at this time he started building a home made 4 x 4 race car from ideas taken from the "Iron Termite II", although never having sat in or driven a 4 x 4 before. This was built in the corner of the shipyard on the weekends.

By 1974 this car was doing 100 yards in the dirt in 4.2 seconds (85 mph in 300 feet), competed in dirt drags, hill climbs, obstacle course, plus street and off road, driven for eight years without breakage.

After selling off the shipyard (after the

second government buy back program to reduce the fishing boat fleet), he started building and repairing four wheel drive vehicles as a hobby job which ended up a business he has owned for over 37 years. Now it's back to a hobby job.

In the late 1980s the 4 x 4 trend faded and back came the hot rods. Glen helped resurrect the BCHRA for its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 1996 and is still a member.

For decades, Glen has been involved with Vintage Trucks and is a member of the Pioneer Truck Club.

So what's in his garage? Besides his '38 Chev, *Iron Termite II* his daily driver is a 1953 one ton GMC 300 Model, a 1959 five ton Chev. *Spartan 80* slide - tilt roll back, 6 wheel drive,  
- 1934 2½ ton Diamond T  
- 1928 1½ ton Model T19 Pontiac truck (grain box)  
- the oldest Toyota short box PU 4 x 4 in Canada with a supercharged Chev engine on propane that weighs in at 5740 lbs empty with 220 liters of fuel on board.

What's next after working 54 years? A few more changes for the *Iron Termite II* are pending plus a twin turbo Cummins diesel engine coupled together with a six speed double overdrive Allison transmission is going into the '59 Spartan 5 ton right now for a start. Glen says: "Bigger toys for the Older Boys" and "I've got more projects than life left".

### EPILOGUE

The past memories still remain as the brain fades, but cruising the *A & Ws, Kings, White Spot, Burger Baron, Wally's, Lions, "This is it?"* and Aristocrat restaurants (where Cokes were 10 cents), or cruising 125 miles a night at 24 cent for a gallon of gas, taking in the drive ins - Cascades, *Paramount, Lougheed, New West and Hill Top*, and of course 1940s & 50s at *Digney Speedway, False Creek Speedway, Haney Speedway, and Langley Speedway*.

And car shows - *Pacific Motorama Shows, Kerrisdale Arena, Autorama, World of Wheels*, etc.

Glen has been involved with car and trucks shows and continues to support various motorsport venues for more than 50 years, including 10 years with the *Pro Trucker Big Rig Weekends*.

OK, last quote from Glen "*Do what you like, like what you do.*"



Iron Termite II (Glen Morrow collection)