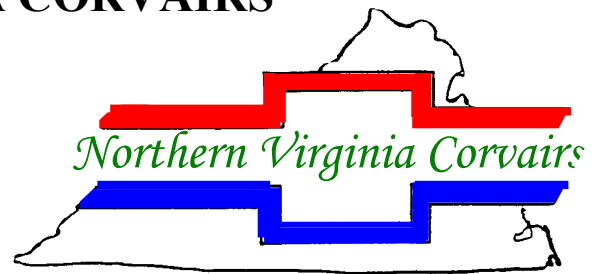


NORTHERN VIRGINIA CORVAIRS



**HOT
AIR
MAIL**



NVCC, CORSA Chapter 220

Volume XXXI, Number 10

October 2014

CHAPTER CHATTER

By Doug Jones

Newsletter time! This last month was a busy Corvair month. We had a car show to go to and the regular meeting.

The car show was in Manassas, the same show as last year. The plans were to have a semi-picnic lunch. The group was to meet at the CVS in Manassas to caravan to the show. Ron Tumillo was the first to show up, followed by me. After a bit, Daniel then Mark came. Bryan called and said that he had overslept and that he had a super busy week. This year's show was set up differently than last year, in that the cars were grouped in classes. Last year all of the Corvairs were parked together. But this year, the late models were together, and the early models were together. The classes were 1960-63 then 1964-66, which somewhat split the late models and early models.

Greg Walthour came just after we arrived with his white late model. There was a bunch of nice looking cars at the show, but as Ron said they mostly looked like cars people drive, not "trailer queens." Mike Runnels also showed up with his Scarab. That was the first time I've seen his car up close – what a beauty! It was probably the best

car show I've ever attended because I won the 50/50 raffle!

We had a good lunch and met a new Corvair person – hopefully he'll join the club. He had a '62 coupe that basically came from the original owner: a Pan-Am stewardess who bought the car in Connecticut and then moved to California. Like Daniel said, if the car could talk the stories it would tell: owned by a Pan-Am stewardess in California in the '60s!

The regular meeting was at Daniel Goldberg's house. Dan had a list of things he wanted to do, the first was to get the car running a little better. It was idling way too fast. Turns out the carburetors were out of sync and needed to be adjusted for the idle to come down. Also the secondaries were not hooked up, but Bryan and the gang got them working also. I hope that Daniel's car is running great.

Well, its time to get ready for the October meeting at Bryan's house, which will be the fourth Saturday. Bryan will be out of town on the third Saturday, so its switched to the fourth. See you all there.

Happy Vairing!

President:

Bryan Blackwell
6329 Hillside Road
Springfield, VA 22152
(703) 569-6908
bryan@skiblack.com

Vice President:

Daniel Goldberg
43 Underwood Place
Alexandria, VA 22304
(703) 868-4371
daniel@danielgoldberg.net

2014 NVCC Officers

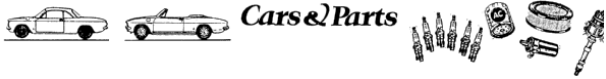
Secretary/Treasurer:

A. J. Paluska, Jr
6839 Brimstone Lane
Fairfax Station, VA 22039
(703) 250-4455
ajjr13@earthlink.net

Editor:

Doug Jones
5176 Woodfield Drive
Centreville, VA 20120
(703) 309-8705
1963.jones.d@gmail.com

The Northern Virginia Corvair Club (NVCC) publishes the HOT AIR MAIL newsletter monthly as a service to its members. NVCC is a non-profit chapter of the Corvair Society of America (CORSA). The \$10 annual dues are payable January 1st, to "Treasurer, NVCC" at the address herein. A prorated amount of \$5 is accepted for periods of less than six months. All other correspondence and submissions can be addressed to the Secretary/Editor. Newsletter expiration date is three months beyond dues anniversary if they are not current. Original material appearing in the HOT AIR MAIL may be reprinted in other non-profit publications with appropriate credits.



NVCC Calendar

Parts/Miscellaneous For Sale

40+ year collection of Corvair Parts. Please contact John Getz at jpgetz@comcast.net or 301-717-9452 for a list of sale items. Parts located in Frederick, Md.

Gas Tanks: Six or so good used gas tanks \$30 and YOU pick up; NE Maryland. Harry Yarnell
hyarnell1@earthlink.net

Corvair Vendors and Services

Clark's Corvair Parts, Inc.
Route 2, 400 Mohawk Trail, Shelburne Falls, MA
01370-9748 (413) 625-9776

Corvair Underground
PO Box 339 Dundee, OR 97115
(503) 434-1648 or (800) 825-VAIR

Corvair Ranch, Inc
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ARE YOU IN?

The Corvair Society of America (CORSA) is the #1 Corvair group in the world, with over 4,800 members and 125 local chapters, including Northern Virginia Corvairs.

