

On the Air

Newsletter of the Arkansas Corvair Club ■ CORSA Chapter 722

February 2005

Volume 18, Issue 2

The Corvair Found: A new yet familiar home

Reprinted from *The Drive*, Winter 2002-03, Issue No. 7, a publication of the MotorCities-Automobile National Heritage Area Partnerships, Inc., Detroit, MI, (www.autoheritage.org)

Editor's Note: The following article describes the 2002 relocation of the Corvair Museum, maintained by the Corvair Preservation Foundation, to the Ypsilanti Automotive Heritage Collection, in Ypsilanti, Michigan.

It has been said that one can never truly return home. Don't let the folks from the Corvair Museum hear those words. In August 2002, a joint effort of the Corvair Preservation Foundation and the Ypsilanti Automotive Heritage Collection relocated the Corvair Museum to its new home at the Ypsilanti Automotive Heritage Collection, in Ypsilanti, MI. Yet this new home is very familiar and comfortable to the Corvair as this vehicle's production history can be exclusively linked to the nearby Willow Run Assembly Plant, from 1959 to 1969. In addition, since its founding in 1995, the Ypsilanti Automotive Heritage Collection has displayed four Corvairs.

Although the Corvair was only in production for a decade, its legacy is important. The Chevrolet Division of General Motors debuted a new and radically designed vehicle called the Corvair in October 1959. The 1950s decade had seen Americans become more economy minded as evidenced by the increased popularity of the Volkswagen Beetle. The Corvair was GM's first attempt to create a smaller

and more economical vehicle. Also a first for American manufacturing was the "flat-six" air-cooled engine with its unique rear location.

Initially there were only two body styles, a 2-door coupe and a 4-door sedan. Additional models were developed as the line expanded and included two van models, a pick up truck, a convertible and even a station wagon. Other American manufacturers soon jumped on the [small car] band-

wagon, producing such models as the Dodge Lancer, Plymouth Valiant, Ford Falcon, and Mercury Comet. Chevrolet also introduced the sporty Corvair models of the Monza and Spyder between 1960 and 1962. The beginning of the end for the Corvair came in 1964 as Ford unveiled the new Mustang whose distinct handling found increased favor with drivers.

About the same time, Corvair found

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"Corvairs bring friends together."

The Corvair Found *continued*

itself in the unwelcome spotlight as a book by Ralph Nader, titled *Unsafe at Any Speed*, claimed that the Corvair was unstable and prone to rollover accidents. Time and investigation would eventually clear Chevrolet of all charges. Production continued from 1966 to 1969, although in much smaller quantities than earlier years.

The Corvair's legacy can be found in the nearly 1.7 million vehicles that were produced over its ten year history. As important were the technological advances pioneered by Chevrolet,

including turbo-charging, four wheel independent suspension, and uni-body construction. Today, long after production has ended, the Corvair remains popular among collectors and passionate aficionados.

Curious to see a Corvair? Then a trip to the new Corvair Museum housed in the Ypsilanti Automotive Heritage Collection is in order. Here you can view an assortment of cars including a '69 Corvair (with only 504 miles) and a 1960 Super Monza prototype.

For more information, contact Jack Miller at 734 482-5200.

Thanks to Butch & Meredith Chapman

Our sincere thanks to Butch and Meredith Chapman for giving of their time and energy to travel to Hot Springs to pick up a 1961 Corvair 700 coupe parts car. Some members have already harvested needed parts from this resource. ■

TOP TEN REASONS TO JOIN CORSA

*Are you a member of the Corvair Society of America (CORSA)? The parent organization of our Arkansas Corvair Club needs support from **everyone** who owns and or loves Corvairs. In recent years, CORSA leaders have expressed concern over CORSA's diminishing membership. For our hobby to stay healthy, CORSA needs your support. In that interest, Chuck Armer, a CORSA Tri-membership chairman, in Georgia, published the following list on the VirtualVairs e-mail list, on February 4, 2005.*

- 10. You love Corvairs and want to promote their survival as collector's cars.
- 9. You own or wish to purchase a Corvair or Corvair-powered vehicle.
- 8. You want to participate in sanctioned and insured Corvair events.
- 7. You enjoy the camaraderie of like-minded enthusiasts of the Corvair marque.
- 6. You need a reason to travel and explore a different area of the US.
- 5. You enjoy the diversity that a multi-model Auto marque promotes in it's membership.
- 4. You enjoy the synergy that comes from an organized club event.
- 3. You understand the monetary support that VirtualVairs receives from CORSA.
- 2. You wish to belong to one of the best international auto clubs.
- 1. You're a "giver" and not a "taker."

ACC Dues Alert

In an effort to keep everyone informed about the status of your ACC membership dues, we publish a membership *Dues Alert* in every issue of *On the Air*.

The *Dues Alert* lists names of members who are past due and those due for the current month.

Dues are **\$20.00** for regular membership and **\$15.00** for associate members. Please mail payments to: **Arkansas Corvair Club, P.O. Box 627, Little Rock, AR 72203.**

Here are the names that are **past due** and due in **February**.

Past Due Phillip Coates
Stew MacLeod
Jim Rogers
David Schneider

Due Feb Butch Chapman
Corey Holtz

Please disregard if you've already paid or mailed your check. **We appreciate your support.** ■

Happy Birthday
to our ACC associates
born in March.

Cindy LaCrosse
March 6

Betty Simmons
March 7

Carole Gregory
Bill Smith (58 years)
March 9

Mary Jolley
March 10

Deloris Higgins
March 11

Javier "Joe" Espejo (66 yrs)
Bill MacSorley
March 13

Carla McCorkle
March 26

Happy Anniversary

David & Susan Carter
March 28

Tech Tip: The Care and Feeding of

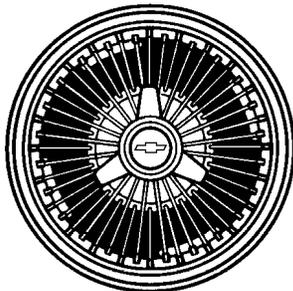
by Phil Fairman

As originally posted to the VirtualVairs mail list. Reprinted here from The Flat Six, January 2005, newsletter of the Prairie Capital Corvair Association.

A good primer for those who are somewhat daunted about taking these things [wire wheel covers] apart. Having done about four sets, mine and for others, here is what I have done.

Disassembly [Remove] 4-screws on spinner, 8-screws on hub, all parts separated. Keep the components from each wheel cover together; I use plastic washbasins. Mark the position of the chrome hub with a Sharpie, to ensure proper index when reassembling.

Paint Removal Tried lacquer thinner and acetone; [these] work okay, but too much labor. Use Strip-ezze or some comparable paint stripper, wash wheel cover with hot water and soap after paint removal. Dry completely (laying in the sun works well) wipe down with a clean rag soaked with lacquer thinner, then mask off the places not to be painted; this is the most difficult part. I use three different widths of masking tape. Wipe



areas to be painted again with clean rag and lacquer thinner.

Painting The surfaces to be painted are polished, paint doesn't want to stick too well to smooth surfaces, so I prime with Eastwood #16014Z self-etching primer. Let dry 2 hours (in sun).

I use Seymour semi-gloss black lacquer #16-838 (From Branden Enterprises, 215 327-4926) Lacquer dries faster and has a harder surface than enamels. This is an underbody paint for restorations. It levels well and has a uniform very low-gloss sheen that brightens up the wheel cover and still looks stock.

Polishing The best chrome/stainless polish I have tried to date is the Artesian Metal Polish made by the P.O.R. folks, also available from Clark's. Polish the areas not painted on the cover, the hub, and the spinner. You can also clean up the spokes. If your spokes have a lot of nicks and

damage, turn them over when you reinstall. The backs will be in much better shape. I replaced my spinners with Clark's repros. They are much nicer than the GM spinners.

Here is something I have found to be very necessary when installing new spinners that have never had a screw threaded into them: Use anti-seize compound. If the screw "bites" or galls going in, the stud will break off. I use anti-seize on *all* the screws when reassembling the covers.

Reassembly Make sure the hub is properly indexed on the cover; use the mark you made before dis-assembly. Assemble the spokes, add the spinner, and you are done.