CORSA supports all sanctioned Corvair Clubs with a wealth of benefits, including event insurance, exclusive Classified Ad access, and their award-winning monthly newsletter "The Communique". Northern Virginia Corvairs encourages all members to join CORSA. Annual dues for active members are just \$45. For more information visit the CORSA website at www.Corvair.org

25 October 2014

Regular NVCC Meeting

Hosted by Bryan Blackwell

6329 Hillside Road, Springfield VA 22152

Project: possible LM windshield panel replacement or engine installation

15 November 2014

Regular NVCC Meeting

Hosted by Doug Jones

5901 Montell Drive, Alexandria VA 22310

Project: possible engine installation

14 December 2014

NVCC Holiday Party

5101 Sequoia Farms Drive

Centreville, VA 20120

Treasurer's Report

Balance as of 9/1/14	\$2449.69
Dues Income	\$0.00
Balance as of 9/30/14	\$2519.69

America's First Sports Car

By: Pat Foster

This article originally appeared in the January 2005 issue of Hemmings Classic Car.

Ask most people to name the first American sports car, and usually they'll say "Corvette." With all the various arguments about which era sports cars first appeared in, it's hard to say what came first. So I'm not going to start a battle over what car actually was the first American sports car, but one thing I know-it ain't the Vette.

Now, before some angry Corvette owner lets the air out of my tires, let me explain that I have a deep fondness for Corvettes. My late brother had a 1967 Sting Ray when I was a kid, and he would take me for rides, which made me just about the coolest 14-year-old in town. But let's face it, when we talk about America's sports car party, Corvette showed up late.

Some people claim America's sports car craze began before World War II, others say prior to World War I. Trying to agree on which pre-war American cars can be called sports cars is hard enough, let alone trying to agree on what era they appeared in. For those reasons, we'll confine our discussion to post-World War II cars from American companies. Not surprisingly, the first U.S. sports car(s) came from America's independents.

Hudson had a very stylish bucket-seated sportster called the Italia, which first appeared in 1954. Its Italian hand-built body is really attractive-and looks even better in person. Low, lithe and very continental, the Italia is a work of art. But as pretty as the Hudson Italia is (and let's face it, they're gorgeous!), I think of it more as a grand touring car than a sports car. But, even if we did consider it a sports car, the Italia wasn't first.

Kaiser-Frazer Corporation introduced one of the most unique cars of all time when it

unveiled its Kaiser-Darrin roadster. Besides being a sports car, which was unusual enough back then, the Darrin had probably the most extraordinary door system ever seen on a production car. The doors actually slid into the front fenders, which made entering and exiting the car much easier. Even without considering that novel design element, the overall styling of the Kaiser-Darrin was very attractive, a fresh, surprisingly modern look. And it was a real sports car. The body was low and sleek, the front fenders long and sweeping. Probably the only things that kept the Kaiser-Darrin from being more successful were a too-small 90hp Willys straight-six engine and the fact that it came from an independent. As they used to say back then, slap a Buick nameplate on a Kaiser and it would sell like hotcakes. Of course, the Kaiser-Darrin wasn't the first American sports car. Like Hudson's Italia, it came out in 1954.

In 1953, the same year the first Corvette rolled out, Studebaker had its delightful Starlight coupe and Starliner hardtop models; but as sporty as they were, they aren't really sports cars. Packard had some concept cars that could be considered sports cars, but they never appeared in regular production. Both Studebaker and Rambler had some exciting sports car designs on the drawing boards around that time, but no production model evolved from them.

"Woody" Woodill built a sports car, dubbed the Woodill Wildfire, in 1952, and several other small companies each managed to knock out a handful of cars before going out of business, but I don't think any of these "cottage industry" types should be considered.

Now, let's get down to the real nitty-gritty. Long before the Kaiser-Darrin, Hudson Italia or Chevrolet Corvette ever appeared, Nash-Kelvinator brought out a genuine sports car, a prancing thoroughbred called the Nash-Healey. Released for sale in 1951, the original Nash-Healey was an aluminum-bodied roadster powered by a big, 3.8-liter straight-six engine.

Right out of the chute, they were raced on European racetracks, putting down a good showing when Nash-Healey finished in fourth place its first time at Le Mans in 1950. They returned to Le Mans in 1951, 1952 and 1953, taking America's banner to the epicenter of sports car racing and establishing a record for American cars unmatched until Ford began its historic assault on Le Mans during the 1960s.

memory is one and the other is, umm, ah...oh, I forget.

But there's a controversy regarding Nash-Healey as an American sports car. See, the Nash-Healey wasn't built in America. The 1951 models were produced in Donald Healey's shop in England, using a Nash Ambassador drivetrain. Beginning with the 1952 model, Nash-Healeys got even more international in nature-the drivetrain, still U.S.-built, was mated to a Healey-produced chassis which was subsequently transported to Italy, where a beautiful new, all-steel Pinin Farina body was installed. The finished car was then put on a boat to America. So, is Nash-Healey an American car? I think so-after all, my daughter's Mexico-built Plymouth Acclaim isn't considered a Mexican car. And how many people think De Lorean is an Irish car?

But, regardless how you view the Nash-Healey, we don't have to get bogged down in argument. That's because there's one other independent car company that produced a sports car even earlier than Nash did. That company is the too-often-overlooked Crosley Motors, which introduced the delightful little Crosley Hot Shot in 1949.

Okay, so maybe some of you object to calling a tiny four-cylinder bug-eyed roadster from a nearly forgotten automaker a sports car. But, if you think about it, what was the Austin-Healey Sprite? A tiny, four-cylinder bug-eyed roadster from a nearly forgotten automaker. Both are sports cars-and the Crosley Hot Shot was the first American sports car in the post-war era.

Now, did I forget any cars? You know, two things arrive in the autumn years...poor