Use a rubber mallet to install wire covers. I cover mine with a soft cloth.

To remove wheel covers from the wheel, use an upholstery panel removal tool (Clark's C5907). They call it a door panel and weatherstrip remover. [This tool] also works for taking off those retainers for the engine lid insulation. It is remarkably similar to the removal tool GM supplied with the car, if ordered with wire wheel covers.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF AUTO REPAIR

Reprinted from the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, June 26, 2003.

From the Aardvark Automotive Web site, mypage.direct.ca/k/kdomries, which bills itself as "the Virtual Garage," comes these "Ten Commandments of Auto Repair."

I. Thou shalt not place any essential portion of thy anatomy beneath a car that is not properly supported with jack stands or blocks.

II. Thou shalt not work on any part of the starting or charging system without first disconnecting the battery.

III. Thou shalt suffer no flame or spark near the battery or fuel system.

IV. Thou shalt forsake the open end of the wrench, and whenever possible use always the box end upon thy nuts and thy bolts.

V. Thou shalt always securely block the wheels of the car before starting work, lest thou run thyself over with thine own car.

VI. Thou shalt never lose thy temper or thy patience. Remember, "Act in haste and you will repent your leisure."

VII. Thou shalt always exercise extreme care when opening thy radiator, lest thou parboil thyself or some innocent bystander.

[Corvair repair persons get a pass here.]

VIII. Thou shalt clean up any and all of the fluids that thy auto may emit, lest they ignite or poison thy pet, thy child, thy soil, or thy ground water.

IX. Thou shalt always place thy car's transmission in park or neutral before commencing work.

X. Thou shalt never forget the laws of ASSUME, K.I.S.S., and Murphy, and never blame another person for thine own mistakes. ■

QUICK QUIP: If you lend someone \$20 and never see that person again, it was probably worth it.



On the Air

Arkansas Corvair Club
370 Windwood Drive
Cabot, AR 72023-8344

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first class
postage
here.

FIRST CLASS

*"Promoting the maintenance,
enjoyment, and preservation of
the Chevrolet Corvair."*

Arkansas Corvair Club Information

Meetings

The Arkansas Corvair Club (ACC) meets on the **3rd Tuesday** of each month at **Just Like Mom's** Home Cooking restaurant, 3140 E. Kiehl Ave., in Sherwood.

February Meeting

The ACC will meet Tuesday, **February 15**, 7:00 p.m., at Just Like Mom's, on Kiehl Ave., in Sherwood.

Join us at 6:00 p.m. for food and fellowship prior to the meeting. The club offers an array of merchandise for sale—oil filters, gas filters, hats, decals, patches, T-shirts and more.

Officers

President: Cathy Smith, 370 Windwood Drive, Cabot, AR 72023, 501 843-8413.

Vice-President: Ronnie MacLeod, 28305 Bandy Rd., Little Rock, AR 72211, 501 821-3622.

Treasurer: Elvis King, 21305 N. Mill Rd., Little Rock, AR 72206, 501 888-1224 (evening).

Secretary: JB King, 21305 N. Mill Rd., Little Rock AR, 72206, 501 888-1224 (evening).

Elected Board: Allan Embrey, 501 834-5373; Ronnie MacLeod, 821-3622; Clyde Jones, 479 774-6789; Bill Smith, 501 843-8413.

Appointed Board: Pending.

Committee Chairs

Membership: Elvis King

Publicity: Bill Smith

Newsletter Editor: Bill Smith, 370 Windwood Drive, Cabot, AR 72023, 501 843-8413.

Newsletter Advertising:

Non-members and businesses:
\$100/year full page; \$60-½ page;
\$35-¼ page.

Program & Events: Open

ACC Webmaster: Ken Franson, 608 Ridgelea Ave., Sherwood, AR 72120, 501 835-6005.

Web Address

Arkansas Corvair Club Web site:
<http://corvair5.tripod.com/acc.htm>

ACC Mission: The mission of the Arkansas Corvair Club (ACC) is to promote the maintenance, enjoyment, and preservation of all types of Corvairs and related vehicles, and to advance and improve driving skills, automobile safety, and the Corvair's image.